



November 1, 2009

Dear Principals, School Administrators and Guidance Counselors:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation (MYLF), it is our pleasure to invite your school to participate in an engaging conference. Your high school has the opportunity to empower a high school sophomore to become an outstanding community citizen at the annual **Massachusetts Students Accepting Responsibility** Citizenship Conference. Each year, we invite every high school in Massachusetts to select one sophomore student to attend the MassSTAR Conference, enhancing his/her leadership skills and exploring student potential on the path of citizenship.

The MassSTAR Citizenship Conference remains free to students, their schools and their parents. Since 1978, our dedicated volunteers, supporting businesses and cooperating organizations continue to raise the funds needed. All sophomores are eligible and we hope you will make the program available to your 10th grade class and encourage all of them to apply. **January 30, 2010** is the priority date to guarantee your selected student's attendance. Please complete registration at [www.MassSTAR.org](http://www.MassSTAR.org).

The MassSTAR Citizenship Conference will be held Friday, June 4 – Sunday, June 6, 2010 at Lasell College in Newton, Massachusetts. **All students attending MUST be available for the entire weekend.** We encourage you to take advantage of this unique opportunity. You will be making an eternal investment in the quality of your classrooms, your school and your community. Enclosed in this packet you will find frequently asked questions about the Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation and MassSTAR, a quick guide on how to select a delegate for the conference and a sample application that you may use select a student. Below is a testimonial from a 2008 MassSTAR Conference alumnus that embodies the experience that students have upon attending this beneficial event:

"I feel so honored to be accepted to come to such an amazing program. I met so many people and made so many new friends. But most importantly, the people I heard from and met said so many inspiring things that I really felt changed me into being a stronger, more positive and more capable person. This was an absolutely life-changing, incredible opportunity that I believe can have the potential to change and benefit everyone for the better. Thank you so much MassSTAR!"  
**Rachel Schmid, 2008 MassSTAR Alumna, Westborough High School**

If your school has participated in the past, we thank you for contributing to your students' leadership growth. If you were not one of those that took advantage of this celebration of learning last year, we encourage you to do so in 2010.

Please refer to our website, [www.MassSTAR.org](http://www.MassSTAR.org), for updated information and frequently asked questions on the MassSTAR Citizenship Conference and other MYLF events. If you are interested in contributing to this worthwhile experience, please contact us. We are always looking to work with individuals or organizations that share our goal of empowering citizens to create a positive impact within their community.

Warm Regards,

Stephanie Nguyen  
Executive Director, Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation

Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation ■ 14 Drinkwater Ave. ■ Braintree, MA 02184

[www.MassSTAR.org](http://www.MassSTAR.org)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q: WHAT IS THE MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION'S VISION?**

A: To empower citizenship. As an educator, you understand how influential student leaders can be in affecting great change; these student leaders are in your classrooms everyday. MYLF motivates students and provides them with the necessary tools to develop into strong leaders. Our Citizenship Conference helps them to expand the talents that will serve them, their schools, and their communities well into the future.

### **Q: HOW DO WE EXPECT TO ACCOMPLISH OUR VISION?**

A: Rather than having students passively absorb information; our Conference fulfills its purpose through a unique 3-day program with a highly interactive process. Through intense but informal workshops, Delegates get a top down look at the world, nation, its people, and their own role in their community.

### **Q: WHAT IS THE EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE CITIZENSHIP CONFERENCE?**

The Conference is designed by a volunteer committee to create an experience for Delegates that produce the following results:

- Students role model effective citizenship skills and enhance their leadership
- Students meet other young leaders
- Students are given the opportunity to think critically about the quality of their communities
- Students are motivated to accept the challenge of using their skills to help others

### **Q: WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

A: Any diploma granting, accredited public or private Massachusetts high school may nominate a sophomore, and all are encouraged to apply. Select one primary representative and one alternate representative from your school.

### **Q: WHAT DOES THE MASSSTAR CONFERENCE COST?**

A: The conference is **100% free** to students, their parents, and their schools. Our dedicated volunteers, supporting businesses and cooperating organizations raise the funds needed. All expenses except for transportation to and from the conference site are fully covered.

### **Q: WHEN AND WHERE IS THE CONFERENCE?**

A: The conference is taking place from Friday, June 4th to Sunday June 6th at Lasell College in Newton, Massachusetts.

### **Q: WHAT ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE TO THE STUDENTS AFTER THE CONFERENCE?**

A: Many opportunities become available after the Conference such as:

**MassSTAR Alumni Association:** Delegates can join the hundreds of others that have passed through our program in an active and vibrant Alumni Association. The Alumni Association continues the work of MassSTAR through **community** activities.

**Citizenship In Service:** After the Conference, each Delegate is challenged (although not mandatory) to undertake a community service project. If they complete 100 hours, they are eligible to receive the Congressional Award, recognition from America's Promise, and the President's Student Service Award.

