



DURHAM, NC YOUTH SUMMIT

**A DAY OF DELIBERATIVE DIALOGUE
OCTOBER 13, 2026**



Rarely has there been a more important moment to bring young Americans together—to hold in-person gatherings away from screens and to learn to appreciate our differences instead of retreat to our corners. To assist students in solidifying the critical thinking skills needed to engage in conversations with diverse perspectives, the Close Up Foundation is partnering with local universities, education leaders, elected officials, and policy experts to engage high school students and educators in regional, day-long events of purposeful deliberation on issues of the day.

On **October 13, 2026**, Close Up will lead a regional deliberation at **Duke University** in Durham, North Carolina. This event is one of six regional deliberations taking place in 2026-27 across the country as part of **NextGen Roundtable: America 250**, a growing initiative to honor the Semiquincentennial of the United States. Through civil discourse, we aim to empower students to engage in meaningful dialogue, listen with empathy, and express their ideas with clarity and confidence.

THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

This NextGen Roundtable regional deliberation will convene **250 high school students from public, charter, private, and independent schools** in the area who represent a cross-section of backgrounds and perspectives. Students will deliberate on economic policy issues in small groups moderated by neutral facilitators, weigh diverse perspectives from their peers and a panel of policy experts, and craft vision statements for making an impact in their community. All participating students will receive Close Up's [Deliberative Dialogue Badge](#).

TENTATIVE STUDENT SCHEDULE

- 8:30am Welcome & Registration**
- 9:00am Opening Remarks & Defining Deliberation:** An introduction to the principles of deliberation and why it's vital to democracy.
- 9:30am Group Issue Deliberations:** Students discuss key economic issues, explore policy options, and craft questions for policy experts.
- 11:30am Lunch**
- 12:15pm Expert Panel:** Policy leaders from diverse perspectives respond to student questions and share insights on national and local issues.
- 1:30pm Reflection Workshop:** Students reflect on the value of deliberation and consider opportunities for future engagement, including how they can earn the Civil Discourse Credential and facilitate deliberative dialogue in their school communities.
- 2:30pm End of Day**

THE EDUCATOR EXPERIENCE

As students deliberate, accompanying educators will take part in a Close Up-led professional development workshop around deliberative dialogue and political values, including an introduction to Close Up's [free, four-week curricular unit](#), "Cornerstones of American Democracy," about how our country's core political values regularly come into tension. Following the PD session, educators will earn continuing education units for applying what they learn in their classrooms.

Space is limited to 10 students per school; please complete the registration interest form as soon as possible. Once your group is confirmed, we will provide enrollment details for participants to complete prior to the event.

REGISTER TODAY!

ABOUT THE CLOSE UP FOUNDATION

Close Up is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, civic education organization that informs, inspires, and empowers young people to become active citizens. Since 1971, we have partnered with school districts nationwide to serve more than one million students and educators through experiential learning programs in our nation's capital and in local communities, professional development, and curriculum design and consulting.

CALL: 800-CLOSE UP (256-7387) **EMAIL:** deliberations@closeup.org



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