



The Staters Union

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Welcome to Boys State

Thane Chastain
Director of Development
Acting Director

Welcome to what I hope is the best week of your life (so far)!

It was 1977 when several of my friends from Pratt High and I piled into the Luder's family van and headed off to Boys State (at that time it was held in Lawrence at KU). I really had no earthly idea what I was getting into. Dad just told me one day that the Rotary Club was sponsoring me and so I would be going. One of my friends in the Senior class did a program at our school about his experience at Boys State, but I will admit I was still pretty clueless. During opening ceremonies I recognized the current Boys State Governor as one of my arch debate and forensic 'rivals' from Hutch High, Rob Morrison. I thought, "well, if he can do it..." so off I ran for Governor. Guess what? I didn't make it. Wow! I was honestly a bit embarrassed. But following the general election results they announced the start of the election process for Boys Nation. I ran, and



I won. That was back when Bob Dole was one of our senators. It was great to meet him in the halls of Congress that summer in DC. Jimmy Carter was President. We did get to visit the White House, but he was out of the country that year. Still, an experience that to this day probably defined who I would become.

Roll the clock forward over three decades. I am here to help you have the most incredible experience possible because years ago, Boys State legends like Dino Spigarelli, Grant Lane, Walt Raymond, and Pat Finley opened my eyes to what a program like this could do for me.

see Welcome page 4

Who Are You?

Garrett Moylan
Newspaper Counselor

Or, perhaps more importantly, who will you become? Boys State is designed to shape tomorrow's leaders by helping you discover yourself and your beliefs. It challenges what you think you know and it forces you to evaluate who you are and who you want to be. It truly is a "week to shape a lifetime."

I once said that high school is for figuring yourself out, while college is where you figure out your life. There is no more ready example than Boys State: this week will help you find who YOU are and what YOU believe and why you believe what you do.

Though my letter may be short, my message is boundless: be true to who you are; for what you believe, and never compromise those beliefs.

On behalf of your 2011 staff, advisers, and legionnaires, I welcome you to Boys State.

I look forward to meeting you and I encourage you to go against the grain, to stand out amongst your peers, and to put all you have into this one week. I guarantee you won't regret it.

The Resilience of Character

Andrew Roozeboom
Program/Local Events Coordinator

I know that I am not the first and I will certainly not be the last person to welcome you to the 74th Session of the American Legion Boys State of Kansas. I will do so anyway: Welcome!

You have seen the literature, you have browsed the website, and maybe you have even seen the recruitment video. You have come as prepared as you can. Mom packed clean underwear and Dad heaved your heavy suitcase in to the trunk. Now they are gone. You are alone with 450 other young men who are in the exact same situation. No amount of literature or information can replace what is going to happen to you this week. Friends will be made, memories will be forged, and your life will be reshaped forever.

Unfortunately, reshaping lives is not a natural occurrence. People tend to find themselves

falling into the same habits and the same routines because it is easy. In my experience it takes no effort to do the same thing you did the day before. It is hard to motivate yourself to do something out of your comfort zone or something that challenges you mentally or physically. While doing the easy thing may be enjoyable at the moment, take a second and think about how it develops your character.

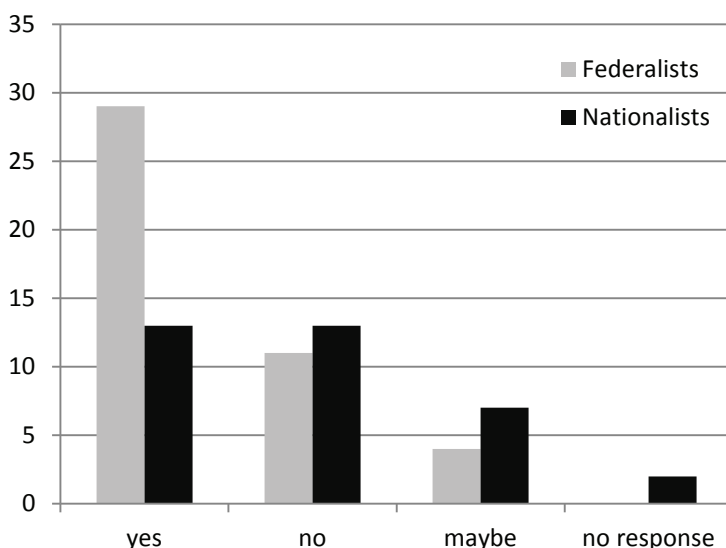
Your character is developed in large part by how you encounter and respond to obstructions and unforeseen events that pop up when you least expect them. This week will be full of things you have never encountered and you will find yourself responding in ways you never thought you would be able to.

