



American Legion Auxiliary EMPIRE GIRLS STATE

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF NEW YORK

1580 Columbia Turnpike Bldg 1, Suite 3 Castleton-On-Hudson, New York 12033

2026 ALA Empire Girls State Program

Dear High School Representative:

Your school has been selected to participate in the 2026 session of the American Legion Auxiliary Empire Girls State Program. Only 300 students are chosen from high schools across New York State. Our program is not a camp or vacation. It is a hands-on leadership program about our governmental process and the Constitution.

In one week, the ALA Empire Girls State citizens will build the government of a mythical 51st state, from the local level up to the state level. They will participate in campaigns, rallies, speeches, various legislative committees, create bills, and participate in a community service project. The students will come as strangers and leave as friends, confident of their role and duties as citizens in a democratic society.

Accompanying this letter is a copy of the Rules Governing Eligibility and Selection. Please read these rules carefully and use them as a guideline when sharing information with the American Legion Auxiliary Unit about which high school Juniors might be eligible to attend. Be sure to include any eligible home-schooled young women as **ANY JUNIOR IN THE TOP 1/3 OF THEIR CLASS IS ELIGIBLE. THE FINAL SELECTION WILL BE MADE BY THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT!**

When the ALA Unit has made its final selection, the Unit's ALA Empire Girls State Chairman will provide the candidate(s) with the registration and appropriate orientation materials.

Every attendee of the American Legion Auxiliary Empire Girls State program is eligible to apply for **The American Legion Samsung Scholarship**. Ten National Scholars receive \$10,000 each, Ten National Runners-Up receive \$5,000 each and the remaining State finalists receive \$1,250 each guaranteed which makes it a great opportunity for participants. Samsung scholarships may be used for undergraduate studies and applied toward tuition, books, fees, and room and board. Winners are selected according to academic record, involvement in school and community services.

The ALA Empire Girls State program has been approved as one component of a **college-equivalent course of study** through University of Colorado LAS Extended Studies program. Each participant is eligible to apply for and obtain college credit recommendations following the completion of the ALA Empire Girls State program and additional course requirements. All requirements, fees and enrollment information is available online through their website at: <https://www.leadershipcredit.info/boys-girls-state-citizens/>

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in recommending candidates to be considered for ALA Empire Girls State citizenship in 2026. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us!

Sincerely,

Steph Fallon

ALA EGS Chairman
27 Stearns Rd. Apt 1
Brookline, MA 02446
call/text: 716 413-2604
EmpireGirlsState@gmail.com

Megan (Hockaday) Walden

1st Vice-Chairman
17 Geneva St
Bath, NY 14810
call/text: 716 575-5090
EGSViceChair@gmail.com

Molly McLaughlin

2nd Vice-Chair/Registrar
159 Cross Rd.
Otego, NY 13825
call/text: 585 484-0462
EGSRegistrar@gmail.com



American Legion Auxiliary EMPIRE GIRLS STATE

To be eligible to participate in the ALA Empire Girls State Program, a participant must be:

1. Between the ages of 15 and 18.
2. Academically in the upper third of their class.
3. A member of the Junior class in Senior High School (including those who are homeschooled) at the close of the current school year and planning to re-enter school for her Senior year.
4. Recommended by the High School Principal or Superintendent, who certifies that the candidate possesses outstanding qualities of leadership, character, honesty, scholarship, cooperation, and maturity. **Final selection will be made after each candidate has been interviewed by the local American Legion Auxiliary Unit.**
5. Is fit – this program is strenuous physically, mentally, and emotionally.
6. Interested in the program and willing to participate in all phases of the program including Americanism activities like participating in and standing for flag ceremonies, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and singing the National Anthem.
7. Present for the entire week long session. No passes to leave the campus will be granted at any time during the session. Citizens **cannot** arrive late or leave early.
8. Candidates must complete the registration packet in its entirety including the online registration forms and signing and uploading required paper forms.
9. Candidates need not be members of the American Legion or the American Legion Auxiliary families.
10. The ALA EGS Board of Directors reserves the right to accept or reject any application for citizenship in the ALA Empire Girls State program. During the session, the Board may dismiss any participant for violation of rules of the program. In such cases, tuition and fees will not be refunded to units from ALA Empire Girls State.

