

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Leadership Camp

A Guide for Rotary Clubs in District #7780



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What is RYLA?

At the surface, RYLA is a four day, three night leadership program for students entering their junior year of high school. However, RYLA is so much more than that; **RYLA changes lives.** Between the curriculum, location, and staff, RYLA provides its participants with a chance to grow as leaders and people on an individual level while in a group setting.

Positive Youth Leadership Development starts with getting a feeling of increased self- confidence and self-esteem. A leader that knows who they are and how to move beyond their comfort zone, will consciously have empathy for those that follow them. The Experiential Learning Cycle develops a habit of seeking productive feedback loops that allow for an environment of continual self & team improvement. As participants reflect on their own strengths and obstacles, they establish a pattern of behavior in which feedback is expected and looked for without having judgment attached. By using this process, and implementing our curriculum, RYLA provides an opportunity for transformational leadership like no other!



Curriculum

The RYLA curriculum is implemented at camp through our five major programs. This curriculum has been co-created by staff to challenge students on all levels of leadership. These programs push students to think critically about life outside of camp, and engage in discussions about decision making, ethical standards, social justice, and self discovery. When these five key programs are run in conjunction with the high and low ropes course, students are able to truly go “all in” on their leadership journey.

Ethics: Each participant assumes the identity of a student applying to college. The goal is for them to decide which six students out of a group of twelve, which receive full admittance to RYLA University. Not only does this activity get participants thinking about what it means to make ethical decisions, but they also are enlightened about personal biases or judgments they or others may have. Our perceptions and judgments have an impact on our decisions.

The Crash: Using a “choose your own adventure” format, participants have to make a variety of decisions under different circumstances. This program focuses on multi-level decision making that has consequences. The decisions are made causing another set of circumstances to unfold.

Community Build: Participants are split into three communities and are asked to brainstorm and build their ideal community. Each community has resources ranging from abundance to extremely limited. The mayor of the town with the new community treats each group with a different way, putting identity privileges on display. This program gives participants a new awareness surrounding social justice issues. Often discussions of discrimination, equality, and the treatment of others take place.

Leadership Strengths: This program uses a handful of writing prompts that guides participants through identifying their unique leadership strengths. The open conversation focuses on how to best use one’s unique strengths in the student’s life currently. Once we are can identify our strengths, we are able to better serve others.

Public Speaking: Participants are asked to prepare and deliver a short speech to their “college admissions” interview board. The prompt asks them to talk about an accomplishment, obstacle, or opportunity they have experienced. In one of the few moments where technology is embraced at camp, speeches are filmed and critiqued, allowing students to practice giving and receiving feedback.

A COPE, **(c)**hallenging **(o)**utdoor **(p)**ersonal **(e)**xperience, course, both low elements (close to the ground) and a high ropes (suspended above the ground) are used to present team building and individual analysis. A feedback loop mechanism is used at RYLA to ensure that participants are gaining from their experiences. The process of completing a task, reviewing how the task went is just the beginning. By the end of the week, participants are asked to go beyond just analyzing the task into analyzing how they individually performed, and how they can take this lesson forward into their lives.



Staffing

RYLA's staff consists of approximately fifty individuals who volunteer a week of their time to make the program what it is. Nearly every staff member attended RYLA and applied back to be apart of the program that changed their lives. Through a variety of roles, staff member assists in providing a positive, unique experience for each the participants

The staff also works throughout the rest of the year to improve and organize RYLA for next year. These tasks include updating the curriculum, organizing training sessions for the staff, reaching out to Rotary Clubs, and making sure everything is ready for the next RYLA.

How to Apply

Application:

Applications for RYLA will be available online at our website, www.ryla7780.org, and on the district website at rotary7780.org/sitepage/ryla/. First, students will apply to or be selected by your Rotary club with basic contact information, a few short essays, and a letter of recommendation. This form, titled "2019 Student Application - Registration Form" will be available to be printed off at our website. Once **you** have chosen the students that you are sponsoring for RYLA, please notify the students of their acceptance.

Rotary clubs accept students and notify students they are accepted to the Leadership Camp. Please notify parents / guardians and make sure each student has transportation to the camp. It is the responsibility of Rotary clubs to communicate that students will receive a welcome package by email and by mail. They will need to complete the medical forms that require a signature from their physician.

NEW ONLINE REGISTRATION PROCESS **FOR ROTARY CLUBS**

Registration:

Once your Rotary club has accepted students and you have notified the students they have been accepted, Rotarians must fill out the "2019 RYLA Student Registration Form" to enroll them in RYLA. This form can be found on **www.RYLA7780.com** under the For Rotarians tab on the home page. All the information needed to fill out the form will be from the Registration Form - Parent's consent. There is a password to access the page which is **2019RYLA7780**. By filling out this form, you are officially enrolling the students for RYLA 2019. Once the RYLA Student Registration Form is completed, students will be mailed a welcome package which includes the medical form, photo release form, and logistical information including a packing list.

To ensure Registration is smooth and successful, please double check your process by using the guide which follows!

How Rotary Clubs Register their RYLA Students

Step 1: Visit www.RYLA7780.org and scroll over the "For Rotarians" section.






