

District 5470 Club RYLA Chair Manual



GOAL OF THIS DOCUMENT:

- The goal of this document is to provide Club RLYA Chairs with a clear guideline for successful participation in the RYLA program.

DISTRICT RYLAMISSION:

- RYLA 5470's mission is to encourage and support the recognition, training, and mentoring of youth leaders by Rotary Clubs in District 5470.

DISTRICT RYLA OBJECTIVES:

- Empower clubs involvement in recognizing & rewarding youth leaders in their community.
- Provide a leadership training retreat weekend for youth identified by clubs to teach leadership skills based on Rotary values of fellowship, high ethical standards, the ideal of service, and the promotion of international understanding and goodwill.
- Train and facilitate club level Rotarians to provide yearlong mentoring and support of RYLA 5470 youth leader participants.
- Facilitate fellowship between youth leaders around our district.
- To connect youth leaders in our district with Rotary opportunities involving Interact, Rotaract, Rotary Youth Exchange, and Rotary Scholarships.
- See the attached "What is RYLA?" for a description of the RYLA Program.

CLUB RYLA CHAIR ROLE:

Rewards: The role of the Club RYLA Chair is a rewarding position. By selecting and guiding students (typically 2-4 per club) through a process of improving themselves and their leadership skills, the Rotarian will be providing a great service to both the youth selected and the future of the community. In the process of mentoring, the Rotarian will also improve his/her own skills in both leadership and working with young people. Most rewarding of all is being able to build a relationship and connections with some great young people in your community. Responsibilities can easily be divided among a few people on a committee.

Chairs are encouraged to hold three year terms, and to always have a future chair identified and in training to take over.

Responsibilities: There is some time and work involved in being the Club RYLA Chair, but it is very reasonable and manageable. The time commitment is estimated to be 20-30 hours over the course of a year, with the bulk of that commitment being the RYLA Retreat Weekend in early June.

Jan	Secure club approval to participate	2-3	hours
Feb	Arrange funding of students' awards	2-3	hours
Mar	Solicit applicants to be interviewed	2-3	hours
April	Interview applicants	2-3	hours
May	Submit Student Registration Forms	2-3	hours
June	Transport students to/from Retreat Weekend	6-12	hours
Sept	Arrange fall follow-up meeting with students	2-3	hours
Oct	Arrange students presentation to club	2-3	hours
Jan	Arrange winter follow-up meeting with students	2-3	hours

Important Deadlines: The Club RYLA Chair has the latitude to operate their club RLYA program as they feel best fits their club and community, but it is important to work within the following deadlines to assist the District RYLA committee in holding the RYLA Retreat Weekend. If your club will miss a deadline, please let the district committee know before the deadline when they can expect to hear from you.

- March 30 Club commitment and reservation for anticipated student(s)
- March 30 Send payment to district committee
- April 30 Submit **names** of students to district
(Deadline to get credit rolled to next year if no student located)
- May 15 Student registration forms due to district
- June 21-24 **Retreat**
 - Fri 4-5pm Arrive at RYLA Retreat
 - Sun 6pm RYLA Retreat Dinner & Keynote (Rotarians Invited!)
 - Mon 1 pm Student pick-up
- Sept 15 Deadline for Club student follow-up meeting
- Nov 30 Deadline for Student presentation to club

RECOMMENDED CLUB PROCESS:

January/February: Secure club approval to participate and identify funding 2-3 hours

1. Speak with Club President and attend a board meeting to ask for board approval to

participate in the district RYLA program.

2. Clubs are encouraged to sponsor two students each year. This allows a level of comradeship among a club's sponsored students. It also multiplies the effect of the chair's efforts to advertise, interview, and transport students to the RYLA Retreat weekend. Two students are not much more work than one!
3. Clubs are asked to notify the District RYLA Co-Chairs of the **number of students** by March 30. Send reservation to RYLA5470@gmail.com.

