

The American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Louisiana



Northwestern State University

Natchitoches, Louisiana

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The American Legion Auxiliary is firm in its conviction that the hope of the free world depends largely upon the character and integrity of the citizens of the United States. To accomplish this end and to cultivate a sense of individual responsibility to the community, state, and nation, it has developed and designed the Girls State program to instill in the hearts and the minds of the young men and women of the United States a love of justice, freedom and democracy.

The Girls State program exemplifies the American Legion Auxiliary's conviction that only through a better understanding and appreciation of the way that our government functions can we hope to maintain law and order and insure for future generations the American way of life.

SPONSORSHIP

Girls State is a program of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Louisiana and administered by Girls state of Louisiana, Inc. The program also receives support from many civic associations, businesses, and donors. Each delegate is sponsored by an American Legion Auxiliary Unit or District.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of Girls State is to educate our youth in the duties, rights, and responsibilities of American Citizenship through the practical mechanics of government by actually performing the functions of local and state government. The Constitution and the statutes of the state of Louisiana are the pattern from which the fundamental law of Girls State has been developed. Girls State should be regarded as being a mythical fifty-first state with constitution, statutes, and ordinances constructed by its citizens to govern themselves.

Citizens of Girls State will not only be required to review knowledge already acquired concerning the political machinery of a state, but also will find themselves performing the same duties as real office holders in the everyday world as they organize their own city, parish and state governments. They will choose their own officials in accordance with state election procedures and learn the duties of the various city, parish and state offices. They will introduce and argue their own bills in the legislature and have justice administered by their own law enforcement agencies and courts. In Girls State, the young citizens has the opportunity to learn for herself that government is just what she makes it. Here, each citizen "learns to do by doing."

The program is non-partisan with issues considered without reference to any existing political party and free from propaganda.

AUXILIARY AND SCHOOL INFORMATION

Selection Rules

The following selection rules are intended as guidelines to the ALA Unit President, ALA Unit Chairman and School Officials to insure uniform and equitable selection in all areas of the state.

Girls State delegates should be selected on the basis of merit only. It is the avowed intent of the American Legion Auxiliary that only outstanding girls may participate as citizens in the Girls State program.

The following specific characteristics should be used in selecting delegates to Girls State:

1. Leadership
2. Character
3. Scholarship
4. Patriotism

High school participation in identifying the most qualified students is essential. The final selection of delegates to participate in the Louisiana Girls State program is the responsibility of authorized Units and Districts of the Louisiana's American Legion Auxiliary. They are guided by the following regulations in making their selection.

There will be areas of the state where two or more schools will send list to sponsoring ALA Units. There will be areas where more than one ALA Unit will sponsor students from a given school. In all such cases the ensuing rules must be followed:

Where two or more schools submit lists to a single sponsoring ALA Unit, the number of students selected from any one school shall be determined by the enrollment of the eleventh grade in all the schools concerned.

Where two or more ALA Units sponsor students from a single high school, the ALA Units must cooperate in determining the number to be sponsored by each ALA Unit, provided that in no case will the number of delegates from the school exceed the quota assigned to the school.

Inevitably, cancellations and vacancies will occur. It is necessary for each ALA Unit to select both principals and at least one alternate for each principle. Commitments for housing, meals, etc., must be made timely so that enrollment fees cannot be refunded regardless of the source of fees. Therefore, ALA Units should be prepared to fill last minute vacancies with qualified alternates.

ENROLLMENT DEADLINE

It is absolutely essential that all that all applications be filed and fees paid into the ALA Department Office no later than May 1 to ensure that Delegates can be contacted with additional information and space can be reserved at the NSU for each delegate.

GIRLS STATE UNIT CHAIRMANS

ALA Unit Girls State Chairmen will serve as the Chairman of the Selection Committee for her Unit.

The ALA GS Unit Chairman should seek the cooperation of school officials to furnish a list of the top representatives of the junior class in each high school requesting that the list contain approximately three times the number of delegates that the unit expects to select from a particular school.

QUOTAS

Each delegate to Girls State represents more than a hundred high school students in the state of Louisiana. In order to assure an equitable distribution of the delegates to Girls State throughout the schools within the state, the ALA District Procurement Chairman shall make school assignments based on enrollment in the eleventh grade in each eligible school. All quotas are assigned at the annual meeting of Girls State and can only be altered through permission from Girls State Executive Director.

DELEGATE INFORMATION

Each delegate is expected to enter into all phases of the program wholeheartedly and participate fully in the many diverse activities. The following should be considered by each delegate in preparing for the program.

