

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA, INC.



*FLORIDA
GIRLS
STATE*

2012
Girls State
Chairman's Guide



YOU ARE THE CHAIRMAN - SO NOW WHAT??



Congratulations. . . you are the Girls State Chairman for your Unit! Now What? You probably have a million questions: Where do I start? Who do I contact? How do we choose the delegate(s)? Where is money going to come from? Who provides transportation? How do I take care of all this paperwork? What about due dates and deadlines? Where do I go for help?

In order to continue the tradition of excellence enjoyed by the Florida American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program for over 50 years, there are certain procedures and criteria in the selection process that need to be followed. Cooperation and communication are the key to making your job easier and ensure an excellent program for the coming year.



This Chairman's Guide is an effort to answer all those questions you are asking, and some you haven't asked yet, but will! It will explain the criteria for selecting a Delegate to Girls State and the procedure for that selection. You, as the beginning rung on the ladder to a successful Girls State session are extremely important. We hope this guide will help you during the next several months. Please read and use the information provided. It will help us all in our efforts to bring a greater understanding of Americanism to the young people in our communities.

The Girls State program is one of the largest programs of the American Legion Auxiliary, costing the Department of Florida over \$130,000 to put on one session. It is vital to the success of Florida Girls State that you give a 100% commitment to your Chairmanship.

What do I do first? Read, Read, Read. . . and then . . .

Let's start with important dates to remember.

2012 Session Dates - JUNE 15 - 23, 2012

November 1, 2011 - Registrations forms will be mailed to Units.

November 15, 2011 - Start contacting schools to set up interviews.

January 31, 2012 - Deadline to qualify for over-quota girl.

February 1, 2012 - completed Registration for and fees due at Department. Over quota requires separate paperwork and payment.

February - early March - finalize your selection.

March 12, 2012 - Delegates' and Alternates' completed applications due at Department Headquarters.

May 2012 - Arrange for your delegate(s), alternate(s) and family to attend the required Orientation. (Exact date to be determined.)

June 10, 2012 - Call all delegates to remind them of their departure time and to verify they have their medical, code of conducts, government questionnaires, and other required paperwork that was included in their packets!

check your Girls State Plan of Action for other dates of importance!

Familiarize yourself with the Girls State Program

You need to be knowledgeable when speaking to schools or potential candidates for the program. You may not have all the answers to their questions, but understanding what the program is about and how it works will be important. Don't attempt to answer something you don't know. . . giving out incorrect information can create a liability for our Department. If you don't know. . . tell them you will find out the answer and then contact the Department Girls State Chairman for more information.

What is the purpose of Girls State?

The purpose of Girls State is to provide citizenship training for young women completing their junior year in high school within the State of Florida. To afford them the opportunity to live together as self-governing citizens; and to inform them of the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of American citizenship in order that they may understand and participate in the functioning of their government. This learning experience will encourage their participation in the democratic process as they progress into adulthood.

What is our objective?

- ★ to develop leadership and pride in American citizens
- ★ to educate citizens about our system of government
- ★ to instill a greater understanding of American traditions
- ★ to stimulate a desire to maintain our democratic government processes

Where is Florida Girls State held?

Florida Girls State is held on the campus of Florida State University in Tallahassee. Girls State citizens reside at Kellum Hall on campus.

An overview look at Florida Girls State

Florida Girls State was first held in 1947 and is currently attended by 300 young women who have the opportunity of experiencing our democratic form of government by assuming the roles of city, county and state officials or legislators. Through these experiences young women learn of the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship which distinguishes our form of government.

Twelve cities of 25 girls are formed where they hold city elections to select their city government.

Political party assignments are made as the Girl State delegates arrive. The two parties are Nationalist and Federalists. This allows citizens to gain special knowledge of how a two-party system operates. The parties adopt party platforms, have pep rallies, and hold nominations for state government.

Girls State citizens participate in these mock political parties, and elections are held to fill city and state positions. Activities include legislative sessions, campaigning, party rallies, debating and voting. They will receive special instructions in Parliamentary Procedure, How a Bill becomes A Law, what roles our elected officials play in state government and much more!

Girls State is government in action. The citizens of Girls State elect their State Governor, Cabinet and other officials. The State officials begin to draft bills, debate those bills, committee appointments are made; just like the real world.

When available, the State Capitol Senate Chambers and the House of Representatives are utilized to hold sessions. Our delegates experience the thrill of sitting in a Senator's chair, using the voting machine to approve or disapprove a bill.

Seven Justices to the Supreme Court are elected and they have the opportunity to participate in mock trials at the Supreme Court.

Who is eligible for Girls State?

To be eligible for Girls State, the young lady and her family must be residents of the State of Florida. She must be in her junior year of high school and be returning to her high school for her senior year. She needs to possess, an interest in government, have

strong leadership ability, good character and honesty, excellent scholastic standing, cooperativeness, community participation and service.

Girls State delegates are a diverse group of women who share a common desire to learn. From small towns to urban areas, the delegate's different backgrounds add spirit to the program.

What about Junior members?

This is a tough one! Are Junior members automatically entitled to attend Girls State? Is your Unit required to send them?

Well, the answer is as tough as the question! There really is no set answer. At least no answer that is carved in stone or in the Standing Rules for Girls State, but let's look at it reasonably.

Often, it isn't the Junior member that wants to go to Girls State, but a mother, grandmother or great-grandmother, that has envisioned their child or grandchild going. So the first thing you need to establish is who is going to benefit by the Junior going? Does this Junior really want to go?

Next you must determine if they meet the requirements set by your Unit? A guideline list of requirements is included in this book. If this student was not a member of your Unit would they meet the requirements that other students will be required to meet? Is it fair to qualified students that would not get to go because your Unit filled its only opening with a Junior member?

Has this Junior been an active member in your Unit, where they have earned the right to attend if they wish, or have they been one of the thousand junior members this Department has whose dues are paid every year, however your Unit has never seen them?

