

Youth Leadership Forum

The Commonwealth's Developmental Disabilities Council

Mission

To create a Commonwealth that advances opportunities for independence, personal decision-making and full participation in community life for individuals with developmental and other disabilities.

Vision

Virginians with developmental disabilities direct their own lives and choose how they live, learn, work, and play.

High School Students with Disabilities Gather for One Week

The Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a unique training program for high school students with disabilities. Students selected to attend the YLF are called Delegates. Role models who have successfully met the challenges of their own disabilities are presenters at the YLF. In an atmosphere of encouragement, the YLF offers youth with disabilities the opportunity to learn from one another and skilled facilitators through shared problem-solving and teamwork.

Eligibility

Rising high school juniors and seniors with disabilities who have demonstrated leadership potential and motivation are eligible to apply and may be selected as YLF Delegates.

Delegates are chosen through a competitive application process administered statewide. Each student submits an application form, a personal essay, and two letters of recommendation.

The YLF strives to ensure that each class of Delegates represents Virginia's geographic and demographic diversity.

July 23-27, 2012: A Week Packed with Activity

The 2012 YLF will be held at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond. Delegates participate in leadership training activities, explore career and life goals, network, develop informational resources, and explore the latest assistive technology. Delegates also:

- ▶ Hear first-hand the real-life experiences of successful adult leaders with disabilities;
- ▶ Develop Personal Leadership Plans to implement following the YLF;
- ▶ Tour the State Capitol, meet with legislators, and give testimony; and
- ▶ Enjoy social activities and entertainment created especially for the YLF.

Delegates Attend YLF at No Cost

Funding from the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) covers all YLF expenses including room and board, instructional materials, activities, interpreters, personal care assistants, and individual medical care as required. The YLF is endorsed at the national level by the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities.

Applications Due March 30, 2012 at 5:00 pm

We strongly encourage electronic submission of application materials. To apply, please download the application at www.vboard.org.

Contact Kara White at VBPD with your questions. 1-800-846-4464 (Voice/TTY) or 804-786-3441 or Kara.White@vbpd.virginia.gov

