

## **Selecting and Funding Delegates for Boys' State.**

Being selected as a delegate to attend Boys' State is an honor in of itself. Boys' State delegates are widely recognized by colleges, universities, and civic organizations as leaders and scholars. Some have scholarship programs specifically for attendees of Girls' State and Boys' State programs, especially in the southeastern United States.

For the past eighty years, Boys' State in Vermont has sought rising high school seniors who demonstrate leadership, scholarship, and citizenship: student government, club leaders, team captains, students who serve their communities. They may not have it together all the time, but as advocates of young people, you know that these characteristics are present – they just need a jump start to get going. We can do that!

### **SO – What to do now?**

#### **Selection**

Check your school's cover letter from me. On the top, you will find your school's allocation: the number of delegates you can send. (NOTE: this is never a hard and fast number. We will work with you to insure every student you deem as qualified can attend.)

Next, **please answer this question:** What group within your school is best suited to identify young men who fit the above description? Some schools have their members of their Administrative Team make the selection; Other schools rely on teachers from their Social Studies department, the guidance department, or principal. These methods serve their schools and students very well. The enrollment numbers are consistent, and schools have a ready-made list in case someone selected has conflicting plans.

**NOTE:** The least effective method is to announce the program and dates, and ask interested students to sign up. I'm sure you understand why this method does not work consistently – and you experience the results of leaving a high schooler to remember and act upon something each day you're in school.

**Financing** – The fee for each delegate is \$275. This fee barely covers the cost of housing and food for each delegate. The Vermont Department of the American Legion and some fund raising cover the rest.

There are several models of funding in use. Most schools have developed a relationship with their local posts of the American Legion, and work with the Legion to participate in its programs: Boys' State, Oratorical Contests, Eagle Scouting, and Scholarships. Unfortunately, not every town in Vermont has a Legion Post, and not every Legion Post has a relationship with their local school. That said, the Vermont Department has challenged every Post in Vermont to do its part to support Legion programs, so please contact your local Post and ask to speak with the Post Commander or Post Adjutant. If they do not return your call in a timely manner, **CONTACT ME**, and I'll get things moving.

Most schools supplement Legion support through local civic organizations like Rotary, Elks Club, Moose Club, and even the VFW. Sometimes, schools use their local scholarship monies, and others ask the parents/guardians to pay the fee. Please contact me if you have a qualified delegate, but no funding source. I will work with you to secure the support.

That about sums it up. I urge you to develop a relationship with a local post of the American Legion. You'll be surprised by the resources they have available for your students. Vermont veterans, still serving.