



The Overview:

The Rotary Eighth Grade Leadership (REGL)

Program’s Residential Camps are offered through Rotary District 5190. Its purpose is to offer professional leadership training to selected 8th grade students as they prepare for their high school experience.

Attendance is by scholarship only. Student selection is by the principals of middle schools that are sponsored by Rotary Clubs. There is no cost to the student or to the school for this training.

The History:

Rotary Clubs in District 5190 have for years been offering high quality, professional leadership training for high school juniors who have demonstrated leadership talent during their high school years. That training, known as Rotary Youth Leadership Awakening, or “Rotary Camp RYLA”, is widely considered the finest youth leadership training of its kind. Campers use that experience in taking leadership positions in high school, college and in their professional life. A comment commonly heard from RYLA campers is “RYLA changed my life”. (Please visit the RYLA web site at www.Camp-Ryla.org.)

To give younger students an opportunity to experience leadership training and self-awareness, the Rotary Clubs in Sparks and Reno began offering this training to over 15 middle schools in 2010. In 2012, Rotary District 5190 offered our first three-day overnight residential camp experience at Grizzly Creek Ranch in Portola, CA, just north of Reno, NV and thereby filling the need to make this program available to a wider geographic area. Since 2017 we have continued to offer two residential camp sessions each year to Rotary Clubs in District 5190 and provide an amazing opportunity to 40 middle schools and their students. We sadly took a break in 2020, but regained momentum in 2021. Our 2023 sessions are:

2024 Residential Program Offerings:

1. **September 13 - 15, 2024 (REGL I)**
2. **September 20 - 22, 2024 (REGL II)**

Both residential camps are open to all District 5190 Rotary Clubs and their sponsored schools. Transportation to (and from, if needed) camp will be provided by the sponsoring Rotary Club.

REGL I - Our three-day weekend residential camp at Grizzly Creek Ranch will begin at noon on Friday, September 13th and conclude with graduation on Sunday, September 15th, beginning at 3 pm.

REGL II - Our three-day weekend residential camp at Grizzly Creek Ranch will begin at noon on Friday, September 20th and conclude with graduation on Sunday, September 22nd beginning at 3 pm.

Professionals skilled in interfacing with this age group will conduct the actual exercises with trained former RYLA campers in the role of counselors and role models. One day will include the Grizzly Creek Ranch ropes course. www.sierranevadajourneys.org

Structured work sessions on making choices, self-understanding, teamwork, resolving conflicts and ethical behavior will be conducted each day. A school or community service project will be developed by the students to strengthen the importance and benefits that come from helping others. A graduation ceremony (school representatives, parents and siblings are invited) will be conducted on the last day.

The People:

All sessions will be conducted under the direction of Dean and Rochelle Whellams, who are also the program directors for the Rotary District 5190 RYLA camps. The Adventure Challenge Program will be directed by Sierra Nevada Journeys. All sessions are under the supervision of District 5190 Rotary Clubs.

The Expected Outcomes:

The highly selective process of choosing students for this program will allow us to focus on students who have already demonstrated leadership skills. We will further develop and refine those skills and add tools to help them make choices, understand themselves and be effective in team situations.

Our graduates will be equipped to be more effective communicators, to know themselves well, and to make sound, ethical decisions in the coming years.

REGL Residential Camp Directors:

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CHECKLIST for Middle School Principals:

- Choose 5 participants, plus 1 girl and 1 boy alternates, based on demonstrated leadership talent. Our aim is to make this experience available to students who are already viewed as leaders. High GPA is not required. We are looking for student leaders – see selection guidelines below.
- Instruct selected students to register on the Rotary Eighth Grade Leadership website (www.rotaryegl.com). Click on “Approved Students Register for Residential Program”.
 - **Target Date for registration is prior to the end of school in May/June 2024.**
- Function as primary interface with participants and parents.
- Ensure that parents/ guardians sign required release forms (they will be provided after students register on line) **before the end of school in May/June 2024.**
- Ensure students (with their parent’s knowledge and support) are committed to participate in REGL and will show up and stay **for all 3 days.**
- The local sponsoring Rotary Club will provide transportation to and from Camp Grizzly Ranch.
- Participate on graduation day (**September 15 or 22**, depending on the session).
- Plan time following the program with your students for a community or school service project.

Rotary Eighth Grade Leadership Student Selection Guidelines

For maximum impact, Rotary Eighth Grade Leadership has proven most successful when the following formula for student selection is followed. We cite Positive Behavior Support (www.pbis.org) as our resource for this formula.

- ❖ 80% of the students attending REGL should be considered the “movers and shakers” on campus. Ideally the students are self-motivated, ambitious, confident, and possess a greater understanding of the world around them as well as an intrinsic awareness of how their choices impact other students.
- ❖ Studies have shown that as little as 10% of a student body can drive the culture on campus (what is cool, what is not; what to say; how to act). REGL strives to put the “Caring Majority” in power, encouraging these students to take active roles in creating positive school culture.
- ❖ 15% may be those students who struggle in their daily school or home life. REGL provides opportunities to make new contacts, connect with other students and spark a sense of belonging with students outside their normal day-to-day life. Students will develop a mutual awareness of themselves and others, realizing they are not alone. By reinforcing positive behavior, REGL will encourage students to focus on what is good. Becoming a part of the “Caring Majority” means connecting

with positive influences and finding those people who make you feel good about yourself.

- ❖ 5% of students attending REGL may come from the population of students who create conflict with and around other students, lack understanding of their word choice or undermine positive behavior. REGL strives to expose this behavior, redirecting negative behavior into a more positive direction.