Calling All Leaders!

If you are an energetic, motivated, and driven person with a disability between the ages of 15-21 this program may be for you!

Hosted by the Florida Independent Living Council, in partnership with the Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
What is the Florida Youth Leadership Forum?

- The Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (YLF) is a unique leadership-training program for high school students with disabilities. Students will represent their communities as delegates in Florida’s state capital, learning to cultivate leadership, citizenship, and social skills.

What Kinds of Activities Will I Participate in?

- YLF Delegates will learn how laws are made and how to successfully advocate for new laws. They will visit the state Capitol, meet legislators, and participate in a mock legislative session.

- YLF delegates will learn what it means to be a leader and discover new ways to increase their leadership abilities. Each delegate will develop a “Personal Leadership Plan”, which provides an individual action plan so students can begin using new skills to advocate for themselves and others.

- YLF delegates will improve their self-advocacy skills and develop disability pride by learning about the history of the disability movement, how to increase disability awareness, and how to access community resources that can lead to independence.

- YLF delegates will learn pre-employment transition skills and explore careers in various disciplines.

- YLF delegates will have fun! Delegates will participate in group activities that allow students with different abilities to network and develop new relationships.

Who May Apply?

- Florida students aged 15-21 that are currently enrolled in a high school education program (public, private, virtual, GED, homeschool) or post-secondary school (trade, college or university) are invited to apply. Each student must have a diagnosed disability at the time of application. We are a cross-disability organization and we welcome applications from individuals with any type of disability.

- Applicants should be able to demonstrate their leadership potential through participation in school, extracurricular activities and/or community involvement.

- Applicants must have the ability to interact effectively with other students, adapt to new surroundings, follow an intense schedule of daily activities, and demonstrate a willingness to participate in small and large group discussions.

- Selected applicants must show proof of health insurance (private insurance, year-round school insurance, Cover Florida, KidCare or Medicaid are acceptable).

Where Do We Stay?

- The 2023 Youth Leadership Forum will take place on campus at Florida State University. Delegates and staff will be housed in double occupancy rooms in university dorms. There is no registration fee. Housing and meal costs will be covered by YLF. Transportation assistance is also available.