Feb - Arrange funding of student's awards

2-3 hours

The A in RYLA stands for "award". This comes from the origins of RYLA in Australia where "award" is synonymous with "Scholarship". Clubs award scholarships to local students who are showing early signs of leadership or leadership potential in the community. The 2019 fee is \$375.00 per student. The two most common forms of funding are:

1. **Club Funded Scholarships:** Many clubs simply budget for RYLA students each year from club funds. Check with your club president about available funds within the budget.
2. **Community Funded Scholarships:** Other clubs solicit local businesses to sponsor students.

The first step would be to announce at a club meeting the call for business sponsors and hand out flyers at a Club meeting. (See attachment for example letter).

The second step would be to select businesses to approach in person. Local banks and realtors are often good options. It is recommended that you approach them in person carrying a letter, and explain in person what the program does, leaving the letter. Then follow-up with a phone call a week later.

Combination of Club & Community Funding: Using a combination of both approaches is highly recommended. Getting community businesses' participation spreads the word of Rotary and builds on the "Fellowship" at the root of Rotary. (Who knows - you might just find a prospective new member for your club in the process of explaining Rotary & RYLA to local business and professional people.)

Other Costs to Consider: The last issue regarding funding is to discuss other costs involved with the program and how they will be paid. There will be some nominal printing and postage costs that the club might or might not reimburse. There will also be the cost of mileage to and from the RYLA Retreat Weekend and hotel and food costs for the Rotarian during the weekend. Some clubs will reimburse members for some or all of the costs associated with district participation and other clubs assume those costs will be covered as part of a members service commitment to the club. Finally, when students attend the club meeting after attending the conference to make their presentation, we encourage you to invite their parents and a school administrator so there will be the costs of their meals to consider.

March: Solicit applicants to be interviewed

2-3 hours

1. How clubs solicit applicants is up to the Club RYLA Chair, as long as the students are 14-17 years old at the time of the Retreat Weekend in June. Generally, they will be freshmen,

sophomores, or juniors when applying. Candidates should be in good standing as students and have shown early signs of leadership or leadership potential. It is strongly recommended that the club does a thorough interview of potential “Rylarians”.

2. A multi-pronged approach to soliciting applications is recommended:
 - a. Within the Club: Announce at a club meeting and explain the kinds of youth that you are seeking, and encourage members to reach outside their normal circles in identifying potential applicants. Remember to acknowledge the local scholarship sponsors.
 - b. Past RYLA Participants and Rotary Youth Exchange Students: Contact past students involved in Rotary to nominate applicants. It is recommended to have them nominate from a younger grade level and not peers who may be too old. Have them follow the same discussion and formal nomination process as adults.
 - c. Within the school: Make an appointment to speak with the school guidance counselor and provide them the attached “What is RYLA” and ask them to nominate students for interviews. Again, they should speak with the student and then formally nominate them to you.
 - d. To the Community: Send out a press release that your club is looking for nominations for young people showing early signs of leadership or leadership potential to attend a leadership training program. Send this to newspapers and radio stations. Keep the contact information you collect so that you can use it in a follow-up release after the Retreat Weekend. See attached example press release. Clubs are encouraged to have interested people contact the chair who will explain how the nominator should speak with the student to gauge interest and then submit a short written nomination.

April: Interview Applicants

2-3 hours

1. How clubs conduct interviews is up to the Club RYLA Chair. Clubs are encouraged to interview students in person. The experience is very rewarding and gives the young person a valuable opportunity to experience an interview process. Many clubs find inviting members of the club to help interview is a way to build interest and new committee members among the club.
2. Criterion for selecting students is up to the Club RYLA Chair. Chairs should consider both the potential benefit to the applicant and also the health and success of the program. **RYLA is not a “troubled kid” program but a program for potential leaders.** Students should exhibit a cooperative nature and willingness to engage in group activities. Sending students to RYLA that misbehave or do not cooperate severely undermines the success of the program for others and undermines the enthusiasm of volunteers who give their time. Applicants should submit a brief written document explaining why they are interested and what they hope to gain from the RYLA experience.
3. Interviewers are encouraged to start by explaining what Rotary is and how RYLA fits into

Rotary's mission. Begin by asking open ended questions that allow the student to shine and build confidence before asking harder or more challenging questions. Assure that the interview process ends positively.

