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ALA GIRLS STATE GUIDE

2023 - 2024

The 83rd session of Michigan American Legion Auxiliary Girls State will be held on the campus of Michigan State University June 23-29, 2024.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE ALA GIRLS STATE PROGRAM:

DISTRICT CHAIRMEN:

- Keeps a copy of the ALA Girls State materials available for copying at all times.
- Handles requests for information from the Units in their District.
- Checks with each Unit Chairman in their District to be sure they have the materials they need when contacting their local schools.
- Provides Department ALA Girls State Committee with a list of Unit Chairman.
- Plans an orientation for all delegates in their District in the spring of 2024.
- Presents a motion at their District meeting to sponsor a delegate to ALA Girls State.

UNIT PRESIDENTS:

- **Make sure your Unit ALA Girls State Chairman receives this guide!** Instruct your chairperson to check the Department website regularly for the Unit mailings, reservation form, delegate application, and Samsung Scholarship information. **She will need all of these tools to do her job!**

UNIT CHAIRMEN:

- **Read your materials! Remember, all of the ALA Girls State information you will need is available in this guide and posted on the Department's website at www.michalaux.org click on ALA Girls State.**
- Contact your local schools' counseling departments, or school Principal as early as you can! It is recommended that you do this in October/November. Contact Beryl Robbins for contact information for any school located in Michigan. They are very responsive to online contact. We recommend following up with a phone call or face to face contact.
- Make certain those in charge understand what the program is about, the type of female student we are looking for, who pays the reservation and registration fees, and the deadlines.
- If schools in your area have not received the ALA Girls State flyer, copy yours for them

or direct them to the Department website.

- **Make your selection of delegates from girls that commit to attending the entire program.**
- Instruct your delegates to contact Department ALA Girls State Chairman and/or Co-Chairman for approval if they need to arrive late or request an early departure. Remember, delegates **MUST** attend the complete session to receive their "Certificate of Completion" and an ALA Girls State pin.

THE SELECTION PROCESS:

The American Legion Auxiliary has provided a unique citizenship educational opportunity for America's female high school juniors for over 80 years. The program has grown from a few hundred participants to over 25,000 annually.

When making your selection(s), you should be looking for the following attributes:

- Must be a junior (11th grader) who will complete her junior year of high school in 2024.
- Must be a legal inhabitant of the U.S. (a U.S. Citizen or in the U.S. legally with a green card).
- We recommend that you interview your candidates. **MAKE SURE THEY WANT TO ATTEND.**
- Important that they have an interest in their community, government process and leadership.
- Important qualities to look for are character, honesty, good scholastic achievement, high moral values, and intellectual curiosity.
- Enthusiasm for the program. **THE DESIRE TO GET INVOLVED.**
- Fitness, as the program is a seven-day program that can be physically and mentally challenging. When running for any office, there are speeches to make, reference work to be done, campaigning, lots of walking, and long days. ALA Girls State is a high-energy program!
- Participation in community, school and church activities.
- **Understanding that the American Legion Auxiliary stands for God and Country**, and that a delegate can participate without conflict with her own beliefs, as long as she respects the Auxiliary's commitments, and our American flag.
- **DELEGATES MUST UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF ARRIVING BEFORE 11 A.M., ON REGISTRATION DAY, PLAN ON ATTENDING THE ENTIRE SEVEN-DAY SESSION THROUGH AND INCLUDING THE AWARD CEREMONY IN ORDER TO RECEIVE HER "CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION" AND ALA GIRLS STATE PIN.**

CANDIDATES DO NOT NEED TO BE THE DESCENDENT OF A VETERAN OR AN AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY MEMBER TO ATTEND ALA GIRLS STATE.

Make certain that each candidate knows and understands that THIS IS NOT A SUMMER SPORTS CAMP, but an interactive government simulation & leadership program that will require her to participate in learning the governmental process. In addition to learning, she will experience fellowship and friendships that will last a lifetime.



ATTENTION ALA GIRLS STATE SPONSORS!

