**ODD FELLOWS AND REBEKAHS**

**PILGRAMAGE FOR YOUTH**

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION**

Since 1949, the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs have offered this grand opportunity to youth from the United States, Canada, and many other countries. For young adults interested in world affairs, international relations, economics, and political sciences, this is an opportunity of a lifetime to exchange views on education, health care, climate change, food and water insecurities, homelessness, and other issues that affect our world. The experiences of this trip will impact the lives of the young people who attend and positively affect their futures.

The first week, students will tour Philadelphia and then spend the next five days in New York City. While in New York City, the students will discuss in small groups about the speech topic that will be given to them when they arrive. At then end of the week, they will participate in a speech contest with the winner receiving a $2,000 scholarship and the runner-up receiving a $1,000 scholarship.

While in New York, they will visit the following landmarks: Empire State Building, Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, 9/11 Memorial, 5th Avenue, and Central Park. They will also attend a Broadway play. One important item that all participants of this tour must remember is that there is a lot of rigorous walking and standing that is required. Therefore, delegates and staff members alike must be physically and mentally prepared.

This program is open to all high school students 16 or 17 years of age with a minimum of one year of high school remaining. Students can obtain an application from a participating Odd Fellows or Rebekah Lodge, or they may download it from the website. After completing the application, potential delegates must submit it to their local sponsoring group.

**Passport Information**

A valid passport (not a passport card) is required for everyone participating in the program. It will be used at border crossings and airports.

* United States citizens can go to the following website for passport information: <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/forms.html>
* Canadian citizens can find their passport application at the following website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/forms/pdf/pptc153.pdf>

**How much does it cost?**

Currently, the fee per delegate is $2,000 in US funds plus airfare. This amount may vary from year to year based upon the budget/economy. The delegate fee covers ground transportation, meals, lodging, and sightseeing. While many jurisdictions completely fund the delegate’s tour fee, this varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Potential delegates will need to check with Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges in their jurisdiction to ascertain the level of sponsorship available. Delegates may also wish to bring spending money for souvenirs, laundry, shopping, extra refreshments, and some entertainment. Parents (or legal guardians) must give written permission for the student to attend the program and agree to pay for the student’s return trip if an accident, illness, or misbehavior prevents further participation in the tour.

**Adult Supervision**

Responsible adult leaders accompany every delegation traveling on this pilgrimage. The bus tour leaders as well as New York Staff members are members of the Order who are recommended by their respective jurisdictions and approved by the Board of Directors. When a jurisdiction is asked to supply an adult tour leader, they also fund these leaders. The jurisdictions do their utmost to only recommend individuals whom they feel will have the health, stamina, and demeanor to effectively supervise the youth who are under their care. Odd Fellows and Rebekahs who are interested in applying to be Tour Leaders/New York Staff can obtain an application for these positions at the website: [www.ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com](http://www.ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com). All applications must be approved by the Jurisdiction Committee.

**Who sponsors students:**

The Odd Fellows motto “We Seek to Improve and Elevate the Character of Man” directly correlates with the aim of this most worthy project. After more than half a century, the members of the Odd Fellows and Rebekah lodges continue to proudly inspire young people to pursue global agendas that will enable them to help their communities relate to world affairs in the future. All delegates must officially be sponsored by an Odd Fellows or Rebekah Lodge.

**How does one apply?**

One can obtain an application through a local Odd Fellows or Rebekah Lodge. If unable to locate a lodge in one’s community, an individual should contact the Executive Director at [pilgrimage@ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com](mailto:pilgrimage@ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com). The Executive Director will provide appropriate contact information. One can also go online to [www.ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com](http://www.ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com) to obtain an application. After completing the application, one should submit it to their Jurisdictional Committee.

