



Conference Agenda

December 1–3, 2026 • Capital Hilton

1001 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036

JAG LEADS is a three-day leadership development conference for the JAG Career Association State Officers and local leaders. Students build advocacy skills, develop professional presence, and are introduced to a national peer network. The week culminates at JAGCA Day on the Hill, where they meet face-to-face with Members of Congress.

Who Should Attend JAG LEADS?

JAG LEADS (formerly the National Student Leadership Academy) is the defining leadership experience of the year for JAG Career Association (JAGCA) officers and one of the most valuable investments your affiliate can make in its students. This capstone event pushes student leaders to sharpen their skills, build networks that extend far beyond their home state, and represent their affiliate on a national stage. Students who attend don't just come back energized - they come back equipped to lead stronger chapters, run better meetings, and mentor the next generation of officers.

We encourage every JAG Affiliate to send a full delegation of up to ten youth leaders - a mix of local chapter officers and state-level JAGCA officers, including **2 Voting Delegates**. A full delegation isn't just about numbers: it's what allows your students to fully participate in the collaborative, team-based learning experiences at the heart of JAG LEADS. Students who attend together return together, ready to put what they've learned to work for their chapters and their peers.

This year, JAG LEADS will include the JAGCA's second bi-annual business meeting, led by the National JAGCA Officers. Your affiliate's two Voting Delegates will represent your students' voice in this meeting, casting votes on official JAGCA business and helping shape the direction of the organization. It is recommended that affiliates elect their Voting Delegates as an official position, one that represents the state affiliate at the business meetings conducted at both JAG LEADS and the National Career Development Conference. Establishing this as a formal, elected role ensures your affiliate has consistent representation across both national events and gives students a clear, meaningful office to campaign for and hold.

Of course, if you don't have a formal position yet, you may nominate two leaders to serve in this role during JAG LEADS (i.e. President and President-Elect). More information will be coming in the coming weeks to support the selection and training of these students.

The investment pays off long after the conference ends. Affiliate leaders consistently report that JAG LEADS (NSLA) alumni return as more confident public speakers, more capable meeting facilitators, and stronger advocates for the JAG mission in their communities. Don't let your students miss this opportunity to grow into the leaders your affiliate needs.

300+

Student leaders representing 30 states

3 Days

Immersive leadership development

1 Meeting

With legislators on Capitol Hill

DAY 1 • TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1

Arrival & Integration | Welcome to Washington, D.C.

Daytime	Affiliate Arrivals, Hotel Check-In & Registration	Foyer 1
4:00 – 8:00 PM	Registration Note: Dinner on your own	Foyer 1
7:00 – 8:00 PM	Welcome & Officer Presentation <i>A fun, engaging kickoff led by National Officers to include An overview of the National Plan of Work, the National Service Project, and an overview of the conference</i> <i>Casual, jeans and JAG t-shirt</i>	Presidential Ballroom
8:30 – 9:30 PM	Chaperone Orientation & Networking	Presidential Ballroom
8:15 – 9:30 PM	Chaos: The Ultimate Experiential Learning Challenge <i>is a high-energy, immersive teambuilding and networking program designed to unite youth through dynamic, problem-solving initiatives.</i> <i>Casual, jeans and JAG t-shirt</i>	Congressional/Senate
11:30 PM	Curfew	

SKILL SPOTLIGHT

Leadership training students can't get in a classroom

From night one, students are building their network and refining their communication and collaboration skills in a live, peer-driven setting — the kind of hands-on skill-building that colleges and employers consistently say they look for.

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2

Leadership, skill-building, advocacy prep & D.C. exploration

7:30 – 8:30 AM	Breakfast <i>Provided at the hotel</i>	Presidential Ballroom
8:30 – 10:00 AM	Leadership Training A: Servant Leadership & Stewardship <i>Business Casual – Polo & Dress Pants</i>	Congressional/Senate
9:30 – 11:00 AM	Specialist Workshop & Networking <i>Implementing the National Service Project, Preparing for NCDC, and information on the Congressional Award</i>	Federal A
10:00 – 12:00 PM	Leadership Training B: Finding a Common Purpose and Empowering Others to Make an Impact <i>Business Casual – Polo & Dress Pants</i>	Congressional/Senate

