

# ODD FELLOWS AND REBEKAHS PILGRIMAGE FOR YOUTH General 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/or political sciences, this is an opportunity of a lifetime to observe the United Nations in person while exchanging views on education, politics and religion. The experience of this trip will truly impact the lives of the young people that attend and positively shape their futures.

In the years since its inception, over 49,000 young people have participated in the tour. Every state in the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii, and every province in Canada, has been represented. Students from Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Cuba, South Australia, and Argentina have also participated.

During their time spent in New York City, students tour the United Nations building and listen to behind-the-scenes briefings conducted by representatives from various United Nations agencies and departments. During these briefings, students will enjoy a lively question and answer period that will sharpen their understanding of the United Nations affairs. Each student, or delegate as they are called while on the tour, will participate in comprehensive discussions with other young people from around the world as well as have the opportunity to make new and lifelong friendships. In addition, they will also experience one of the greatest cities in the world: New York City.

While the majority of the delegates' time will be spent touring New York City, they will also travel by bus to visit Philadelphia, Washington DC, and Gettysburg in the United States. In Canada, delegates will visit the capital city of Ottawa. In these important cities, delegates will visit various historical sites, museums, government buildings and memorials.

While in New York City delegates participate in a speech contest. They generally attend a Broadway play, visit the Empire State Building, visit the 911 Memorial, visit the Statute of Liberty and Ellis Island and do a little shopping on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

One important item that ALL participants of this tour must remember is that there is A LOT of rigorous walking, standing and overall exercise that they will be exposed to while on tour. Whether one is a Delegate on this tour or a Staff Member, each person attending must be physically and mentally prepared for this to enjoy the journey.

## **Which students are eligible?**

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 a "Candidate Application" from a participating Odd Fellow Lodge, Rebekah Lodge or they may download it from the website [www.ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com](http://www.ioofpilgrimageforyouth.com). After completing the application, potential delegates MUST submit it to their local sponsoring group and must comply with this group's requirements.

A valid PASSPORT (NOT a Passport Card) is **required** for everyone participating in the program. It will be used at all border crossings and at airports.

- United States citizens can go to the following website for passport information:
  - o <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/forms.html>
- Canadian citizens can find their passport application at the following website:
  - o <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/passport/forms/pdf/pptc153.pdf>
- Citizens of other countries will need to check with their own government for passport information. In some cases, visas may be required by government agencies.

## **How much does it cost?**

Currently, the fee per delegate is \$2000 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 Fellow 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 the 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 Jurisdictional Committee.

## **Who sponsors the students?**

The Odd Fellow motto "We seek to Improve and Elevate the Character of Man" directly correlates with the aim of this most worthy project. After more than a half century, the members of Odd Fellow 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 Fellow or Rebekah Lodge.

## **How does one apply?**

One can obtain an application through a local Odd Fellow 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 3 to 5 minute speech. Possible speech topics could include: "Describe the United Nations involvement in a current world affair." For these topics, the student 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 (1/2) of the total registration fee for each delegate (This fee is **nonrefundable**). At this time, the Jurisdictional Chairman will also indicate his or her preference for tour date. Mail this to:

**IOOF Pilgrimage for Youth  
422 N. Trade Street  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101-2830**

2. **April 1st** – submission of two (2) 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:**

Executive Director  
IOOF Pilgrimage for Youth  
422 N. Trade Street  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101-2830

**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 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:**

**November 1st** - Applications for Tour Leaders and New York Staff is due at this time. These adult applications must be submitted to the Executive Director for approval by the Board of Directors.

**April 1st** - Tour Leader fees are due in full. Current price is \$1600 plus airfare.

Fees should be mailed to:

**IOOF Pilgrimage for Youth  
422 N. Trade Street  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101-2830**

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

### **Preparing for the tour:**

Please note, each delegate will be limited to one (1) piece of luggage, in addition to one (1) carry on. One must have appropriate clothes and shoes for various occasions. One will be walking a lot; good footwear is very important. Business dress clothing will be required when attending the United Nations and when attending the Broadway play.

Don't forget:

- Camera
- Spending money (even though food and lodging are provided in the cost of the trip, there are always incidental expenses and the "absolutely essential" souvenirs.
- Any required Medication
- Pack light – dirty clothes take up more space than clean ones and one will be bringing back more than you take.

**After the tour ends:**

Delegates should be prepared to report back to the sponsoring lodge about how their trip went and what they learned from it. Also, one should consider sharing his / her experiences with individuals who would be eligible to participate in the next year or two. Let school officials know about the trip and the things that one may have learned. This will assist sponsors when they are working to get information out to future applicants.

When applying for advanced educational institutions and jobs (now and in the future) having been selected as a delegate on the Pilgrimage for Youth tour looks great on a resume'.

**Alumni:**

We are putting together an alumni database of delegates and tour leaders. Delegates will be added to it and should attempt to keep in touch. The IOOF Pilgrimage for Youth does not publish the names of individuals. However, we can facilitate reunions with friends. In order for this to occur, one must keep us updated with one's current name, address, email, etc.

**Networking:**

Keep in contact with new friends, tour leaders, sponsors and this program. One never know when, how or where their paths may cross in the future or when one may need or be able to provide a helping hand.

**Continue the Legacy:**

The Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Pilgrimage for Youth was started in 1949 by a few individuals. Over the ensuing years, it has been dependent not just on funds but the hard work of many dedicated people. Everyone is needed to continue providing this opportunity for others.