As the week begins, take the time to think about your viewpoints and how you relate to

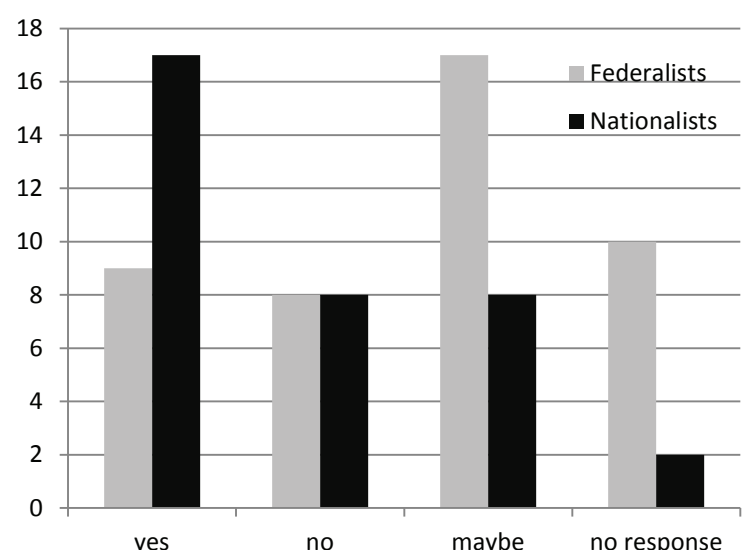
people. By the time Friday rolls around I guarantee that it will be different. Maybe not an extreme 180 degrees, but perhaps a refinement in the way you interact with people from a different socioeconomic class, race, sexual orientation, or geographical location. This week is a controlled, chaotic environment where you can take advantage of every moment to take a look at yourself and realize this is the perfect opportunity to develop a network of friends, to learn about others and yourself, and to see how you can make a difference in your community.

As staff we will do our part to challenge you in ways you never thought possible. We ask only that you rise to our challenge and discover that, with the support of peers, shaping a lifetime can be a lot simpler than you would expect.

Do you support the death penalty?



Should 'Intelligent Design' be taught in school?



Meet your Boys State Coordinators



Andrew Roozeboom
Program/Local Events



Jared Meitler
Program/Local Events



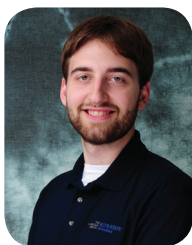
Matthew Root
Legislature and State Offices



Josh Cleek
Departments/PACs



Adam Doyle
IT/AV



Zach Gardner
Recruitment



Colton Poort
Recruitment

Showing up is half the battle

Jared Meitler
Program/Local Events Coordinator

Congratulations! So far, all you've done is show up and believe it or not, that in itself has the possibility of turning into the single greatest decision of your life. I'd like to take a moment and hop back in your shoes.

I was pretty excited when my American Legion approached me about attending Boys State. The upperclassmen from my high school that had attended before me were pretty cool, popular guys. They came back with stories about how much fun they'd had, how good the food was, and I certainly knew it would be better than the alternative, which was helping Dad with harvest.

However, I did have some very significant fears as we pulled up to K-State's campus. What if I don't find anybody that likes me? What if I don't know what office to run for? What if I get made fun of for my curly, highlighted hair? What in the world am I going to do for a week without any interaction with girls?!

It didn't take long for me to recognize just how significant each meeting, program, activity, and interaction was at Boys State. Now here we are, ten years later, and nearly all of the blessings in my life have ties to my experience at State.

