

Girls State History

GIRLS STATE began in 1937 and for almost 80 years now, the American Legion Auxiliary has succeeded in giving young women the finest citizenship training program possible. The program has grown from a few hundred participants nationwide to nearly 20,000 GIRLS STATE citizens annually, representing 49 states.

Following each GIRLS STATE session, the two top outstanding citizens are chosen to represent their state at GIRLS NATION in Washington D.C. GIRLS NATION has been recognized by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and has been placed on the National Advisory List of Contests and Activities.

Program Objectives

Members of the American Legion Auxiliary have structured GRANITE GIRLS STATE program in order to meet the following objectives:

- ◆ To develop leadership skills and pride in being American citizens
- ◆ To educate citizens about our system of government
- ◆ To stimulate a desire to maintain & appreciate our governmental process

Selection Process

- ◆ Completed Junior year of high school
- ◆ Interested in government and current events
- ◆ Have strong leadership abilities
- ◆ Have an above average scholastic standing
- ◆ US citizenship
- ◆ Each applicant must be willing to pledge allegiance to the flag of our country and abide by all rules of GRANITE GIRLS STATE



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

Founded in 1919, members of the American Legion Auxiliary support and serve the Nation's veterans and their families. Auxiliary programs encompass many humanitarian and social concerns including the welfare and care of veterans, children and youth, women's issues and service to the community. Year after year, members donate more than \$18 million and 6 million volunteer hours to communities nationwide.

PAST PARTICIPANTS OF GIRLS STATE/GIRLS NATION

include:

Anne M. Edwards

Associate Attorney General of NH

Jane Pauley

Broadcast Journalist

Katie Couric

Talk Show Host

Sharla "Kris" Cook

Brigadier General of the Air Force

Lynne Cheney

Author, Education Reform Advocate, wife of the United States Vice President

For more information on GRANITE GIRLS STATE contact

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American Legion Auxiliary

Department of New Hampshire

GRANITE GIRLS STATE

A Youth Citizenship Program

For Young Women



Whatever path the future holds, taking full advantage of the chance to develop leadership skills, confidence and poise will give young women a lasting foundation for success in their personal and professional lives.

GIRLS STATE



"The American Legion Auxiliary believes that educating youth about the basic ideals and principles of government will help to ensure the survival of democracy. GIRLS STATE is a unique citizenship training program in which Auxiliary members guide the youth of our nation toward an understanding, comprehension and appreciation of their roles as United States citizens."

What is Granite Girls State?

GRANITE GIRLS STATE is a practical application of Americanism and good citizenship accomplished through non-political lessons. These lessons inculcate in our citizens a love of America, knowledge of their government, an a sense of individual obligation to their community, state and nation.

GRANITE GIRLS STATE follows New Hampshire's governmental procedure as closely as possible. The girls learn about our two-party system. They learn the duties, responsibilities and powers of various offices. They hold party caucuses and have primary and general elections. GIRLS STATE citizens elect town, city, county and state officials and conduct city, town and county meetings. As senators and representatives, they introduce, debate, and vote on bills.

Girls from communities throughout the state attend GRANITE GIRLS STATE. They learn the important lessons of democracy, patriotism, love, loyalty, learning, truth, and service. They make everlasting friendships. They have the opportunity to learn that government is just what they make it. They learn the duties, privileges, rights and responsibilities of American citizenship.

Selection Criteria

Citizens of the GRANITE GIRLS STATE program are selected by their local American Legion Auxiliary Unit, working with local high school educators who assist in evaluating potential leadership qualities of the young ladies.

The number of GIRLS STATE citizens varies greatly in each state and is determined by each state's American Legion Auxiliary available resources. The program is funded by the American Legion Auxiliary, with some additional support coming from local businesses, civic and non-profit organizations. Little expense is required of the young woman and her family.



Scholarships

GRANITE GIRLS STATE citizens have the opportunity to receive financial assistance through the Samsung American Legion Scholarship. The scholarship will be awarded to qualified students who are direct descendants of United States wartime veterans. Selection criteria includes academic record, community involvement, school activities and financial need.

Various other college scholarships are offered through the Department of New Hampshire American Legion families.

Check with your local American Legion Auxiliary Unit to see what scholarships are available in your area.

Additional Activities

To encourage creativity and fellowship, many activities are offered as part of the GRANITE GIRLS STATE program. Citizens will have the opportunity to participate in:

- ◆ Public speaking/debating
- ◆ GRANITE GIRLS STATE Talent show
- ◆ Singing
- ◆ Patriotic Ceremonies
- ◆ Creating the Granite Press

GRANITE GIRLS STATE has provided valuable learning experiences for thousands of New Hampshire women. It has instilled in these women, a deeper understanding of their government.

"I can't imagine graduating high school without the opportunity to attend GIRLS STATE. It was such an amazing experience, it created memories that I will have for the rest of my life."

*-Samantha Welch GGS 2013
Pinkerton Academy*

"Going to Girls State was an opportunity of a lifetime. I met amazing girls from throughout the state, got a deeper knowledge of our government and made memories that I will cherish forever."

-Rebecca Lynn Cosgrove GGS 2013

"I never knew high school girls could ever be so great and become your best friends in a week! Not to mention how much you learn about government and how great our country is! All in all, the best week of the entire summer!"

-Sarah Payson GGS 2012