The best advise we can give you, is plan ahead how the Unit will handle a Junior member applying for Girls State. Establish a policy for consideration. Present that plan to the Unit for approval then include it in the Unit's Standing Rules. Doing this makes it fair for everyone applying and will eliminate hard feelings down the road. No Unit should feel pressured to send someone to Girls State. Sending someone to Girls State that isn't right for the program is a big mistake. They will not enjoy the

experience and the Unit will have wasted their money!

These are things your Unit will want to consider before sponsoring a Junior member for Girls State.

OK . . . I'm new, what does all this mean and where do I begin?

First things first! Is your Unit going to participate in Girls State? If the answer is yes. . . you need to determine how many girls your Unit can send.

Each Unit is entitled to send one girl for their charter and one for every 100 paid members to Department Headquarters. For example, lets say, your Unit has a paid membership of 299 members. Your Unit would be entitled to one for the charter and two additional girls for the 200 paid memberships for a total of three (3) delegates. If your Unit's paid membership is under 100, the Unit would only be entitled to sponsor one delegate. Now! If your Unit reaches its 100% in membership by January 31, 2006, then your Unit could apply for an over quota girl. These are awarded to Units reaching their 100% membership by the required date if openings are still available in the program.

Once you establish how many your Unit is entitled to send, it must be determined how many your Unit can afford to send. This would be decided either when the budget is prepared or voted on at a Unit meeting. We will discuss how to raise the money later.

Once your Unit determines how many delegates you are going to sponsor, it must be decided where they are going to come from and how they will be selected.

If your Unit has a long term relationship with a school in your area, it is important to continue that working relationship. Dropping a school without warning creates bad feelings and potentially excludes girls that have been planning for this once in a life time opportunity. Don't, however, exclude other schools in your area just because they have not participated in the past. Contact all schools in your area and give them an opportunity to recommend qualified students.

Phone all schools in your area. Explain you are with the American Legion Auxiliary and would like to speak with someone regarding the Girls State program. The person answering the phone may not be familiar with the program, so explain that it is a

scholarship program that teaches government to girls the summer between their junior and senior year. In most schools, the guidance department handles scholarship opportunities. Once you establish who the contact person is. . . get their name and address so you can mail them specific information regarding the program. Do not go into details during this first call. Make arrangements to either mail them the specific information or make an appointment to visit the school and hand deliver the information.

Always put the Unit's requirements and information regarding the selection process in writing. Be very careful to give the correct dates of the program. Double check all information given to the school, as mis-information will cause your Unit and the Department problems down the road. Explain that the selection process will begin in December or early January and that you are asking for recommendations only! The selection of a delegate is the sole responsibility of the Unit, **NOT** the school. Make sure they understand that your committee/Unit will decide who attends Girls State and that you can only accept recommendations.

Now you know how many delegates you are going to send and what schools you are going to work with. . . what's next?

How do we select a delegate and who does it?

It is time to decide exactly how your Unit will select its delegates and who is responsible for the final decision. We recommend that you select a committee to assist you. Develop a plan for selection along with requirements. Present this plan at a Unit meeting to have your plan approved. Then work the plan!

It is your responsibility as Chairman to acquire a list of potential candidates from the schools in your area. Have a committee assist you when you conduct the initial interview with these students to determine if they meet all the requirements of the Unit. Many Units use a questionnaire (sample included) that can be provided to the school in advance for the students to complete. You should arrange with the school an appropriate time to speak with all interested students regarding the program. Often girls are eliminated at this meeting, once they hear about the program, its requirements and dates. You and your committee should decide which of the recommended students will be extended an invitation to the final interview.

Members of your Unit should have the opportunity to meet all candidates for Girls State and be part of the final selection process. Plan to have the finalists speak at a regular meeting of your Unit, or at a special meeting called for the purpose of this selection. Ask the girls address the Unit regarding themselves. Give them a time limit to speak and an outline of information you want covered in their speech. Information regarding this is included as a sample for your use.

Open the floor for questions. Spend some time getting to know the applicants. Talk to them about being away from home and how they handle being in a strict environment. Don't restrict your questions to scholastics, you have already determined they are qualified scholastically or you would not have invited them to this final interview. Ask about special interests, community service, future plans. Then put it to a vote. Let the members vote on the delegate(s) of their choice. This should not be the decision of one person.

A school does not have the authority to make the final decision! If you allow the school to decide who your Unit sends to Girls State, you have not done your job!

- ▶ It is important to remember that you can not select a delegate until you have received your numbered application(s) from Department Headquarters. Even though you have requested a spot in the program, you are not guaranteed a spot until the numbered application arrives. Only then can you select a delegate. It would be embarrassing to your Unit to select a girls, notify her of her selection, and then find out the program was full and you don't have a spot. It is first come, first served! Once we have 300 reservations, the program is closed and sometimes it fills before the deadline date.

Give all finalists a letter or memo, congratulating them and telling them they are a finalist. Put in writing, the date, time and location of the final interview. Let them know what is expected from them at this interview and how to dress. A sample of a finalist memo is included with the oral presentation sample. You will get the idea. . . and can adapt the memo to your needs.

What should our requirements be?

There are a few basic requirements that are mandatory for all delegates attending Girls State.

- ✓ All delegates must be residents of the State of Florida
- ✓ All delegates must have completed their junior year in high school and be a returning senior.
- ✓ All delegates must be able to complete the entire program
- ✓ All delegates must attend an Orientation prior to the session
- ✓ All delegates must be willing to salute the flag and take an oath on the Bible if elected to a top State position.

These requirements are not negotiable! Your Unit must be certain that all of these requirements are met. Your Unit determines the remaining requirements, however it is our experience that certain qualities are important to the success of a Girl State delegate. A few things to look for are:

- ▶ Strong interest in government
- ▶ Knowledge of current events, both locally and within the state
- ▶ Strong leadership abilities
- ▶ Excellent attendance record at school
- ▶ Above average scholastic record
- ▶ High moral character
- ▶ poise/personality
- ▶ good speaker
- ▶ quick thinker
- ▶ interacts well with others/outgoing
- ▶ community service record
- ▶ future goals
- ▶ Experience in Debate
- ▶ Knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure
- ▶ Physically fit

What information does the school need and when do they need it?

