



Youth Leadership Jacksonville

Actively Recruiting the Class of 2026

Apply as a Freshman. If selected you'd participate as a Sophomore.

MISSION: *Youth Leadership Jacksonville (YLJ) identifies a diverse group of high school students from across the First Coast who have demonstrated leadership and prepares them to become responsible, ethical leaders committed to active community involvement.*

PROGRAM OVERVIEW: Created in 1989, this six month program inspires, educates, and connects up to 55 High School Sophomores from across the First Coast region. The program is designed to help participants understand and learn how to address the issues facing the community; introduce opportunities for involvement in all aspects of the community; and teaches critical skills needed to be a community leader.

TIME COMMITMENT: Attendance at Orientation and Retreats are mandatory. Of the four Program Days, only one can be missed. Your participation in the program will excuse you from school, however, you are responsible for any school work assigned while attending the program.

Key Dates for Class of 2026

Thursday, May 8, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. - Family Orientation - **Mandatory** for the students and at least one of their parents or guardians.

Friday, August 15 from 3:30-8:00pm & **Saturday, August 16, 2025** from 8am-3:30pm - Opening Retreat. **Mandatory** in its entirety.

Program Days: Thursdays once a month on: **September 25, October 23, November 20, December 4, 2025 and January 15, 2026.** Program Days typically run from 7:45am-3:30pm.

Saturday, February 21, 2026 from 8:00am-3:00pm - Closing Retreat & Graduation.

Please note: Parents will need to provide transportation to and from each Youth LJ Retreat or Program Day.

ELIGIBILITY

- ☒ Attend an accredited high school in Duval, Clay, Baker, Nassau, or St. Johns counties.
- ☒ Apply as a freshmen to participate your sophomore year.
- ☒ Your application must be approved by your school administration.
- ☒ Demonstrate proven leadership in school and/or community activities.
- ☒ Have an interest in addressing the issues confronting your community.
- ☒ Commit to full participation in the program.
- ☒ Be academically sound. An average of “B” or better is recommended, as program will require students to miss approximately one day of school a month.

Does this sound like you? Then considering applying for this amazing opportunity!

APPLICATION PROCESS

Complete the application form. Make sure to save your document. Either e-mail your completed application to your school’s YLJ Liaison or print and give to the liaison.

Your Liaison will provide a Reference Form to students your school selects as applicants to YLJ. Give reference forms to an adult you know well, other than a parent or relative. The reference must be included with your application to Youth Leadership Jacksonville to be considered.

Return your completed application packet to your school’s YLJ Liaison by the deadline your school has established. Your school will select applications to forward to the Leadership Jacksonville Office for participation in the Selection Process.

SELECTION PROCESS & NOTIFICATION TIMELINE

Application Deadline: Confirm your school's application deadline with your School's Liaison / Guidance Department. Schools will nominate no more than 6 candidates to advance to the interview process.

Candidate Interviews: After an initial review of school nominations, no more than 100 candidates will be invited to interview. If invited, candidates **will be interviewed** by three to five members of the Selection Team via Zoom in February or March 2025. Emails will be sent to all applicants to notify them of their interview date and time.

The community-volunteer-led selection team will invite up to 55 students from across the region to participate in YLJ during the 2025-2026 School Year. All Applicants will receive emails notifying them of the Selection Team’s decision by mid-April 2025.

The Family Orientation, if accepted into the program, will be Thursday, May 8th, 2025.

To learn more, please visit www.leadershipjax.org.



Please be sure to complete all questions. Limit your responses to the space provided.

Student Personal Information

Name (Last): _____ (First): _____ (Middle): _____

Preferred/Nickname: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Gender: _____ Current Grade: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ High School: _____

Main areas of interest in studies: _____

Parent/Guardian Information:

Name (Last): _____ (First): _____ Relation to Applicant: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name (Last): _____ (First): _____ Relation to Applicant: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Organizations and Activities

Please list activities and/or organizations in which you have participated during the last TWO years:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Volunteer & Work Experience

List any volunteer experience and paid work, and briefly tell what it involved:

*** Personal Statement: Please introduce yourself. What do you like most about yourself? What are your best qualities? What do you aspire to do with your life (at this time)?**

*** Name someone in your life who has taught you about leadership. Why did you select this person? What did they teach you?**

*** What do you hope to learn if accepted into the Youth Leadership Jacksonville program?**

Essay – If you could make one positive change to improve the quality of life in your community, what would it be and why? What role would you play in that change? (*Ideal length = 300-500 words*)