

THE HOBY STORY

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 community. As the nation's premier nonprofit youth leadership development organization, 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 in a rodeo.

HOBY's mission is to inspire and develop our global community of youth and volunteers to a life dedicated to leadership, service, and innovation.



Then the cable arrived from French Equatorial Africa: renowned humanitarian and 1952 Nobel Peace Prize winner 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 Ogooué River in Lambarene.

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.

The doctor was impressed that the young American had taken the trouble to visit him. He shared stories and life lessons with O'Brian each evening. Schweitzer, then 83, was concerned about global peace prospects and was convinced that the United States should take a leadership role in achieving peace. He impressed upon the young O'Brian the urgency for change and how education must teach young people to think for themselves.

It was an unforgettable nine days. And, as O'Brian departed, Schweitzer took his hand, looked deep into his eyes, 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: HOBY. And the rest is living history.



Through the Years

- **1958 - 1967:** Leadership Seminars took place annually in Los Angeles for sophomores throughout California.
- **1968:** The scope of the HOBY program grew to include national and international participants, which led to the expanded week-long international leadership seminar, now called the **World Leadership Congress (WLC)**. The WLC is held annually in different major cities across the United States.
- **1977:** In an effort to include more students nationwide, three- and four-day **State Leadership Seminars (LS)** were instituted, with Delaware, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island being the first to conduct HOBY Leadership Seminars.
- **1982:** Within five short years, State Leadership Seminars were being conducted annually in all 50 United States with the help of many partner civic organizations.
- **1991:** HOBY extended its reach and started a one-day leadership program called **Community Leadership Workshops (CLWs)**. These workshops, now held for high school freshmen, allow schools to select many students to participate.
- **1997:** To secure its commitment to local communities, HOBY began **Leadership for Service (L4S)**, which challenged HOBY Ambassadors to volunteer a minimum of 100 hours in their community.
- **2011:** HOBY went global and revitalized its **International Programs**, which allowed HOBY Alumni to visit and experience the cultures of other countries.
- **2013:** The **Advanced Leadership Academy (ALA)**, a five-day program, was created to provide high school juniors and seniors with an extended HOBY experience.
- **2016:** HOBY Founder Hugh O'Brian passed and HOBY established the **Hugh O'Brian Legacy Fund** to continue Mr. O'Brian's impact.

By the Numbers

- **Twenty-six student Ambassadors** participated in the very first HOBY leadership seminar. Now, nearly **six decades** later, there are more than **450,000 Alumni** that are part of the HOBY legacy.
- Each year, more than **10,000 students** attend HOBY Leadership programs from across the U.S. and around the world.
- Our Ambassadors represent more than **7,200 U.S. high schools**.
- There are **70 State Leadership Seminars** each spring across the country.
- More than **4,000 committed HOBY volunteers** plan, fundraise, and help to produce the programs each year. **65% of volunteers are HOBY Alumni**.
- HOBY's total paid staff is **16 full-time equivalents**.
- HOBY Alumni have logged approximately **four million hours of service** since the inception of Leadership for Service.