



Spirit of America Youth Leadership Program

Program Registration:

Thank you for registering for the Spirit of America Youth Leadership Conference. We look forward to welcoming you to our campus in Valley Forge!

This packet contains some general information to assist you when preparing for your trip including important arrival information.

If you have any questions, or need help, please contact:

Founding Forward
Education Office

E-mail to spiritofamerica@foundingforward.org or call 610.933.8825 ext. 221

“Leave-at-Home” Information:

Contacting a student – In case of an emergency, you may contact a student by calling the Program Director’s cell phone at **610-960-3357**. Please be sure to leave your name and phone number.

Room Registration:

Registration is held Thursday afternoon in the Martha Washington Building. During registration you will receive your weekend program and room key. Following registration, you may have some time to unpack and meet other participants before dinner.



Arrivals and Departures

To ensure a smooth trip to and from Founding Forward, travel itineraries for air, train, and bus should be shared with the Education Team by emailing spiritofamerica@foundingforward.org.

Arrival by Plane via the Philadelphia Airport:

Arrivals by plane will come into Philadelphia International Airport. Founding Forward will provide two bus trips between 12:00 noon and 5:00 p.m. for Program participants. The exact time for each bus departure is determined during the week prior to the conference. Depending on your arrival time, you may have to wait at the airport for a scheduled trip.

When you arrive at the airport, go directly to the baggage claim area of the airline which you are flying. A map of the Philadelphia Airport is available at: http://www.phl.org/terminal_map.html.

As you descend on the escalator into the baggage claim area look for a Founding Forward airport representative (the representative will be holding a Founding Forward sign). The representative will arrive at the airport at 11 AM and meet any early arrivals at this time, unless prior arrangements have been made.

The representative will advise you when and from where the bus will depart.

If you cannot find the Founding Forward representative, call our staff promptly on 610-960-3357 for further instructions.

Arrivals by Train:

Train arrivals into Philadelphia from North or South should detrain at Philadelphia 30th Street Station (main terminal) and take the R5 Paoli Local to the Paoli Station (10 minutes from Valley Forge). This train leaves from the same 30th Street Station. Train arrivals from the west should detrain directly at Paoli. Call Founding Forward at 610-933-8825 x221 or staff cell phone at 610-960-3357 when you arrive at the Paoli Station. Transportation will be provided from Paoli to Founding Forward.

Arrival by Bus:

If you wish to travel by bus, take Greyhound to the Norristown Transportation Center. Call Founding Forward's staff cell phone at 610-960-3357 when you arrive for transportation to Founding Forward. Please note you must make advanced reservations for Greyhound.



Arrival by Car:

If you are driving, Founding Forward is located on Route 23 between Valley Forge National Park and Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. Please arrive between 3pm and 5pm.

Founding Forward's street address for all GPS systems, including Google Maps/Waze, is **1601 Valley Forge Road, Phoenixville, PA 19460**. Please see the written directions below. If you need further directions, please call Founding Forward at 610-933-8825 ext. 221 or the staff cell phone at 610-960-3357.

From Pennsylvania Turnpike:

Depart the turnpike at **Exit 326 (King of Prussia-Valley Forge)**. After the toll booth, take the first immediate right exit, "**Valley Forge National Historical Park**." Follow past the Valley Forge Convention Center and continue on Route 23 west through Valley Forge National Historical Park. At the next traffic light (route 252), proceed straight through on Route 23 West. Approximately one mile on your right at the top of the hill (where a large American flag is located) is the entrance to Founding Forward. Proceed to the Martha Washington Building for registration.

From I-95 and I-76:

From I-95, take Route 676 West (Vine Street). This exit is located near the Benjamin Franklin Bridge or Center City Philadelphia. Stay on Route 676 which turns into Route **76 West (Valley Forge)**. Take this highway for approximately 18 miles until the **Valley Forge Park/Pottstown exit (Route 422 West)**. Proceed on Route 422 West to the Valley Forge Park Route 23 West exit. At the light at the end of the off ramp make a left onto Route 23 West. Proceed on Route 23 West through the Park. Route 23 West at the exit of the park will intersect with Rt. 252 at a traffic light. At this intersection you are approximately one mile from Founding Forward. Continue on Route 23 West one mile and on your right at the top of the hill (where a large American flag is located) is the entrance to Founding Forward.

Proceed to the Martha Washington Building for registration.

Departures:

The program officially concludes at **12 noon** after a tour of historic Philadelphia. Lunch will be on your own. Founding Forward will transport all participants to transportation hubs or back to campus for pick-up.

Students who are leaving from or getting picked up from Philadelphia on Sunday must have a parent or guardian email Associate Director of Education, Deepak Bhagat at BhagatD@foundingforward.org no later than 6pm on the Friday of the program.



