

A Volunteers Guide to:

Starting a State
Youth Education Summit



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State Youth Education Summit Program Details

I. Program History

- A. The National Youth Education Summit (YES) began in 1996 with a goal to reach sophomores and juniors from all across the United States to impart the significance of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights while developing an understanding of the government process and the importance of actively participating in it.
- B. The National YES program is held each summer in Washington D.C., where 40 outstanding high school students from across the country come together for a week-long visit to our Nation's capital.
- C. Due to the incredible success the National YES program has enjoyed, the next step is to reach out to the individual states, thereby reaching more students. Beginning with Ohio and Michigan in 2002, the National Rifle Association began making an effort to impart the importance of state government and the role future generations of voters will play with special emphasis on firearms ownership.

II. Application Process and Schedule

A. Requirements

- 1. Students must be either freshmen or sophomores in high school
- 2. Students must have at least a 3.0 grade average on a 4.0 scale
- 3. Students must complete a detailed application, including submitting three recommendation forms, personal statement, and an essay dealing with the importance of the Second Amendment. Please see the attached application and scorecard.

B. Logistics

- 1. State YES programs are held in the state capital, as to allow for easy access to historical sites, capitol buildings, and legislative and political bodies.
- 2. All State YES programs run Thursday through Sunday. This allows two business days for legislative and career oriented activities, and a day for NRA related activities, ensuring the students miss as few days of school as possible.
- 3. State YES is a scholastic leadership opportunity. Shooting is secondary.

C. Activities

- 1. At every State YES, a similar agenda is desired, including the following activities:
 - a. Tour State Capitol Building/House & Senate
 - b. Tour Governor's Office or Mansion
 - c. Meet State Legislators and/or Governor, or someone from their staff
 - d. Meet Attorney General, or their staff
 - e. Tour State Supreme Court
 - f. Have State Legislator or ILA Representative attend the ILA Breakfast to talk with students

about their state government, and how they can become involved in politics

- g.** Tour State Police Training Academy, or Highway Patrol Training Academy
- h.** Tour any Military Bases in the area
- i.** Tour any museums relating to the state's history and government
- j.** Meet with Division of Wildlife or Game Commission for brief presentation about the important role they play in the state's wildlife
- k.** Shooting and safety training at a local range

2. Other Activities Include:

- a.** An introduction to public speaking, including a brief presentation about how to make a good speech, and individual student speeches
- b.** An introduction to debating, and several student debates on current events
- c.** Legislative breakfast, where students are introduced to NRA's Institute for Legislative Action (ILA), and the states political and legislative activities are discussed with the students
- d.** NRA Program Presentations
 - 1.** Introduction to the NRA
 - 2.** *Friends of NRA*
 - 3.** Refuse to Be A Victim®
 - 4.** Eddie Eagle®
 - 5.** Overview of some of the many programs NRA has available

3. Awards Banquet

- a.** Every State YES program concludes with an Awards Banquet, which begins with a formal student debate before dinner, and concludes with a short awards ceremony.
- b.** At the conclusion of each State YES program, one student will be selected, based on his or her participation throughout the program, and on the essay submitted, to attend the very next National YES program in Washington D.C., all expenses paid, except travel to and from Washington, D.C. During the weeklong National YES program, students will have the opportunity to try to win one of several college scholarships, to be awarded at the conclusion of the program, and based on participation throughout the week.

Planning for A State Youth Education Summit (To-Do List)

I. Securing Funding

- A. The program will cost between \$8,000 and \$20,000 depending on the location and the number of participants.
- B. Possible Sources of Funding
 - 1. State Fund Committee – NRA headquarters will submit a grant application every year to all state fund committees. If the funding is approved, the check is deposited into a Headquarters budget for that state’s YES program. The grant money is then available to the NRA Field Representative before the program as an advancement or after the program as an expense form reimbursement.
 - 2. Organizations
 - 3. General Donations

II. Promoting the Program

- A. The program **MUST** have a minimum of five students in order to be held, no exceptions.
- B. Plenty of time is needed for promoting this program. There are many ways to promote, however, word of mouth always works the best.
- C. Possible ways to promote the State YES program
 - 1. Send a letter to all high schools, public & private, in the state
 - 2. Send a letter to the state’s home school associations
 - 3. Send a letter, flyer, or postcard to all member clubs in the state
 - 4. Contact youth groups to see if they will mention it in their newsletter
 - 5. Have the program information posted on club websites
 - 6. Have the information posted on NRA websites
 - 7. Send the information out in the Grassroots Alert
 - 8. Contact wildlife publications within the state to see if they will put an article about the program in their next issue
 - 9. Write an article for *Traditions* magazine
 - 10. Mention State YES at *Friends of NRA* events, and make sure flyers about the program are present

