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**81st Session**

**May 25th – May 31st, 2025**

**The University of Mississippi**

**Oxford, Mississippi**

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*Educating the leaders of today for better government tomorrow*

*For God and Country*

[www.msboysstate.com](http://www.msboysstate.com)



# AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE

## DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI

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Dear Student,

I hope you will apply to attend the 2025 Session. The 2025 session will take place on the campus week of May 25th through May 31st in 2025 a rigorous class of outstanding young men, each representing high Legion Posts. Boys State is an intense, action-packed experience that will sharpen your leadership skills as you learn about our systems of government and politics by participating in various activities. You will also sharpen your leadership skills as you work with officials and other notable leaders.

At Boys State, you can run for and participate in various activities including academic competitions, participate in mock trials, and attend an annual talent show. At the conclusion of the session, you will be recognized for your capabilities and, ultimately, how to be a leader. You might even walk away with some scholarships.

Boys State is truly one of the most rewarding experiences of your summer and will be added to the ranks of former members, Boy Scouts, Congressmen, Supreme Court Justices, and U.S. Presidents.

Enclosed in this packet are all the details for the 2025 session. Should you have any questions, please contact [info@msboysstate.com](mailto:info@msboysstate.com)

Sincerely,

Milton Robinson

Program Director  
American Legion Boys State  
Department of Mississippi





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### What is Boys State?

The American Legion is committed to strengthening the United States of America. They believe that working with the youth of the nation is the best way to achieve this goal. Through its youth activities programs, The American Legion plays a crucial role in the creation of responsible and well-informed citizens who will lead the country in the future. The Boys State and Boys Nation programs are the most prominent examples of this youth leadership instruction.

The Boys State program is structured similarly across all Departments (states) of the American Legion. 49 states and the District of Columbia conduct a Boys State program every year, with over 28,000 young men participating in these civic workshops. During the one-week program, the delegates take on the roles of city, county, and state officials to learn how governments at different levels function. To be eligible for Boys State, the young men must be high school juniors with one year remaining before graduation. This allows them to apply their practical experience in leadership and service to their senior year and encourage other students to participate in the program.

### A “LEARN BY DOING” Approach

The main objective of American Legion Boys State is to identify and nurture young leaders and instill in them positive attitudes towards the American style of governance. The program aims to demonstrate that democracy necessitates an intelligent citizenry, a just society, an honest legislative body, and an impartial administration that is accountable to the people. Boys State is envisioned as a theoretical 51st state, where its citizens create a Constitution, Statutes, and Ordinances to self-govern themselves. The participants will have to review their knowledge of state and local government's political machinery and perform the same functions as real officeholders in the everyday world. Delegates will learn about the responsibilities of various city, county, and state officials and introduce and argue bills in their legislature. Every citizen will have the opportunity to understand that their government is what they make of it, a “learn by doing” approach if you will.

The entire program is non-partisan. Problems will be evaluated without reference to existing political parties, and they will be free from propaganda. The only goal is to enable the delegate to comprehend the significance and duties they will shoulder when they become an adult. It should be explicitly understood that the selection and assignment of citizens to parties are not linked to any existing political parties in Mississippi. Boys State political parties are called Nationalists, Federalists, and Independents. They are purely imaginary, and none of the principles typifying any existing parties will be adopted. This way, we strive to ensure a democratic government in its purest form.



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### Historical Sketch of Boys State

Boys State is a program that was originated by the Illinois Department of The American Legion in 1934. The National Organization adopted the plan in 1945, and it has since been put into operation in forty-nine states. Although Hawaii does not operate a program, it sends delegates to attend the programs of other states. American Legion Posts in the Panama Canal Zone, the District of Columbia, and Mexico have sent delegates to Boys State in Mississippi in the past.

The American Legion Department of Mississippi incorporated Magnolia Boys State on May 2, 1939, and the first session was held in Jackson from June 11 to June 17, 1939. Every year thereafter, except for 1943, 1945, 1949, 1970, and 2020, the program has been held. In 1955, the name was changed from Magnolia Boys State, Inc. to The American Legion Boys State, Inc.

Since the inception of Boys State in Mississippi, over 25,000 delegates who possess qualities of honor, character, courage, leadership, service, and discipline have attended these sessions. Only those who have completed their junior year of high school are chosen to attend. Department Headquarters assigns each local American Legion Post a scholarship quota. The Boys State program also receives excellent support from civic clubs, churches, schools, Boys State alumni, civic leaders, businesses, and other respectable organizations. The cost to attend Boys State is \$275.00, but the cost should never hinder a student from wanting to be a part of our program. If a financial burden arises, please contact our staff by emailing [info@msboysstate.com](mailto:info@msboysstate.com).

The American Legion Boys State program in Mississippi is recognized as one of the most outstanding and successful Boys State programs in existence. Mississippi's Boys State is known for its leadership development and motivation, its dynamic and energetic young staff, and for the exceptional support the program receives from Legionaries across the state. Our Boys State was the first program in the nation to include a "College and Military Service Information Day," where representatives from every state college, university, various branches of the Military, and cadets from the U.S. Military Academies actually come to Mississippi's Boys State to speak to the young men about post-high school plans. It is not uncommon for delegates to discover scholarship opportunities while at Boys State.

### American Legion Scholarships

Participants of the Boys State program in Mississippi are eligible to receive scholarships from the Mississippi American Legion, which amount to over \$50,000 in total. One lucky Boys State Delegate will be awarded the Harold F. Hale Scholarship worth \$2,500. The American Legion Department of Mississippi also presents several scholarships of \$1,500, \$1,000, and \$500. Additionally, the program Director and Staff will choose the recipient of Mississippi's Samsung Scholarship, who will then move on to compete nationally.



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### Institution Scholarships

These institutions offer scholarships to eligible participants who attend their schools:

#### Mississippi State University

- Boys State Governor and/or Boys Nation Delegate
  - o Award Amount: \$6,000 [\$1,500/year]
  - o Eligibility: Entering freshmen who are named as Governor to their state OR the state delegate to Boys Nation. Must have a scholarship GPA of 3.0.
- Boys State Scholarship
  - o Award Amount: \$1,000 [one year only]
  - o Eligibility: Entering freshmen or transfer students (with university-specified credit hours) who participated in Boys State. Must have a GPA of 3.0.

#### University of Mississippi

- Boys State Governor and/or Boys Nation Delegate
  - o Award Amount: \$4,000 [\$1,000/year]
  - o Eligibility: Entering freshmen who are named as Governor to their state OR the state delegate to Boys Nation
- Boys State Scholarship
  - o Award Amount: \$1,000 [one year only]
  - o Eligibility: Entering freshmen who participated in Mississippi Boys State

#### University of Southern Mississippi

- Boys Nation Delegate Scholarship
  - o Award Amount: \$4,000 [\$1,000/year]
  - o Eligibility: Entering freshmen who are named as one of the state delegates to Boys Nation
- Boys State Scholarship
  - o Award Amount: \$1,000 [one year only]
  - o Eligibility: Entering freshmen who participated in Mississippi Boys State