First. . . they need the dates for the Girls State session. The 2012 session will be June 15 -23, 2012. Make sure they understand there is no exception to these dates. Delegates will not be allowed to arrive late or leave early for any reason! There is no sense in the school recommending, or your Unit interviewing a student that is not available these dates. The school also needs to have a list of requirements so they can make valid recommendations. Don't be too strict on GPA requirements. We have found that some

of our best delegates were A-B students with a 3.0 GPA. You are looking for a well rounded student with excellent attendance and good grades. They do not have to be a straight “A” student to qualify for Girls State. Ask for a teacher’s letter of recommendation, copy of their school transcript, attendance record, and a report regarding special activities and clubs. All schools call these reports something different, explain what information you need and they will know what to give you.

Some Units require an essay from applicants. You can use the essay title for the Americanism Program. Copy the rules for this essay along with the title so the school can pass the information along to the students (samples are included.) Once you receive these essays and have judged them for Girls State, be sure to give them to your Unit’s Americanism Chairman for their program. If you don’t want to use the essay title from the Americanism program, use the title of your choice. These essays would then be for your use only.

All delegates and alternates will be required to attend an Orientation in your District. The date of this Orientation will be provided to you at a later date. It is a mandatory meeting, and your responsibility to inform the school, so any student they recommend will be aware of this requirement. Initial contact letters for schools along with list of requirements are included for your use. Make changes as they pertain to your Unit. These are only samples to help you.

Look at the following samples for ideas on what to send the schools. The brochure is available from Department Headquarters.

NATS & FEDS

Political party assignments are made as the Girl State delegates arrive. Those parties are: Nationalist and Federalist. Twelve staff members serve as Counselors to about 25 young women, comprising the cities. The citizens of each city hold elections to select their city government. Two cities form a county out of which Senators, Representatives and Lobbyists are elected. The Nationalists and Federalists adopt party platforms, have pep rallies, and hold nominations for state government.

GOVERNMENT IN ACTION

The citizens of Girls State then elect their State Governor, Cabinet and other officials. The State officials begin to draft bills, debate those bills, committee appointments are made; Girls State is just like the real world.

When available, the State Capitol Senate Chambers and the House of Representatives are utilized to hold sessions.

Imagine the thrill of sitting in a Senator's chair, using the voting machine to approve or disapprove a bill, just being in the Capitol, it's exciting and adds an important touch of reality to our sessions.

IS GIRLS STATE FOR YOU ?

Girls State citizens are selected by the American Legion Auxiliary.

Some of the qualities Girls State citizens possess is an interest in government, leadership ability, character and honesty, scholastic standing, cooperativeness, community participation and service.

ARE YOU READY ?

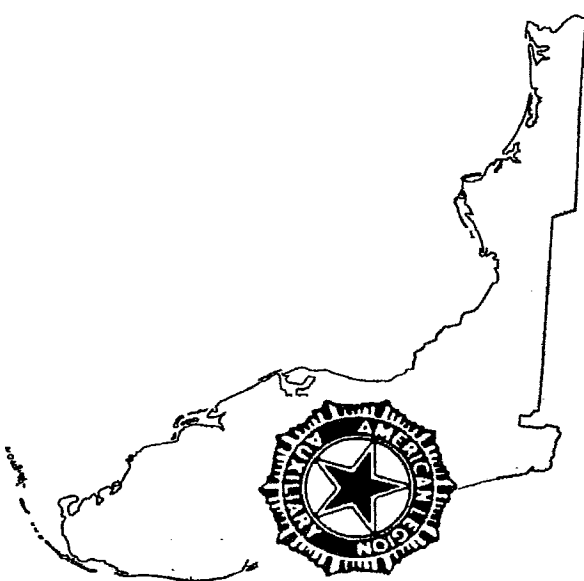
Are you ready for an intense week of government study? What about the boyfriend . . . will he wait for you? Are you interested in running for office and learning how city, county and state governments function? Can you give your best to insure the maximum benefit for yourself?

SINCE 1947

Yes? The American Legion Auxiliary has sponsored Girls State since its inception in 1947. We are looking for young women to govern the State of Seminole. That's power.

GIRLS STATE IS GREAT !

WE KNOW IT,
AND
WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHY.



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Girls State

65th Session

June 15 - 23, 2012

GIRLS STATE MOTTO
"FORWARD FOREVER, BACKWARD NEVER,
WITHIN OURSELVES OUR FUTURE LIES."

GIRLS STATE IS GREAT !

GIRLS STATE IS GREAT !

Girls State is a practical application of Americanism and good citizenship. The entire program is a non-partisan, non-political, non-sectarian attempt to teach and inculcate in the young women of America, a love of God and country. With its inception brought a new form of training in government processes for young women who will compose a large percentage of our citizenry tomorrow. Girls State was organized as a national Americanism activity of the American Legion Auxiliary in 1937; to inspire and develop interest in the study of government, foster civic leadership, but most of all, to stimulate a desire to protect the privileges and responsibilities of our democratic form of government. Outstanding high school girls attend Girls State each year, currently about 20,000 young women.

PURPOSE

The purpose of Girls State is to provide citizenship training for young women completing their junior year in high school within the State of Florida; to afford them the opportunity to live together as self-governing citizens; and to inform them of the duties, privileges, rights, and responsibilities of American citizenship in order that they may understand and participate in the functioning of their government. *Florida* Girls State was first held in 1947 and is currently attended by 300 young women who have the opportunity of experiencing our democratic form of government by assuming the roles of city and state officials or legislators. Through these experiences young women learn of the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship which distinguishes our form of government

SPONSORSHIP

Girls State is sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary as a means of heightening the awareness of our future leaders in the uniqueness of our form of government and its interest in the individual.