### **Q: WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT THE ALTERNATE'S INFORMATION?**

A: We encourage you to select an Alternate Delegate at the time you select your Primary Delegate. If your Primary Delegate is unable to attend the Conference, please contact us immediately so that we may make timely arrangements.

### **Q: WHEN AND HOW DO I REGISTER?**

A: The priority acceptance date is **January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010**. Go to [www.MassSTAR.org](http://www.MassSTAR.org) and click the "Conference" tab. All students registered after this date will be considered on a space available basis.

### **Q: WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?**

A: You can get additional information on our web site at [www.MassSTAR.org](http://www.MassSTAR.org), or e-mail us at [nominate@MassSTAR.org](mailto:nominate@MassSTAR.org)

## **Selecting Your MassSTAR Delegate**

### **3 Easy Steps**

**1. Promote The Program:** Encourage all teachers affiliated with the sophomore class to mention the Conference in their classes and distribute the *MassSTAR Application Worksheet*, included in this packet. Make an announcement to the student body. Only one student from each high school may attend, but all 10<sup>th</sup> graders should be encouraged to apply.

**2. Screening Process:** Many schools use an essay to sharpen the application process. The essay should be about citizenship and leadership in action. May we suggest: *“In 100 to 150 words please describe the most rewarding and challenging aspect of being a good citizen and leader in our school and community.”* We ask that if you have a student write an essay that you fax or mail your school's chosen representative's essay to the Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation. We only use them for informational purposes as this gives us insight into what a student thinks about citizenship and leadership and helps us to tailor our curriculum. Another option is to have a brief interview with sophomores. Possible interview questions are:

- Why do you want to attend this conference?
- How have you demonstrated your leadership skills?
- What would you like to learn at this conference?

**3. Selection of MassSTAR Delegate:** The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Gifted and Talented, identifies “leadership ability” as one of the areas of the broadened definition of giftedness. As with any exceptionality, leadership ability cuts across race, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. In other words, those with demonstrated leadership ability or potential can come from anywhere, and *all* groups should be considered in selecting your student to attend the MassSTAR Conference. The emphasis should be on *inclusion* with respect to the pool of candidates so that no potential student leader is overlooked.

You may choose to appoint a school committee to select the best representative for your school. In general, multiple criteria should be employed in making your selection - i.e., more than one factor or leadership quality. One alternate should be selected and submitted as well.

**Register Online at:** [www.MassSTAR.org](http://www.MassSTAR.org) under the “Conference” tab

**Please retain a copy of your completed registration for your records.**

## MassSTAR Student Application

**Counselors:** Please duplicate and distribute this MassSTAR Student Application to *all interested sophomores*. Use this form to select a student to represent your school at the 2010 MassSTAR Citizenship Conference. **Do not mail or fax this form to the Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation.** After selecting your Delegate, fill out the Official MassSTAR Nomination Form enclosed with this packet.

Student's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**DEAR SOPHOMORES:** Filling out this worksheet could be the beginning of a challenging and exciting learning experience. Last year, nearly 100 inspired sophomores across Massachusetts participated in the MassSTAR Foundation's Citizenship Conference. All 10th graders are eligible, and we encourage you to apply!

**ABOUT MASSACHUSETTS YOUTH LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION:** The MassSTAR Conference is a three-day event being held from Friday, June 4<sup>th</sup>-June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010 presented by Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation. The purpose of MassSTAR is to bring together a select group of high school sophomores who have demonstrated leadership ability. The Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation has conducted annual conferences since 1978. During these conferences, sophomores have the opportunity to meet, interact, and question leaders in government, business, technology, education, science and the arts. This conference promotes interaction with like-minded students through group collaboration, engaging workshops, and dynamic speakers. Massachusetts Youth Leadership Foundation's specific goals are to:

- Empower citizenship
- Value, motivate and cultivate student leader's potential
- Encourage and assist students in their quest for self-development and self-identification
- Provide through this exposure the opportunity to explore community service

**SELECTION:** All sophomores are eligible to apply. MassSTAR is a fun, life-motivating experience. Your principal or your school's designated selection committee will choose one student to represent your school at this year's Citizenship Conference based on your leadership ability, sensitivity to others, and desire to communicate your knowledge to your peers.

If you are selected as your school's MassSTAR Delegate and if your principal or guidance counselor submits the Official MassSTAR Registration Form by the priority deadline of **January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010**, you will be registered to attend the weekend conference. **You MUST be able to attend the entire Conference. If for some reason you cannot attend the entire conference then your Alternate should attend. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to attend.**

**APPLICATION PROCEDURE:** Complete this form as soon as possible and return it to your guidance counselor or your school's MassSTAR selection committee to express your interest in representing your school at the MassSTAR Citizenship Conference in 2010. Your guidance counselor or selection committee will contact you about completing the application process.