4. Clubs are encouraged to seek diversity in the students they select and send to RYLA. Our communities are increasingly diverse and sending students of all segments of our community will build links between the student leaders selected and Rotarians and parts of the community they are not familiar with already.
5. If you have a promising candidate that has special needs, please consult with a District Co-Chair prior to offering them the scholarship. The campus is ADD complaint, but the nature of our program has proven challenging for some in the past. We want to ensure that everyone has a full learning experience and often additional conversations are needed before a decision to attend.
6. Notify the District RYLA Committee of students' names as soon as selected. Selected applicants should turn in the registration form by May 15. Registration forms are available on the district website: <http://www.rotary5470.org/>
7. Announce the selected students' names to the club. Remember to acknowledge local sponsors again. Clubs are encouraged to invite applicants to a club meeting to be introduced as soon as they are selected. This begins the relationship of the club and the students and helps them understand what Rotary and community leadership really means.

May: Submit Student Applications to District RYLA Committee **2-3 hours**
Please assure all payments and student registration forms are submitted to the district by May 15. The program is committed to pay for student spaces after this date so any withdraws must be received by May 15.

June: Transport students to/from Retreat Weekend **6-12 hours**

1. Club RYLA Chairs are strongly encouraged to drive students to the Retreat Weekend and drive them home. The Retreat has been scheduled for a long weekend to make this as easy as possible. This time in the car is an important opportunity to build a relationship with the students that will last throughout the year and the discussions that take place are an important part of the program. If you have only one student in the car, please bring an additional adult to be a part of the conversation.
2. If the Club RYLA Chair cannot drive the students, please find another Rotarian to join the club RYLA committee that can do so.
3. If students transport themselves to the Retreat, contact the district committee for approval. Students must arrive at the campus before 6 p.m.
4. Drop-Off: Club RYLA Chairs are encouraged to stay on Friday evening after dropping off the students for a BBQ and fellowship with other Rotarians and RYLA Chairs. They are welcome to attend the Keynote address that evening.

5. RYLA Chairs who can stay over the weekend of the retreat and participate in all or part of the activities are welcomed. The District RYLA committee needs to be notified so room arrangements can be made. Details will be provided in late April.
6. *Optional:* Club RYLA Chairs are encouraged to join the district committee and be an active part of the weekend programs (see below for more information), but even informally, Club RYLA Chairs are welcome to join or observe the retreat weekend program.
7. Sunday night is an important dinner for the students. They will hear a presentation on inter-generational differences and dialogue and then have a “dignitaries’ dinner” with Rotarians at each table. Club RYLA Chairs are encouraged to participate in this dinner and discussion.
8. Pick-Up: There will be a picnic at noon on Monday for students and Club RYLA Chairs. Closing Ceremony will follow. Students will be dismissed at 1:00 p.m.
9. Contact your club’s “Speaker Chair” to reserve a date for the students to present in August-September.

September: Fall follow-up meeting with students

2-3 hours

1. Club RYLA Chairs are encouraged to have a follow-up meeting around the beginning of the school year to review what the students learned at RYLA and what goals they have set for themselves for the school year. It is recommended that this be a group activity for all the youth from the community who attended so they can encourage and support each other’s goals as they learned at the retreat.
2. Make sure students know date of presentation and invite any community scholarship sponsors. This is a good time to secure a repeat scholarship sponsor for the next year. We also recommend inviting a school administrator or counselor to attend. This increases the exposure of the program and helps connect the student’s new leadership skills with the school.
3. Club RYLA Chairs are encouraged to follow-up one-on-one with students to mentor and encourage them as needed. The power of a 2-3 minute phone call in reminding a kid that an adult is interested and cares about their success is a small investment for a powerful result.