ELIGIBILITY

Florida high school students in their junior year that are returning to their high school for their senior year, who are residents of the State of Florida, may apply for admission to Florida Girls State.

WHO STAFFS IT ?

The staff of Girls State consists of American Legion Auxiliary members who volunteer their time to insure the success of this program. We of the American Legion Auxiliary are very proud of our Girls State program. Our staff includes Counselors, Administrative Staff, and Security. The Security Staff is provided by the Florida Highway Patrol. We are privileged to have their assistance in providing for the safety of our Girl Staters.

GIRLS NATION

Girls Nation is sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary, and is held in Washington, D.C. Young women from each Girls State are selected to attend the study of Federal government, meet national government officials and visit places of historical interest in our Nation's Capitol.

DUAL ENROLLMENT - DUAL CREDIT

Each participating delegate could receive three (3) hours of college credit and credit for a social science course in their High School. This course is a state-required course in the university system, and will transfer as either a required or elective course to schools outside the State of Florida. The dual enrollment opportunity is offered through Tallahassee Community College. All delegates are encouraged to participate to maximize their Girls State experience.

WHERE IS IT HELD ?

The American Legion Auxiliary Florida Girls State is held on the campus of Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida each June. Girls State citizens reside in a dorm on campus.

WE ARE THE FUTURE BUILDERS

FLORIDA GIRLS STATE OATH

For God and Country, as a citizen of Florida Girls State, I promise; to give unselfish and constructive cooperation; to share with others the benefits of my experience at Florida Girls State; to participate in the government of my community, state, and nation upon reaching my majority; and, above all, to constantly exemplify the highest type of Americanism.

American Legion Auxiliary
(Unit Name and number)

DATE: (Date)
TO: (Name of school contact)
(Name of High School)
SUBJECT: Florida Girls State
FROM: (Your Name, Girls State Chairman)

Thank you for taking a few minutes to speak with me regarding Girls State. Here is the information I promised regarding our program, dates and requirements.

Florida Girls State is a week long intense, hands-on study of government. The 2012 session of Florida Girls State will be held at FSU, in Tallahassee from June 15-23, 2012. Three hundred students from all over the State of Florida will be selected to attend this unique government experience. This experience will include, debating bills in the House of Representatives and Senate and a mock trial in the Supreme Court.

Requirements for the program are; an excellent scholastic record, interest in the study of government, knowledge of parliamentary procedure, active within their community and an outgoing personality. Applicants must be residents of Florida, in their junior year of high school and be returning as a senior next year, to be eligible for Girls State.

This program is fully funded by the American Legion Auxiliary, which includes, transportation, tuition, food and lodging. There is NO expense to the student. Students **must** be available to attend the entire program as well as an Orientation prior to the session.

The selection must be in February, as all paperwork must be complete and in our Headquarters no later than March 12th. Our selection committee is available to come to the school to interview the girls, just let me know when it would be convenient to conduct the interviews. Students interested must bring to the interview, a letter of recommendation from a school official, school transcript including attendance record, activity report reflecting club activities, and an essay. Title and cover sheet for essay are included. Enclosed is a copy of our Girls State brochure which can be copied for interested students. Finalists will be invited to attend a meeting of our Unit and additional information will be provided them regarding this meeting.

Thank you for helping us with this important program. We look forward to meeting the students you recommend for the program. Don't hesitate to call if you have any questions. I can be reached at (give all phone numbers where you can be reached) My E-mail address is (supply an E-mail address if you have one) should you wish to e-mail me.

Your Name
Unit (#) Girls State Chairman

Sample

Here is a sample questionnaire for potential candidates to complete:

Name _____ School _____

- 1) How did you learn about Girls State?
- 2) What are your special interests outside school?
- 3) What are your extra curricular activities?
- 4) Tell us about your community service.
- 5) What are your future plans?
- 6) What do you think the most pressing issue facing your community is?
- 7) What is the most pressing issue facing the state?
- 8) What Bill would you like to see come before the Legislature?
- 9) Why do you want to do to Girls State?

Sample

- 10) Have you spent time away from home without family or friends?
- 11) How well do you know Parliamentary Procedure?
- 12) What other leadership workshops or programs have you attended?
- 13) What clubs do you belong to?
- 14) Have you ever held office in a club or school?
- 15) How would you rate your debating skills?
- 16) Where do you plan on attending college?
- 17) What will be your major?
- 18) Do you have any interest in journalism?



- 19) What can attending Girls State do for your future?
- 20) If selected, are you available June 15 - 23, 2012?
- 21) Are you willing to salute the flag?
- 22) If elected to an office that requires it, are you willing to take an oath on the Bible?
- 23) Do you and your family reside in the State of Florida?
- 24) Are you returning to this high school for your senior year?
- 25) Why should you be selected for Girls State?

*These are suggested questions. Change, add or delete any questions that you want.



**AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST
2011 - 2012 Cover Sheet**

Each year, the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) sponsors an Americanism Essay Contest for students in grades 3-12. Grade levels are divided into five classes. One award in each of the five classes will be presented in each Division. Winners will receive \$50 and a \$50 honorarium in the student's name to the Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship.

Essay Theme: *How Can I Show My Patriotism in My Community?*

Essay Classes:

Class	Grade Level	Word Requirement
<i>I</i>	<i>3 and 4</i>	<i>150-250</i>
<i>II</i>	<i>5 and 6</i>	<i>250-300</i>
<i>III</i>	<i>7 and 8</i>	<i>350-400</i>
<i>IV</i>	<i>9 and 10</i>	<i>450-500</i>
<i>V</i>	<i>11 and 12</i>	<i>450-500</i>

Essay Checklist:

- Student grade _____ Class competing in _____
- Sponsoring ALA Unit _____
- Typed or neatly written essay conforming to the word limit for class
- Completed essay coversheet as first page of essay

Complete this Information:

Student Name: _____

Address (Street, City, State, Zip): _____

School Name: _____

School City/State: _____

Teacher Name and Signature: _____

Sponsoring Unit: _____

Congratulations, you have been selected as a finalist for Florida Girls State.