**The 2026 ALA Empire Girls State Session will be held from
Tuesday June 30th - Monday July 6th, 2026 at SUNY Brockport, Brockport, NY 14420**

Steph Fallon
ALA EGS Chairman
27 Stearns Rd. Apt 1
Brookline, MA 02446
call/text: 716 413-2604
EmpireGirlsState@gmail.com

Megan (Hockaday) Walden
1st Vice-Chairman
17 Geneva St
Bath, NY 14810
call/text: 716 575-5090
EGSViceChair@gmail.com

Molly McLaughlin
2nd Vice-Chair/Registrar
159 Cross Rd.
Otego, NY 13825
call/text: 585 484-0462
EGSRegistrar@gmail.com



American Legion Auxiliary EMPIRE GIRLS STATE Unit Chairman Overview

To: Unit ALA Empire Girls State Chairman

Re: Overview and Instructions

This is your packet of materials and instructions. Attached you will find the following:

- Rules Governing Eligibility and Selection
- Interview Tips and Suggested Questions for Selecting Your ALA Empire Girls State Citizen
- Letter to the High School Principal/Guidance Counselor

For Citizen and Alternate Packets:

- Candidate Contact Information Form
- Non-Refundable Registration Processing Fee Information
- ALA Empire Girls State CITIZEN Registration Directions Page with Helpful Instructions for Citizens and Alternates
- ALA Empire Girls State ALTERNATE Registration Directions Page with Helpful Instructions for Citizens and Alternates
- Samsung Scholarship and College Credit Information
- ALA Empire Girls State Rules

TUITION: \$450 per citizen (Sponsor) plus \$50 application fee (family)

UNIT CHAIRMAN RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Request in November-December** from the HS Principal or Guidance Counselor: a list of students (including home schooled) who meet the qualifications and are interested in the program
- **Complete interviews and selections by February 1st** using the suggested interview tips enclosed.
 - ◆ PLEASE spend some time making clear what ALA Empire Girls State program is to the interviewees. Use the About Us tab of the empiregirlsstate.org website, and the video on that page to **present an overview of the program** before beginning interviews. (We have experienced girls who arrive with no idea of what they will be doing, or what the focus of the program is. We need to address this and can't do it without YOUR help.)
 - ◆ Go over the ALA Empire Girls State Rules with interviewees.
 - ◆ The ALA Unit should interview the girls **using the suggested interview questions**, and make the final selection of Citizen(s) and Alternate(s) by Feb 1st. Citizens and Alternates should complete the **Candidate Contact Information Form** immediately upon selection. ******This form is for YOU and your county chairman to keep so you have their contact information.**
- You are receiving one copy of each of the documents listed above for your **Citizens**. REMEMBER YOU SHOULD SELECT one or more qualified **Alternates** AND HAVE THEM COMPLETE THE ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM right away (they will select "Alternate" in question #2). Make as many additional copies of any forms as needed: one for yourself in case questions arise, and at least one more for last minute citizen changes. If your citizen gets sick or can't make it at the last minute, you will be ready to bring in your Alternate immediately. Please review these documents carefully and become familiar with them so that you can answer any questions from the Citizen/Alternate and/or their family.



American Legion Auxiliary EMPIRE GIRLS STATE Unit Chairman Overview

Additional forms can be downloaded by the Unit/County Chairman from our website: empiregirlsstate.org under the ALA Resources tab (password: GirlsState).

→ Prior to handing out the material to your Citizen or Alternate, please:

- ◆ Fill out the Sponsoring ALA Unit Contact information on the bottom of the Registration Handout. This is important because it will clearly outline the expectations of your selected Citizens and Alternates as they complete the Registration process. It also gives them your contact information, and the name of their sponsoring unit. **They will need this information to register.**

→ The ALA EGS Unit Chairman must forward a copy of all completed Candidate Information Forms to their ALA County EGS Chairman by February 15th. Keep a copy for your own records. You must also send the tuition check including the registration processing fee paid by each citizen. The combined total of the checks must equal \$500 per citizen. (Alternates do not pay at this time). All checks are to be made payable to your ALA County organization.

→ The ALA EGS County Chairman will compile the Citizen and Alternate Contact Information Sheets and complete the Transmittal Forms and attach tuition payment. (One check per county-sent to the REGISTRAR) and mail to the ALA EGS Registrar by February 28th.

**** Please DO NOT send Candidate Contact Information Forms to the Registrar.
These are for your records only.**

→ **Please adhere to deadlines** as the roster cannot be finalized (and the assignment of housing, ALA EGS Counties and political parties in preparation for the session, cannot be completed) until all applications have been received. Missing registration and payment deadlines may result in the forfeiture of quota spots.