Packing Checklist

Please use this list to ensure you pack all your necessities. Remember to check the weather forecast. Snow and cold temperatures are a possibility from November through March. The late spring and summer months can be hot and humid. Please pack comfortable clothes. While facilities are air conditioned, you will be spending time outside as well. Outdoor activities such as basketball, volleyball, frisbee, and football are available during free time.

Other Suggested Items to pack include:

- Toiletries
- Any Medications Needed – including over-the-counter medications for headaches, stomach pains, etc. Founding Forward staff does not dispense drugs or medications to students.
- Snow/Raincoat & Snow/Rain gear
- Sunscreen & Bug repellent
- Swap Meet Materials
- Cell Phone and charger
- Spending Money for Snacks and Souvenirs
- Copy of health insurance card
- Copy of all phone numbers and information concerning the conference for your reference.
Make sure that all items are clearly labeled with your name. Your luggage should also be clearly labeled with your name, address and phone number.
- [OPTIONAL] Camera with extra card and Batteries
- [OPTIONAL] Postage Stamps for Postcards

If you have any questions, please call Deepak Bhagat in the Education Office at 610-933-8825 x 221 or email at BhagatD@foundingforward.org



Accommodation Information

Accommodations:

Founding Forward was established as an educational campus fully equipped with three dormitories, classroom space, and dining facilities. Upon your arrival, you will be placed in a room with up to four other participants. **We assign rooms randomly**, so you will not know your roommate(s) until you arrive. **Your roommate(s) will remain the same throughout your stay at Founding Forward.**

Packing:

In anticipation of your trip, please pack wisely. Here are a few tips to help you pack:

- ✎ Commercial airlines have a variety of fees and restrictions for luggage. Please check with your individual airline for specifics. **You are responsible for any luggage fees.** If you can pack everything in a carry-on bag and a backpack, you can avoid luggage fees.
- ✎ Clearly mark your name, address, and phone number on your luggage. Have Founding Forward's address and phone number on your person in case of emergencies.
- ✎ Dormitory rooms have limited closet space.
- ✎ You will be responsible for the transportation of your luggage to and from your dorm room, so only pack what you can carry.
- ✎ Put your name on everything and **DO NOT** bring valuables. Founding Forward is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Dress Code:

Casual dress may be worn throughout the conference, except for the banquet on Saturday evening (see below). Casual dress is considered nice jeans, pants, sweaters, t-shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, and athletic shoes. Please remember the ABC guidelines: no armpits, bellies, or cleavage. Offensive language on t-shirts will not be tolerated.

On Saturday night there is a **banquet** which is semi-formal dress. Semi-formal dress is considered "church clothes" and may include skirts, dresses, and/or suits for women; dress shirts, slacks, jackets and/or suits for men. Cadets are encouraged to bring and wear dress uniforms.



Rules:

Rules are set in place to ensure a safe and exciting environment for you to live and learn. The staff of Founding Forward take the rules very seriously. Upon your first offense, you will be sent home immediately. **There are no exceptions.** You will be responsible for your own travel costs if sent home from the program. Rules are expected to be followed upon your arrival at the airport in Philadelphia throughout your stay. Please read and thoroughly understand the rules before you arrive.

- **Drugs or Alcohol:** Use of these items is strictly prohibited. If for any reason you have doctor-prescribed medication, please notify a staff member upon arrival.
- **Lights Out:** Lights out will be announced at the conclusion of the evening activities. During lights out you must be in your room with the lights out.
- **Dormitory Restrictions:** At NO TIME are women allowed in men's dorms/hotel rooms or vice versa.
- **Attendance:** Your attendance is required at every session. If you are unable to attend due to illness, you must notify the Program Director immediately.
- **Honor Code:** All students are expected to sign and return the Honor Code to Founding Forward prior to their arrival on campus.

Student Insurance and Medical Information:

Founding Forward requires that each student submit a medical form completed with medical history and insurance information prior to arrival on campus. Should a medical emergency arise, Founding Forward will assume the authority to administer medical treatment in the absence of a parental guardian. Founding Forward will assume **NO** financial responsibility for medical treatment. Please notify us well in advance of the program date if there are any medical needs you have.

Housing:

There are three residence Halls on campus (MacArthur, Hamilton & Franklin). Each room is carpeted and fully equipped with a bathroom. Participants are provided with an adequate supply of towels, soap, and bed linens for the conference. Wireless Internet is available in the dormitories. There are **NO** vending machines in the dorms.