This section is a two page, step-by-step, guide of our reservation, application, and registration processes!

KEEP IT HANDY, AND REFER TO IT OFTEN!

ALA MICHIGAN GIRLS STATE - JUNE 23-29, 2024 Reservation Deadline – April 15, 2024

RESERVATION AND SPONSORSHIP FEE:

- The fee is \$425.00, and is **NOT** refundable – NO Exceptions!
- Reservations will be accepted at the Department office beginning October 1, 2023. Send your payment early, you don't need to wait until you find a delegate.
- A **fully completed RESERVATION FORM must accompany your check.** Please write legibly, and make the check payable to ALA DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN.
- Have the funds to sponsor a delegate, but can't find one? Contact an ALA Girls State Committee member for assistance in locating a student.
- Don't have enough funds to sponsor a delegate? Consider pairing up with one or more Units in your District.
- Poppy funds **cannot** be used to send delegates to ALA Girls State.
- Sponsorship fees can be accepted from individuals, parents, relatives, schools, organizations and community businesses. **Please share this guide with any sponsoring organization or business you work with.**
- Collect pledges from your local businesses to help defray your cost of sponsoring a delegate

THE APPLICATION PROCESS:

- Recruit early! High school juniors are very active these days, so contact your schools in the fall and ask them to get the word out that you are looking for applicants. Make sure they have the updated application forms and informational materials. Take copies with you when you go into schools, or email them to counselors you work with. **Applicants do not have to be members of the American Legion Auxiliary!**
- The delegate application will be available to students who are interested in attending online this year. The link will also be made available on the department website, www.michalaux.org, click on ALA Girls State. We plan to do some marketing on social media and the link will be available there as well.
- The delegate application form is a *wonderful tool for your Unit to use for your selection process.* It can be used in conjunction with other application methods such as requiring them to write an essay or scheduling personal interviews. **PLEASE DO NOT MAIL THE DELEGATE APPLICATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OFFICE.**
- If you have applications for students that you do not have the funds to sponsor, **please send them to Beryl Robbins and we will locate a sponsor for them. Any girl that applies to ALA Girls State that has a strong desire to attend deserves to go!** The ALA Girls State Committee members reach out to District Presidents, Units and other sponsors from previous years to locate a sponsor from the applicant's area.

GETTING YOUR DELEGATES REGISTERED FOR ALA GIRLS STATE:

- Once the ALA Department office receives your reservation form and sponsorship fee, they will scan those documents and email them to Beryl Robbins, who will assign you a reservation number for each delegate you are sponsoring.
- **For each paid reservation, the sponsor will be emailed (or mailed upon request):**
 - one (1) *Delegate Letter*;
 - one (1) *ALA Girls State Checklist* (to be given to your delegate)
- **The sponsor contact will be responsible for getting the delegate letter and checklist to their delegate(s), either directly, via email or snail mail, or as an alternative, to the school counselor who can help with the registration process.**
 - The letter will inform them that they have been selected to attend ALA Girls State.
 - It will contain their **reservation number**.
 - It will have complete instructions for the **mandatory on-line registration at their cost of \$25 that they must pay online when they register**.
 - The **CHECKLIST** is a brief summary of the what they need to bring to ALA Girls State, what to wear, where to go, and instructions to visit the ALA Girls State page at www.michalaux.org, where they can obtain other detailed information, such as a PowerPoint orientation and the Government Manual they can review prior to attending.
 - **Please stress the importance of reviewing this material early, not 2 days before ALA Girls State. The earlier they receive this information, the better prepared they will be!**
 - If your delegate cancels, or you were unable to locate a student in your area to sponsor, PLEASE contact Beryl Robbins immediately so we can get that spot filled for you if possible!
- **It is the delegate's responsibility to register online at a cost to them of \$25. Detailed instructions will be included in their Delegate letter. PLEASE MAKE SURE THEY GET IT, and they register early! DO NOT send the \$25 to Department with your sponsor reservation form, give it directly to your delegate if you wish to pay this fee. You may also choose to reimburse them once they successfully complete the program.**

QUOTES FROM PAST DELEGATES OF ALA GIRLS STATE:

"It was an amazing experience that I would recommend to any girl interested in government or leadership. Everyone was so kind and I learned so much and got to know the great people around me."

