

NYSC – National Youth Science Camp

A prestigious Award offered by the Governor's Office

How do I apply?

Finalists at the 62nd State Science and Engineering Fair of Florida must complete the Nomination Application (www.ssefflorida.com) and provide the required information on the form. A representative from the Governor's Office will interview applicants during Judging. Students must be available Wednesday, June 14th through Saturday, July 8th, 2017 for this Opportunity.

Florida will select two candidates and up to four alternates. Candidates must be seniors (**12th grade**) eligible for graduation this academic year. The candidates must, with parent/guardian permission, commit to attend the **National Youth Science Camp** from June 14 - July 8, 2017. The camp will be held in the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia. This is an all-expenses paid opportunity to include transportation. This month-long summer, outdoor adventure program honors excellence in science and promotes scientific leadership through lectures, hands-on research opportunities, and challenging outdoor activities. (*See brochure online at www.nysc.org for more information.*) **Complete the SSEF/ NYSC application www.ssefflorida.com.**

The National Youth Science Camp is a residential science education program for young scientists the summer after they graduate from high school. Students from around the country are challenged academically in exciting lectures and hands-on studies, and have voluntary opportunities to participate in an outdoor adventure program, gain a new and deep appreciation for the great outdoors, and establish friendships that last a lifetime.

Two students are chosen to represent each state as delegates to the National Youth Science Camp. Delegates have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement, leadership in school and community activities, and a genuine interest in the sciences. [West Virginia's Governor](#) invites the governor of each state to appoint a selection coordinator who initiates a competitive process to choose two delegates and up to four alternates. Delegates attend the National Youth Science Camp the summer after their high school graduation.

The National Youth Science Camp is made possible through the planning and fund-raising of the [National Youth Science Foundation](#), a nonprofit organization with a mission to honor, sustain, and encourage youth interest and excellence in science by conducting comprehensive informal science education programs that provide opportunity for constructive interaction with others and emphasize the social value of thoughtful scientific careers.

The National Youth Science Camp program is strengthened through a philosophy that encourages delegates to experience each day by day. This philosophy permits the Staph* to plan numerous special events that surprise the participants. This philosophy also encourages the delegates to give undistracted attention to guest presenters. The National Youth Science Camp does not, therefore, publish detailed program calendars.

NYSC Frequently Asked Questions

What is the National Youth Science Camp?

The National Youth Science Camp is one of the nation's premier programs in secondary science education. Since its inception in 1963 as part of West Virginia's Centennial Celebration, the summer program has offered educational forums and recreational activities that encourage the development of thoughtful scientific leadership.

Who should apply to the National Youth Science Camp?

Potential delegates to the NYSC must meet all of the following guidelines:

- Be available to participate in the entire NYSC program;
- Demonstrate superior academic proficiency, including recognition in mathematics and/or the sciences;
- Demonstrate an application of leadership abilities and social maturity through involvement in both school and community activities;
- Demonstrate skills and achievements outside the realm of science and outside the realm of academic pursuits; and
- Demonstrate a curiosity and an eagerness to explore many and varied topics.

How much does it cost to attend?

Delegates attend the National Youth Science Camp at no expense, transportation included. This has been true throughout the history of the camp so that selectees can attend regardless of their financial status.

How is the camp funded?

The National Youth Science Camp was totally supported by the State of West Virginia from its first session in 1963 through its twentieth session in 1982, and is now funded through contributions to the [National Youth Science Foundation](#), a 501(c) (3) foundation registered with the Internal Revenue Service. While a generous portion of the funding still comes from the [State of West Virginia](#), support increases each year from the private and corporate sectors.

What are the goals of the National Youth Science Camp?

The National Youth Science Camp honors, rewards, and encourages excellence in science. It creates an environment where young scientists of diverse backgrounds and interests may reap maximum benefits from interaction with one another and with visiting scientists. It strives to broaden, to inspire, and to encourage a sense of thoughtful scientific leadership among future scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and health care professionals.

How does the National Youth Science Camp accomplish its goals?

The National Youth Science Camp offers hands-on small-group learning experiences, a provocative lecture series, and an outdoor adventure program. The hands-on experiences and lectures expose delegates to current work across the spectrum of scientific disciplines. Visiting scientists are invited based on their reputation as leaders in their fields and on their ability to share up-to-date research with the delegates. The atmosphere at the NYSC is engaging and supportive. Guests, staff, and delegates have time to relax and discuss ideas over meals or while on the hiking trail. Recent guest speakers at the NYSC include Mr. Wes Bush, President and CEO of Northrop Grumman; Dr. Julie Robinson, Chief Program Scientist, International Space Station / NASA; Dr. Scott Aaronson, David J. Bruton Centennial Professor of Computer Science at The University of Texas at Austin (Previously Associate Professor, MIT, Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Lab) and Dr. Walter Stromquist, Editor, *Mathematics Magazine*.

Where is the camp held?

The National Youth Science Camp is held at Camp Pocahontas near Bartow in the eastern mountains of West Virginia's Potomac Highlands, close to the [National Radio Astronomy Observatory](#) at Green Bank and within the unique wilderness areas of the [Monongahela National Forest](#). Because of the camp's location, delegates have the opportunity to visit the NRAO as well as such West Virginia landmarks as the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area, the Dolly Sods Wilderness Area, and several other destinations.

What happens on a typical day at the National Youth Science Camp?

A typical day begins with a morning lecture from a guest scientist. After this, some groups of students leave to go on outdoor trips while the rest break up into small groups for their hands-on, small group science seminars facilitated by guest scientists or NYSC staff members. The afternoon is reserved for activities such as seminars, athletic and recreational activities, art, and music. While seminar topics can be scientific, they often depart from science and encompass the personal interests of delegates, staff, and guests. All activities challenge delegates to approach problems with creativity or to try something new. Activities range from fishing to philosophy, ballroom dancing to biological technologies. The atmosphere is purposefully informal. An evening science lecture follows dinner.

What is the National Youth Science Camp outdoor adventure program like?

To reinforce and encourage well-rounded development, the NYSC's scientific program is supplemented by an outdoor adventure program. Three times during camp, delegates go on overnight outdoor trips which may include backpacking, rock climbing, caving, kayaking, mountain biking, or science field experiences. Many of these activities are also offered on "day trips", making it possible for most delegates to try several different offerings. Participation is voluntary.

Why do the delegates travel to Washington, D.C.?

Because the National Youth Science Camp is only five hours from the Nation's Capital, delegates are able to take advantage of the area's extensive scientific and cultural offerings during a multi-day trip. Each year, West Virginia's senior member of the United States Senate honors the delegates with a luncheon. Recent keynote speakers include Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Administrator of NOAA; Dr. John Holdren; Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson; Dr. Michael Griffin, Administrator of NASA; Mr. Aneesh Chopra, Chief Technology Officer of the United States; Dr. Francis Collins, Director, National Institutes of Health; and Dr. Rudy Tanzi, Joseph P. and Rose F. Kennedy Professor of Neurology at Harvard University, and Director of the Genetics and Aging Research Unit at Massachusetts General Hospital and Alumnus of the National Youth Science Camp, Rhode Island 1976.