

What do former delegates have to say about the Forum?

"I met other young people with disabilities and we immediately understood each other."

"It made me proud of who I am ... I feel better about myself ... I can be a leader ... I am glad I am a Missouri Youth Leadership Forum delegate."

"Missouri Youth Leadership Forum was a fantastic experience that I will never forget."

"When my mom dropped me off, I can remember telling her I didn't think I wanted to stay! Four days later when my mom returned, she tells me I had a whole different attitude! She is right! It was an amazing experience. This forum changed my life!"

"We really did share our experiences with each other and learned from each other."



HOW DO I APPLY?

Download an application at <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/ylf.htm> or <http://www.silcolumbia.org/what-we-do/programs/mylf/> and mail, fax or email to:

Governor's Council on Disability
Missouri Youth Leadership Forum
P.O. Box 1668
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-1668
800-877-8249
(Fax) 573-526-4109
gcd@oa.mo.gov

WHO SPONSORS THE FORUM?

The Forum is coordinated by the Governor's Council on Disability and Services for Independent Living. For more information, please visit <http://disability.mo.gov/gcd/ylf.htm> or <http://www.silcolumbia.org/what-we-do/programs/mylf/>



GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITY
301 West High Street, Room 840
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Jefferson City, MO 65102
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SERVICES FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING
1401 Hathman Place
Columbia, Missouri 65201
800-766-1968
sil@silcolumbia.org
www.silcolumbia.org



THE FORUM

MISSOURI YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM



The **Missouri Youth Leadership Forum** (the Forum) is a unique career leadership-training program for high school students with disabilities, ages 16 – 21. Youth delegates are selected from their local communities to cultivate leadership, citizenship and social skills at this four-day summer program.

What are the goals of the Forum?

- » Develop leadership skills to ensure that all youth with disabilities will realize their full potential
- » Promote inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of society
- » Participate in policymaking or practices that affect young people with disabilities

Why is the Forum only for students with disabilities?

It is important for students with disabilities to meet other students who share similar experiences. Through the course of four days, students build pride and self-esteem and learn from each other. Youth begin building a supportive community.

The key success to the Forum is leadership by example. As part of the program, students meet successful adults with disabilities who share similar challenges. This framework provides an atmosphere of encouragement which helps youth realize their ability to pursue meaningful employment and become contributing members of society.

How are students selected?

Youth are selected through a statewide competitive process that seeks students with disabilities who have leadership potential. Each applicant submits a standard application, resume and three letters of recommendation.

The student delegates will represent a cross section of Missouri in terms of geography, gender, economic status, ethnicity and different types of disabilities.

What is the agenda?

1. Learning and applying leadership principles
2. Understanding the disability experience and sharing resources
3. Assistive technology
4. Building independent living skills and setting career goals
5. Developing advocacy skills

What is the cost?

The Forum is available to student delegates at **NO COST**. If you would like to help defray the cost of this program, please make your tax-deductible donation to the Forum online at <http://www.silcolumbia.org/what-we-do/programs/mylf/> or mail to:

Services for Independent Living
Attention: Missouri Youth Leadership Forum
1401 Hathman Place
Columbia, Missouri 65201

