



CALIFORNIA YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM
FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



Attention High School Juniors & Seniors

We Invite You to Apply to Attend the

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) for
Students with Disabilities

Created by the **C**alifornia **G**overnor's **C**ommittee on **E**mployment
of **P**eople with **D**isabilities

1. What is it?

- An exciting **five-day leadership program** that provides information on everything from technology to resource agencies, and helps you create a "Personal Leadership Plan" to help you reach your future education and career goals. Plus, you and your peers will be able to meet and interact with leaders in the State and Nation – celebrities, politicians, entertainers, and other role models from the "disability community."
- The forum will take place **July 24-29, 2010**, in the State Capitol, Sacramento, California. **Dates are subject to change.** Student delegates and volunteer staff stay in the dorms at California State University, Sacramento. If you have never experienced a university campus before, this is a great opportunity to do so!
- **Furthermore, AT NO COST FOR YOU TO ATTEND!**

2. *Who can attend?*

This amazing opportunity is only available to:

- High School students in **11th or 12th grade** with a disability which may include a variety of disabilities such as learning, visual, mobility, mental health, developmental, hearing, and neurological impairments. Some age exceptions may be made.
- Those who have demonstrated **leadership potential** in school and in the community.
- Must live in **California**.

3. *How are students selected?*

- Finalists will be contacted by telephone to arrange a personal interview.
- YLF Steering Committee partners will conduct the interview, which will take place during March and April.
- The Student Selection committee will make final selections by early May.
- **All** applicants will be notified through mail.
- Approximately 60 students will be chosen to attend.

4. *What happens if you are selected to attend YLF?*

- Students will be asked to fill out a confirmation form and provide additional information.
- The YLF staff will then send more detailed information about the Forum's schedule and activities in July.
- All appropriate expenses will be paid by the Youth Leadership Forum. This includes travel, lodging, food, and accommodations such as sign language interpreters, personal care attendants and alternate formats.

5. *What happens after you attend YLF?*

- All alumni of the YLF program are eligible to join the YLF Alumni Alliance, a group devoted to furthering the leadership skills of future youth with disabilities across California.
- Alumni are strongly encouraged to share what you've learned at YLF with your high school by giving presentations, encouraging other students to apply for future YLFs, and talking to your friends about your YLF experience.
- Overall, YLF will prepare you to be a stronger leader and give back to your community.

6. Who funds this fantastic opportunity?

- The YLF is produced as a cooperative project that includes the California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, State Employment Development Department, Department of Rehabilitation, Department of Education, State Independent Living Council, CalSTAT and California Health Incentives Improvement Project/San Diego State University, California Workforce Investment Board, State Council on Developmental Disabilities, California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, California Youth Leadership Forum Alumni Alliance, and Friends of Californians with Disabilities, Inc.

7. How do you apply?

- A. You can download and complete the on-line, fill-in application at: www.calylf.org. E-mail the application as an attachment to YLFapps@cfilc.org. (Letters of recommendation and required student/parent signature page should be mailed to the address below.)
- B. If you are assisting the student with this application, please be sure they are clear what YLF is and why they want to participate.
- C. Complete Application Packet must include:
- Application pages 1 thru 7 or pages 1 thru 10 on the accessible version (e-mail) (hard copy mail the signature page 7 or 10)
 - Two letters of recommendation (e-mail or mail if provided in hard copy)
 - Essay responses (e-mail)
 - Hard copy documents should be mailed to:
Youth Leadership Forum
c/o Dani Anderson
Department of Rehabilitation
Workforce Development Section
721 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814

8. *Deadline*

- Completed application packet must be e-mailed or post-marked **no later than February 3, 2010!**

9. *Who do you contact for further information or questions?*

- Please feel free to contact us by e-mail at: YLFapps@cfilc.org
or
- Telephone:
 - Voice (916) 558-5407 or Voice (866) 296-9753
 - TTY (916) 558-5403

FACT SHEET

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM (YLF) FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

A Unique Program for Future Community Leaders

WHAT IS THE YLF?

