AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE IS . . .

To the participant: A richly rewarding and educational program that has prompted many former participants to seek careers in public service. Selection serves as testimony to a participant's character and leadership skills and is an experience recognized by employers, U.S. service academies and university admissions boards as an indicator of strong leadership and character traits.

To the parents: Assurance their son is participating in a character-building program of rich tradition open to those who have earned the right to attend.

To the school: An experience that teaches young men about state government and how to become better leaders. As participants return to school for their senior year, they are able to take a more active role in student government.

To the sponsor: An opportunity to make a positive difference in a young man's life. A sponsor provides a character-building and educational experience that the participant will cherish for a lifetime. It is also a source of satisfaction to the sponsor.

AMERICAN LEGION BOYS NATION

Each American Legion Boys State program selects two outstanding participants each year to represent the state at American Legion Boys Nation, an extension of the Boys State experience. Boys Nation has objectives and characteristics similar to those of Boys State except the focus is on the study of federal government. The week-long program in our nation's capital combines lectures, forums and visitations to federal agencies, institutions, memorials and historical sites in and around the District of Columbia.

At Boys Nation, each delegate represents his state as a senator and participates in senate sessions. They organize into committees and conduct hearings on bills submitted by the senators. Instruction and operation of the Boys Nation Senate is based on the rules of the U.S. Senate.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Information about The American Legion Boys State program in your state may be obtained by contacting either an American Legion post in your community or The American Legion headquarters of your state. Information about American Legion Boys State and points of contact for American Legion headquarters and posts in your state are on The American Legion's website at **www.legion.org/boysnation**.

The Boys Nation program is administered at the national level by the Americanism Commission, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206; phone: (317) 630-1207; www.legion.org/boysnation/contacts.

Local Contact Information

Participants at American Legion Boys State programs develop friendships that will last a lifetime. (Badger Boys State)

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THE AMERICAN LEGION

BOYS STATE

A WEEK THAT SHAPES A LIFETIME

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Boys STATE

American Legion Boys State is a unique summertime educational program for rising high school seniors that focuses on participation and personal experience in a model state, complete with governmental bodies and elected public officials. It is designed to mirror the structure and operation of its respective state government, while providing training in practical citizenship, leadership and character development through a non-partisan perspective.

The American Legion believes our U.S. government can survive only with an educated populace. By teaching youth to understand and appreciate our democratic republic, America can remain strong and ensure our freedom for future generations.

OBJECTIVES

American Legion Boys State seeks to:

1) Develop leadership and pride in American citizenship.
2) Promote a keen interest in the detailed study of government.
3) Develop a full understanding of American traditions and a loyalty to the United States of America.
4) Motivate young citizens to maintain our form of government.
5) Inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation.
6) Safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

The effectiveness of American Legion Boys State in teaching state government is found within its instructional program. It consists of some classroom work and general assemblies of instruction, but the program is primarily comprised of functional hands-on activities that promote learning by doing. The majority of program hours are focused on government instruction and practical exercises.

Known as "citizens" at Boys State, each young man becomes an integral part of the program by assuming responsibilities and performing duties either as an elected or appointed official, or otherwise fulfilling an assignment entailing the duties of responsible citizenship.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Participants are assigned to a mythical political party which results in involvement at the precinct level, the city, county, judicial circuit, senatorial or legislative district, as well as at the state level of government. The government organization provides for elections at all levels and includes party caucuses and conventions, platform development, and the organizing and operation of local government units such as county boards, agencies and courts.

Boys State allows its citizens to form and operate their government with guidance of adult volunteer staff. And because the program emphasizes learning by doing, citizens are encouraged to be innovative and are not bound by rigid design.

ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

The American Legion's Americanism Commission has established certain qualifications for prospective Boys State citizens and works with the respective programs to insure compliance. Guidelines for Boys State participation include:

- Only males who have successfully completed their junior year of high school and have at least one semester of high school remaining are to be considered.
- Any young man who has previously attended a Boys State is not eligible to attend a second session.
- Only young men with outstanding qualities of leadership, character, scholarship, loyalty and service to their schools are to be considered.

In the selection process, merit and ability are the two most important factors considered. Enrollment fees, or tuition, are paid by American Legion posts or other community-minded organizations, leaving little or no expense to a young man or his family.

The selection process for Boys State varies at the state-level organization of The American Legion, but it generally begins with high school educators and/or counselors recommending several young men. The sponsor (either a Legion post or other community organization) then selects representatives from that list to participate in American Legion Boys State.