****ALTERNATES WILL NOT PAY THE \$50.00 REGISTRATION PROCESSING FEE UNTIL THERE IS A PLACE IN THE PROGRAM FOR THEM. YOUR COUNTY WILL BE NOTIFIED SHOULD THIS OCCUR.**

Let Citizens and Alternates know immediately upon selection that they will attend a Zoom (virtual) 2026 ALA Empire Girls State Orientation. Information regarding virtual orientation sessions will be forthcoming. **No participant should arrive at the session not knowing what to expect of the program, or what is expected of them.** Citizens, alternates and parents should be asked to attend so everyone understands the program, the rules and all involved may ask clarifying questions. **Make no promises or commitments to the girls that are contrary to the rules of ALA Empire Girls State. Use the About Us tab of the empiregirlsstate.org website to make clear the purpose and content of the program.** If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact your County Empire Girls State Chairman, or any of the Department Vice Chairman. Good luck!

Steph Fallon
ALA EGS Chairman
27 Stearns Rd. Apt 1
Brookline, MA 02446
call/text: 716 413-2604
EmpireGirlsState@gmail.com

Megan (Hockaday) Walden
1st Vice-Chairman
17 Geneva St
Bath, NY 14810
call/text: 716 575-5090
EGSViceChair@gmail.com

Molly McLaughlin
2nd Vice-Chair/Registrar
159 Cross Rd.
Otego, NY 13825
call/text: 585 484-0462
EGSRegistrar@gmail.com



2026 AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY EMPIRE GIRLS STATE RULES:

1. Any citizen leaving the ALA Empire Girls State session before the closing ceremonies will **NOT** receive an Attendance Certificate and therefore, will be ineligible for the College Credit Program recommendation and the Samsung Scholarship. In addition, the High School Guidance Office and sponsoring ALA Unit will be advised of an incomplete status for the ALA Empire Girls State program.
2. No ALA Empire Girls State citizen will leave the campus during the length of the ALA Empire Girls State session. Any citizen found out of bounds at any time, without permission, will be subject to dismissal and sent home immediately.
3. All college property and equipment will receive proper care. No furniture may be moved, without permission by an ALA Empire Girls State or college staff member.
4. Each citizen is responsible for the cleanliness of her room. Rooms must be cleaned and left as you found them.
5. All campaign material will be placed in designated areas only. Nothing may be pinned, pasted, written or nailed on painted walls or woodwork. No tape on rugs. Campaign Rules will be presented in detail during the program.
6. ALA Empire Girls State, and the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of New York, **WILL NOT** be responsible for bills of any kind, including lost keys or damage done to the dormitory, incurred by any citizen of ALA Empire Girls State.
7. Any citizen who is ill or injured must report to the medical personnel immediately. All citizens currently taking medications must discuss this with the medical personnel. If you have not done so, please make sure that you do so ASAP.
8. Possession of alcohol and/or illegal drugs is cause for immediate dismissal. Vaping, use of e cigarettes or other similar devices is cause for immediate dismissal.
9. Citizens will dress in accordance with the ALA Empire Girls State dress code. Dress code will be explained during mandatory orientation prior to the program. Any citizen advised that her attire is inappropriate will change into acceptable clothing at the earliest opportunity to do so.
10. Each citizen **MUST** attend the morning and evening Flag Ceremonies and must not object to demonstrating proper respect for the Flag of our Country.
11. Citizens will respect the authority of the ALA Empire Girls State Chairman, ALA EGS Board of Directors, the ALA Empire Girls State staff, and college staff and students. Citizens will respect each other, even when differences of opinion, ideology, beliefs, cultures, etc. occur.
12. The staff and citizens of ALA Empire Girls State will work together to cultivate and promote a culture of diversity, inclusion and belonging. You have a personal responsibility to be proactive in maintaining this culture within the program. ALA Empire Girls State has a no tolerance policy in regard to bullying. Bullying takes on many shapes and forms. You sign a pledge stating that you will not engage in bullying behavior while at ALA Empire Girls State. If you are unsure of the definition of bullying, please speak to your counselors.

Any citizen who violates any rule may be dismissed without refund of tuition. Parents/Guardians will be called to pick up a dismissed citizen. The sponsoring ALA Unit of a dismissed citizen may require reimbursement of the \$450 tuition fee by the citizen. The \$50 registration fee is non-refundable.

