



# THE AYLUS TIMES

Alliance of Youth Leaders in the United States

No. 7

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to the San Diego, Great Neck, West Essex, Murrieta, Chapel Hill, Pearland, Roslyn, Frisco & Plano, Basking Ridge, and Morris branches for winning Branch of the Month for February 2025. Congratulations to the Gainesville branch for winning New Branch of the Month for February 2025.

March's monthly theme is "Earth Day Support." We invite branches to incorporate this theme into their events.



## Monthly Themed Challenge: Food Insecurity



Imagine walking through a grocery store filled with food, yet knowing that you can't afford any of it. Unfortunately, for every 1 in 7 households in the United States, this isn't imagination. In response to food insecurity, AYLUS turned donated food and community effort into reliable support for struggling families.



The San Diego and Greenville branches assisted local food banks by organizing food items for future allocation. West Essex and Roslyn branches partnered with local food banks, distributing groceries and snacks with care to families in their community. In addition, West Essex also prepared and packed homemade PB & J sandwiches for a sandwich drive. Meanwhile, AYLUS Morris hosted its 111th food drive with Helping Hands, collecting over 28 pounds of canned goods, and partnered with a local church to gather an additional 42 pounds for those in need.

Across the country, small acts of service like these continue to make a meaningful difference in the fight against food insecurity. Moving forward, AYLUS will ceaselessly work towards ensuring everyone has access to food.



Written by: Sarah Xue  
Revised by: Megan Wang

## Welcoming the Year of the Horse

As communities across the United States welcomed the Lunar New Year and ushered in the Year of the Horse, AYLUS branches marked the occasion with vibrant celebrations that blended service, cultural tradition, and community engagement.



AYLUS Pearland prepared for its annual Lunar New Year Festival by assembling chocolate coin-filled red envelopes for festival attendees and organizing fundraising booths featuring traditional crafts and themed merchandise. Meanwhile in New York, the Oakland Gardens Branch celebrated the 30th Lunar New Year Parade in Flushing and assisted at a community festival alongside local officials, distributing traditional foods and guiding visitors through the festivities. The Great Neck Branch hosted a cultural event where children listened to Lunar New Year stories and created clay horse sculptures inspired by the zodiac animal of the year, while the West Essex Branch supported Livingston Chinese Cultural Day through cultural performances and interactive activity stations.



Through these joyous celebrations, AYLUS branches not only preserved the cultural traditions of the Lunar New Year but also strengthened community connections nationwide.



Written by: Audrey Kuo  
Revised by: Megan Wang

## Community, Compassion, and Cupid

This February, AYLUS members across the nation celebrated Valentine's Day by spreading love through service. From running balloon-making and face painting stations for children with special needs in Texas to hosting bingo for senior home residents in Minnesota, AYLUS volunteers created special moments for people of all ages across communities. In Florida, the Space Coast branch delivered 250 handmade Valentine's cards to nursing homes in Melbourne, creating a heartwarming experience for both the residents and staff. In California, the Santa Clarita Valley branch volunteered with the Living Limitless Collective, assisting with art activities and encouraging social connection, fostering a space of creativity and belonging for individuals with developmental disabilities.



Whether crafting heartfelt cards or connecting through artistic expression, AYLUS members demonstrate that love for one's community extends far beyond a single holiday. As branches continue to lead service initiatives throughout the year, AYLUS strives to spread kindness and compassion through each and every act.



Written by: Eason Wang  
Revised by: Megan Wang

## Crafting for a Cause

As February unfolded, scissors, yarn, and markers became part of a nationwide effort to spread joy and give back. AYLUS volunteers across the country transformed simple crafts projects into meaningful contributions to support their communities.



The Columbus Branch donated 78 handmade placemats to the Dublin Retirement Village, brightening seniors' dining tables. At the Frisco & Plano Branch, volunteers came together for the Loops of Love event to crochet stuffed animals. Meanwhile, AYLUS Chapel Hill members crafted heart pillows and origami for families staying at the Ronald McDonald House, and AYLUS Twin Cities decorated welcoming cards for Gilda's Club, a cancer support community.

Finishing these efforts, the Great Neck Branch led arts and crafts activities at a local library and read books to children, celebrating Asian American and Pacific Islander culture.

Through these projects, AYLUS volunteers continue to embody the values of AYLUS, demonstrating how simple materials and a splash of creativity can bring comfort and encouragement to communities across the nation.



Written by: Angie Feng  
Revised by: Henry Tang

## Branch Spotlight Pearls of Service: Aylus Pearland

Founded in 2015, the AYLUS Pearland branch has grown from a modest club into one that now boasts over 350 members. To this day, members thrive to lead and improve their community, putting in the dedication and initiative necessary to turn ideas into action.



One of the main qualities the Pearland branch exemplifies is collaboration, whether it be with the city itself or among its members. Each event they host is aligned with one of their six tracks: City and Neighbor Support, Achieve Together, SMILE 4 Special Needs, STEM and Tech, Healthy Future, and Entrepreneurship. Volunteers have supported local food drives, library programs, and city events, while also hosting educational programs such as robotics classes, chess lessons, art workshops, and tutoring sessions for younger students.

The key to their longevity lies in their support of not just high school members, but middle school ones as well, cultivating leadership at a young age. With each event, AYLUS Pearland collaborates alongside the neighboring clubs with support from the city, turning their initiative into a group effort. What may have started as a small, one-off opportunity often blossoms into a recurring event that reaches more people each time.



Beyond just volunteering, AYLUS Pearland demonstrates that passion and impact can go hand in hand. Many activities reflect the interests of members, and this approach allows members to share their talents while making service more engaging and meaningful. In doing so, the branch shows that service is not merely a one-sided endeavor, but rather helpful actions that foster mutual growth for both the volunteers and those they serve.



Written by: Stella Zhao  
Revised by: Henry Tang

## Expanding Access to Everyday Essentials

A warm meal, a good book, or a warm coat are everyday items many people take for granted, yet for some families they can be difficult to obtain. This February, AYLUS branches across the country worked with local organizations to help make these essential resources more accessible within their communities.



Several branches focused on expanding access to clothing and educational materials. The Greater Triangle Branch organized a community clothing drive, collecting gently used clothing for redistribution to individuals in need. Meanwhile, AYLUS Howard County supported students through its Stories for a Cause initiative, donating more than 60 children's books to Baltimore County Public Schools' Exchange program and helping expand access to reading resources.

Other volunteers helped ensure that meals remained accessible in their communities. The Greenville and Bridgewater branches volunteered at food banks and pantries, organizing and distributing food to families in need. Meanwhile, AYLUS Chapel Hill added a warm touch by baking homemade cookies for recipients of Meals on Wheels.

From books to clothing drives to cookies, AYLUS members will continue working to ensure that essential resources remain accessible to communities nationwide.

Written by: Zoe Cheng  
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