

Lowndes County School District students who will be seniors in the 2024-25 school year have a great opportunity thanks to the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA).

On May 26-June 1, 2024, Mississippi American Legion Boys State will give young male leaders an opportunity to come together at the University of Mississippi in Oxford. The program will attempt to show a democracy needs an intelligent citizenry and a moral, honest, and impartial administration responsive to the will of the people.

On June 9-15, 2024, ALA Girls State at Ole Miss will offer female high school students a week of learning focused on responsible citizenship, leadership and love for God and country.

An application for the boys event is available now at:  
<https://msboysstate.com/>. Applications close May 20.

An application for the girls event is available now at:  
<https://form.jotform.com/231527183500145>. Applications close May 25.

T.S. Patterson American Legion Post 69 and the American Legion Auxiliary Post 69, in Columbus, will offer scholarships for boys and girls to help cover the cost of meals and housing.

Boys State should be thought of as a mythical 51st State with the Constitution, Statutes and Ordinances constructed by its citizens to govern themselves. Citizens not only will be required to review knowledge already acquired concerning the political machinery of state and local government, but they will find themselves performing the same functions as real office holders. Every delegate to Boys State will hold elective office. Delegates learn the duties of various city, county, and state officials and introduce and argue bills in their legislature.

Each citizen will have the opportunity to learn that his government is what he makes it. The program is non-partisan. Problems will be considered without reference to existing political parties and will be free from propaganda. The sole purpose is to enable the delegate to grasp the meaning and responsibilities upon which he will be called to assume when he becomes an adult.

The selection and assignment of citizens to parties is in no way connected to existing political parties in Mississippi. Boys State, "political parties" are called "Nationalist", "Federalist" and "Independents". They are mythical and none of the principles typifying any of the existing parties will be adopted. In this way, we try to assure a democratic government in its purist sense.

Female high school students will be competitively selected and sponsored by ALA units. The students will learn about the political process by electing officials for all levels of state government and actively running a mock government. The girls are assigned to mock cities and the "Federalist Party" or "Nationalist Party."

Assistance from ALA volunteers ensure the program's nonpartisan governmental, patriotic, and civic objectives are carried out through interactive learning.

Though the week is filled with many learning opportunities, there is time for fun and the formation of long-term friendships. The art of civil debate is one of the main skills learned at the program, which the ALA has hosted since 1937.

Candidates should be interested in government and current events, have high moral character, and show strong leadership abilities.

For more information about Mississippi American Legion Boys State, go to: <https://msboysstate.com/>, or call T.S. Patterson Post 69 at 662-617-5049 or 303-807-3140.

For more information about ALA Magnolia Girls State, go to:  
<https://sites.google.com/view/alamississippigirlsstate/home>, or call  
662-617-5049 or 303-807-3140. Send your questions to:  
[magnoliagirlsstate@gmail.com](mailto:magnoliagirlsstate@gmail.com).