"I loved ALA Girls State and think all girls should go to develop many useful skills for life while meeting new friends and having fun."

"I think that the purpose and motives behind ALA Girls State is amazing. I love the idea of empowering women and teaching us how to be strong leaders in the world while remaining supportive of each other."

"I absolutely loved it and wish every day that I could go back."

"I think it was a really good experience. It started out a little boring on day one just because we were all getting into things, but later it was much more fun. It helped me step out of my comfort zone while gaining knowledge and having fun."

ALA GIRLS STATE FLYER AND POSTER:

- A Michigan ALA Girls State flyer will be mailed to every high school in Michigan. The flyer will also be available on the ALA Department of Michigan's Girls State page and includes all the information the school officials and you will need to know to assist in selecting a delegate to ALA Girls State.
- An ALA Girls State poster is available on the ALA National and Department websites. You are encouraged to make multiple copies and post it wherever female students in their junior year of high school will see them. Take them to your local schools, grocery stores, McDonalds, Burger King, anywhere they will allow you to hang them! Make sure to put a label at the bottom with your contact information.
- **REMEMBER**, today's young people begin planning their summers very early in the school year, so contact your school(s) before the holidays.

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

- Publicize the ALA Girls State program in your local newspapers and high school media.
- Contact your school about posting a notice on their message board, or school radio program.
- Contact local newspapers and cable television stations to see if you can submit an article, or a public service announcement. Some cable programs offer to tape an interview with you, or an ALA Girls State counselor or your delegate from a previous year.
- There are sample press releases available on our ALA Girls State webpage for your use in recruiting students and associate sponsors in your communities.
- Mention the American Legion Auxiliary whenever possible in the interviews, literature and discussions in connection with ALA Girls State to increase the awareness of our program.
- Press releases and pictures should be given to the media upon selection of your delegates. Make sure you include "Michigan American Legion Auxiliary Girls State", your name, address and phone number in addition to the Unit name and location.
- Submit another press release when your delegate returns home from her week at ALA Girls State. Include a picture, her name, hometown name, sponsor information, a quote about her experience and activities she participated in at ALA Girls State.
- If your delegate is selected to attend ALA Girls Nation, or is awarded the Samsung Scholarship, make sure you contact your local newspaper! This is HUGE news!
- Copies of National ALA's suggested press releases are also available on their website.
- **Invite other civic and non-profit organizations to help with finances. In the past, Kiwanis, Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, Exchange Clubs, schools, parents, and many women's organizations have sponsored students. Most are willing to help financially, recognizing that the ALA Girls State program is known nation-wide. Once again, contact them early in the fall when they are planning their budgets.**

MEDICAL INFORMATION:

- MSU requires that we keep medical information on file for each of our delegates, and the medical centers/hospitals require insurance information, in case of illness or the need for emergency treatment.
- Your Delegate will be required to provide a medical information when she registers online.

- If a delegate is physically, visually, or hearing impaired and needs assistance to fully participate in the program, the contributing group must furnish a full-time female aide to assist the delegate. This aide must be 21 to 30 years of age and, preferably, someone other than a family member. The contributing group will be responsible for all expenses for the aide, including conference fees, meals and lodging. The aide must be approved by the ALA Girls State Committee.