Meals:

Three meals per day are served in the MacArthur dining facility. The first meal will be dinner on Thursday evening. Meals are served in a cafeteria style serving manner and each participant is asked to clear their own table. On Saturday evening, there is a formal banquet to end the conference. During breaks and free time, the Founding Forward Gift Shop in MacArthur sells soda and snacks. You are allowed to have drinks and snacks in the classroom and your dorm, but you are expected to clean up after yourself.



Major Activities

Leadership Sessions

Students selected to attend the Spirit of America Youth Leadership Conference will engage in a variety of leadership workshops. Some of these include Character Development & Responsible Citizenship, Civic Engagement Roundtables with your groups, and a Leadership Carnival on Friday night that showcases your group dynamics and skills as you compete against other groups.

Freedom Summit

In addition to a series of lectures and group discussions on the topics of democracy, citizenship, the American Constitution, and current events, students will participate in a Freedom Summit session wherein the students will become their own working government to debate current topics of global concern.

Tours & Sightseeing

Students will have the opportunity to tour historic Philadelphia and Valley Forge National Historic Park. Sites visited will include Philadelphia - Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Congress Hall; Valley Forge - Washington's Headquarters, Continental Army barracks, and the Grande parade ground.

Living History Presenters

Students step into the past, hearing from and engaging with characters from the nation's founding. Through these conversations, participants learn about the Founding Fathers' ideas and philosophies on freedom and independence and take up the responsibility of preserving our rights through our Signers' Ceremony.

Committees

Throughout the weekend you will have an opportunity to participate in committees demonstrating your talents and creativity or just having fun. Committees include Floor Captains, Public Speaking, News, Affirmations, Flag, Vespers, and more.



Materials

Upon arrival in Valley Forge, you will receive a folder containing your schedule, room key and other program information.

Staff & Faculty

- Founding Forward Program Staff – Supervise all aspects of the program. Staff reside at the Foundation and are on call throughout the program.
- Faculty – Core faculty members are experts from national universities in the fields of government, constitutional law, and American History. Along with the faculty members, additional speakers, of local and national experiences, are brought in to supplement the excellent opportunity for *Spirit of America Youth Leadership Conference* students to engage and converse with experts both in theory and practice.



Tentative Spirit of America Youth Leadership Program Schedule

Thursday

3:00 - 6:00pm	Student arrival and Check-in
7:00	Dinner
7:45	Orientation: Goals of the Program, Review of Schedule, and Committee Sign-Ups
8:30	Group Check-ins

Friday

7:45 am	Breakfast
8:30	Living History Presentation
10:00	Freedom Summit I: Constitutional Law Seminar
12:30 pm	Lunch
1:30	Freedom Summit II: Mock Congress
3:00	Reflection in Small Groups
4:00	Free Time
5:00	Character Development & Responsible Citizenship
6:00	Dinner with Committees
6:45	Leadership Carnival
8:45	Ice Cream Social and Swap Meet



Saturday

7:15 am	Flag Ceremony
7:30	Breakfast
8:15	Free Enterprise Speaker & Session
9:30	Free Enterprise Challenge - Shark Tank
10:30	Free Time/Tours of Medal of Honor Grove
11:15	Leadership Workshop – Group Civic Roundtable
Noon	Lunch
12:45	News Committee Report
1:15	Tour of Valley Forge
4:30	Committee Meetings
5:00	Free Time
6:00	Banquet
7:00	Keynote Speaker
8:30	Vespers Ceremony
9:00	Signers' Ceremony
10:00	Closing Orientation

Sunday**

7:00 am	Boxed Breakfast To-Go
7:15	Depart for Philadelphia
8:00	Tour of Historic Philadelphia
Noon	Departures

**Note: lunch is not provided on Sunday. Students should be prepared to purchase lunch at the airport if they are flying home.

Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change.



SWAP MEET

Founding Forward's **Swap Meet** gives students the opportunity to bring and share gifts from their hometown and state. Items in the past have included: food items, pens and pencils, pins, patches, postcards, keychains, stickers, bumper stickers, candy, etc.

Please do not feel like you need to spend large amounts of money on items. Instead, contact local businesses, colleges and universities, sports teams, and community organizations and ask for donations. Tell them that you are attending a prestigious leadership conference and want to share a bit of your town, city, or state with students from around the nation.

Please make sure that your items are easily packable so you can travel with them. During the Swap Meet all items will be displayed on tables and each participant will be able to view the tables and select items to take home. If you opt to bring a large item, it may be raffled off in the spirit of fairness.

This is a great time to take home a piece of America, so please, feel free to be creative!

Due to increased travel costs, students may choose to mail their swap meet materials to Founding Forward. Please send any boxes to:

Founding Forward
ATTN: Education Department
Student's Name & Program Date
P.O. Box 67
Valley Forge, PA 19481