**Selection of Delegate**

The Committee in each jurisdiction will review submitted applications and proceed with the selection process of that jurisdiction. The selection committee reviews the application for evidence of leadership, character, concern for community welfare, interest in world affairs, and general fitness. Also considered are a student’s extra-curricular activities, scholarship, public speaking experience, and their general fitness level. Each applicant may be required to write a 500 word essay (see application). At the discretion of the jurisdiction, the candidate may also be required to participate in a local speech contest. This is especially important when the candidate pool is quite large.

The panel of judges for the speech contest may be made up of not only lodge members but also individuals experienced in working with youth on a daily basis, i.e. clergy, educators, coaches, and other community mentors. The judges will select the delegate(s) based on content and delivery of the candidate’s three to five-minute speech. Speeches should be about a current world affair such as climate change, healthcare, food and water insecurity, etc. For these topics, the students will have to do some research. The speech must be accurate, structured, and relevant to the assigned topic. The delivery must effectively use body language, voice, eye contact, and rhetoric.

**Completion of Registration Forms**

Once delegates are selected by the jurisdictions, they will be required to complete registration packets. Included in the packets are a current physical proof of medical insurance including out of country insurance, color copies of the passport page, and color copies of a current photograph. Delegates will be required to submit these items as well as any fees required on or before the dates specified. **Deadlines MUST be met.**

Although individuals may contact the Executive Director at [pilgrimage@ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com](mailto:pilgrimage@ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com) for general information, students **MUST** submit all applications and registration packets to the designated local Jurisdictional Chairperson.

**Deadlines for all Jurisdictional Chairmen:**

1. **December 1st**- Submission of number of delegates for the jurisdiction as well as one-half of the total registration fee for each delegate (This fee is nonrefundable). Mail this to:

Leonard Bolton, Executive Director

IOOF Pilgrimage for Youth

6223 Six Mile Road

Danville, WV 25053

1. **April 1st**- Submission of two copies of the **COMPLETED** application packets for each delegate which includes **ALL** required attachments. Also due at this time is the remainder of the registration fee for each delegate. Note: Airfare is the responsibility of the jurisdiction. Fees are mailed to the above address.

**Jurisdictional Chairmen mail registration packets to:**

Leonard Bolton, Executive Director

IOOF Pilgrimage for Youth

6223 Six Mile Road

Danville, WV 25053

**Please note: It is imperative that ALL deadlines are met. There is a monetary penalty of $50.00 levied for any paperwork and/or fees not submitted to the Headquarters by the given deadline.** Because of this, it is necessary that each jurisdiction sets forth earlier deadline dates for fees and forms that are due to the Jurisdictional Chairman. (For example, one could use the dates of October 1st and March 15th as deadlines for submissions to the Jurisdictional Chairman.)

**Deadline Dates for Tour Leader/New York City Staff**

1. **November 1st**- Applications for Tour Leaders and New York Staff are due at this time. These adult applications must be submitted to the Executive Director for approval by the Board of Directors.
2. **April 1st**- Tour Leader fees are due in full. Current price is $1,600 plus airfare. Fees should be mailed to:

Leonard Bolton, Executive Director

IOOF Pilgrimage for Youth

6223 Six Mile Road

Danville, WV 25053

Also due at this time to the Executive Director is a copy of the physician’s statement, a color copy of the passport page, proof of out of country insurance, and a front and back copy of their insurance card.

**Preparing for the tour**

* Each delegate will be limited to one piece of luggage and one carry-on - pack lightly
* Appropriate clothing and shoes for various occasions
* Business dress suggested but not required while attending the United Nations and the Broadway play
* Camera is suggested
* Spending money (Food and lodging are provided in the cost of the trip, but students must provide their own spending money.)
* Bring required medication

**After the tour ends**

Delegates should be prepared to report back to the sponsoring lodge about their trip and what they learned. They should also consider sharing their experiences with individuals who would be eligible to participate in the near future.

**Alumni**

We are putting together an alumni database of delegates and tour leaders. The IOOF Pilgrimage for Youth does not publish the names of individuals. However, we can facilitate reunions with friends. In order for us to do this, you must keep us updated with your current name, address, email, etc.