**YLDP Session with Judge Ed.Emmet**



On Saturday, January 21st, 2012, YLDP of Houston held its fourth session at TranStar of Houston under the theme of Government and Politics. In this session, the students of YLDP were given a tour of the building and were enlightened by Judge Ed Emmett’s entertaining speech on leadership.

The session opened with a Transtar building tour, including a well connected conference room on the second floor that overlooks a control room resembling that at NASA. The centerpiece attraction is the “spider web” map of Houston area highways. TranStar uses an innovative technology using sensors that pick up Bluetooth signals from cell phones and calculates travel speeds for display in the familiar color coded area traffic map we see on TV.

Following the tour, YLDP students were treated to an inspirational talk by Harris County Judge Ed Emmett. He shared many valuable lessons on leadership drawing upon anecdotes, sometimes humorous, from his own life with the high schoolers, leading up to his current role as county judge. He stressed the importance of never “permanentizing an enemy” and keeping close contact with friends to build a support network, an enabler for any leader. Along with teamwork, he emphasized the importance of personal humility in a leader, a theme exemplified throughout his life. Judge Emmett left the students with a powerful concluding message—good leaders are made by several collective factors: a good support network, a little intelligence, even a bit of luck, and a whole lot of perseverance. Following his exemplary leadership in managing emergencies in Harris County, the students were inspired to find ways that they could step up and help during an emergency and become effective leaders in their own communities.

The students came away with a better understanding of how the city of Houston and Harris County function in emergencies and how the county manages its daily traffic volume. Interacting with Judge Emmett provided valuable lessons on how to interact with their own peers and how to serve their communities as leaders.

YLDP students Sanjiv Gopalkrishnan, Priya Bhattacharjee, Navin Kalluri, Shourya Saxena and Srimahesh Vangavolu contributed to this report.

The students, Directors, and well wishers of YLDP and the Bear Creek Yoga Club raised $1,800 and donated to the Food Bank at our third session. The students also learned to reach out to the less fortunate people by donating their time, volunteering at the Food Bank, which was more valuable.