

Youth Development Program: Junior State of America (JSA)

On high school campuses across the country, there are students concerned with what is happening around them -- students who are interested in politics and government, foreign affairs, the law, and education. The Junior State of America (JSA) was created by and for these students. Since its inception in 1934, more than 300,000 student members have become active, informed citizens through the Junior State.

What makes JSA so unique is that students organize every aspect of organization, all the way from the chapter level to state and national administration. Our student leaders, elected by their fellow JSA members, plan and execute all of the conventions, conferences, and political awareness events held by the Junior State.

JSA allows for an exchange of ideas through stimulating student debates, thought talks, problem solving, and a variety of simulations. By participating in these activities, each member walks gains a more intelligent and informed viewpoint. JSA also provides a wonderful chance to meet and make friends with scores of other bright, involved students who have similar interests. It's an experience that you don't want to miss.

JSA is a national organization, from the high school chapter level to the regions which coordinate communication with chapters and run two regional events annually, the states which run three large overnight conventions a year, and the national level of general administration.

Chapters

The Junior State chapter is the most fundamental part of the organization. The vast majority of a student's involvement in JSA takes place at the chapter level. Junior State chapters have a huge impact on the lives of high school students and have an equally meaningful impact on their high school campuses and communities. In over 500 high schools across the nation, JSA chapters are recognized as the place to go for students who are interested in politics.

A strong JSA chapter attracts liberals, conservatives, moderates and even people who don't know where they fall on the political spectrum. The lively debates, stimulating discussions and engaging activities let students express their opinions while learning about the issues. The student leaders of the chapter gain valuable skills as they build and run the club. School administrators and faculty recognize the chapter as an augment to the social studies curricula and an addition to the civic education mission of their school.

Junior State chapters are school sponsored extracurricular clubs. They must have a teacher/advisor and at least eight members and follow the regulations of their high school. Junior State chapters hold regular meetings on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

