

TENNESSEE AMERICAN LEGION

BOYS STATE

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AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE CELEBRATES 53 YEARS AT TENNESSEE TECH, 78 YEARS IN STATE

The American Legion Boys State program that ranks as best in the country will fill the campus of Tennessee Tech University this week for the 53rd consecutive year.

Because of the opportunities given to more than 500 rising high school seniors from across the state, Tennessee's American Legion Boys' State holds a high reputation and thousands of students apply to come each year. Putnam County alone will send 37 students who will receive instruction and advice from the state's lieutenant governor, military leaders and state and local government officials.

"We continue the tradition of serving students in our state with this program," Marc Burnett, Tennessee ALBS director, said. "As Memorial Day approaches each year, we look forward to having the privilege of teaching hundreds of young men about government and service to their state."

Beginning today, delegates will be immersed in learning state government by running a mock 51st state, Boys State. They will organize political parties and establish city, county and state governments by election, complete with primaries and political campaigns. American Legion posts across the state sponsor delegates and fund the activities held at Tennessee Tech. The week will conclude on Saturday, May 27, with an inauguration ceremony and an address by Jeffrey S. Bivins, Chief Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court.

Judge Gary McKenzie, in his third year overseeing the program at Tennessee Tech, serves as American Legion Boys State state chairman for Tennessee. Judge McKenzie welcome participants Sunday night and speak to them in a Monday evening assembly.

Anighya Crocker, 2016 Tennessee ALBS governor, will participate in the opening orientation and memorial service. State Rep. Ryan Williams, Rep. Kelly Keisling and Sen. Paul Bailey will lead a discussion on major political issues in Tennessee on Monday. Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Director Jason Locke will address delegates on Wednesday night. Major Gen. Max Haston, Tennessee adjutant general, will be a guest speaker on Thursday.

Boys State again will host the SCALES program, the Supreme Court Advancing Legal Education for Students, during which the Tennessee Supreme Court will hold a special session to hear oral arguments in two actual Supreme Court cases.

Since the creation of the program in 1995, the SCALES project has given more than 25,000 Tennessee students the ability to see the judicial branch in action.

The American Legion was chartered by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic, mutual-help, war-time veterans organization. A community-service organization which now numbers nearly 3 million members -- men and women -- in nearly 15,000 American Legion Posts worldwide.