Please attend a meeting at our Post Home, located at (address), on (date), at (time) for the final step of our selection process. We ask that you bring a parent or guardian with you, as they may have questions regarding the program and your possible attendance.

We would like you to be prepared to speak before our membership at this meeting. An outline is provided below for your use. There will be time for questions so, come prepared with any that you may have. Our members may have questions for you as well.

Dress for the meeting in business attire, and please be on time. We look forward to seeing you on the (date). Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or are unable to attend. (Give phone #)

Oral Presentation

Please be prepared to speak for _____ minutes (designate the time you want them to speak) and include the following information in your presentation.

- Interest in the study of government
- Leadership abilities
- Scholastic achievements
- Community Service
- Physical fitness
- Idea for a Bill
- Goals for the future
- Reason you want to attend Girls State and why you feel you are qualified
- Include any additional information you feel relevant

Give the school a time-line to work within. Don't spring an unexpected deadline on them. Take school holidays into consideration when setting interviews. Too often Spring Break interferes with paperwork being completed on time. Plan ahead to avoid delays.

Planning is the key! Set your requirements well in advance so a list of requirements along with program dates and deadlines can be provided to the school early.

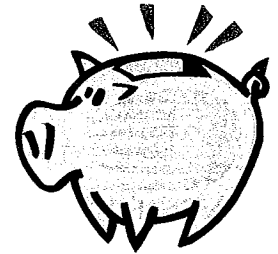
The sample provided are only to assist you. Use these as a guideline when preparing your correspondence. Add or delete information as it pertains to your Unit.

Let's see where we're at!

Ok. . . this is great! You know how many girls your Unit will sponsor. You know what schools you will be working with. You have a plan for selecting the delegates. You have information to provide the school. And you now have a better understanding of the program! But there is so much more to do!

Where does the money come from?

Sponsoring students to Girls State is expensive. Let's look at what it will cost the Unit and then we'll discuss ideas on where the money can come from.



Registration for one (1) delegate to Girls State is \$300.00. This includes the money to cover the two shirts that will be part of the uniform they will wear while in the program.

Unless your Unit is in the Tallahassee area, your Unit will be responsible for providing transportation which will be an additional expense. Many Units give their Delegates spending money. Later we will discuss this item, however, if your Unit decides to do so, it must be taken into consideration at this time. Your Unit could be looking at more than \$400.00 per delegate.

Depending on the size of your Unit's membership, it may be difficult to raise enough money to sponsor a girl to Girls State. Don't give up too early! There are many ways to fund this program and many that you probably haven't thought of.

Dues money is one source. When it is time to do the Unit's budget, look at how much is available for Girls State. If you have a large membership with high dues, you may not need to look any further. BUT! If you are one of the many Units whose membership is small and your dues barely covers the per-capita due Department and your Quotas, then you might want to seriously consider one or more of these suggestions for raising out-side money for this program.

- ▶ Special event fund-raising
 - ✓ "Theater night" - Buy the "house" then sell tickets at a price you determine.
 - ✓ Plant Sale - Have member donate plants, dress them up to be appealing and sell at a Post function or community event.
 - ✓ Sewing Sale - Have talented members sew items after getting local merchants to donate sewing supplies. Then sell them at a Post function of community event. Combine with the plant sale.
 - ✓ Book Sale - Seek donations and hold a 100% profit sale.
 - ✓ Car Wash - Seek the help of your Juniors, Post and SAL. Contact the schools you work with for Girls State, and see if their National Honor Society members or other clubs can help. They all need community service hours.
 - ✓ Las-Vegas Night - plan a night of fun entertainment and gambling with proceeds going to Girls State.
 - ✓ Pot-Luck Dinners - have members donate a tasty treat and charge a fee to eat!
 - ✓ Fish fry, dances, golf or fishing tournaments, special bingo games earmarked Girls State, card parties, white elephant auctions, garage sales, etc. the possibilities are limited only by imagination and willingness to work!

Write to members of the Unit seeking donations. Get permission to write to Post members. Ask to put donation jars in the Post Home. Pass the "Hat" at functions. Hold a raffle. Get local merchants to donate services or merchandise for a "surprise box" raffle.

Request permission to speak at a Post meeting and ask for their help. Many Posts in the Department donate money to sponsor local students to Girls State. Don't be afraid to ask.

Contact SAL Squadrons in your area and the Riders for sponsorship of a delegate.

Contact other organizations for financial assistance - Moose, Elks, Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimist, Lions, Knights of Columbus, Women's Clubs, Etc. Many Units enlist the help of other organizations. Remember any funds donated to your Unit must be deposited in the Unit account, and a Unit check is to be sent to Department. Department will not accept checks from other organizations. Sponsoring organizations have no authority to select a delegate. The Unit must do the selection. The sponsoring organization should be notified of the selection and the person selected should be made aware that another organization paid for their opportunity to attend Girls State so they can thank them. A sample letter to an outside organization is include.

Never accept money from a potential delegate or their family. Applicants can not pay for their own registration.

Contact the participating schools. Many schools have money in their budget for programs such as this and would be willing to donate to the Unit so a student from their school has the opportunity to attend Girls State. You never know unless you ask!

Contact your local government officials. Many cities have funds available to sponsor students in programs like Girls State.

Your Unit doesn't have to do it alone! There is money out there! If fund-raising isn't your "cup of tea", assign one of your committee members that is comfortable with it, the job. You'll be surprised how easy it can be with the right approach. Girls State is an excellent program that can sell itself! Always be professional when contacting outside organizations for help. Be knowledgeable about the program. Always use Unit letterhead for your correspondence and follow-up all donations with letters of appreciation.

Invite major contributors to the final selection meeting. They will enjoy meeting the applicants, but remember **only** the Unit has a vote as to who is selected!

