

# THE HOBY STORY

For five decades, Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) has worked diligently at helping young people make a difference and become positive catalysts for change—in the home, school, workplace and the community. As one of the nation's foremost nonprofit, non tax-supported youth leadership development organizations, HOBY is respected worldwide.

## ***Beginnings in an African Jungle***

In the summer of 1958, actor Hugh O'Brian received the invitation that would change his life.

O'Brian, then 33, was in Winnipeg, Manitoba, parlaying his fame as television's legendary Wyatt Earp into extra income by guest-starring with a circus.

Then the cable arrived from French Equatorial Africa: Dr. Albert Schweitzer would welcome him at any time.

O'Brian had long admired the German doctor-missionary-theologian-musician. "I'd read so much about him," he reflects. "He was a great humanitarian who could have done anything he wanted in the world, and there he was in the middle of Africa taking care of people."

Within two weeks he was on his way, by commercial airliner, bush plane and canoe, to the famed hospital that Schweitzer had founded in 1913 on the banks of the Ogooue River in Lambarene.

There he was met by a very old man with a huge, white walrus mustache, wearing white pants, shirt and pith helmet. "That was his uniform," says O'Brian, recalling his first sighting of Schweitzer.

The actor spent nine days at the clinic complex where Schweitzer and volunteer doctors and nurses, working without electricity or running water, cared for patients, including many with leprosy.

Schweitzer, then 83, who had received the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in behalf of the "Brotherhood of Nations," was concerned about global peace prospects and

was impressed that the young American had taken the trouble to visit him. The doctor led the actor through history over those evenings. Schweitzer was convinced that the United States was the only country in the world with the ability to bring about peace. "He said the United States must take a leadership role," O'Brian recounts, "or we are a lost civilization."

It was an unforgettable nine days. And, as O'Brian departed, Schweitzer took his hand and asked: "Hugh, what are you going to do with this?"

Two weeks after returning from his 1958 meeting with Schweitzer, O'Brian put together a prototype seminar for young leaders.

## ***Five Decades Later. . .***

From 1958 to 1967, leadership seminars took place in Los Angeles for sophomores from California. In 1968 the scope of the HOBY program grew to include national and international participants, and the seminar moved annually to different major cities across the United States. Thus, the International Leadership Seminar, now known as the World Leadership Congress (WLC), began. In an effort to include more students nationwide, three-day HOBY Leadership Seminars were instituted in 1977 in which high schools throughout the country may select a sophomore to attend a HOBY seminar in their state.

Annually, 8,000 tenth graders, representing as many high schools nationwide, graduate from HOBY Leadership Seminars.

In 1991, HOBY added one-day leadership seminars called Community Leadership Education Workshops (CLEWs). These workshops have become popular because schools may select multiple students to participate. For more information about HOBY activities and sponsorship opportunities, please contact us.



**EMPOWER • LEAD • EXCEL**

***One of the nation's foremost youth leadership development organizations***

***Has reached 375,000 high school sophomores since 1958***

***Conducts over 70 leadership seminars in the U.S. and internationally***

***Participants from all 50 states and more than 20 countries***

***More than 4,000 volunteers nationwide invest one million hours per year in HOBY programs***

# HOBY Facts & Stats

## **Our Mission:**

*To inspire and develop our global community of youth and volunteers to a life dedicated to leadership, service and innovation*

## **We carry out our mission by:**

- Providing interactive opportunities for critical thinking.
- Developing leadership knowledge and competence
- Encouraging social responsibility among the individuals and corporations.

## **We challenge our Ambassadors to:**

- Think for themselves and to become critical thinkers.
- Examine their personal leadership, practice group leadership and pledge leadership in society
- Enhance their leadership skills through active involvement in the community.

## **Results from a survey of HOBY alumni and volunteers:**

- 99% believed they could make a difference in their communities.
- 99.7% felt that volunteering with HOBY was a positive experience.
- 99% stated they would recommend HOBY to a friend.
- 98% reported that as a result of HOBY, they know what steps to take to be a better leader.

## **Historical figures:**

- 375,000 HOBY participants since 1958
- 9,000 students instructed annually
- Over 70 leadership seminars each year
- 71 countries have been represented at WLC (1976-2008)
- 20+ countries represented at WLC annually