



## Our History and Approach

Since 1969, the RYLA Northwest program has had the honor and privilege to teach leadership development to over 5,500 students.

The Rotarians who lead the program come from a variety of professions, including leadership consulting, professional coaching, non-profit youth development, and education.

In addition to these professionals, the program planning team includes recent program alumni who help guide program design and speaker selection.

The RYLA program endeavors to help participants learn about leadership through interactive programs and experiences that can provide a positive frame work for the rest of their lives.

## Who We Are

### About Us

RYLA Northwest is a Washington-based, 501(c)(3) non-profit. Consistent with Rotary youth programs, the program organizers, staff, and speakers donate their time and talents. All staff are subjected to background checks and receive youth protection training.

### Contact Us

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**RYLA**  
Northwest



**Rotary**

**RYLA**  
**Northwest**

*A program serving youth in  
Rotary Districts 5020 and 5030*



## What is Rotary Youth Leadership Awards?

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is an intensive leadership experience organized by Rotary clubs and districts around the world. Each program is designed to develop students' skills as a leader while having fun and making connections.

RYLA is modeled on the principles of Rotary: Service Above Self, high ethical standards in all vocations, and building goodwill and peace in the world. Students are challenged to think in new ways, solve problems, and work together as a team.

## What is RYLA Northwest?

RYLA Northwest is a four-day leadership development conference for high school sophomores and juniors. Each June, Students from western Washington, U.S.A, and Vancouver Island, Canada, gather at YMCA Camp Colman, Longbranch, WA.

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*"What I love about RYLA is watching the transformation of the students as they discover what they are capable of."*

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### Curriculum

RYLA Northwest is a near-peer facilitated, small group-based program. Students are organized into teams and presented with a series of mental and physical challenges to test their leadership skills. Program alumni lead these small group teams, demonstrating the servant leadership principles the program seeks to teach.

RYLA Northwest curriculum is based on the concept of *challenge by choice*. Students are encouraged to step outside their comfort zone to try new skills. For instance, students afraid of public speaking are invited to interview and introduce program speakers.

Within the context of team-based leadership, we challenge the leader-follower dichotomy.

Because team challenges are so varied, no one student can "lead" all the time. Students support one another, sharing what they know and encouraging their peers to grow.



### YMCA Camp Colman

Boasting over 100 acres, YMCA Camp Colman is located on the Puget Sound with views of the beachfront and Olympic Mountains. Facilities include an expansive lodge and quaint cabins nestled among evergreen trees. YMCA Camp Colman is peanut-free and ADA-accessible. YMCA staff facilitate the groups through some of the challenges, including those on the high ropes course.

As of 2022, the RYLA team has also incorporated leadership exercises developed by YMCA. By providing students with more physical challenges that promote teamwork and challenge the students' self-imposed limitations, they come to recognize their own hidden strengths of those of their peers.