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA
(Your Unit Name and Location)

(Date)

(The organization's name)

(Address)

(City, FL, Zip)

Dear (Contact person's name):

Thank you for taking a few minutes to speak to me on the telephone about the Florida Girls State Program. As I explained to you, I'm the Girls State Chairman for Unit (#) in (location) and I'm hoping your organization will work with us to bring the Girls State program to (name a local school).

First, a little about Girls State. Girls State is a non-partisan program that aims to teach young women Americanism, democracy, responsible citizenship, and love of God and Country. Since the inception of the Girls State program in 1937, over one million young women have had the opportunity to learn firsthand how their state and local government works. Girls State provides functional citizenship training for young women who will be entering their senior year of high school and affords them an opportunity to live together as self-governing citizens. Participants are informed of their duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of American citizenship in order that they may understand and participate in the functioning of their government.

Each Department (State) within the American Legion Auxiliary administers their own session of Girls State. The Florida session is held in Tallahassee for one week in June at the FSU campus. The 300 participating students have the opportunity to practice state government at the Capitol using the Senate and the House of Representatives chambers for their debate. Girl State "citizens" are typically extraordinarily talented and accomplished young women who excel academically and are involved in a variety of extracurricular and community activities.

The American Legion Auxiliary has long been recognized by Freedom's Foundation at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, for the Girls State and Girls Nation programs. The programs have received several prestigious awards including the Americana Award, the Distinguished Service Award, and the George Washington Honor Medal for Excellence. The National Association of Secondary School Principals has placed this program on the NASSP National Advisory list of contests and activities. Most colleges and universities include attendance at Girls State in their college applications. Our attendees have the opportunity to receive college credit for their participation through a dual enrollment program with Tallahassee Community College.

Students wishing to participate in Florida Girls State, must be sponsored by a local Unit of the American Legion Auxiliary. Unfortunately, our Unit has limited funds and we are unable to financially fund this program. We are looking to organizations, such as yours, to fund this very important program so a student in our community can benefit from this outstanding leadership program.

Tuition for this program is \$300.00 plus the cost of transportation per student. Housing and meals are included. Please help us bring this very important program to our community, by donating the cost of tuition to send a student. This would be a wonderful investment for your organization and an opportunity to make a difference in our community, by impacting the future of a deserving student.

I look forward to hearing from you very soon, as registration for the 2012 session will begin in November. Please don't hesitate to contact me should you need additional information. Thank you!

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

Girls State Chairman (Your Unit #)

Your delegate(s) have been selected. . . now what?

You think your job is finished. . . Right? Sorry, you aren't finished yet! In fact, there is still much to do. Once your Unit has selected their delegates, there is paperwork that needs to be completed. Paperwork is your responsibility. . . not the delegates or the schools. You need to make arrangements to sit down with the delegate(s) your Unit has selected ***and*** their parents to complete the paperwork. You also must sit down with your Alternates to complete their paperwork. All alternates must be registered and you will receive colored application forms to be completed and returned to Headquarters for your alternates.

Make sure all applications are properly completed and signed. Please have the information neatly completed either by printing or typing. Do not leave anything blank. An incomplete application will not be accepted by Department and may cause a delay in your delegate or alternated receiving additional important information. Once the applications have been received by Department all future correspondence regarding their attendance will be mailed directly to the girls from Headquarters. It is important, however, for you to stay in touch with your delegates and alternates to monitor their progress and to remind them of their Orientation.

Both Delegates and Alternates will receive a packet of information early in April. This paperwork is very important and you need to encourage your girls to read and complete this paperwork in a timely fashion. Remind them to bring this packet of material to the Orientation.

Call each girl one week before the Orientation to make sure they are planning to attend. Be sure at least one parent is attending with them and that they know where it is and how to get there. Provide transportation if necessary.

Stay in touch with the girls right up until they board the bus for Tallahassee. Call them the week before Girls State to verify they have all the proper paperwork in order. It is always nice to be at the bus stop to see them off the morning the bus departs.

Greet the girls when they return form Girls State so you can hear how the week went.

Remember they will be very tired when they return so plan an event at your Unit to get all the details at a later date. Don't forget to invite any sponsors you had to hear all about the week in Tallahassee.

That is about it. . . you made it! Remember, Girls State is GREAT!! It is all up to you. . . the better job you do as a Chairman. . . the better the girls you select will be and the better the Girls State session will be. We are counting on you!

Sample forms are included for information only. Do not attempt to complete these forms.

Sample

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA, INC.

2012 FLORIDA GIRLS STATE APPLICATION

THE AMERICAN'S CREED

"I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation of many sovereign states; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon these principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its' Constitution; to obey its' laws; to respect its' Flag; and to defend it against all enemies."...William Tyler Page...1868 - 1942. (Adopted by the U.S. House April 3, 1918).

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

"For God and Country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:
To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our association during the great wars; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of The American Legion; to consecrate and sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

As a Girls State applicant I believe in the principles of the American Legion Auxiliary, as outlined in the preamble of their constitution, and I am familiar with and believe in the American Creed, as written by William Tyler Page. I have been advised that I am representing the American Legion Auxiliary and the youth of our state. I have been advised that Florida Girls State has been proven successful after years of experience and that I cannot change it this year, but my suggestions will be considered for future years. I understand that Girls State includes members of all races, religions and political convictions, to which I do not object. I have been advised that I will be called upon to speak before my sponsoring Unit as well as other organizations in the community about the Girls State program. I understand there are rules at Girls State and I will abide by such rules as listed in the Code of Conduct or announced by the staff. I understand that non-denominational religious program, saluting the American flag and singing of patriotic and morale type songs are part of the program and traditions at Girls State. If elected to a State office, I would be willing to take the oath of office on the Bible. I hereby certify that my family are legal residents of the State of Florida, and that I am in my junior year of high school and will be returning to high school for my senior year. I understand that I am required to attend an Orientation prior to Girls State and failure to do so would forfeit my admission to the program.

