

American Legion Auxiliary
Department of California Girls State
Department Executive Committee (DEC)
January 20, 2024

Good morning, Madam President:

My name is Sherry Core, and I am the Assistant Director for the American Legion Auxiliary California Girls State Program. Department Girls State Chair, Allyn Kau, has asked me to read her report.

Greetings from the State Interns! I greatly appreciate Sherry's willingness to read my report.

1. Recap of the 2023 Session

- a. 454 delegates arrived at the 80th session at Sacramento State University. This is 56 more delegates than our 79th session! Unit and District Girls State Chairs should be highly commended, as the difficulties of sponsorship continue to increase with rising financial costs, aging membership, and school staff workload being too great to assist.
- b. In addition, every delegate showed up, which has not happened as long as anyone could remember. Usually at least a few delegates miss the bus, get too nervous to go, and have last-minute conflicts. Again, Unit and District Girls State Chairs are primarily responsible for this extraordinary success, keeping in contact with their selected candidates, immediately finding alternates for those who drop out, and ensuring alternates have completed required paperwork ahead of time. Two delegates dropped out the day before, and seven within the week prior to the start of the session. Yet, all these vacancies were filled.
- c. We had eight interested students who could not find a sponsoring ALA Unit for their high school and completed the Department Alternate application. All eight students were chosen by ALA Units to fill vacancies. This also helped to ensure that every Unit who paid fees for a student to attend ALA CAGS had a student to fill that spot.
- d. Delegate Natalie Myers from Big Valley Christian School (U74, D12) was the Department Finalist for the Samsung American Legion Scholarship.
- e. Delegate Sam Poteet from San Clemente High School (U281, D29) received the Jessica Wright Memorial Scholarship awarded to a Blue Star delegate.
- f. Delegate Fatima Alarcon from Harmony Magnet Academy (U20, D15) was selected as the session's Outstanding Citizen.
- g. Delegates Laila Ali from Joseph A. Gregori High School (U74, D12) and Enya Yuan from Aragon High School (U585, D26) represented California at ALA Girls Nation. I was honored to be selected to volunteer on the ALA Girls Nation staff.

2. 2024 Session

- a. We currently have 461 reservations for our 81st session which will be held Tuesday, June 25th-Sunday, June 30th at Sacramento State University.
- b. 126 Units from twenty-six Districts have submitted reservations, compared with 134 Units from last year.
- c. Units can still submit reservations. Our goal is 500 delegates for this year's session. There is no waiting list since Sacramento State can accommodate as many delegates as we can sponsor.
- d. The ALA Girls State Alumnae Foundation offers grants to assist Units in sponsoring schools. The deadline for applications is next Thursday, January 25.
- e. Department Code requires that Unit Presidents and Unit Girls State Chairpersons review the Candidate Selection Google Slides presentation which provides instruction about the types of

- questions that should be included in interviews and essays during the selection process, and the types of questions that are discriminatory or not appropriate and should not be included.
- f. Please continue to clarify to schools that there are two separate programs in 2024: our 81st session of ALA CA Girls State and the American Legion's second coed CA Boys State session. Those interested in ALA CA Girls State, but eligible for both programs must choose to apply for only one program.
 - g. We are still looking for City Liaisons. Please see Director Valerie Hardy if you or someone you know is interested.
 - h. Our next monthly Zoom meeting will be this Monday, February 5 at 7:30pm.

3. Girls State Committee Meeting

- a. Madam President Glenda Schultz, Department Vice-President Linda Hayes, and the Girls State Committee attended the meetings October 20-21, 2023 via Zoom.
- b. Dates for the 2024 session and the 2023-24 budget were approved.
- c. Fees increased to \$425 Unit Enrollment fee plus \$75 Delegate Registration fee.
- d. The Code was reviewed and two changes were discussed and approved by the Committee to present at Department Convention in June.

4. Girls State Fundraising Leadership Team

Donna Carter, part of the Department Girls State Fundraising Leadership Team, spearheaded a Department ALA CAGS auction that generated \$946.67. She also submitted a grant application for \$5000 to the CA Legislative Women's Caucus. We are extremely grateful for Donna's hard work!

5. Special Recognition

- a. About two months ago, District 9 Girls State Chair, Roseann "Vicky" Bean, regrettably informed me that Unit 161 will be giving up their charter after 95 years of service to veterans, their families, and the community and would be closing out the Unit and District Girls State programs. Vicky has worked with the ALA CAGS program for over 38 years, sponsoring seventeen schools! Yes, SEVENTEEN! Blindness in one eye, a car wreck, a pandemic, nothing could stop her except a move out of state to be closer to her youngest son.
- b. When I mentioned that Unit 161 would no longer be able to sponsor their schools, I was so touched by the support from ALA members and Units. Michelle Lee (U161 member), Carrie Gallegos (U16 member), Liz Parshall (U68 Girls State Chair), and Susan Mar (U117 Girls State Chair) all reached out to offer assistance to Vicky amidst their own busy schedules. It is this exemplification of Service above Self and camaraderie that makes me so honored and humbled to serve as Department Girls State Chair.

Thank you to the Girls State Committee, Unit and District Girls State Chairs, staff members, and all those who support the ALA CA Girls State program. It is inspiring to hear the impact this program has made on the lives of so many students year after year.

Please contact me if you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or concerns.

Thank you,

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