

GIRLS STATE
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Please note: *Following is information about the Girls State program. More specific information outlining application procedures, deadline dates, fees, rules and other pertinent information will be sent to each unit*

Since Girls State began in 1939, millions of high school aged young women have had the opportunity to experience our country's democratic form of government. The young women who attend Girls State participate in debates, campaign for office, attend party meetings and legislative sessions, vote and make life-long friendships.

The 2010 session of "Cornhusker" Girls State will be held at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln the week of June 6 - 12, 2010.

Girls State Goals and Objectives; Girls State is an all-volunteer program structured with the following objectives in mind: - Teaching the ideals and principles of our country's democratic form of government- Informing youth of the duties, rights and privileges of citizenship- Providing experience of actively participating in government- Instilling confidence, pride and love of God and country.

Girls State is a non-partisan program and aims to teach young women responsible citizenship. Girls State gives participants the opportunity to learn how state and local government operates by working together as self-governing citizens. Participants are taught the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy.

Unit Participation and Responsibilities; Every Unit has the opportunity to send a delegate(s) to Girls State. A packet of materials pertaining to the 2010 session will be mailed to each Unit in January. This packet will include guidelines for selecting your Girls State delegates and alternates, suggested interview questions, Girls State rules, and application form and promotional brochure. PLEASE READ THIS INFORMATION CAREFULLY, FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS AND ADHERE TO ALL DEADLINE DATES!

Sponsorship of a delegate to Girls State is the responsibility of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit. However, some Units are not financially able to sponsor a delegate. If your Unit is faced with this dilemma pool your resources with other Units to sponsor a delegate or invite other civic and non-profit organizations to help financially.

Girls State Delegate Selection; Selection of a Girls State delegate is the responsibility of the Auxiliary Unit. Teachers, school administrators and guidance counselors have a variety of ways to select appropriate candidates. It is important that the schools understand that the American Legion Auxiliary sponsors the Girls State Program. School officials may recommend a student, but the Unit members make the final selection. Outside organizations that may be contributing necessary finances might also give suggestions on delegates; however, the Unit retains final approval of the delegate. Units must retain control of the selection of their delegates.

Proper selection of delegates is very important to the success of the entire Girls State program. It is imperative that Units interview their candidates. Units may also request candidates to complete an essay about what they hope to accomplish or learn at Girls State. Participants in the program

are to be selected based on merit, ability and interest in government rather than a single achievement.

A Junior Auxiliary member or relative of an Auxiliary or Legion member does NOT have priority over other eligible young women.

It is extremely important that each Unit VOTES to accept or reject proposed candidates. This vote and the name(s) of the accepted and rejected candidate(s) must be ELECTED IN YOUR UNIT MINUTES.

Requirements of Girls State Candidates- Enrolled as a Junior in a Nebraska high school - Interested and knowledgeable about government and parliamentary procedure- Scholastically in good standing (a potential leader may not necessarily have the highest grades but should have above average grades).

- Have moral character, demonstrates leadership qualities and is willing to be involved - Physically and emotionally healthy and able to participate in a strenuous week of activity- Possess an outstanding personality and able to get along well with others

District Orientations- After delegates and alternates have been selected, it is important that they know what to expect from the Girls State program. Each District will schedule a Girls State orientation session which will be held no earlier than Mid-April and will include presentations by Girls State staff members, a question and answer session and a get-acquainted time for delegates. It is important that all Girls State delegates attend an orientation session. Please contact the Girls State Vice - Chairmen to inform them when your District orientation will be held.

Publicity; Promote the Girls State program as much as possible. Be sure that every school in your area knows about the program. Take advantage of every opportunity to tell the local media about the Girls State program. This will increase awareness about the program so that interested young women will know about the program and apply to become a citizen of Girls State.

Contact your newspapers, radio stations and television stations at least two weeks prior to the start of the Girls State session informing them that local students are attending.

It is also important for the citizens to share their Girls State experience when they return. Tell your delegate what appearances are required of her and encourage her to write and submit an article to the local newspaper.

Responsibilities of Unit Chairperson-

1. Review all information in the 2010 Girls State packet sent to your Unit and follow the guidelines provided. Contact the Girls State Chairman or Secretary if you have any questions about the materials.
2. Publicize the program early through local media and in the schools.
3. Communicate with high school officials. Ask for a list of young women who meet the eligibility requirement. Assemble a committee to interview all candidates. Suggested interview questions will be provided in the information packet. You may also request a short essay from each candidate.
4. The Unit votes to accept or reject proposed candidates. This vote and the names of the

approved candidate(s) must be included in the Unit Minutes.

5. If sponsorship is to be a community project, contact other organizations for contributions. Start this process early. A Certificate of Appreciation should be given to the contributing organizations.

6. Girls State applicants must complete the application. This is not to be completed by the Unit. After choosing your delegate, attach the enrollment fee and return it by March 1st, 2010.

7. Contact local media to announce your selection. A sample media announcement will be provided in the information packet.

8. Contact your delegate several times prior to the week of Girls State. Give her your name and phone number in case she has questions. Verify that she is receiving information about Girls State and that she understands what her responsibilities will be.

9. VERY IMPORTANT!!! Send written notification if an alternate will be attending in place of the delegate. If neither the delegate nor the alternate can attend, send written notification to the Girls State Secretary immediately.

10. Ensure that your delegate and alternate attend a District Orientation.

11. While your delegate is at Girls State, send her a note, a small gift or call her. Let her know you are pleased she is taking part in the program and that her participation is important to you.

12. When your delegate returns from Girls State, invite her to share her experiences with your Unit and other contributing organizations. Encourage her to speak to civic groups and high school assemblies.

13. Make this year an exceptional one for the Girls State program. Show your enthusiasm, excitement and support of the program.

Note: Although Girls State is an Auxiliary sponsored program, please do not contact Department Headquarters with questions or concerns regarding Girls State -- inquiries must be made with the Girls State Chairman and/or Girls State Secretary. Their phone numbers are listed in the front of this publication.

CITATION POINTS - 10 points assigned

10 pts ... Unit sponsored a young woman to 2009 Girls State