III. Making the Arrangements

- A. Hotel
 - 1. Contract with a hotel several months prior to the program
 - 2. The hotel will need to meet the following criteria
 - a. Hotel should be clean and comfortable
 - b. Should have banquet and catering services available
 - c. Should be located in or close by the state capital
 - d. Must have a large suite available during the program (This is used as a gathering place for the students so the chaperones can keep up with them at all times, as well as a place for the students to practice public speaking and debating in between activities)
 - e. Should have plenty of parking available

- B. Activities**
 1. All activities should be scheduled three months before the program.
 2. Activities should remain within the list of acceptable activities (see Program Details Outline).
 3. A tentative agenda is to be made at this point
- C. Transportation**
 1. A 12-15 passenger van, (and a second if needed), is recommended to be secured 2-3 months before the program
 2. Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the program. Once they arrive, the group travels together during the program.
 3. Depending on contacts in the area, the Field Representative or volunteer may be able to get the rental company to donate the use of the van.

IV. Finding Volunteers

- A. Volunteers and NRA Field Representatives run state YES programs.**
There are many ways for volunteers to get involved with this program, depending on the amount of time they have to spend working on the program. NRA would like the Field Representative to work closely with all volunteers the first year of the program to ensure that the YES is run properly, and then turn the program over to the volunteers in following years. The first year program is supposed to be a training session for the volunteers so that they can run the program independently in the future.
- B. Clubs, Ranges and Organizations**
 1. There may be a club in the area that wants to be involved in some way with the YES program.
 2. They might volunteer chaperones, help arrange activities, host the group on range day, donate range time, ammunition, targets, guns, instructors, or they may wish to make a general donation towards sponsoring a portion of the program, such as the Awards Dinner, or the van rental.
- C. Individuals**
 1. This program is a tremendous amount of work for one volunteer, and works much better as a collective effort.
 2. Another option is to form a small committee of volunteers. One person can be responsible for finding students; one can be responsible for arranging activities, etc.
- D. Chaperones**
 1. The program needs a minimum of one male and one female chaperone.
 2. Chaperones are expected to help run the program, lead discussions, drive the van, keep the program running efficiently, and should have an interest in continuing to volunteer for the program in future years.
 3. Chaperone meals and lodging should be paid for once they arrive at the program.
 4. It works best if volunteers helping plan the event also attend the event as chaperones.

State YES Legal Issues

State YES volunteers should coordinate with their field representatives regarding these legal issues:

1. Insurance/Liability coverage
2. Contracting hotels and other services
3. Handling money, Advances, Setting up bank accounts, Grant and Expense Reports, and returning unused funds
4. Volunteer Agreements

State YES Sample Schedule

Thursday

Students Arrive	11:00 AM
Welcome Lunch and Introductions	11:30 AM
Capitol Tour	12:30 PM
Meet with State Representative	1:30 PM
Visit Governor's Mansion	2:30 PM
Visit State Museum/Historical Society	3:30 PM
Students Check into rooms & unpack	6:00 PM
ILA How to Make A Speech Presentation & Practice Exercises	6:30 PM
Dinner	7:00 PM
Student Speeches	8:30 PM
Free time until lights out	9:30 PM
Lights Out	10:00 PM

Friday

Wake Up	7:00 AM
Breakfast at Hotel w/ Guest Speaker	8:00 AM
State Police Training Academy - Tour	9:30 AM
Lunch	11:30 AM
Visit State Division of Fish and Wildlife Museum Visit	12:30 PM 2:00 PM
Return to Hotel	4:30 PM
Introduction to Debating	5:00 PM
Dinner	5:30 PM
Student Debates	7:00 PM
Lights Out	10:00 PM

Saturday

Wake Up	7:00 AM
Breakfast	8:00 AM
Range	8:30 AM
Lunch	12:00 PM
Museum Visit	1:30 PM
Leave museum for hotel	2:30 PM
Refuse to Be A Victim - Guest Speaker	3:00 PM
Eddie Eagle - Guest Speaker	4:00 PM
NRA Programs - NRA Staff	4:30 PM
Student Time to Prepare for Awards Dinner	5:00 PM
Awards Dinner	7:00 PM
Dinner served	8:00 PM
Completion Awards	9:00 PM
Lights Out	10:30 PM

Sunday

Wake-Up and Pack	7:00 AM
Breakfast and Departures	8:00 AM

About the National Youth Education Summit

Program Summary and Objectives

YES is an exceptional opportunity to gain a hands-on education of American history and the democratic process. YES is designed to accomplish several educational objectives:

- ▶ Develop an understanding and ability to communicate the principles of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
- ▶ Develop an awareness and desire to participate in all levels of government.
- ▶ Develop an appreciation and knowledge of the history and unique heritage of the United States.
- ▶ Develop an understanding of volunteer networks and how young citizens can serve their communities.
- ▶ Develop an understanding of the history, mission and programs of the NRA.

