

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!

A parent's guide to Iowa RYLA

We look forward to hosting your student at Iowa RYLA 2026!

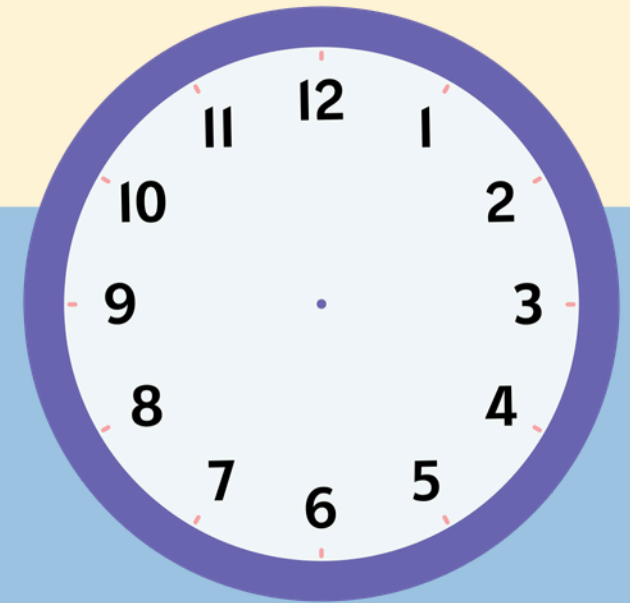
This document contains important information for you as a parent and/or guardian. Questions? Please contact our 2026 conference chair, Steve Wieneke (chair@iowaryla.org / 515-250-0507) or our chair-elect, Marie Pipes (chair-elect@iowaryla.org / 816-260-4355)



Rotary is the oldest and largest community service oriented organization worldwide!



Drop off is on Sunday, July 26th from 1:15-2:30pm. More details on the next page!



Live in the moment!
One week without having to worry about where to be next or how much time is left.



RYLA is a **no-phone-zone** during the day! See our detailed phone policy to learn more.



We have a **registered EMT** and **licensed school counselor** on staff at all times!

MEET & GREET

Conferee **pick up & departure** is scheduled for Friday, July 31st at 12:30pm!



You are always welcome to **contact the conference chair** in the event that you need to get in touch with your conferee during the day. We can put you in contact with your student within minutes!

RYLA

Iowa RYLA is a six day leadership conference for high school incoming sophomores, juniors, and seniors, held each summer on Grinnell College's campus, designed to help prepare our next generation of leaders!

Iowa RYLA 2026 Parent Information Packet

Registration/Drop Off

Registration and Check-In will begin at 1:15 PM next to Rathje Hall (indicated by the yellow arrow on the map to the right) for female conferees and next to Norris Hall (blue arrow on the map to the right) for male conferees.

You and your family will be greeted by members of our conference staff who will be happy to direct you to the check-in station and assist with bags.

Please be sure to have your printed and completed Pick Up/Release Form prepared when you check your student in. Safety for all involved is our priority. This document ensures we have documentation of your plans for pick up and/or who you have granted permission to pick up your conferee on Friday. Please contact the conference chair if plans change during the week.

After checking in, we will ask you to say your goodbyes before one of our staff assists with bags and directs your conferee to their dorm for the week. All conferees will be instructed to leave their bags and belongings in their rooms and head to group icebreakers and our welcome gathering on the central lawn. They will have time to unpack that evening.

Sunday, July 26th, 1:15PM - 2:30PM

Female Conferee Check-in - Rathje Hall
Parking Lot L, 1421 East St (corner of East St & 10th Ave), Grinnell, IA

Male Conferee Check-in - Norris Hall, 1430
Park St (corner of Park St & 10th Ave), Grinnell



"What is RYLA?"

The Iowa Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is a six day intensive leadership conference packed with exciting activities, engaging speakers and countless opportunities for your student to learn more about themselves and their leadership abilities.

Our curriculum is curated specifically to give your student the opportunity to not only learn about leadership, but to also PRACTICE and develop those skills. Our goal is for your student to return home feeling more confident in their ability to be a leader. Conferees will learn about various forms of leadership, including working with varying team dynamics, emotional leadership, service, and community-oriented leadership skills.