Please visit www.empiregirlsstate.org for additional program information.



American Legion Auxiliary EMPIRE GIRLS STATE

THE AMERICAN LEGION SAMSUNG SCHOLARSHIP

Worldwide electronics leader Samsung endowed a scholarship fund of \$5 million to be administered by The American Legion in 1996. Meant to show appreciation for U.S. veterans who came to Korea's aid during its struggle against communist forces in the Korean War, the Samsung American Legion Scholarship Program established a series of scholarships derived from interest and other income from the principal amount. As of 2019 the Samsung American Legion Scholarship has awarded more than \$6.5 million in college scholarships to 2,266 applicants since its inception in 1996.

Scholarship applications are restricted to high school juniors who attend the current session of either The American Legion Boys State or American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program and are a direct descendant - i.e. child, grandchild, great grandchild, etc. - or a legally adopted child of a wartime U.S. military veteran who served on active duty during at least one of the periods of war officially designated as eligibility dates for American Legion membership.

Samsung scholarships may be used for undergraduate studies and applied toward tuition, books, fees, and room and board. Winners are selected according to academic record, involvement in school and community service.

- Ten National Scholars receive \$10,000 each (two from each region)
- Ten National Runners-Up receive \$5,000 each (two from each region)
- Remaining Department Finalists receive \$1,250 each, guaranteed

Each year, the American Legion Auxiliary Empire Girls State program is honored to select 1 (one) candidate whose application will be forwarded on as a department finalist to be judged at the national level.

Applicants who are direct descendants of Korean War Era Veterans will receive 3 bonus points. Applicants with membership to the American Legion Auxiliary or Sons of the American Legion will receive 1 bonus point. Or, they can receive 1 bonus point by uploading a membership card of a parent. No more than one bonus point for an application.

The 2026 Samsung Scholarship information can be found by visiting :

www.legion.org/scholarships

****Scholarships are due no later than the first day of a participant's American Legion Boys State or American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program. All applications must be submitted using the online application system by 11:59PM on this day. Applications will not be modified after the due date or given a deadline extension under any circumstance.**



American Legion Auxiliary EMPIRE GIRLS STATE

College Credit Opportunity

The ALA Empire Girls State program has been approved as one component of a college-equivalent course of study through **University of Colorado LAS Extended Studies program**. Each participant is eligible to apply for and obtain college credit recommendations following the completion of the ALA Empire Girls State program and additional course requirements. **College credits are not automatic for participants in the ALA EGS program.** The college credit program is a great opportunity, at a significant savings based on rising tuition costs for college students. All requirements, fees and enrollment information is available online through their website at:

<https://www.leadershipcredit.info/boys-girls-state-citizens/>

The program coordinator contact information is listed on their website, and we recommend all questions be directed to them as the ALA EGS program does not oversee the college credit program.

Other Scholarship Opportunities

For additional scholarship opportunities available to ALA EGS participants, please visit:

<https://www.alaforveterans.org/scholarships>

Huntingdon College Scholarship

Once completing the ALA Empire Girls State program, you are eligible for the Huntingdon College Presidential Scholars Program.

Any students who are interested in learning more may contact Bria Rochelle Stephens at hc.brochelle@hawks.huntingdon.edu or (334) 398-5150.



American Legion Auxiliary EMPIRE GIRLS STATE

Candidate Contact Information for ALA Unit and County Sponsors *Please print clearly!*

Candidate Information

Last Name First (Legal) First (Preferred) Middle Initial

Street Address

City State Zip Code

Citizen E-Mail Address Citizen Cell Phone Number

()

Home Phone Number Date of Birth Age

Name of Parents / (Guardians)

()

Parents/Guardian Email Address Cell Phone Number

()

Primary Phone Number Address of Parent or Guardian (if different from above)

Sponsoring American Legion Auxiliary Unit Information (Fill out below and give a copy to the Candidate)

CLARENCE AMERICAN LEGION POST 838

Sponsoring ALA Unit Name

JIM SCHULTZ

Sponsoring ALA Unit Contact Person

716 812-0405 JD SCHULTZJR@GMAIL.COM

Phone Number Email

****THIS FORM WILL BE KEPT ON FILE BY THE ALA EGS COUNTY CHAIRMAN**
(DO NOT FORWARD TO THE ALA EGS REGISTRAR)**