(Signature of Girls State applicant)

(Date)

I hereby give permission for my daughter to attend the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State session at Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, June 15, 2012 through June 23, 2012. I understand that my daughter cannot begin the program late or be dismissed prior to 8:00 AM, Saturday June 23rd. There will be no exception to this! I have read the eligibility statement signed by my daughter and verify all information provided to be accurate. I understand that if my daughter leaves the program for any reason prior to its completion, it will be at my expense and she will not receive credit for attendance. I verify that my daughter is not enrolled in Florida Virtual School and if she is, she is not eligible for our program and must withdraw!

(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

(Date)

APPLICATION # _____

PRINT OR TYPE Name and address of Girls State applicant

DO NOT WRITE HERE -- OFFICE USE ONLY

CITY _____

RM # _____ PARTY _____

(Last) (First) (M. I.) D.O.B. _____ (required)

(Mailing Address) (City) (Zip) (Area Code / Phone number)

Applicant's Email Address Are you a member of the American Legion Auxiliary?
Y or N (circle one)

Parent's Email Address (required) Cell phone number

Name of School currently attending

UNIT CERTIFICATION

Date of selection meeting _____ Sponsoring Unit # _____ District # _____

I hereby certify that above named applicant has been properly selected and BRIEFED about the Florida Girls State program by our Unit/or Unit Girls State Committee. A representative of the Unit will attend, and advise the applicant of the date, time, and place of the (Required) District Girls State Orientation.

Unit Girls State Chairman (sign in ink)

Unit President (Sign in ink)

(Address of Chairman)

(G.S. Chairman's Daytime Phone #)

(G.S. Chairman's Evening Phone #)

(G.S. Chairman's Email Address)

Sample

DRESS CODE AWARENESS FORM

The Girls State Program has a strict dress code. All delegates will be provided two (2) Girls State shirts at no cost. These shirts will be worn each day while at Girls State. These shirts will be laundered by staff members, so that a clean shirt will be available each day. The shirts will be washed in a laundry detergent that is free of dyes and perfumes.

While on campus, the dress code for all delegates is as follows: Girls State Shirt, slacks, shorts, skirts, skorts, or Capri pants in any color. Jeans are acceptable providing they are in good condition. Shorts cannot be short shorts. Name tags are required to be worn at all times.

Off campus, while at the Capitol, the dress code for all delegates is: Girls State Shirt, black slacks ONLY. No denim, capris or skirts will be allowed. We visit the Capitol three (3) days, therefore you are required to have clothing for all three days. Please remember, there are no laundry facilities available for your use. Director, Asst. Director or GS Chairman, reserve the right to reject clothing choice prior to departure for the Capitol, if dress code has not been met.

Shoes: While on campus, comfortable shoes of any style are acceptable. While off Campus, at the Capitol, flat dress shoes, nice leather sandals, or white (clean) tennis shoes are acceptable. No flip flops or high-heels of any kind will be allowed off campus.

Free time in the dorm: any comfortable clothing is acceptable while in the dorm.

Outside time: Campus dress code applies while outside during free time. The only exception is for the Pep-Rally. Government Party Advisors will determine the parties' attire for the pep-rally. A plain white t-shirt is suggested for use at the pep-rally.

Awards night: Dress code is waived. Delegates are allowed to wear any appropriate attire. Many delegates dress-up for this evening.

I understand the above dress code and will comply while at Girls State.

Signature of Delegate

The Girls State shirt is a 50/50 blend, polo style shirt. Please order a size that will properly fit. We will not allow any delegate to wear a shirt that is too tight or too baggy. Exchanges will be made based on availability, but are not guaranteed.

Please circle the appropriate size:

SM MED LG X-LG XX-LG XXX-LG

MEAL AWARENESS FORM

Meals will be provided by FSU Food Services and private catering services. We make every effort to having a variety of foods to choose from, however, we are not able to set the menu while at the FSU cafeteria. The food schedule and menu is determined by FSU and out of our control. Vegetarian meals will be available if you request them in advance. We are unable to accommodate likes and dislikes, or food allergies.

I am a vegetarian: YES NO

Signature of Delegate

PRESS RELEASE INFORMATION AWARENESS FORM

The American Legion Auxiliary reserves the right to use your name and or picture in any press release or news media interview as it applies to your attendance and/or performance while at Girls State. This includes any promotional material that we use during or after the close of the 2012 Girls State session. A media form will be provided in your packet to be completed and brought to Girls State.

Permission is hereby granted to release my name, town, and/or High School name, as it pertains to my attendance in, and performance at, Girls State. I am aware that pictures from the session are used to promote the program and I may appear in these pictures.

Signature of Delegate

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Sample

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA, INC.

2012 FLORIDA GIRLS STATE ALTERNATE APPLICATION

THE AMERICAN'S CREED

"I believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign nation of many sovereign states; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon these principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its' Constitution; to obey its' laws; to respect its' Flag; and to defend it against all enemies."...William Tyler Page...1868 - 1942. (Adopted by the U.S. House April 3, 1918).

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

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CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

As a Girls State applicant I believe in the principles of the American Legion Auxiliary, as outlined in the preamble of their constitution, and I am familiar with and believe in the American Creed, as written by William Tyler Page. I have been advised that I am representing the American Legion Auxiliary and the youth of our state. I have been advised that Florida Girls State has been proven successful after years of experience and that I cannot change it this year, but my suggestions will be considered for future years. I understand that Girls State includes members of all races, religions and political convictions, to which I do not object. I have been advised that I will be called upon to speak before my sponsoring Unit as well as other organizations in the community about the Girls State program. I understand there are rules at Girls State and I will abide by such rules as listed in the Code of Conduct or announced by the staff. I understand that non-denominational religious program, saluting the American flag and singing of patriotic and morale type songs are part of the program and traditions at Girls State. If elected to a State office, I would be willing to take the oath of office on the Bible. I hereby certify that my family are legal residents of the State of Florida, and that I am in my junior year of high school and will be returning to high school for my senior year. I understand that I am required to attend an Orientation prior to Girls State and failure to do so would forfeit my admission to the program. I understand that I can only be interviewed by one Unit and cannot represent a Unit other than the original interviewing Unit without their permission. I further understand I am not guaranteed admission to Girls State. I will be notified if an opening becomes available.

