



# **Elijah Cummings Youth Program in Israel**

With Generous Support in Memory of  
Congressman Elijah E. Cummings and Jerold C. Hoffberger

## **Application for the Class of 2028**

### **OUR VISION**

A world guided by ambassadors of cross-cultural relations who demand high expectations of themselves and are committed to working for a better tomorrow.



# Program Overview

The Elijah Cummings Youth Program in Israel (ECYP) is a two-year leadership fellowship that builds bridges between the Black and Jewish communities. ECYP is a partnership between the Baltimore Jewish Council and the late Congressman Elijah Cummings.

**ECYP ALUMNI** Over the past 27 years, the Elijah Cummings Youth Program in Israel (ECYP) has achieved tremendous success. In total, over 300 participants have completed the program. Our graduates have gone on to higher education and successful careers! Examples include a CNN news anchor, commercial airline pilot, Peace Corps volunteer, United States Naval Officer, entrepreneur in early childhood education programming and investment banker.

## BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAM

- Acquire leadership skills
- Travel abroad
- Build new friendships
- Become a community leader and activist
- Obtain a better understanding of self
- Increase comfort in public speaking
- Receive service-learning hours
- Receive support throughout college and financial aid application process
- Receive support throughout college experience

**HOW YOU WILL LEARN** ECYP promotes a hands-on approach to learning. Fellows will have ample opportunity to interact with community leaders, facilitators and guest speakers. In addition to monthly training sessions, ECYP fellows perform community service throughout the year as mentors to middle school students to increase awareness of the community and provide the opportunity to serve.

**INTERNATIONAL TRIP** After completing Year 1, ECYP fellows traditionally travel to Israel at no cost. To prioritize the safety of our fellows, we have made the difficult decision to suspend our travel to Israel. Our hope is to resume travel there once conditions improve. In the meantime, we have shifted our focus to offering an alternative trip to Eastern Europe.

While traveling through Eastern Europe, these young ambassadors will become global citizens through immersive and authentic travel experiences. We strive to instill a love for travel, hunger for learning, and genuine curiosity about different cultures. The International experience allows ECYP students the opportunity to gain independence, develop respect and appreciation for other cultures, and reflect on their self-worth and character.

Symera Hawkins Class of 2025, reflects, *"The monthly experiences, trips, conversations, and interactions have opened my perspective outside of what I see and hear on television and social media. My travel experience to the South and Eastern Europe exposed me to a worldwide view of history, culture and perspectives outside of the United States."*





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## Application for the Class of 2028

**MISSION** To invest in promising teens from Maryland's 7th congressional district and prepare them to serve as open-minded leaders with the skills, community ties, and global exposure critical to success in a diverse society. Our efforts are infused with the spirit of bridge-building exemplified by the longstanding partnership of Congressman Elijah E. Cummings and the Baltimore Jewish community.

**REQUIREMENTS** Applicants must be entering their junior year of high school in the fall of 2026 and residing or attending school in Maryland's 7th congressional district (<http://mfume.house.gov/>). Applicants must be able to commit to the program for two years. Please note that all ECYP programming is provided at no cost to admitted fellows. \*We will also accept applications from students who attend schools which previously were in the 7th district starting from 1996.

**PAPER APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS** Complete this application on your computer and **save a copy for your records.** Scan and email the finished version to **[application@ecyp.org](mailto:application@ecyp.org)**. Scanned transcripts are permitted and may be sent in the same email or separately. Please use the subject, 'ECYP Application for LAST NAME, FIRST NAME.' See Part Three for recommendation letter instructions. Applicants who cannot send all documents by email may send any remaining documents by postal mail to ECYP Application, **5700 Park Heights Ave, Baltimore, MD 21215**. Questions may be submitted to **[information@ecyp.org](mailto:information@ecyp.org)**.

**DEADLINE** All application materials are due by midnight or postmarked on **March 30, 2026**. Selected applicants will be notified by mail and/or phone in early May if they have been selected to interview.

### APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Short Essays                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Required Certification and Release |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recommendation Letters (Two) | <input type="checkbox"/> Official School Transcript         |

**Find us on Facebook at [facebook.com/ECYPIsrael](https://facebook.com/ECYPIsrael),  
instagram.com/elijahcummingsyouthprogram or online at [ecyp.org](http://ecyp.org)**

**We look forward to reading your application.  
Thank You!**

**In Cooperation with Congressman Kweisi Mfume**



**Baltimore Jewish Council**  
An agency of The Associated



**The Associated**  
Jewish Federation of Baltimore



**Student Name:**

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**High School:**

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## PART 1 : Application

Name (Legal First, M.I., Last):

Preferred Name (Nickname):

Preferred Gender Pronouns (Optional):

Ethnicity (Optional):

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth (City/State):

Name of Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s):

Street Address:

Apt #

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Home Phone:

Student Cell Phone:

Parent Email:

Student Email:

High School:

Phone:

G.P.A. (on 4.0 scale):

Name of Guidance Counselor:

Phone:

Email:

Are you a U.S. citizen?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If not, are you a permanent resident?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Do you hold a passport issued by another country? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, where?

