



Rotary Youth Leadership Awards

District 7450
2025 RYLA Conference

February 7-9, 2025
Founding Forward
Valley Forge, PA

Program Information

For Student and Family Reference Only

(Please DO NOT submit this document with required documents)

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Rotary – Rotary International is the largest private scholarship foundation worldwide. Local Rotary clubs provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world.

There are 33,000 Rotary clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas. Clubs are nonpolitical, nonreligious, and open to all cultures, races, and creeds. As signified by the motto “Service Above Self”, Rotary’s main objective is service — in the community, in the workplace, and throughout the world.



Rotaract - It is a service, leadership and community service organization for young men and women between the ages 18–30. "Rotaract" stands for "Rotary in Action", focuses on the development of young adults as leaders in their communities and workplaces.

To be eligible for membership, prospective members must be 18–30 years of age, show that they are committed to Rotaract, and show that they are of good standing in the community.



Interact is Rotary International’s service club for young people ages 12 to 18. Interact clubs are sponsored by individual Rotary clubs, which provide support and guidance, but they are self-governing and self-supporting.

Each year, Interact clubs complete at least two community service projects, one of which furthers international understanding and goodwill. Through these efforts, Interactors develop a network of friendships with local and overseas clubs and learn the importance of: developing leadership skills and personal integrity, demonstrating helpfulness and respect for others, understanding the value of individual responsibility and hard work and advancing international understanding and goodwill.

Interact has since become one of the most significant and fastest-growing programs of Rotary service; with more than 20,000 clubs in 159 countries and geographical areas, Interact has become a worldwide phenomenon. Almost 500,000 young people are involved in Interact.

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What is RYLA?

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is Rotary's leadership training program for youth. RYLA participants can be ages 14-18.

RYLA emphasizes:

leadership, citizenship, and personal growth.

RYLA aims to:

- Demonstrate Rotary's respect and concern for youth
- Provide an effective training experience for selected youth and potential leaders
- Encourage leadership *of* youth *by* youth
- Recognize publicly young people who are rendering service to their communities

Why RYLA?

- To create future leaders through informative, interactive, and thought provoking workshops.
- To encourage student networking with others in all geographic areas of District 7450 resulting in lasting friendships.
- To ignite an excitement in students of their innate abilities, leadership traits, and self-confidence to take back to their respective high schools and apply in their future life.
- To create a true sense of what community service is and opportunities to do so in our area and beyond with Rotary as a possible partner.
- To learn about Interact and Rotaract and from this information possibly start one at their High school or join one that already exists.
- Just Have Fun!

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RYLA Frequently Asked Questions

Where is RYLA being held?

The conference is held at Founding Forward, 1601 Valley Forge Road Valley Forge, PA.

Where do the students stay?

Founding Forward has dormitories on site. There are separate dorms for males and females. Founding Forward staff and Rotary chaperones will be staying overnight in both dorms.

What is the program at the conference?

The program is a combination of leadership training, team building, motivational and living history lessons. A preliminary weekend agenda follows.

Can participants leave during the program for other activities and return later?

No. To get the full benefit, we expect all students to attend the **entire** program from Friday evening to Sunday midday. This is necessary to get the most out of the weekend.

Who is eligible to attend the conference?

High school sophomores who have not previously attended RYLA.

What qualities do participants need to fully participate?

Enthusiasm, energy, a desire to learn and to meet new people. A list of “What to Bring” follows.

Is there a Cancellation Policy?

Yes. Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is funded through sponsorships by local Rotary Clubs and made possible by hundreds of volunteer hours from Rotarians. Each Rotary Club pays \$300.00 raised in the normal course of fundraising, to fund each student’s attendance. Since we solicit and collect donations from the public at large, we are obligated to be responsible stewards of these donations. **Our loss of these funds, caused by a student’s failure to attend, requires us to collect a cancellation fee.** See Cancellation Fee Acknowledgement in required documents.

What do past participants say about the program?