Step 2: Click on the “2019 Student Registration” link.



Step 3: Enter the password **2019RYLA7780**. (Please note that the password will come up as •'s to keep privacy. The lettering is shown here for a reminder.)

info@ryla7780.org

 [Quick Links](#)



The Official Website of RYLA District 7780
RYLA 2018: Take Action

[Home](#) [Getting Involved](#) [Who We Are](#) [Resources](#) [For Rotarians](#) [Photo Gallery](#) [Contact](#)

Protected: 2019 Student Registration

This content is password protected. To view it please enter your password below:

Password:

[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)

Step 4: At this point you will need to refer to the application(s) of the student(s) that you are sending to RYLA 2019.

Rotarians must fill out a separate form for each student you are sending to RYLA.



How to Interest Potential Participants

In the past, some Rotary Clubs have mentioned that they have struggled to find students who are interested or able to attend RYLA. This section will discuss a few methods some Rotary Clubs and schools have used to identify students who would be successful at RYLA.

The first recommendation is to connect with the **guidance counselors** at the high schools in your club's area. Guidance counselors tend to be a good liaison between the Rotary Club and the students and teachers. The RYLA staff is looking to connect with all high school guidance counselors within District 7780 and can discuss the curriculum with them.

Some clubs have had success by having **past RYLA participants** and a member of your Rotary club speak to the sophomore class or a selection of students who would benefit from this Outdoor Leadership Camp, such as an Interact Club. By hearing about the great opportunity from peers, students who are on the fence about going may decide to go for it.

Some clubs have hosted **Parents Nights for RYLA**. This night consists of having the students who will be attending RYLA, their parents, and Rotary members gathering to tell the parents about the great opportunity their children are going to have. This night usually occurs after students are selected. Not only is this a chance to tell parents about the program and all it has to offer, but it can also be a chance to highlight that this is an award that the students are being given and will be at no cost to the parents.

Frequently Asked Questions

How many Students go to RYLA?

We have slots for 144 students each year.

How many Students can one club send?

The limit is 12 students from one High School, allowing for no students from the same high school to be in a group together. Some clubs have two high schools in their area and budget for 20 students. Other clubs set a limit of four to six students. We are getting closer each year to the max of 144 so the earlier you reserve your spots, the better.

What type of student should attend RYLA?

As long as a student is willing to come to RYLA with an open mind, they will be successful.

Why are no electronics or cell phones allowed?

The logistics help with this with no electricity to charge phones, but the real reason is to help participants disconnect from distractions so they can focus on their leadership development and building trust with a group of new lifelong friends.

Can District #7780's RYLA accommodate students with physical disabilities?

There is a great deal of walking, climbing up steep hills and bumpy trails, and activities that are physically based. If the disability prohibits any of the previously mentioned aspects of the program, it will not be able to be accommodated.

Can District #7780's RYLA accommodate dietary needs?

Yes, we will ask during the application process if the participants have any special dietary needs and will make sure to be prepared for them.

What is the cost of RYLA?

The cost of the clubs for students is \$375.00 per student. ***We also need to find enough funds to send our staff to camp, so the cost to support a staff member is also \$375.00.***

What is the value of RYLA?

We value camp at \$750.00 per participant. There are over 1000 unpaid volunteer hours from staff members taking their weeks vacation to be at RYLA and be a facilitator.

What are the deadlines for RYLA?

Clubs should have students selected by the **end of February**. Clubs should submit final student names to RYLA staff by **April 1st**. The staff needs to collect medical forms and other material from each student. **June 1st** is the deadline for students getting their medical forms to RYLA Staff. Medical forms are confidential and should not be collected by individual clubs or other school staff. The preferred method of collection is having parents mail directly to RYLA P.O. Box. **June 1st** is the deadline for a student to back out of RYLA and for your club to receive a refund. Dates of camp for 2019 are **Sunday June 23rd - Wednesday June 26th**.

NOTE: We will accept students after the deadlines on the basis there is space and the student can get the forms signed by doctors.

What happens if a student backs out after the June 1st deadline?

Clubs can find another student to replace the student backing out. The collection of medical forms is sometimes a barrier, and students don't often understand that a Rotary Club has paid for them to attend. Because of limited space it is important to let students know it is a \$750.00 value and they are committed to attending camp.

If the club does find a student replacement, please contact RYLA staff as soon as possible so staff can be in contact with parents.



Contact Us

•**Email:** Phil Giordano - philtastic7780@gmail.com

Phil - Cell Phone 207-636-6500 Work Phone 207-850-9072

Sam Klemarczyk - director@ryla7780.org

•**Cell Phone:** [603-793-8896](tel:603-793-8896)

•**Mailing Address:** RLYA – P.O. Box 124 Kennebunk, ME 04043

• **RYLA Website:** - <http://www.ryla7780.org>

• **Website: Rotary District 7780** - <http://www.rotary7780.org/sitepage/ryla/>

Please Contact Phil Giordano – RYLA chair and Executive Director of Camp or Sam Klemarczyk - Exeter Rotary and Programs Director of RYLA if you have any questions or need additional information.