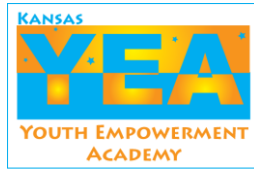


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KANSAS YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM SEARCHES FOR POTENTIAL YOUTH LEADERS

The Kansas Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (KSYLF) is currently searching for motivated young leaders to attend the ninth annual forum held June 16 – 20, 2009 at Washburn University in Topeka. The KSYLF is coordinated by the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (KYE A), a youth-driven, non-profit organization that promotes and supports the development of youth with disabilities in Kansas.

The KSYLF is an annual conference that is heading into its ninth year serving students with disabilities across the state. During the forum, delegates enjoy a week full of learning, fun, friends, and, most of all, a new sense of empowerment! Through various large sessions, delegates are able to hear from community leaders on such topics as disability history, advocacy, goal setting, leadership, resources, and much more. Students are also able to share life experiences, goals, and ideas during breakout sessions with small groups. By week's end, all delegates will have stated their future plans and career goals in their very own Personal Leadership Plan.

Aside from large and small group sessions, students participate in a variety of fun activities as well. A trip to the Capitol is always a highlight of the week. Students are able to tour the Capitol building, as well as participate in a legislative activity in the Senate Chambers. Other activities include a mentor luncheon where delegates are paired with an adult from their area who has a similar career interest, and a talent show where participants are able to share their unique abilities with the group. Other fun activities include a recreation session, real life fair, a barbeque, and a dance, which is always a delegate favorite!

All students who are interested in attending the KSYLF must meet the following criteria: (1) reside in Kansas, (2) have a disability as defined with the Americans With Disabilities Act, (3) be in the 11th or 12th grade as of December 31st of the current year, and (4) have demonstrated leadership potential in school and the community. Students must fill out an application that will be reviewed through a competitive selection process. About 30 – 40 delegates will be selected to attend. Applications are available on the KSYLF section of the KYEA website (see below). The application deadline for the 2009 forum is **December 15, 2008**.

There will be no cost for students who are selected to attend. All lodging, food, and accommodations are paid for through KSYLF funds. Accommodations such as personal care attendants, sign language interpreters, large print or Braille materials, and other accommodations will be provided for those delegates who need them.

For more information about the Kansas Youth Leadership Forum, please contact Julia Fonseca, Executive Director, toll free at 866.577.5932 or via e-mail at juliaf@kyea.org. More information can also be found on the KYEA website at www.kyea.org.

The KYEA is made possible by a grant from Kansas Rehabilitation Services and match funds from the Kansas Legislature.