



AMERICAN LEGION
AUXILIARY

Serving veterans, their families and their communities

Girls State

National Chairman ~ Mary Davis

Girls State

Plan of Work: Girls State Committee

Mission Statement: To provide an outstanding, unique, and coveted educational opportunity to the young women of our nation that instills the basic ideals and principles of American government through our Girls State and Girls Nation citizenship training programs.

Girls State Committee

National Chairman

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Department of Washington

National Vice Chairman

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Committee Member

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Girls State Committee – Outline

- I. Reoccurring Programs
 - A. Girls State
 - 1. Selection
 - a. Present Girl State program to schools
 - b. Eligibility requirements
 - c. Other sponsorship
 - 2. Orientation
 - 3. Girls State Programs and Activities
 - a. Samsung Scholarship
 - B. Girls Nation
- II. Recognized Collaborative Programs and Activities
 - A. American Legion Auxiliary Programs
 - B. Public Relations
 - C. Other Programs
- III. New Initiatives
- IV. Resources
- V. Annual Program Evaluation
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Girls State Goals for 2008-2009

I. Reoccurring Programs

A. Girls State- The American Legion Auxiliary has provided a unique citizenship educational opportunity for America's female high school juniors for almost 70 years. The program has grown from a few hundred participants to nearly 20,000 annually.

1. **Marketing and Citizen Selection** Units from across each state sponsor eligible young ladies to participate in their Department Girls State program.

Goal: Partner with schools about the Girls State program. Information provided to schools should help identify and prepare young women in their junior year of high school for the lessons of government.

Tactics:

1. Distribute pertinent program information and meet with school leaders to inform school districts about the benefits of the Girls State program to their students.
2. Explain that eligibility requirements include (a) young women who are completing their junior year of high school (b) there is an interview process (c) have an interest in government, (d) be of high moral character, (e) have leadership abilities and above average grades.
3. Solicit financial sponsorship from other civic and non-profit organizations, if needed.

Best Practices:

1. Department Chairmen should ensure local units contact high schools and provide information about our program. National and Department brochures may be helpful in explaining the program. Local chairman should be prepared to answer questions posed by local school representatives.
2. Local Unit chairman should coordinate the process by which applicants will be selected with the proper school representatives. This may include scheduling a junior class assembly as well as the interview process. Local Unit chairman should emphasize final selection is reserved for the sponsoring American Legion Auxiliary.
3. Enlist the help of former girls state citizens at the junior class assembly to peak interest and encourage their participation in the selection process.

2. Orientation

Goal: Provide information to volunteers and delegates to facilitate a successful Girls State session.

Tactics:

1. Department Chairmen should prepare plans for orientations to be presented to volunteers and Girl State citizens in their Department.
2. Department standardized orientations should be conducted for all delegates and alternate candidates as well as their parents or guardians.

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Best Practices:

1. Provide time and location of orientation.
2. Coordinate with other Units in District/County for a joint orientation.
3. Request standardized orientation briefing from Department chairman.
4. Provide transportation details, if applicable.
5. Provide specific information about the American Legion Auxiliary, to include opportunities for scholarships and community service work, and information about the specific Unit sponsoring each citizen.
6. Suggested orientation programs may include presentation of bill ideas using previous bills as references, a parliamentarian to discuss basics of parliamentary procedure, and information on providing current state legislative actions , providing legislative web site for resource material.

3. Girls State Programs and Activities

a. Samsung Scholarship

Goal: Provide information to all Girls State citizens.

Tactic: Provide Samsung Scholarship information at earliest possible time in selection process.

Best Practices:

1. Department chairman should prepare instruction for Unit chairman on the importance and the process for citizens to apply for the Samsung Scholarship.
2. Provide information about the Samsung scholarship to local educators, during initial meeting, at final selection process, at orientation and on Department web site.

b. Girls State Directors Conference

Goal: Facilitate learning and growth of Girls State program.

Tactic: Create an atmosphere of learning interest and sharing of information and concerns.

Best practices:

1. All Department Girl State chairmen are encouraged to participate in an online conference.
2. Department Girl State committees are requested to send conference agenda ideas to National Chairman before September 1, 2008.
3. Department Girl State Chairmen are encouraged to bring best ideas and challenges to share.

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B. Girls Nation

Goal: The American Legion Auxiliary provides a select number of young women a unique citizenship educational opportunity by continuing their experience in governmental practice.

Tactic: Two Girls State Citizens from each Department will be selected to represent their state as U.S. Senators to Girls Nation which will convene at the National 4-H Conference Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland, July 18-25, 2009 for the purpose of experiencing Federal Government.

Best Practices:

1. Each state should designate two girls to represent their state as Girls Nation Senators.
2. Each Senator should be prepared to present legislative initiatives before her fellow Girls Nation Senators.
3. Each Senator should be prepared to campaign and run for an additional elected position at Girls Nation.