August-November: Arrange Students’ Presentations to Club

2-3 hours

1. Having the students follow-up and present to the club is an important part of the RYLA program. Students practice their public speaking skills in doing so and it further builds the relationship between the students and Rotary as well as reminds club members of the value of participating in the RYLA program.
2. Be sure to have the students recognize local sponsors at your meeting. Ask Rotarians in your club to individually thank the sponsors if they see them in person.

January-February: Winter follow-up meeting with students**2-3 hours**

1. After the first of the year, schedule a final meeting with the students to assess how they are doing on their goals and objectives and see if they should change their leadership goals or their approach to achieving them.
2. Use this meeting to gather feedback from the students on the success of the program and get information on what can be improved. Forward this information to the district RYLA Committee at RYLA5470@gmail.com.
3. Use this meeting to explain the process for graduates to nominate new students for the upcoming year. Ask the students to reach outside their own social circles and to think about the diversity of the school. It is recommended that you ask them to nominate students from a younger grade level and to take the same approach of using the compliment of speaking with the nominee first and then writing the recommendation.

RYLA DISTRICT COMMITTEE:

The best way to help improve our program is to help us improve this manual so that it is as easy as possible for clubs to participate successfully in the RYLA program. Please let us know any advice for changes, improvements, or examples of what you and your club have done that made RYLA a success.

The RYLA Retreat Weekend is run by a district committee and your participation would be greatly appreciated. You can download the RYLA operating manual and other documents on the district website.

What is RYLA?



(Rotary Club Name Here)
(RYLA Club Coordinator Name)

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is a program to assist high school students in developing leadership skills. The program centers on an intense, professionally led, four-day leadership training retreat. Rotary District 5470 (covering the southern half of Colorado) holds its retreat weekend in early June at the Colorado Mountain College Spring Valley Campus located near Glenwood Springs, Colorado.

What Happens at the Leadership Retreat Weekend? The RYLA Retreat weekend provides a series of professionally developed presentations and activities that takes participants through a process of assessing their personal leadership characteristics, and understanding the ethics of leadership and setting personal goals. It then teaches leadership through interpersonal skills, working effectively with diverse peers in conflict resolutions and consensus building, as well as organizational planning, and recognizing and working with support networks.

How much does RYLA Cost? RYLA does not cost students anything. The “Awards” in the RYLA name refers to the scholarships that are awarded by Rotary and/or locally supporting businesses that sponsor RYLA scholarships through the local Rotary Clubs. If you are willing to sponsor a scholarship, please let your local Rotary Club know. Scholarships are approximately \$375 each.

How are students selected to participate? Students are nominated by a local Rotary Club in the district. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the District website for Rotary District 5470 or can be provided by your local Rotary Club. The Rotary Club RYLA Chair interviews students and selects the recipients of the awards. Most communities sponsor between two and four awards each year from their community.

Who should attend RYLA? RYLA is designed to work with students that are starting to show signs of leadership, or the potential for leadership, in their communities. Successful applicants are in good standing at school and are actively involved with clubs, sports teams, or community groups.

What else is RYLA? The RYLA program is an opportunity to meet and build friendships with fellow student leaders from around the state as well as getting to know the Rotarian leaders in your community. Rotary is based on a foundation that Fellowship, by getting to know each other, opens opportunities for service that will make our communities’ better places to live, as well as promoting peace and better understanding worldwide. An important part of RYLA is building these relationships – and most clubs will meet with students 2-3 times after the retreat to follow-up on what was learned at the retreat and how to apply that leadership in school, family, and friends.

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP
REQUEST LETTER



(ROTARY CLUB NAME)
(CLUB RYLA CHAIR CONTACT INFO)
(Date of Letter)

(Potential Sponsor Name)
(Business Name) (Address)
City, State Zip

Dear _____,

The Rotary Club of _____ is seeking partners to support leadership training for high school sophomores and juniors in our community that have been identified as exhibiting early leadership skills or leadership potential.