(Signature of Girls State applicant)

(Date)

I hereby give permission for my daughter to attend the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State session at Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida, June 15, 2012 through June 23, 2012. I understand that my daughter cannot begin the program late or be dismissed prior to 8:00 AM, Saturday June 23rd. There will be no exception to this! I have read the eligibility statement signed by my daughter and verify all information provided to be accurate. I understand that my daughter can only be interviewed by one Unit and cannot represent a Unit other than the original interviewing Unit without their permission. Attending a District Orientation is required. I further understand completing this application does not guarantee admission to Girls State. My daughter will be notified if an opening becomes available. I verify that my daughter is not enrolled in a Florida Virtual School and if she is, she is not eligible and must withdraw!

(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

(Date)

DO NOT WRITE HERE -- OFFICE USE ONLY
CITY _____
RM # _____ PARTY _____

ALTERNATE'S APPLICATION # _____

PRINT OR TYPE Name and address of Girls State alternate

(Last) (First) (M. I.) Date of birth _____

(Mailing Address) (City) (Zip) (Area Code / Phone number)

Applicant's Email Address _____ Are you a member of the American Legion Auxiliary?
Y or N (circle one)

Parent's Email Address _____ Parent's cell phone number _____

Name of School currently attending _____

UNIT CERTIFICATION

Date of selection meeting _____ Sponsoring Unit # _____ District # _____

I hereby certify that above named alternate has been properly selected and **BRIEFED** about the Florida Girls State program by our Unit/or Unit Girls State Committee. A representative of the Unit will attend, and advise the applicant of the date, time, and place of the (Required) District Girls State Orientation.

Unit Girls State Chairman (sign in ink) Unit President (Sign in ink)

(Address of Chairman)

(G.S. Chairman's Daytime Phone #)

(G.S. Chairman's Evening Phone #)

(G.S. Chairman's Email Address)

Sample

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Awards night: Dress code is waived. Delegates are allowed to wear any appropriate attire. Many delegates dress-up for this evening.

I understand the above dress code and will comply while at Girls State.

Signature of Alternate

The Girls State shirt is a 50/50 blend, polo style shirt. Please order a size that will properly fit. We will not allow any delegate to wear a shirt that is too tight or too baggy. Exchanges will be made based on availability, but not guaranteed.

Please circle the appropriate size:

SM MED LG X-LG XX-LG XXX-LG

MEAL AWARENESS FORM

Meals will be provided by FSU Food Services and private catering services. We make every effort to having a variety of foods to choose from, however, we are not able to set the menu while at the FSU cafeteria. The food schedule and menu is determined by FSU and out of our control. Vegetarian meals will be available if you request them in advance. We are unable to accommodate likes and dislikes, or food allergies.

I am a vegetarian: YES NO

Signature of Alternate

PRESS RELEASE INFORMATION AWARENESS FORM

The American Legion Auxiliary reserves the right to use your name and or picture in any press release or news media interview as it applies to your attendance and/or performance while at Girls State. This includes any promotional material that we use during or after the close of the 2012 Girls State session. A media form will be provided in your packet to be completed and brought to Girls State.

Permission is hereby granted to release my name, town, and/or High School name, as it pertains to my attendance in, and performance at, Girls State. I am aware that pictures from the session are used to promote the program and I may appear in these pictures.

Signature of Alternate

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Sample

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA, INC.

GIRLS STATE REGISTRATION

Registration fee for the June 2012 session of Florida Girls State is **\$300.00 per delegate**. No refund will be made to a Unit or contributing organization if their delegate does not attend Girls State. Send your Alternate if chosen Delegate cannot attend.

Do not select delegates until numbered applications from Department office are in your possession.

Completed form and registration fees must be received at Headquarters BY FEBRUARY 1, 2012.

Mail to: **American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Florida PO Box 547917, Orlando FL 32854-7917**

Send check payable to: **ALA, DEPT OF FLORIDA** with this form to above address.

Number of Girls State delegates requested: _____

Enclosed is a check for registration fee for Girls State Delegates: \$ _____

If Unit Quotas have not been paid, please refer to the 2012 Unit Guide pages 66-70.

DO NOT INCLUDE PAYMENT OF QUOTAS IN GIRLS STATE REGISTRATION CHECKS!

Issue usual check to the American Legion Auxiliary Headquarters for Quotas.

(Unit name) (Unit #) (Dist #)

(Girls State Chairman)

(Unit address)

(Area code & DAY TIME phone number required) (Area code and evening phone number)

(E-mail address)

DEADLINE DATE - FEBRUARY 1, 2012/OR FIRST 300 REGISTRATION FEES RECEIVED!

Sample

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA, INC.

GIRLS STATE OVER-QUOTA REGISTRATION

Units that have reached their 100% goal in membership by January 31, 2012 are entitled to apply for Over-Quota Delegate(s). Over-Quota girls are awarded to a Unit on a priority date basis according to date received providing form and checks are correct. Units will be notified after February 6, 2012 if Over-Quota Delegate(s) is awarded.

Completed form and registration fees must be received at Headquarters BY FEBRUARY 1, 2012.

Mail to: **American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Florida PO Box 547917, Orlando FL 32854-7917.**

Send check payable to: **ALA, DEPT OF FLORIDA** with this form to above address.

Number of Over-Quota Delegates requested: _____

Enclosed is a check for \$**300** for each Over-quota delegate: \$ _____

If 100% in membership has not been reached your Unit may still receive requested delegate based on availability. Check will be returned if no spots are available. Do not advise a student she is going based on this request. You **MUST** wait until you receive the numbered application.

Over Quota applications will be mailed separately from initial registration applications.

Mail application(s) to:

_____ Unit # _____
Unit Chairman's name

Unit Address

_____ City _____ Zip

_____ Telephone # _____ Email address