Our Schedule!

The conferee's day begins at 7:00AM (the early bird gets the worm!) with their choice of activity to help wake up before breakfast. Each day's schedule includes a guest speaker, many leadership and team building activities, large group activities, delicious meals, and opportunities to debrief, discuss and reflect on all aspects of the day. Students are asked to keep all electronic devices in their room during the day, but have access to them when they return to their dorm at 10:15 PM.

Our Guest Speakers!



Amy Perry

Collegiate professor, speaker, and advocate for conscious leadership,



Rich Linden

Sports, media and event producer and announcer



Leslie Carpenter

Legislative Advocacy Manager for the Treatment Advocacy Center

Iowa RYLA 2026 Parent Information Packet

Iowa RYLA Electronic Device Policy

Iowa RYLA expects conferees to leave electronic devices, including phones, in their dorm during the day unless they are in a situation that requires an exception, like monitoring their blood sugar levels.

Yes, it sounds like the end of the world to some conferees, but we find that conferees are so busy that most forget about them by day two. We're always impressed by the number of comments from conferees on the last day about how much they enjoyed being fully present for a few days without the temptation to check their social media. **Your student will have plenty of time to give you a call or text an update and check their socials when they return to the dorms in the evening.**

Your student's Team Lead and Rotarian will both have their phones on them at all times. If your student expresses a need to contact you, they are able to use their Team Lead's or Rotarian's phone, or a RYLA team member can escort them to their dorm to access their phone.

We will be making an exception to this rule on Tuesday, as conferees will be completing a project where having access to technology could be beneficial. During this time, we still expect conferees to demonstrate leadership skills by not allowing their electronic devices to become a distraction.

In the event that you have a question or need to make contact with your student during the week, you may contact Steve Wieneke or Marie Pipes, the 2026 conference chair and chair-elect. They will be available to answer any questions and put you in contact with your conferee within minutes, if needed.

Steve Wieneke (chair@iowaryla.org / 515-250-0507)

Marie Pipes (chair-elect@iowaryla.org / 816-260-4355)

Our Staff!

Head Team Leads



Margaret McCurdy



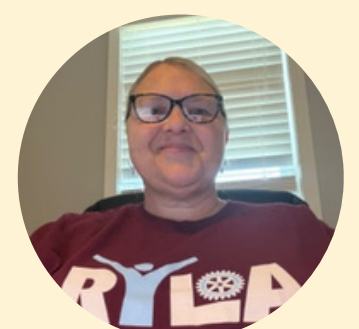
Carl Rathje

Our head team leaders will guide the conference during the week. They have worked since January to put together a team and make preparations for our best RYLA, yet!

Conference Chair & Chair-Elect



Steve Wieneke



Marie Pipes

The Conference Chair and Chair-Elect have been working with the Head Team Leaders since January to prepare for the conference. We are happy to assist if you have any questions about RYLA!

Health & Safety



Mrs. Hansen



Mrs. Hassman

The health and safety of your student is important to RYLA and Rotary. RYLA 2026 will have Mrs Hansen, a registered emergency medical technician, and Mrs. Hassman, a counselor, available

Live in the Moment!

We believe some of the best learning comes when you are fully present in the moment and not focused on how much time is left or what activity we're doing next. RYLA operates on a tight schedule; however, it is generally not shared with conferees which activity is next unless their preparation is needed, such as when to change for the dance.

You may hear your student describing time in various forms of fruit when they return - they're operating on RYLA time!

This is meant to be a light-hearted way of reminding conferees to focus on being present in the moment.

Pick Up / Departure

The conference concludes at 12:30 PM. You may pick up your conferee in front of Rathje Hall Parking Lot, 1421 East St (corner of East St & 10th Ave), Grinnell. You will complete the checkout process with your conferee's Team Lead and Rotarian by finding their team letter, which will be posted on signs. We will encourage your student to text you their team letter on Thursday evening. Our staff will be happy to assist with this information as well.

*Please note that for male conferees, after checkout, you will take them to Norris Hall, corner of Park St & 10th Ave, to pick up their luggage.