I developed a stronger sense of self identity and really understood for the first time how I (not just how my parents or

those around me) felt about political issues and what the decisions of our policy makers means to each individual. I gained a deeper feeling of civic responsibility and what it means to be an American. Most of all, I learned about mutual respect. I found out that my views were very different from the other delegates at State. I was raised by great parents, in an outstanding small community, with completely different day-to-day issues than the other delegates I got to know. Each of our upbringings helps to shape us as people and that's why this country is so great. I learned that there's seldom right and wrong when debating issues,
see Showing up page 4

THE NEWSPAPER

All stories pertaining to Boys State within these pages refer to a simulated society, and editorial license may have been used to report the "facts" of such stories.

Letters to the editor are encouraged and accepted. Letters must be signed and the writer's county indicated to be considered for publication. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, grammar, and legality. Letters should be taken to the Staters Union office in the basement of Marlatt Hall (room 20).

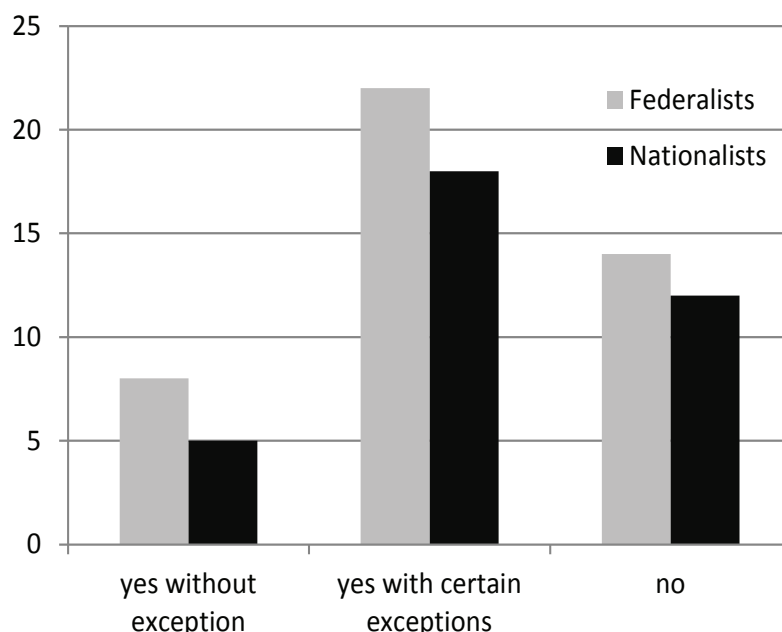
facebook

Join the group on Facebook for the American Legion Boys State of Kansas!

Share with others your amazing stories about Boys State and keep in touch with your fellow staters.

Search for the American Legion Boys State of Kansas on Facebook and join today!

Do you support a woman's right to have an abortion?



from [Welcome](#) page 1

I am proud of you for being here. For some of you, I know you couldn't wait to get here. For some, you are probably scared to death right now and may wonder if you made the right choice to be here. The rest of you are no doubt somewhere in the middle. Where ever you are, imagine the leap off the platform of a bungee jump, or one of those incredible thrill rides at Worlds of Fun. Trust me. Relax. Lose yourself in the moment and let this program take you where it will. Trust me, it is a great ride.

Thirty-five years from now, I hope one of you is writing a letter like this to the incoming class, urging them to get involved and be all they can through this

program. In the relay race of life, a great baton was handed to me (and the rest of my staff) by the legends before me. We do our part to carry on this great race to the next generation. We now pass the baton to you. Show us what you are made of.

from [Showing Up](#) page 3 but different perspectives and ways to find solutions. I challenge you to recognize those same ideologies during your time here.

As you move through the week, one that will certainly change your life, keep these three things in mind and you'll find success. Have fun, be open-minded, and step outside your comfort zone. Congratulations on your nomination, selection, and arrival at the American Legion Boys State of Kansas!

Polls

The data displayed in the charts throughout this issue of the Staters Union were collected from a survey of 79 delegates and were collected prior to this session of Boys State.

Interested in Journalism or Reporting?

Run as your county's delegate for the Media Corps tonight! Only two from each county will be elected. Good luck!