Through carefully designed workshops and seminars, students will develop valuable communication and public speaking skills, as well as a hands-on knowledge of their Constitutional rights and responsibilities.

Who Should Apply?

YES welcomes applicants from all backgrounds who are high school sophomores or juniors in good academic standing (a minimum 3.0 on a 4.0 scale). State YES participants must also meet this standard. Students interested in applying should also have strong interests in American government, history, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the role and mission of the NRA.

The YES week will be strenuous (a typical day will go from 7:00 am - 10:00 pm) and will include a lot of walking and bus transfers. Also, be aware that summer months are usually hot and humid in Washington, and many YES activities will take place outdoors. Participants will be required to take part in all YES activities.

Please visit www.nrafoundation.org/yes for more information.

NRA State Youth Education Summit Guidelines

The purpose and mission of the State Youth Education Summit (YES) program are:

To give each student the opportunity to develop an awareness and desire to participate in all levels of government, to learn about their state's unique heritage and history, and to obtain a better understanding of volunteer organizations and how young citizens can become involved in serving their communities.

All State YES programs should meet the following goals:

Students should be introduced to the legislative and political bodies in their state. Students should be introduced to their state's history by touring museums and historical sites in the area relating to the state's history. Since this is an educational program, visits to other educational places, such as science museums, are also an option, if the schedule permits after all other goals have been met. Students should also be introduced to various career opportunities, relating directly or indirectly to their interest in firearms, such as law enforcement, or careers dealing with wildlife, to name a few. We are always open to new career ideas to introduce to the students as well. Students should also be briefly introduced to public speaking and debating through carefully designed introductory exercises, to be done in free time, either between activities or in the evenings.

The State YES program should be held in the state capital, as to allow for easy access to historical sites, capital buildings, and legislative and political bodies. All State YES programs run Thursday through Sunday. This allows two business days for political and career oriented activities, and a day for NRA related activities, ensuring the students miss as few days of school as possible. State YES is a scholastic leadership opportunity. Shooting is secondary.

Students must meet the following requirements in order to be considered for the YES program: Students must be either freshmen or sophomores in high school, have at least a 3.0 grade point average, and successfully complete the application process.

Activities should stay within the suggested list of activities, but suggestions for additional educational activities are welcomed at any time during the planning phase of the program. New activities may be incorporated into the schedule.

Suggested Legislative Activities:

- ❖ Tour State Capitol Building/House & Senate
- ❖ Tour Governor's Office and/or Mansion
- ❖ Meet State Legislators and/or Governor, or someone from their staff
- ❖ Meet Attorney General, or someone from his staff
- ❖ Tour State Supreme Court, possibly meet with Justice(s)
- ❖ Have State Legislator or ILA Representative attend the ILA Breakfast to talk with students about their state government, and how they can become involved

Other Activities:

- ❖ Tour State Police Training Academy
- ❖ Tour any Military Bases in the area
- ❖ Tour any museums relating to the state's history and government

- ❖ Meet with Division of Wildlife or Game Commission for brief presentation about the important role they play in the state's wildlife, and how student's can become involved
- ❖ Shooting and safety training at a local range
- ❖ Exercises in Public Speaking and Debating
- ❖ NRA Programs

NOTES ON ACTIVITIES

The following should be covered at the ILA Breakfast:

If a State Legislator is the guest speaker: State and Local government, and how students can become involved, and some current issues within the state, with respect to firearm/hunting legislation. If an ILA Representative is the guest speaker: ILA and NRA, their relationship, what ILA does, history of both ILA & NRA. Ideally, both state legislature and ILA will be covered during the breakfast, but one or the other will do if it is not possible to cover both. The students will receive packets of information about ILA as part of their program materials.