II. Recognized Collaborative Programs and Activities

A. ALA Programs: Children and Youth, National Security, Poppy Programs

Goal: Provide support for National Guard/Reserve and active duty military families by partnering with chairmen of other American Legion Auxiliary programs.

Tactic: Encourage increased coordination and cooperation by partnering with Children & Youth's Operation Military Kids; National Security –Salute the Troops and Poppy program chairmen.

Best Practices:

1. Support the Operation Military Kids program by featuring student and guest speakers from OMK at Department Girls State session.
2. Introduce the Operation Military Kids backpack program and the Sesame Workshop military family support DVD to citizens for implementation as part of individual community service work.
3. Encourage Girls State citizens and Units to attend National Guard Family Activity Days to distribute backpacks and DVD's.
4. Identify and honor Girl State citizens who are members of military families.
5. Present a Salute the Troops program in conjunction with Poppy awareness program by inviting National Guard/Reserve, active duty families and veterans.

B. Public Relations

Goal: Create a program to educate the public about the importance of the educational opportunities afforded young women attending Girls State and Girls Nation sessions and demonstrate how this education will help create a more informed nation.

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Tactics:

1. Create press releases for local and state media at the National and Department levels.
2. Maintain a high profile for the organization by using the name and symbol of the American Legion Auxiliary whenever dealing with the public.

Best Practices:

1. Coordinate with National Public Relations
2. Help local Units formulate press releases if needed.
3. Create an educational process in which each Girl State Citizen aware of our organization and applicable programs.
4. Distribute Girls State/Boys State DVD and other marketing materials provided as extensively as possible for use with public broadcasting as well as local schools, businesses etc.

C. Other Programs-American Legion Boys State

Goal: To inform the public about other American Legion Family opportunities available to students finishing their junior year of high school who wish to learn more about and participate in our unique experiences in government studies.

III. New Initiatives

Goal: Develop a means by which young ladies, interested in attending and those chosen to attend Girls State can access electronic information concerning the program.

Tactic: Each state should provide information about their Girls State on the worldwide web under a centralized, uniform category.

Best Practices:

1. Promote the use of the Girls State 'Facebook' web page which would help facilitate Department and alumni communication through message boards and continual updates of Department specific information.
2. Create Girls Nation 'Facebook' web page for updates, attendee connection, parents, schools and general public information about the program.

IV. Resources

A. Web sites

www.legion-aux.org
www.boysandgirlsstate.org
<http://girlsnation-auxiliary.com>

B. Auxiliary references

Unit Handbook of the American Legion Auxiliary
Policies and Procedures of the American Legion Auxiliary

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IV. Annual Program Evaluation

Goal: To review and assess the successes and needed improvements of the National program and to help evaluate the successes and needed improvements of Department programs.

Tactics:

1. Continually assess performance of all aspects of the program through open communication at all levels.
2. Prepare a standardized evaluation form for Departments, Units and Citizens to help determine successes and weaknesses.
3. Utilize feedback from Department Girl State Directors.
4. Compile and disseminate information

Best Practices:

1. Prepare and distribute an annual National Girls State form. This form is based on the previous year's program and it will be due in time for the suggestions to be discussed at the Fall National Girls State meeting.
2. Evaluate existing practices implementing recommended improvements when necessary.
3. Create a formal annual evaluation form to be distributed to Departments and returned to the National Committee for identifying and sharing best practices to facilitate improvement.

V. Annual Report Form

Completed and returned to the National Chairman by October 1, 2008.

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GIRLS STATE ANNUAL REPORT

(Complete for the 2008 program)

Deadline: October 1, 2008

Department: _____ Number of Units: _____

Department Chairman Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

- | | Total | Change from Last year |
|--|-------|-----------------------|
| 1. Units participation | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Number of schools participating | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Number of Girl State citizens | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Fees | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Location: University: _____ Other(identify) _____ | | |
| 6. Number of Units that made final selection: _____ | | |
| 7. Number of school officials that worked with the Units:
Principals _____ Counselors _____ Activity Director _____ Other _____ | | |
| 8. Number of Units that held orientations: _____
Number in attendance: _____ | | |
| 9. Orientation format used:

_____ | | |
| 10. Types of recognition by Units:
Banquet# _____ Unit Meeting # _____ Other (Identify) _____
Joint with Legion # Yes _____ No _____ | | |
| 11. Number of Units who invited school official(s) to recognition activity: _____ | | |
| 12. Number of Units who invited community leaders to recognition activity: _____ | | |
| 13. Girls State 2008 session evaluation made: Yes ___ No ___
(If yes, was it shared with Girls State Chairman/Director?) Yes ___ No ___ | | |
| 14. Type of evaluation: _____ | | |
| 15. List enhancements to Girls State Program:
_____ | | |
| 16. Types of publicity by Units: _____ | | |

Please include any additional comments or information on reverse side.
Complete and send to: Mary Davis, National Girls State Chairman
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(Also, please send a copy to your Divisional Chairman)