



May 24th – May 30th, 2026

The University of Mississippi

Oxford, Mississippi

*Educating the leaders of today for better government tomorrow
For God and Country*

www.msboysstate.com



AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE

DEPARTMENT OF MISSISSIPPI

Dear Student,

I hope you will apply to attend the 2026 Session of Mississippi American Legion Boys State. **The 2026 session will take place on the University of Mississippi campus during the week of May 24th – May 30th, 2026.** You will join a large class of Mississippi's most outstanding young men, each representing high schools, communities, and local American Legion Posts. Boys State is an intense, action-packed leadership program where you learn about our systems of government and politics by participating in a mock government. You will also sharpen your leadership skills as you hear from some of Mississippi's top elected officials and other notable leaders.

At Boys State, you can run for and serve in mock political offices, compete in athletic or academic competitions, participate in mock trials, broadcast journalism, print journalism, and our annual talent show. At the conclusion of the week, you will have learned more about yourself and your capabilities, and ultimately how to be a strong leader. You will have the time of your life, and you might even walk away with some scholarships.

Boys State is truly one of the most rewarding experiences. I hope that you will join us this summer and be added to the ranks of former Boys Staters who went on to become Governors, Congressmen, Supreme Court Justices, U.S. Presidents, Generals, Pro Athletes, Doctors, and CEOs.

Enclosed in this packet are all the details that you need to become a Delegate to Boys State 2026. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us by email at info@msboysstate.com.

Sincerely,

Milton Robinson

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Milton Robinson".

Program Director
American Legion Boys State
Department of Mississippi



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Quick Facts:

Mississippi American Legion Boys State is a week-long program for high school juniors that aims to provide them with the opportunity to learn about government and leadership through hands-on experience. The program involves creating a mock government, including the election of officials, legislative sessions, and court proceedings. The participants will also have the opportunity to hear from speakers and interact with their peers to develop their leadership, show off their athletic talent, and compete for scholarship dollars.

- **Taking Place: May 24th – May 30th, 2026**
- **Hosted by: The University of Mississippi - Oxford, MS**
- **Only current male high school juniors are eligible for participation.**
- **The cost of attendance is \$275, but sponsorships are available.**
- **Online application opens on February 1st and closes on May 9th.**

Scan to Visit Our Website for More Info:



Scan to Begin Your Application:





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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 originated within the Illinois Department of the American Legion in 1934. The National Organization adopted the plan in 1945, and it has since been implemented in 49 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, 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 it should never deter a student from being part of our program. If a financial burden arises, please contact our staff by emailing 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. 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 \$1,500, \$1,000, and \$500 scholarships. 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 the Governor of 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 the Governor of 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



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So, Are You Interested in Becoming a Delegate?

Please follow the steps below to apply for the American Legion Boys State program:

STEP 1 - Review our information packet and speak with your school counselor or a local American Legion member.

STEP 2 - Submit your online application using the QR code provided below.

STEP 3 - Wait **patiently** for notification of acceptance.

STEP 4 - Once you receive your acceptance email, print and complete the registration packet that will be attached. You will also receive payment instructions. If you are being sponsored by your local American Legion Post or another organization, please share these instructions with them.

STEP 5 - Submit your completed registration packet and payment by Wednesday, May 20th, 2026, using the online form linked within your acceptance email.

If the cost of attendance is a concern, first contact your local American Legion to discuss their ability to cover some or all of the cost. If further assistance is needed, contact local businesses or service organizations. We have an expansive network of supporters and alumni willing to provide support where needed. No eligible young man should be turned away because of cost.

If you face any issues or have any questions throughout this process, please get in touch with us by emailing info@msboysstate.com.

Scan the QR Code below to begin your application:

