



PALMETTO GIRLS STATE, INC.  
A PROGRAM SPONSORED BY THE  
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY, DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
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May 2009

Dear Palmetto Girls State Citizen:

Welcome to Palmetto Girls State! We, the members of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of South Carolina, are excited that you have been chosen to attend this exceptional program known as Palmetto Girls State. We believe that you are about to partake in one of the greatest experiences of your life, and we hope that your time at Palmetto Girls State will be a truly remarkable experience for you. Your selection to attend Palmetto Girls State is an honor and is a result of who you are. For you to have been nominated and selected to attend Palmetto Girls State, someone believes that you are a special individual and that you are a leader in your school and community. Your attendance at Palmetto Girls State offers you the opportunity to participate in mock political activities on the city, county, and state levels of government and to develop relationships with other young leaders from across the State of South Carolina.

Girls State is a program developed and sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary. In each state with a Girls State program, the state American Legion Auxiliary (known as a state department) sponsors the Girls State program. The South Carolina version of the Girls State program is Palmetto Girls State which is sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of South Carolina. Palmetto Girls State, like similar Girls State programs being conducted across the nation, is a program in government, Americanism, and citizenship. As a program of the American Legion Auxiliary, Palmetto Girls State operates under the tenants and principles of the American Legion Auxiliary. At Palmetto Girls State, we respect the Constitution of the United States, as well as the Constitution of South Carolina, and we respect and salute the flags of the United States of America and South Carolina. Girls State also recognizes the history and importance of "God and Country," and vesper services (sessions of evening devotion and reflection) are held daily at Palmetto Girls State. All in attendance at Palmetto Girls State are expected to participate in these daily activities and observances.

To achieve all that Palmetto Girls State has to offer requires only desire and enthusiasm on your part. Palmetto Girls State is not a summer camp designed solely for your entertainment and relaxation. To reap all that Palmetto Girls State has to offer, you must make a commitment to being involved and to participating in the activities of the week. As you give of your best while participating in the activities and mock governmental campaigns and elections in the mythical state of "Palmetto," you will not only learn of our government and the political process, but you will learn much of yourself, will make new friends, and will have an enjoyable experience. Palmetto Girls State has the potential to be an unforgettable and rewarding experience, as well as an inspiration for years to come, but only if you want it to be.

This year's session of Palmetto Girls State will be held from **June 7 – 13, 2009**, and marks the 63<sup>rd</sup> session of the program. We look forward to June 7 and your arrival at Columbia College. **Plan to arrive at Columbia College between the hours of 9:00 A.M. and 12:00 P.M. (noon) on Sunday, June 7.** Columbia College is located at 1301 Columbia College Drive in Columbia.

Upon arrival at Palmetto Girls State and Columbia College, there will be luggage-drop areas in front of each dorm. Please make sure that all luggage, bags, cosmetic cases, etc. are clearly marked with the delegate's name. Each delegate should proceed to her assigned dorm to unload luggage and to register for the program. Registration will occur in the lobby of each dorm. [NOTE: Room assignments will be mailed to all delegates on or before June 1. (Please consult the map enclosed with these materials to determine the dorm to which you are assigned.) Cars will be allowed to stop and unload luggage in the areas in front of the dorms, but parking is limited and will be strictly monitored and timed. If for some reason, extended parking is needed, cars may be moved to assigned lots away from the immediate area of unloading and registration. Staff members will be available in the areas in front of the dorms to direct you to the appropriate areas. After unloading luggage, delegates will enter their assigned dorm for registration. At

registration, delegates will need to present (1) the \$25.00 registration fee, (2) the \$25.00 room key/dorm access card deposit (please have the exact amount in cash for each of these fees), (3) the completed medical record and consent form, (4) the completed waiver of claim form, (5) the completed insurance information/permission to travel form, (6) a signed Girls State pledge, (7) completed "Bio/Media Information" sheet, (8) completed Release of name and address sheet, and (9) (if applicable) the completed Samsung scholarship application. If you elect to register for optional college credit, you should register for the class prior to arrival at Palmetto Girls State by using the on-line registration at [www.ed190.com](http://www.ed190.com).

After registering at Palmetto Girls State, each delegate may move her belongings into her assigned room. Each delegate is responsible for carrying her luggage from the curb to her room. Please be aware that only Girls State delegates and Girls State Staff are permitted in the dorms. Neither parents nor friends are allowed in the dorms. Each delegate is responsible for transporting her luggage and belongings from the curb in front of her dorm to her room and, therefore, should pack accordingly.

We expect over 500 delegates for this year's session of Palmetto Girls State and moving that many people with luggage takes time. Overcrowding and congestion is inevitable. Please be patient. You can assist in avoiding congestion by arriving early, by limiting good-byes with family, and most importantly by being prepared for registration by having all forms completed and the exact money available to register. Also, you should consider the fact that you are responsible for moving your own luggage from the curb to your room when you are packing and limit the amount of luggage you have.

After check-in, you should use any free time to unpack and get your room straight and to eat lunch in the Columbia College cafeteria. You may also use the time to meet others on your floor and help others as they arrive. Lunch will be available for Girls State participants on Sunday, June 7, 2009. If you do not plan on eating lunch at Palmetto Girls State, then please eat prior to arrival. (But note the 12:00 P.M. (noon) arrival deadline.) Once you check-in at Palmetto Girls State, you are not to leave, even to go out to eat with family members. Meetings within each city and then the first assembly and scheduled to begin after lunch on June 7, and all delegates are expected to be present.

**DO NOT BRING VALUABLE OR IRREPLACEABLE JEWELRY OR LARGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY. YOU WILL BE ISSUED A ROOM KEY WITH WHICH YOU MAY LOCK YOUR ROOM, BUT NEITHER PALMETTO GIRLS STATE NOR COLUMBIA COLLEGE ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY OR LIABILITY FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO PERSONAL EFFECTS OR PROPERTY.** During your stay at Palmetto Girls State, you are asked to lock your room, but even though you may secure your room, you still should not bring valuable belongings or large sums of money.

A non-refundable registration fee of \$25.00 is required from each participant. Also, a deposit of \$25.00 for your room key and dorm access card is required. This room key/dorm access card deposit will be refunded on Saturday morning when you return the room key and dorm access card at checkout. Should you lose or fail to return the room key and/or the dorm access card, you will be charged any additional costs associated with replacing the dorm access card and/or replacing the lock on the room. **NOTE: CHARGES ARE ASSESSED TO GIRLS STATE WHEN THE GIRLS STATE OFFICE CHECKS OUT ON SATURDAY, JUNE 13. THEREFORE YOU CANNOT RETURN THE ROOM KEY OR THE DORM ACCESS CARD BY MAIL AND MUST PAY ANY ADDITIONAL MONEY FOR THESE ITEMS BEFORE LEAVING.**

**DELEGATES MAY NOT HAVE PERSONAL CARS AT PALMETTO GIRLS STATE.** Delegates are responsible for arranging for transportation to and from Palmetto Girls State.

Delegates and their parents should carefully review this letter and the enclosures accompanying this letter. Attendance at Palmetto Girls State is a privilege, and all delegates are expected and required to abide by the rules of the program, including adherence to the dress code that is prescribed for Palmetto Girls State.

We look forward to meeting you and having you in attendance at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Palmetto Girls State.

Sincerely,



Florence P. Belsler  
Palmetto Girls State Director