OTHER MANDATORY FORMS:

- The students and their parents will also be required to sign the Consent Form, and Loyalty Pledge as part of their registration process. In addition to providing us with their contact information, name of the school they attend and their t-shirt size. **It will be mandatory for them to provide their Delegate Reservation Number, and the name of their sponsor in order to register, so please make sure they are supplied with that information!**

SAMSUNG SCHOLARSHIPS:

- Every eligible ALA Girls State citizen is encouraged to apply for this financial assistance. **Applicants for this scholarship must be a descendant of a U.S. wartime veteran.** Each Department selects one winner, in accordance with the foundation rules. Her application is forwarded to the National headquarters of The American Legion. Ten National scholars receive \$10,000 each (two from each region), Ten National runners-up receive \$5,000 each (two from each region), and the remaining Department finalists receive \$1,250. Make sure they **follow the rules** set by the Samsung Scholarship Foundation. Information for this scholarship, the application and criteria can be found at: www.michaloux.org, www.ALforVeterans.org or www.legion.org. **The form is now completed and submitted by the student on-line with a completion deadline of midnight on the first day of the session, although highly recommended that they complete it prior to arriving at ALA Girls State!** They will not have time to work on it once they arrive at MSU. The submitted scholarships are judged on-line by ALA Girls State volunteers. Our department winner will receive an award certificate at the closing ceremony. The national results are not announced until mid-October.
- **Required Documents.** Applications determined to include incomplete, incorrect, or illegible documentation are not eligible for consideration. To be considered complete, each Samsung American Legion Scholarship application should contain the following:
 - Veteran proof of service documentation
 - Student High School Record Certification Form.
 - High School Transcripts.
 - Understanding and Consent Form.
 - Supporting documents that support claims of work experience, student activities, volunteer opportunities or community service, honors and awards, and descendance from a Korean War veteran.
 - Two original essays not to exceed 500 words each on a topic determined by the Committee on Youth Education at the Fall meeting prior to the opening of the Samsung American Legion application window.

- **We highly recommend that your delegates obtain the documents and signatures needed for the Samsung Scholarship application process from their high school early! DO NOT wait until the school years ends! Also, please note it can take approximately six weeks to obtain a veteran's proof of service documentation.**

GIRLS NATION:

- Two delegates will be selected to represent Michigan as “Senators” to ALA Girls Nation, a similar program based on our federal system of government. Candidates are chosen based on their participation, leadership skills and broad knowledge of the process. ALA Girls Nation is held in July, 2024 in the Washington DC area.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS YOUR DELEGATES MAY ASK:

- **ALL Smoking is prohibited** by MSU in accordance with their written policy.
- **Students from the same school or home town are not assigned to room together, and cannot make special requests to be housed in the same room as a friend.**
- Delegates must bring their own spending money, toiletries, washcloths, hair dryer, watch, radio, alarm clock, calculator, fan, rain coat, and sweater or jacket. Their cell phone probably covers some of these items now. Wireless service is available in most MSU halls.
- Casual clothing (shorts & jeans) is acceptable. **NO short shorts, or skimpy tops are allowed.**
- Dresses, skirt and blouse, or nice slacks and blouse are required for the opening session, Wednesday city photos, and Saturday's closing awards ceremony. **No jeans for these events please.**
- Comfortable walking shoes are a must! While flip flops are acceptable, remind them of the ten-minute walk multiple times a day to a hall where their classroom activities take place.
- Must have items are: Personal water bottles, shower shoes (flip flops), medications and sanitary products.
- Laptop computers or tablets are not mandatory, but can be beneficial for research projects.
- Spending money can be useful for vending machines, ALA Girls State Merchandise Store, a trip to the MSU dairy store, or the MSU Book Store
- We have an ALA Girls State Bank that is open at registration and available daily during the lunch and dinner hours. Delegates are encouraged to bank their money to avoid loss or theft.
- ALA Girls State Staff and/or MSU **IS NOT** responsible for the loss of money that is not banked, lost jewelry, the loss or damage to laptops, and other electronic devises they choose to bring.

ORIENTATIONS:

- **PLAN AHEAD!** It's the goal of the ALA Girls State Committee to have every ALA Girls State DELEGATE attend a district orientation. Although attendance is not mandatory, it is very beneficial to them. ALA Girls State Committee members are available to assist you with your orientations. You are encouraged to invite them to speak at your orientation to ensure that everyone is receiving correct, up to date information.