- “I really enjoyed the program and had a great time... and I made many new friends.”
- “My overall experience was awesome.”
- “I really had a great time and learned a lot about myself.”
- “I found this weekend to be informative, fun and very educational. There can always be improvement on leadership, and I feel this greatly improved my skills.”
- “I think that this weekend was fun. I learned a lot and met new people. I think it is always good to be able to hear different points of view. I am glad I was chosen to come.”
- “Best motivational speaker I’ve ever heard.”
- “Wow!”

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Agenda

Please see <http://rotarydistrict7450.org/ryla-program/> for the most up to date Agenda as we finalize plans for this exciting and very full conference.

What to Bring and Other Last Minute Details

- Registration is in the lobby of the Martha Washington Building. Please plan on arriving between 4:00 and 5:00 in the afternoon on Friday.
- Attire is casual for most of the weekend. Please bring warm clothing as there will be outdoor activities.
- After you arrive on Friday you are NOT permitted to leave the conference and return; you must stay for the entire program. Departure is in the afternoon on Sunday.
- If you drive your own car to Valley Forge, the keys will be held for you and returned at departure on Sunday.
- Interact members please bring a poster of current activities and fundraisers your club has accomplished this year. These will be put on display for the weekend.
- Bring a camera, enthusiasm, energy, a desire to learn, and a willingness to make new friends.

OPTIONAL:

- Anything you might need for the Talent Show, e.g., musical instrument, sheet music, lyrics, props, costumes

NOTE: Founding Forward will provide all sheets, towels, and soap; therefore, you do not need to bring any of these items.

- Don't forget your toothbrush!



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Directions to Founding Forward 1601 Valley Forge Road Valley Forge, PA 19482-0706

From Pennsylvania Turnpike

Depart the turnpike at **Exit 326 (King of Prussia-Valley Forge)**. After the toll booth, take the first immediate right exit, "**Valley Forge National Historical Park**." Follow past the Valley Forge Convention Center and continue on Route 23 West through Valley Forge National Historical Park. At the next traffic light (Route 252), proceed straight through on Route 23 **West**. Approximately one mile on your right at the top of the hill (where a large American flag is located) is the entrance to Founding Forward. Proceed to the Martha Washington Building for registration.

From I-95 and I-76

From I-95, take Route 676 West (Vine Street). This exit is located near the Benjamin Franklin Bridge or Center City Philadelphia. Stay on Route **676 West** which turns into Route **76 West (Valley Forge)**. Take this highway for approximately 18 miles until the **West Chester exit (Route 202 South)**. Proceed on Route 202 South to the Devon exit.

At light (**Route 252**), make a right. Proceed on Route 252 through the Park until Route 23. At light, make a left on to **Route 23 West**. Approximately one mile on your right at the top of the hill (where a large American flag is located) is the entrance to Founding Forward. Proceed to the Martha Washington Building for registration. If you should have any questions about directions, you may call Founding Forward Associate Director of Education, Deepak Bhagat at 610-933-8825 x 221.

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Application Deadline: January 15, 2025

5 Step Application Process

1. Click on <http://rotarydistrict7450.org/ryla-welcome/> to access the RYLA web page.
2. Click on the link to “Application Form”
3. Complete FULL application screens.
4. Print out and complete the Required Documents - available at <http://rotarydistrict7450.org/ryla/> - including the **required** student and parent/guardian signatures.
5. Submit all required documents - completed and signed - to the RYLA Registrar at the address below:

RYLA
C/O Brian Casey
505 Georgetown Road
Wallingford PA, 19086-6921

A link to the required documents is available on the top menu at <http://rotarydistrict7450.org/ryla/>

The process is easy but all 5 steps are required.

Student Transportation:

Transportation will not be provided by the RYLA Organizing Committee. Please contact your sponsoring Rotary Club if you are unable to find transportation to the event.

Directions to Founding Forward are available on page 7 in this document and at <http://rotarydistrict7450.org/ryla-directions/>.

Student Participation:

To get the full benefit of the program, students **MUST** stay for the entire event. They **CANNOT** leave and come back during the weekend.

Registration starts at 4:00PM on Friday in the Martha Washington Building. All students should be picked up on Sunday by 12:00 noon in front of the Martha Washington Building.

If you have Questions:

Brian Casey
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610-800-5183

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610-564-7744