The YLF is an innovative, intensive five-day training program for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities. The training is presented in a fun, entertaining, and educational format in Sacramento, California.

WHAT KIND OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM?

Young people with disabilities who demonstrate leadership potential, academic success, involvement in extra-curricular activities, community involvement and the ability to interact effectively with other students.

WHAT SPECIFICALLY HAPPENS AT THE FORUM?

- ◆ The program includes small and large group discussions, a talent/variety show, a dance, a formal luncheon with community leaders, and a meeting in the Governor's Office.
- ◆ Topics include "Choosing a Career," "Understanding the History of Disability as a Culture," and "Assistive Technology for Independence." Presenters include disability community leaders, legislators, celebrities, and other adult role models who have disabilities.
- ◆ Students identify existing challenges to personal and professional success and develop plans to address overcoming those challenges.
- ◆ Students learn to manage their independence.
- ◆ Students develop public policy recommendations, which are formally presented by the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to the Governor and State Legislature.
- ◆ Students develop "Personal Leadership Plans" which include specific action items for the students when they return to their communities.
- ◆ Students learn how they may be able to participate in internships, mentoring programs, and other employment preparation activities, once the Forum has ended.

WHY HAVE THIS FORUM?

Young people with disabilities have both more opportunities and more challenges than at any other time in our nation's history. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has created unprecedented opportunities for these young people to fully develop as positive, contributing members of our society. The YLF enables them to learn from each other and from successful adults with disabilities. Hundreds of our YLF alumni lead independent lives and many have graduated from such prestigious universities as UCLA and Stanford and have successful careers.

HOW DOES THE FORUM HAPPEN?

Approximately 60 high school students are selected to attend through a competitive process. The event successfully integrates students who represent the disability and ethnic diversity of our State.

The Forum is held annually, the end of July, in the State Capitol, Sacramento, and at California State University, Sacramento.

WILL THERE BE MORE FORUMS IN THE FUTURE?

The first-ever YLF was held in Sacramento in 1992 and successful forums have been held annually since then. Additionally, more than 30 other states use our YLF as a model.

HOW MUCH DOES THE FORUM COST?

There is no charge for the student delegates to attend the Forum. The cost is approximately \$1900 per student, not including thousands of dollars for services and goods provided in-kind by volunteer supporters.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Rules and Guidelines for Student Delegates of the Youth Leadership Forum

In order to provide a fun and safe learning experience at the leadership forum, all student delegates will be expected to follow the rules listed below.

Students are selected to attend this forum because of their leadership skills and potential.

Consequently, students are expected to demonstrate their leadership ability and must:

1. **Be punctual**, beginning with your transportation pick-up point in your community. (Delegates who miss their scheduled transportation will have to provide their own.)
2. **Respect the scheduled program**. Attendance at all sessions is mandatory. You must stay with your assigned group at all times. Wake up and “lights out” times are set for all participants.
3. **Maintain a respectful attitude** toward peers, counselors, and conference staff.
4. **Respect the facilities** (maintaining the condition of dormitory rooms and all other areas). Participants will have to pay for property damage they cause and for lost room keys or towels.
5. **No co-ed visitation is allowed**. When not in assigned groups, males and females are restricted to their own assigned rooms at all times.
6. **Smoking and possession or use of illegal chemicals or alcohol is strictly prohibited**. Prescription or other approved medications require verification and can only be dispensed under supervision by the medical staff.

7. **All other campus residence halls and facilities are off limits.**
8. **Cellular phones, pagers, two-way radios, etc., must be turned off** during all program times of the forum. It is recommended that headsets, radios, and electronic games **not be brought to the forum.**

Any violations of these rules will result in students being sent home immediately at parents'/guardians' expense. Your application to the Youth Leadership Forum indicates your acceptance of these rules and guidelines.

And more importantly, we emphasize that delegates are chosen to attend the forum because of their leadership potential. Remember the responsibility that goes with the honor of being selected . . . and **plan to have a great time!**