### How did you hear about ECYP (check all that apply)?

☐ Media (radio, print)

☐ Religious organization

☐ School counselor or teacher

☐ Relative or friend

☐ ECYP alumnus

☐ Other (Please specify)

### What are your plans upon graduating high school?

☐ Four-year college/university

☐ Technical college/trade school

☐ Two-year community college

☐ Join the workforce

☐ Unsure

Please complete the chart below by listing activities you have participated in during high school only. Be sure to include past, current, and anticipated activities moving forward. Do not use abbreviations for clubs or activities. Write out the full names and titles.

DATES	SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES (Extracurricular, volunteerism, athletics)	POSITION HELD

DATES	COMMUNITY-BASED ACTIVITIES (Volunteer work, religious involvement, other affiliations)	POSITION HELD

- In a brief paragraph (5-7 sentences), reflect on a meaningful experience you had through your participation in one of these activities.

- List your hobbies and/or special talents.

- Are you currently employed? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
If yes, where and how many hours per week?

- Please list places you've traveled outside Maryland.

- Have you ever traveled by plane? ☐ Yes ☐ No

### **SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**

Tell us about yourself! We encourage you to be genuine in your responses. There are no right or wrong answers. Minimum length is 100 to 250 words per question.

1. Describe someone who has influenced you. Feel free to draw from your family, your community, your teachers, your classmates or others.
2. Describe a situation in which you played a leadership role and what you learned about yourself from that experience?
3. Tell us why you are applying to ECYP.



4. Thinking about your time in school, write about one positive or one challenging experience. What did you learn about yourself and how did you grow from that experience?
5. How do you organize your calendar and stay on top of your multiple commitments? What is your current top extra-curricular priority?
6. Optional: Please submit one item (artwork, poetry, photography, etc.) that shows us a part of your personality. Please also include a brief explanation of what this submission represents to you and why you chose to share it with us.
7. Optional video response: Please email a video to [application@ecyp.org](mailto:application@ecyp.org) that is no longer than two minutes, that tells us about yourself and why you want to be part of the program. This video will be screened by ECYP board members, so please dress appropriately.



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## Application for the Class of 2028

### REQUIRED CERTIFICATION AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

- ☐ I certify that all the information on this application is true to the best of my knowledge.
- ☐ I certify that I live or go to school in the Maryland's 7th congressional district  
(Please visit [mdelect.net](http://mdelect.net) to confirm the congressional district of your residence and/or school.)
- ☐ I understand that if selected, it is mandatory that I attend two monthly events and participate in community service/mentoring activities during my 11th and 12th grade years of high school.
- ☐ I will participate in at least three public-speaking engagements as an "ambassador" during my 12th grade year.
- ☐ I hereby authorize ECYP to share or publish portions of my application for the purpose of evaluation, recruitment, public relations, possible scholarship and internship opportunities, or any other related activity.
- ☐ If selected as a fellow, I understand that I will be held to an Honor Code during my time in Baltimore and abroad.

### APPLICANT'S NAME

(Signature)

(Date)

By typing your name above, you create an electronic signature and affirm that you have read and agree to the disclosure statement.

#### My annual household family income is approximately:

- ☐ \$0 - \$25,000      ☐ \$100,001 - \$150,000  
☐ \$25,001 - \$50,000      ☐ \$150,001 or higher  
☐ \$50,001 - \$100,000

#### My household size is:

- ☐ 2      ☐ 3      ☐ 4  
☐ 5      ☐ 6 or more

Please answer this question to the best of your knowledge. There are **no income guidelines** for participation in the Elijah Cummings Youth Program.

### PARENT/GUARDIAN'S NAME

(Signature)

(Date)

By typing your name above, you create an electronic signature and affirm that you have read and agree to the disclosure statement.

