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News Release

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Students with disabilities take part in Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum

TROY – The 17th annual Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) will be held on the campus of Troy University from May 31 - June 4.

Each year, the five-day event, which is sponsored by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) and hosted by Troy University, helps shape high school students with disabilities through sessions on self-esteem, self-advocacy, career choice, independent living options, and leadership.

Forum delegates are carefully selected through a statewide competition that seeks students with disabilities who display leadership potential. Chosen delegates represent the state's demographics in terms of geography, gender, ethnicity, and types of disabilities.

Thirty-eight students with disabilities received an invite to participate in this year's forum. To be eligible, students must be a junior or senior in high school, be between 17 and 21 years of age, and have a disability.

"YLF is a unique opportunity for young people with disabilities to realize their full leadership potential," said Karen Jenkins, YLF coordinator. "We encourage all of the students to not place limits on their career and academic goals."

During the forum, delegates will write a Personal Leadership Plan (PLP) to assist them in becoming leaders in their communities. In addition to their other activities at YLF, the group will spend a day in Montgomery to tour the Capitol and learn about state government. While in Montgomery, delegates will have an opportunity to visit with and seek guidance from successful adults with disabilities at the Angeline Pinckard Mentor Luncheon.

YLF won't be all work for the delegates. To develop social skills, they will also be treated to a dance, talent show, and an afternoon at Camp Butter and Egg.

The Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum is a program of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the state agency whose mission is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.

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PROVIDING SERVICES TO ALABAMIANS WITH DISABILITIES