

What is RYLA?



Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is a program to assist high school students in developing leadership skills. The program centers on an intense, professionally led, four-day leadership training retreat. Rotary District 5470 (covering the southern half of Colorado) holds its retreat weekend during the summer at the Colorado Mountain College Spring Valley Campus located near Glenwood Springs, Colorado.

What Happens at the Leadership Retreat Weekend? The RYLA Retreat weekend provides a series of professionally developed presentations and activities that takes participants through a process of assessing their personal leadership characteristics, and understanding the ethics of leadership and setting personal goals. It then teaches leadership through interpersonal skills, working effectively with diverse peers in conflict resolutions and consensus building, as well as organizational planning, and recognizing and working with support networks.

How much does RYLA Cost? RYLA does not cost the student anything. The “Awards” in the RYLA name refers to the scholarships that are awarded by Rotary and/or locally supporting businesses that sponsor RYLA scholarships through the local Rotary Clubs. If you are willing to sponsor a scholarship, please let us know at RYLA@RYLA5470.org and we will connect you with a local club in your community. Scholarships are \$350 each.

How are students selected to participate? Students are nominated to a local Rotary Club in the district. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the website at www.RYLA5470.org or can be provided by your local Rotary Club. The Rotary Club RYLA Chair interviews students and selects the recipients of the awards. Most communities sponsor three awards each year from their community.

Who should attend RYLA? RYLA is designed to work with students that are starting to show signs of leadership, or the potential for leadership, in their communities. Successful applicants are in good standing at school and are actively involved with clubs, sports teams, or community groups. Generally participants are in the summer between Sophomore or Junior year in High School, but mature incoming freshman are welcome as well.

What else is RYLA? The RYLA program is an opportunity to meet and build friendships with fellow student leaders from around the state as well as getting to know the Rotarian leaders in your community. Rotary is based on a foundation that Fellowship, by getting to know each other, opens opportunities for service that will make our communities better places to live, as well as promoting peace and better understanding world wide. An important part of RYLA is building these relationships – and most clubs will meet with students 2-3 times after the retreat to follow-up on what was learned at the retreat and how to apply that leadership in school, family, and friends.

What do I do to participate?



Decide if RYLA Supports Your Club's Mission: I've been to PETS several times, both as a P.E. and as a trainer, so I know you have been told 5470 "great ideas" about what you should do in the next year – but you're the president – you need to decide what your priorities will be for the year. Do you want to continue or expand your clubs involvement with youth? If the answer is yes then RYLA is an easy way.

Budget for RYLA: The "Awards" in the RYLA name refers to the scholarships that are "awarded" to the student. Many club work with locally supporting businesses as co-sponsors. Scholarships are \$350 each. Clubs are encouraged to sponsor three students to maximize the benefit of the time and effort. Therefore, a budget of \$1050 is recommended.

Find a Club RYLA Chair: RYLA takes a commitment - but is not a lot of work for a Rotary program. Most clubs have a committee of 1-3 members that handle RYLA. Time averages 2-4 hours a month at the most. The RYLA program has a detailed "Club Chair Manual" available upon request. Once you designate a chair, have them contact us at RYLA@RYLA5470.org.

Bookmark RYLA Dates: The following are key dates for the RYLA program:

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| May 15 | - Club Commit to Spots at the RYLA Retreat |
| May 15 | - Club Sends Payment to RYLA |
| May | - Clubs Interview Students |
| June 15 | - Club's Submit Student Names to RYLA |
| June 30 | - All Student Paperwork is due to RYLA Staff |
| July 15-18 | - RYLA RETREAT WEEKEND |
| September | - Club Holds Follow-up Meeting with Students |
| October | - Student Presentations to clubs |

Use RYLA to Build Leaders Beyond The Club Level? As you have learned this weekend, one of the goals of a healthy club is building leaders beyond the club level. RYLA is a great program to challenge a new member, or a established leader in the club, to step to involvement at the district level. The committee is seeking support in the following areas: Administrative Assistance, Club Participation Recruitment, Student Registration, Accounting, Program Development, Website & Social Media Coordinating, and Counselors for the Retreat Weekend. The RYLA Committee has a monthly telephone conference and conducts its business online, requiring very little travel beyond attending the retreat weekend. The time commitments vary by role, but for most members at the district level it would be about 5-10 hours a month for the six months surrounding the Retreat Weekend. The RYLA committee reimburses expenses for committee members and provides a private room for counselors during the retreat weekend.

If you can inspire a leader in your club to step up beyond the club level, the district RYLA Committee welcomes them.

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