The range portion of the YES can be at any facility, outside or inside, and can include any type of shooting. The host range will need to supply the firearms, because students are prohibited from bringing their own to the program. Ideally, 3-4 hours will be spent at the range, depending on the type of range. If the host is an indoor facility, two hours is probably a sufficient amount of time. If an outdoor range can be used, we may want to allow more time, since the students will most likely have more of a variety of shooting available. Regardless of the facility, we would like to ask the range to allow us to shoot a variety of firearms, for several hours, so as to expose the students to guns they would not normally have the opportunity to shoot. We also request that the range provide certified instructors. Ideally, the host range will donate the range time and fees, and possibly the targets and ammunition. If this cannot be arranged, we will need to look into the best facility for the dollar.

The Awards Banquet is a semi-formal event held at the hotel, on the last evening of the program, and will begin with student debates. The students will be divided up earlier that afternoon, and given topics, and time to prepare. Following the debates, a nice dinner will be served. The chaperones/volunteers and staff will meet for a few minutes to make the final selection, and then return to give out the completion and scholarship awards. The student who receives the scholarship award will attend the very next National YES, all expenses paid, in Washington DC. A few minutes will be spent talking about the National program, and encouraging those who are still eligible for the National program to apply the following year. This concludes the planned activities for the State YES program. Typically at this point, students are allowed free time for fun, socializing, movies, etc. until a designated time.

Public speaking and debating exercises have previously been conducted by chaperones and staff, informally in the evenings, and during lag time between activities. It is acceptable to continue these exercises this way, however, any way we can improve this portion of the program, possibly by having a guest speaker talk to the students about making a speech or tactics for debating, is certainly welcomed and open for discussion.

It is important to spend some time talking about the various programs NRA offers to its members and the community. The students will be unfamiliar with most of NRA's programs. Usually, NRA staff spends about 30 minutes to an hour talking about the NRA, and handing out brochures about various programs that may interest the students. It is important that the students realize that State YES is an NRA program, and NRA is the reason they are there. We suggest, if

possible, scheduling NRA's Refuse to Be A Victim® presentation during the YES week. This is typically a 3-hour program, and we try to find an Instructor who can condense the program into an hour-long presentation. We also suggest arranging for a volunteer in the area to give the Eddie Eagle GunSafe® presentation.

Students must be allowed some free time in the evenings for socializing, etc. One evening during the program, a social activity may be scheduled, such as a baseball game or a trip to an arcade, etc. The students can even decide on this by taking a vote, if the chaperones and staff decide to allow them to. The chaperones and staff can feel free to give them several options for the evening, and let them decide. (The students may opt to skip the social time and continue with debates. This has previously happened.) Regardless, the entire group will participate in whatever activity is decided upon.

Students should be evaluated throughout the program based on their participation, including questions asked, and level interest shown in each activity, the level of effort put into the speeches and debates, their interaction with other participants and chaperones, and the Second Amendment essay. Chaperones and staff may want to keep an informal score sheet or notes throughout the YES to assist in selecting the recipient of the National YES scholarship.

The first year of any State YES program, NRA Headquarters will have an integral role in all aspects of the program, so that volunteers have the opportunity to see what the program is about, and how NRA Headquarters wants the program to be run. Volunteers should use the time beginning with the planning phase, all the way through the conclusion of the first program, as a training session to learn how to properly run the program, so that they can have a stronger role in coordinating and running the program in future years.

Students will be paired with one other student per room, with each student having his/her own bed. Rooming assignments will be made by NRA staff and no change of roommates will be permitted. One volunteer/chaperone, or staff member will be placed in a suite, large enough to serve as a meeting place between activities. This will serve as an informal meeting place for speeches, debates, and social time. (Most hotels charge a fee for reserving a meeting room, if no catering services are provided, anywhere from \$150-\$200 per day-part. This can be costly, and is not very flexible. Often the schedule changes at the last minute, and there is some unscheduled free time. The suite is an economical alternative, since it will serve as lodging for one chaperone, as well as an informal meeting area between activities. This also enables the chaperones to keep track of the students more easily.)

All program expenses will need to be approved by NRA Headquarters. Often, we have access to donated materials or services, which may aid in minimizing program costs. NRA staff will also have a good idea of what has and has not worked at previous State YES programs, and will be able to offer valuable suggestions.

Volunteers are encouraged to assist in any way possible. We understand that volunteering means using free-time, and at times a volunteer may have more time to devote to the program than at other times. The first year of the State YES program, is really a learning experience for the volunteers involved. Any and all help is welcome, including, assisting in suggesting activities, helping NRA Headquarters with making contacts for the program, assisting in promoting the program, and chaperoning during the program.