- An orientation guide will be made available on the Department’s website.
- When you set your date, take into consideration spring breaks, special activities of the schools in your District; including, proms, musicals, plays, major sports events, etc., to assure the best attendance for your orientation.
- For large districts you may want to consider holding more than one orientation.
- If you contact us, we will do everything in our power to have one of our committee members or past committee members available for your orientation.
- Extend an invitation to Unit members, city officials, your school counselors, the history or social studies teachers and any potential sponsors.
- Make sure you notify the Department’s ALA Girls State Chairman with the date, time and location of your District’s Orientation. We would like to post the schedule of orientations on the ALA Girls State page of the Department’s website: www.michalaux.org. If you have girls that can’t attend yours, encourage them to check the Orientation calendar for one they are available to attend. **Informed ALA Girls State delegates make better ALA Girls State citizens!**
- Don’t be too extravagant with your ALA Girls State orientation/tea. Punch and cookies or snacks on the tables is sufficient.
- ***NOTE:*** Many times, delegates sponsored by associate sponsors, are not included on orientation invitation lists. Feel free to contact Beryl Robbins to get the names of all delegates from your district. ***These girls need the orientation information too!***

DONATION AWARDS PROGRAM:

The following awards will be given, at the 2024 Fall Conference for monetary donations (not sponsorships) made to the Michigan American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program, in the 2023-2024 fiscal period. These donations help cover items such as Capitol expenses, water for staff/volunteers, supplies for nurses’ clinics, staff parking, office supplies and other miscellaneous items.

<u>Donations of</u>	<u>will receive:</u>
\$ 50.00 - \$ 250.00	A Certificate
\$ 251.00 - \$ 500.00	A Certificate
\$ 501.00 - \$1,000.00	A Certificate
\$ 1,001.00 or more	A Certificate

Make check payable to: **ALA DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN.**
Earmark donation for: **ALA GIRLS STATE PROGRAM.**

Send donations to Department Headquarters:
212 N. Verlinden Avenue, Suite B, Lansing, MI 48915

ANNUAL REPORT:

To better prepare you for the annual reports, these are the questions you will be asked to report on for ALA Girls State:

1. Did you assist or host an ALA Girls State orientation in your Unit or District?
2. Did a member, Unit or District make a donation to ALA Girls State? Amount donated:
3. Did a member, Unit or District make any “in kind” donations to ALA GS? Item(s) donated:

4. Did you invite your delegates to a unit meeting or special event to report on their ALA Girls State experience? If yes, what did they express as the most rewarding part of their experience?
5. The ALA Girls State committee welcomes all comments or suggestions in the form of a narrative.

DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN ALA GIRLS STATE COMMITTEE

SPECIAL ALA GIRLS STATE EMAIL ADDRESS: alamigirlsstate@gmail.com
 (Please use this email address for all ALA Girls State inquiries to Beryl or Rysta)

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COMMITTEE MEMBER TBD

We are here and anxious to assist you with your ALA Girls State program. If you have any questions, no matter how insignificant it may seem, please ask. Our aim is to fill every paid reservation. Let's do our best to fill the resident hall with our delegates!

Additional Quotes from ALA Girls State Delegates:

Thank you so much for sponsoring me to go to Girls State! I had so much fun this week and like it was said at the information meeting, I definitely made some life long friends. We've been texting constantly since leaving Girls State, and I keep crying because they live on the other side of the State. One of them is named Lindsay and she was my roommate, saying goodbye to her on Saturday is what started my crying. The other girl is Drennan and we have been talking all day on group chats and privately. I'm so glad I met these girls and I'm soooo grateful that you helped me go to Girls State to make these friendships! THANK YOU SO MUCH!!
 Suzannah Green, Alto, MI. 2023 Delegate sponsored by ALA Unit 305.

Thank you very much for this amazing opportunity! It's only been day one but we're having an amazing time. Everyone here is so incredible and we cannot wait to make the best of this week!
 XO XO – Olivia and Saanvi – 2023 ALA Girls Nation Senators