#### Board of Directors

Congressman Kweisi Mfume  
*Honorary Chair*

Michael Ward  
*Chair*

Andrew Dansicker  
*Vice Chair*

Roberta King  
*Secretary*

Samuel Scott  
*Treasurer*

Randi Pupkin  
*Immediate Past Chair*

Congressman Elijah Cummings\*  
*Honorary Chair Emeritus*

Stewart Greenebaum\*  
*Director Emeritus*

Carole Sibel\*  
*Director Emeritus*

Marc Broady  
Anthony Bush  
Rabbi Daniel Burg  
Jennifer Cummings  
Laurie Duhan  
Cinneah El-Amin  
Maureen Evans

Joseph Fink  
The Honorable Chaya Friedman\*\*  
Dylan Goldberg  
Aaron Hekin  
Shelly Hendler  
Chase Hoffberger  
L. Michelle Jackson  
Kevin Johnson\*\*  
Henry Kahn  
Paul Saval  
Torrey Smith  
Martha Weiman\*\*

\*Of Blessed Memory

\*\* Ex-officio

#### Staff

Kathleen St. Villier Hill  
*Executive Director*

Liza Koh  
*Program Director*

Karla Press-Porter  
*Program Coordinator*



**Baltimore Jewish Council**  
An agency of The Associated

 **The Associated**  
Jewish Federation of Baltimore



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## PART TWO: LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION (STUDENT PAGE)

**DEADLINE** References and all other materials are due by midnight or postmark on **March 30, 2026**.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT** Obtain two letters of recommendation. Direct your references to **ecyp.org** in order to complete a recommendation letter. The individuals writing your recommendation must use the form listed on the website (please designate as source A or B). Letters of recommendation should be written by an academic advisor, teacher, religious clergy, mentor, or employer. Please note that it is your responsibility to ensure that your references submit letters by the deadline.

**STUDENT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

### PLEASE LIST YOUR REFERRAL SOURCES

#### REFERRAL SOURCE A

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

In what capacity do you know this individual? \_\_\_\_\_

#### REFERRAL SOURCE B

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

In what capacity do you know this individual? \_\_\_\_\_



# Elijah Cummings Youth Program in Israel

## Application for the Class of 2028

### PART TWO: LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION ONE

**DEADLINE** References and all other materials are due by midnight or postmark on **March 30, 2026**.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT** Obtain **two** letters of recommendation. Give this form to each of your references. Letters of recommendation should be written by an academic advisor, teacher, religious clergy, mentor, or employer. Please note that it is your responsibility to ensure that your references submit letters by the deadline.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO REFERENCE** Please use this form to write a letter of recommendation for the student named below and email the document to **application@ecyp.org**. The letter should be sent from a work email address associated with your organization and note the name of the student in the subject line. If you are unable to email the letter, you may post two copies (one envelope) of your reference to: **5700 Park Heights Ave, Baltimore, MD 21215**. References submitted by postal mail must be signed across the seal and may also be given to students to send as part of their completed application.

- Please note the mission of ECYP: To invest in promising teens from Maryland's 7th congressional district and prepare them to serve as open-minded leaders with the skills, community ties, and global exposure critical to success in a diverse society. Our efforts are infused with the spirit of bridge-building exemplified by the longstanding partnership of Congressman Elijah E. Cummings and the Baltimore Jewish community. Since 1998, our fellows have had the opportunity to assume new responsibilities, affirm leadership potential and learn the importance of cooperation and civic participation. ECYP fellows reach these goals through three components: (1) Two years of educational and capacity-building programs through a leadership enhancement initiative funded in memory of Jerold C. Hoffberger, (2) a summer cross-cultural experience abroad, and (3) community service opportunities in Baltimore.
- In your letter, please include specific evidence to support the student's candidacy for the program, and your confidence in their ability to complete the program successfully.

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Name (First, Middle, Last):

### REFERENCE INFORMATION

Name:

Organization:

Title:

How long have you known the applicant?

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Telephone:

Alternate Phone/Facsimile:

Email Address:

In what capacity do you know this individual?



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# Elijah Cummings Youth Program in Israel

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## PART THREE: LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION TWO

**DEADLINE** References and all other materials are due by midnight or postmark on **March 30, 2026.**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENT** Obtain **two** letters of recommendation. Give this form to each of your references. Letters of recommendation should be written by an academic advisor, teacher, religious clergy, mentor, or employer. Please note that it is your responsibility to ensure that your references submit letters by the deadline.

**INSTRUCTIONS TO REFERENCE** Please use this form to write a letter of recommendation for the student named below and scan then email the document to **application@ecyp.org**. The letter should be sent from a work email address associated with your organization and note the name of the student in the subject line. If you are unable to email the letter, you may post two copies (one envelope) of your reference to: **ECYP, 5700 Park Heights Ave, Baltimore, MD 21215**. References submitted by postal mail must be signed across the seal and may also be given to students to send as part of their completed application.

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- In your letter, please include specific evidence to support the student's candidacy for the program, and your confidence in their ability to complete the program successfully.

## APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Name (First, Middle, Last):

## REFERENCE INFORMATION

Name:

Organization:

Title:

How long have you known the applicant?

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Telephone:

Alternate Phone/Facsimile:

Email Address:

In what capacity do you know this individual?



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