Selected students will be awarded full scholarships to attend a four day leadership retreat weekend in early June. The weekend consists of professionally lead activities that take students through a process of assessing their personal leadership characteristics and setting personal goals, to teaching leadership skills based on interpersonal relationships, ethics, and organizational structures and planning. Students will then have periodic follow-up meetings with local Rotarians to mentor the students in applying the new skills to their relationships at school, home and in the community.

Our club is seeking community scholarship sponsors to collaborate with our Rotary Club. Our club's goal is to send__ (two recommended) students. The cost of the program is \$375 per student. The club has allocated club funds to cover (\$XX) per student, and we are asking you to consider helping with the remainder.

The value of supporting this program is clearly in the benefit these young people. Our community will gain from having more capable young leaders. Sponsors will be recognized for this community support at local Rotary Club meetings and in press releases issued about the program. Perhaps most rewarding, however, is that the students will make a presentation about what they learned to the club and we would like you to come and be recognized.

Please consider being a community sponsor. Our deadline for reserving student spaces is Feb 28, and we would need to receive payment by March 31st. Please mail checks to our Rotary club at the address above.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours in Rotary Service,

(Rotarian Name)
(Rotarian Phone Number)

PRESS RELEASE



(ROTARY CLUB NAME)
(CLUB RYLA CHAIR CONTACT INFO)

DATE: (ADD TODAY'S DATE)
Please run at least weekly though March 31.

SUBJECT: Rotary Club seeks Nominations for Student Leadership Training Scholarships.

The _____ Rotary Club seeks nominations for the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) Scholarships. RYLA is a program that provides professional leadership training for high school sophomores and juniors. The four-day leadership retreat will be held June 21-24, 2019. Students interested in being Rotary Youth Exchange Students or applying for Rotary Scholarships are strongly encouraged to apply.

Community members may nominate students whom they feel are showing early signs of leadership or leadership potential in the community. Information and nomination forms can be found on the website www.RYLA5470.org or by contacting the local Rotary Club before March 31st. Students will be interviewed by the club and awardees selected in April.

The local scholarships are sponsored by _____. Scholarships cover the cost of the training weekend for scholarship awardees. For information on sponsoring additional scholarships, please contact the local Rotary Club as soon as possible. Club RYLA Chair:

NAME _____ at XXX-XXX-XXXX or by e-mail at
xxxx@xxxxx.com .

Submitted by:

Name of Club RYLA Chair _____
ROTARY CLUB OF _____
PHONE NUMBER: _____
E-MAIL: _____

How to Nominate a RYLA student.



(Rotary Club Name)

(RYLA Club Coordinator Name)

What is RYLA? Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is a program to assist high school students in developing leadership skills. The program centers on an intense, professionally led, four-day leadership training retreat. Local Rotary clubs and community scholarship sponsors cover the cost of the training weekend.

Who should attend RYLA? RYLA is designed to work with high school sophomores and juniors who are beginning to show signs of leadership or the potential for leadership in their school and community. Successful applicants are in good standing at school and are actively involved with clubs, sports teams, or community groups.

How are students selected to participate? Students are nominated by community members and interviewed for the scholarships by local Rotarians. To nominate a student please use the following form and send it to the local Club RYLA Chair listed above:

Speak to the student and tell them why you would like to nominate them and ask if they would be interested. This should be a serious conversation about what you see in them and what they could learn. Ask them to think about it and get back to you.

If the student is interested, write a short paragraph below on why you feel this student would be a good candidate. The club who will select the recipients of the awards will interview the student.

Name of Nominated Student: _____

Student's Phone Number: _____

Student's email address: _____

Local Rotary Club Name: _____

Why this student would be a good candidate:

Signature: _____ Printed Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail address: _____