12:15 – 1:15 PM	Dine & Shine Luncheon <i>Business & Reception Etiquette with partners</i> <i>Business Casual – Polo & Dress Pants</i>	Presidential Ballroom
1:15 – 2:00 PM	Developing Advocacy & Agency with Civics Unplugged <i>Developing advocacy skills for multiple audiences including legislators, employer partners and more.</i> <i>Business Casual – Polo & Dress Pants</i>	Presidential Ballroom
2:00 – 2:30 PM	Networking Break	
2:30 – 3:45 PM	JAGCA National Business Meeting <i>National Officers conduct an Official Business Meeting with Voting Delegates, JAGCA members observe meeting</i> - A pathway to earn the Congressional Award <i>Business Casual – Polo & Dress Pants</i>	Presidential Ballroom
4:45 – 10:00 PM	Twilight Monument Tours 5:00 – 7:00 pm Pentagon City Mall & Dinner 7:00 – 10:00 pm Twilight Tour (transportation provided) <i>Casual – dress for the weather, you will be outside. Bring a coat, hat, and gloves with you on the tour and wear comfortable walking shoes.</i>	Bus Boarding Times 5:00 pm: Bus 1 & 2 5:10 pm: Bus 3 & 4 5:20 pm Bus 5 & 6
11:30 PM	Curfew	

REAL CREDENTIALS**Leadership and Advocacy Training**

Students leave Day 2 having developed extensive leadership skills and prepped their own advocacy pitch - practical, resume-ready experience most high schoolers never get.

DAY 3 • THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3*JAGCA Day on the Hill*

7:00 – 7:45 AM	Breakfast <i>Provided at the hotel</i>	Presidential Ballroom
7:45 – 8:15 AM	Travel to U.S. Capitol Ulysses S. Grant Memorial <i>Shuttle bus, board outside of hotel</i>	Transportation to and from Capital Hilton
8:15 – 8:45 AM	Official Group Photo <i>Taken in front of the Capitol</i> <i>JAG Uniform – Business Professional</i>	Ulysses S. Grant Memorial 7 th St NW Washington DC

9:00 AM – Your appointments are complete	JAG Day on the Hill <i>Meetings with Congressional representatives</i> <i>JAG Uniform – Business Professional</i>	<i>Private meetings with Legislators (schedule on your own)</i>
	Lunch at the U.S. Capitol <i>Meal voucher at the U.S. Capitol Food Court – eat at your convenience</i> <i>JAG Uniform – Business Professional</i>	<i>U.S. Capitol Food Court</i>
8:30 – 5:00 PM	Hotel Shuttle available every 30 minutes - Hop on/off at the following locations between 8:30 – 5:00 pm - Shuttle stops: Ulysses S. Grant Memorial, U.S. Navy Museum, Capital Hilton	
12:00 – 6:30 PM	Choose Your Own Adventure: Walk to Smithsonian Museums & Monument Tours <i>*Note: Smithsonian Museums close at 5:30 pm</i> <i>Casual – dress for the weather, you will be outside. Wear comfortable walking shoes.</i>	<i>Smithsonian Museums</i>
6:30 – 7:30 PM	Dinner <i>*Staggered dinner provided at the hotel</i> <i>Casual – dress for the weather, you will be outside.</i>	<i>Presidential Ballroom</i>
7:30 – 8:30 PM	Leadership Lessons & Closing Program <i>A fun reflection led by the National Officers, “Advocacy to Action” planning; Specialists/State Leaders sit with their teams for structured conversations</i>	<i>Presidential Ballroom</i>
8:30 – 11:00 PM	LEADS Dance: “Old Hollywood” <i>Final celebration and networking</i>	<i>Presidential Ballroom</i>
11:30 PM	Curfew	

THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

Face-to-face with Members of Congress

This is the centerpiece of JAG LEADS: students walk the halls of the Capitol and advocate directly to their elected officials, turning civics-class theory into a real, lived experience of how policy gets made.

DAY 4 • FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4

Departure | Safe travels home

	Affiliate Departures <i>Depart for home or tour Washington, D.C. on your own</i>	
9:00 AM (optional)	Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Wreath Presentation <i>With National Officers, Transportation NOT provided</i> <i>Business Casual – Polo & Dress Pants. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes.</i>	<i>Arlington National Cemetery</i>

WHAT YOUR STUDENT TAKES HOME

- ✓ A completed National Plan of Work and hands-on leadership training in servant leadership, common purpose, and empowering others
- ✓ Real advocacy experience — including a face-to-face meeting with a Member of Congress
- ✓ A national peer network spanning 30 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands
- ✓ A pathway to the nationally recognized Congressional Award
- ✓ Professional presence: etiquette training, public speaking, and confidence built on a national stage

LOGISTICS

2026 Registration: \$599 per person

Meals Provided

Wednesday, Dec. 2: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner (meal voucher)

Thursday, Dec. 3: Breakfast, Lunch (meal voucher), Dinner

Note: All room locations are placeholders pending hotel floor plan confirmation.