

Support the Kansas Youth Leadership Forum!

Your investment WILL build leaders, change lives, and make our state stronger!

The Kansas Youth Leadership Forum is...

A week-long leadership training on a college campus for high school juniors, seniors, and those in a transition program with all types of disabilities from all across the state. This is more than just a leadership training. This is a week of being immersed in empowerment, future planning, disability pride, and confidence building! Delegates learn from community leaders in large group sessions and from role model volunteers in small group sessions. They also experience a Day at the Capital, Mentor Luncheon, adapted recreation, resource fair, talent show, and dance.



The Youth Delegates Gain:

- A **5-year goal plan** with SMART goals, steps to reaching the goals, resources, and a timeline
- A large **toolbox of community resources** in the state of Kansas
- Interaction with many **role models** with disabilities and without disabilities
- **Awareness** of their disability and others disabilities, along with disability pride and accommodations
- New **advocacy skills** and tools to speak up for themselves and others
- Enhanced communication, social skills, teamwork, and soft skills that will be an **asset in the workforce** and in life
- Knowledge, exploration, and a mentor in their **career field of interest**
- Growth in their **self-confidence, self-efficacy**, and belief in their abilities
- Knowledge and opportunities for **further leadership exploration**
- A **new support system** that brings a sense of belonging and connection



Just the Facts!

- The KSYLF has been around since 2001 and has helped to **build 523 leaders across our state**. These alumni are now out in the world, living full lives and achieving their goals. They are employed, going to college, participating in other leadership programs and events, and contributing to our communities.
 - In the last 5 years, we estimate that **70% of our alumni have achieved at least one goal** on their Personal Leadership Plan. Many have achieved more than one goal.
 - In the last 5 years, we estimate that **90% of our alumni have graduated high school**.
 - We estimate that, out of our 523 alumni, at least **135 have attended or graduated from some kind of post-secondary education** and **205 have been employed** at some point in their life.
 - Our alumni are **USING the resources gained!** They have utilized: Vocational Rehabilitation, Pre-ETS, centers for independent living, Working Healthy, SACK, KCDD, Assistive Technology for Kansans, Disability Rights Center, workforce centers, ABLE accounts, KYEA, and more.



"I got that it is okay to have a disability. I learned what it means to be a leader. I will go to college, and I will live on my own. I learned that, even though I have a disability, I am just like everybody else. I liked this and I made new friends."

— Khia, KSYLF Alumni '24

"I feel like it taught me that I could be more independent than I thought I could."

- America, KSYLF Alumna '23



"The staff and volunteers were very supportive, considerate, and helpful. They helped me get through tough spots and made sure to include everyone in the activities. They taught me how to advocate for myself better. Please never stop supporting this organization. This can change thousands more lives for the positive."

- Dylan, KSYLF Alumni '23

"I've had such an amazing week. I'm so so happy that I got to experience this before I went to college. I feel so ready and excited for what's to come. Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity and for making programs like this possible!"

- Addie, KSYLF Alumni '25

"I really love this place and I don't wanna say goodbye yet. This is like my second family. I learned that having a disability is okay. You don't need to feel ashamed of having one. I wouldn't change anything. I love it here so much."

- Zander, KSYLF Alumni '23

"It really motivated me to advocate for myself and others, step out of my comfort zone and try something new, and be more confident in myself."

- Emme, KSYLF Alumna '23



"The sessions made me learn new things and helped me step out of my comfort zone. [I now know] I can get accommodations, even at the workplace. I learned I am a leader, and I am braver than I thought. I should never feel ashamed about my disability. [I will now] advocate more for myself and maybe others."

— Christian, KSYLF Alumni '22

"I learned that I am a part of a community that I never knew was so accepting and loving. I hope to get more involved in this community."

- Ally, KSYLF Alumna '19

