

2016-2017 Tar Heel Girls State Plan of Action

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Mission of the Tar Heel Girls State Commission is:

- * To instill and to increase in the citizens, a heightened awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in their community, state and nation.
- * To assist and educate citizens on their responsibility for honoring and thanking veterans for their sacrifices in giving us the freedoms we enjoy.
- * To honor the commitment of active duty service persons.
- * To provide the citizens with “hands on” participation in, and creation of a “51st” state of the union with a total functioning government.

Objectives of the program on the National and Department level are:

1. To utilize the Internet, FaceBook, Twitter and other social networking sites and increase visibility of Tar Heel Girls State.
2. To instill in girls State citizens a commitment of volunteerism in their communities and an awareness of the American Legion Auxiliary’s mission.
3. To continue to attract participants and increase growth of the Girls State program by keeping them relevant and by encouraging the Department to increase scholarships/funding for the program and to give Unit’s tools with which they may ask other community groups for financial assistance
4. To continue to read and study all materials sent from the Department that provide all information on the Tar Heel Girls State Program and how the Unit can implement the program.

Plan of Action of Tar Heel Girls State related to the objectives is:

1. Continue to encourage citizens, prospective citizens and Unit members to use our website: www.thgs.com and Facebook page.
 - a. Encourage Units and citizens to submit to our webmaster articles and photos for posting on the THGS website and the NCALA website
 - b. Encourage Junior Unit to ask a member of the THGS Commission or THGS staff to present a program at a junior unit meeting, as well as at the Junior Department meeting.
 - c. Encourage citizens and Unit members to follow the Orientation schedule on the website.
2. Continue to educate the citizens and prospective citizens about the programs and missions of the American Legion Auxiliary. The Commission will do this through our area orientations to which citizens are required to attend. We will explain how the ALA supports and provides for members of the active military, their families and veterans and their families.
 - a. Continue during orientations to recognize parents of citizens who are veterans or active duty military personnel, and will thank them for their service to our country.
 - b. Continue to provide citizens during orientations and also at the session with materials including “Auxiliary Facts” about the ALA and membership information.
 - c. Recognize Junior ALA members during the session with recognition during opening ceremonies, a star beside their name in the handbook, and with a special star on their nametag.
 - d. Recognize citizens and staff with a small **Blue Star Banner** attached to their nametags to signify that they have a family member currently serving on active duty in a branch of the military.
 - e. Share poppies with citizens at the Session and give the Poppy Story, and use poppies in decorations and in corsages during Inauguration of the Council of State.
 - f. Ask the citizens during closing ceremonies to go back to their schools and

communities and get involved and volunteer.

Continue during the session to ask citizens to:

- * Make thank you cards and posters to be distributed to veterans who are currently hospitalized in our NC VA Medical Centers.
 - * Bring to the session personal toiletry items, bags of popcorn, books, socks, writing materials, ie, for use with indigent and/or homeless veterans by the deputies in our NC VA Medical Centers.
 - * Perform a public flag ceremony in which veterans and active duty personnel are honored. Invite public to the ceremony, along with the Catawba College staff.
3. Encourage Units to find sponsorships/funding from other civic organizations in the community by sharing with them the importance of investing in these youth: the future leaders of the community. The Commission will provide materials including samples of letters that can be used in these efforts.
- a. Share resources for obtaining grants and how to write grants:
<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/shortcourse/index.html> (once you have received a grant, contact the Department office for instructions on how it can be processed through the American Legion Auxiliary).
 - b. Ask Units to set up a Girls State Scholarship, perhaps in memory of a former Unit member.
 - c. Ask Units to consider fundraisers if they need to raise funds for Girls State tuition.
 - d. Enlist former Girls State alumnae or staff to serve as recruiters in the high schools.
 - e. Share information with the citizens on how to get college credit for their week at Girls State.
4. Promote the availability of the Samsung Scholarship, a scholarship opportunity available to all ALA Girls State participants who are a direct descendant of a veteran. Each Year, one girl from each ALA Girls State program will be awarded a plaque and their application will be forwarded to National as a finalist. National winners may be awarded up to \$20,000.
- a. Include information promoting the Samsung scholarship in our March mailing to the girls and to unit Girls State chairmen.
 - b. Include the link to the Samsung scholarship on the THGS website and department website.
 - c. Announce the recipient of the Samsung scholarship during our closing ceremony.
 - d. Share a photo on the THGS website and provide the recipient with the proper forms to submit to her local media outlets.
5. Continue to send via bi-monthly mailings /email/web site all the necessary materials that the Unit needs to understand and comprehend the program, including contacting the high schools, selection process, raising funds if necessary and more. Units are encouraged to use all materials and to contact the Tar Heel Girls State Commission if additional help is needed.
- a. To encourage Units to publicize their Girls State program and citizens locally in the newspaper, TV and radio stations through articles and photographs and also through social media.
 - b. To stay in contact with the citizens after their selection, contact them right before the session, and invite them back to report to the Unit.

Report Deadlines: End of Year due April 30, 2017