1. Use of tobacco products or tobacco alternatives are expressly prohibited by state law on the campus of Northwestern State University. Anyone breaking this rule will be sent home.
2. After your school tells you that have been recommended as a possible delegate to Girls State, it is your responsibility to request further information from the ALA Unit Girls State Chairman or the Girls State District Procurement Chairman.
3. You should be contacted by your District Girls State Procurement Chairman before the program regarding transportation with the designated boarding points and specific times.
4. Read all materials sent to you very carefully and bring with you to the mandatory briefing conducted by the Procurement Chairman in your area.
5. Do not bring prepared campaign materials with you to Girls State.
6. You should be prepared to participate in a strenuous and rapidly moving program which affords you little free time. Each citizen is expected to remain with the program for the entire session. **Any citizen who leaves the program will not be allowed to return or receive program credit.**
7. Each citizen is expected to write a letter of thanks to their sponsoring ALA Unit. Upon returning home, each delegate may be asked to visit the sponsoring American Legion Auxiliary Unit to make a verbal report.
8. The Medical History/Parental Consent form must be presented by each delegate during registration. This form must be signed by both the parent/guardian and delegate and must be witnessed. It is better if contact information is typed with correct summer contact phone numbers and email addresses. The program is extremely strenuous with a lot of walking and only those in good health and who are physically fit will be allowed to participate. Any medical problems should be discussed with your District Procurement Chairman. School athletic physicals will be accepted. However, illnesses or injuries prior to the program should be added to the form.
9. The program cost is \$325 which includes room, meals, two shirts, a commemorative pin and program materials. Transportation fees vary for each district and is determined by each District Procurement Chairman. **Fees are non-refundable.**
10. Money can be brought to purchase snacks, drinks and pizza on pizza night. Delegates are encouraged to purchase additional shirts (\$12) for wearing and for trade with Boys State at the Girls State/Boys State social. Girls State crew sweat shirts (\$20) for cold classrooms. (Order on Admission cards. It is better to preorder to insure size and quantity available.) You can reserve your copy of the GS Picture CD for \$10. All pictures taken during the GS program will be included on the disc; Red/White/Blue Graduation Cords will be available for \$10.
11. Laundry of shirts will be done by ALA Staff at the cost of \$1.00 for the week. That is all that they launder! Bring enough shorts, jeans, and undergarments to last the week.

For each day you will need walking shorts, jeans, skirts, etc. (no short/shorts) tennis shoes or walking shoes with socks or footies. Dress code for the social is casual, or Sunday dress, but no jeans or heels. (you will walk to the social at night) Dorms and classrooms are very cold at night, so you will need a sweater, light jacket or sweat shirt and long pants or jeans are desirable. If you plan to run for a State office, you will need a white dress or white jacket with skirt or pants and white shoes. Dark pants are required for the joint convocation and inauguration.

Toiletries, personal items, medications both prescription and over-the counter that you routinely take, extra long/or deep pocket twin sheets or a sleeping bag, light blanket and pillow are necessary.

Bring a stamped post card or envelope and paper to write to your sponsoring ALA Unit. You will also need to have a back pack, a folding umbrella, rain poncho, flashlight and water bottle. Art supplies that are on hand, such as, construction paper, scissors, markers, etc. may be brought to use for campaigning and shared for other projects.

(A packing list will be accessible through the Girls State Website.)

Each separate luggage item must be labeled clearly with name, hometown, district and have attached a dormitory ribbon. (Ribbon will be supplied by Procurement Chairman.

Use of cell phones during Girls State program activities are prohibited. Use of the phone during these periods will result in penalty infraction or dismissal.

ELIGIBILITY

Participation eligibility is limited to Students of State of Louisiana accredited high schools who meet the following qualifications.

1. Delegate must have completed the eleventh grade in State accredited high school.
2. Must never have married or have children or be pregnant.
3. Delegate must be returning to high school for their senior year of study.
4. Delegate must not have attended any previous session of Girls State.
5. A certified copy of Birth Certificate required.
6. The Girls State Executive Director reserves the right to accept or reject any delegate admission application.

DISTRICT PROCUREMENT CHAIRMAN

The District Procurement Chairman serve as the liaison officer between the delegates, the ALA Units and the Executive Director. She is responsible for, if appropriate, for arrangement for transportation of delegates from her district to the program. She is responsible for quota allocation within her district, but may not alter eligibility regulations or selections rules. Questions regarding eligibility or change in quota must be resolved by the Girls State Executive Director.

GIRLS STATE PROCUREMENT CHAIRMAN

Linda Petit.....First District

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Joyce Grier..... Fifth District

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GENERAL REGULATIONS

The general regulations governing Girls State are established by the Board of Directors and are administered through the Executive Director of Girls State of Louisiana, Inc. The Director is assisted by the Procurement Chairmen in each of the Eight Districts and the Girls State Staff. Any deviation from these general regulations must be approved by the Executive Director.

The control and conduct of the affairs of the corporation are vested in a Board of Directors consisting of eight members who represent their respective American Legion Auxiliary Districts; the Executive Director of Girls State of Louisiana, Inc. who is appointed by the Board; the Secretary/Treasurer; and one member who serves as liaison officer for the Girls State program.

GIRLS STATE CORPORATION

Laura Clark.....President
Barbara White.....Vice President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Linda Petit.....First District Member and Chairman
Cheryl Bossenmyer.....Second District Member
Jane Dupuis.....Third District Member
Janet LaBuryere.....Fourth District Member
Kay Perritt.....Fifth District Member
Sylvia Anthony.....Sixth District Member
Margaret Daigle.....Seventh District Member
Essie DeCuir.....Eighth District Member
Maggie Watts.....Executive Director
Cheryl Bossenmeyer.....Secretary/Treasurer
Essie DeCuir.....Associate Director
Janet Maggio.....Program Director

NOTES

