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## **Pembroke Pines Named 2026 Youth Council Excellence Award Winner**

*Youth Council recognized by Florida League of Cities for community initiative*

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**TALLAHASSEE, FL** – The **Florida League of Cities (FLC)**, the united voice for Florida’s municipal governments, announced the **City of Pembroke Pines Youth Advisory Board** as one of three winners of the 2026 Youth Council Excellence Award. The annual competition recognizes exceptional youth council initiatives or projects that have made significant contributions to their local municipalities.

Municipal youth councils are special councils that typically serve as advisory boards to the local governments. They are composed of high school students within the city and are sometimes referred to as youth corps, teen advisory boards, or mayor’s youth councils.

The Pembroke Pines Youth Advisory Board earned the 2026 Youth Council Excellence Award for its Career Fair & Life Skills Event, a citywide initiative developed in direct response to students' questions about life after high school. Now in its second year, the event connected high school students in grades 10-12 with nine local businesses, including the Pembroke Pines Police Department, Dade County Federal Credit Union, and Craig Zinn Automotive Group, through an interactive rotation model covering career exploration, financial literacy, vehicle safety, resume writing, mental health awareness, and more.

Organized in partnership with the Miramar/Pembroke Pines Chamber of Commerce and city leadership, Youth Advisory Board members played a central role in designing, coordinating, and executing the event from concept to completion, gaining firsthand experience in civic leadership while equipping their peers with the practical tools and confidence needed to navigate adulthood successfully.

"The Pembroke Pines Youth Advisory Board has set a remarkable example of what is possible when young leaders take initiative and invest in their future," said **FLC President Holly D. Smith, Vice Mayor of Sanibel**. "By bridging the gap between education, city government, and the business community, these students created an experience that equips the next generation with the real-world skills and confidence they need to thrive. I am incredibly proud of the Pembroke Pines Youth Advisory Board for demonstrating that youth-led civic action has the power to transform lives and strengthen communities for years to come. With young leaders like these championing meaningful initiatives in their communities, the future of Florida’s cities is bright."

The Riviera Beach Youth Council and the West Park Youth Council were also named winners in the statewide competition. Contest winners will receive a monetary award of \$500, a trophy, and be featured online in the League's Quality Cities (QC) magazine as well as on the League's website and social media outlets.

For more information on the winning projects, visit [flcities.com/youth-councils](http://flcities.com/youth-councils).

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*Founded in 1922, the Florida League of Cities is the united voice for Florida's municipal governments. Its goals are to promote local self-government and serve the needs of Florida's cities, which are formed and governed by their citizens. The League believes in "Local Voices Making Local Choices," which focuses on the impact citizens and city leaders have in improving Florida's communities. For more information, visit [flcities.com](http://flcities.com).*