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FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

BLUE RIDGE LEADERS' SCHOOL

Advisor Packet

2021 YMCA BLUE RIDGE LEADERS' SCHOOL

Saturday, June 19 - Saturday, June 26
Saturday, July 24 - Saturday, July 31



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Please review the information carefully and follow the instructions completely. Check and double-check all enrollment forms and class schedules for accuracy. Make certain all required signatures are included and all required forms are returned. Inaccurate forms, incomplete forms, missing forms and/or improper deposits will delay the registration process and potentially result in the participant being placed on a waiting list.

Questions? Please contact: Greg Hall, School Director, at 828-275-4662 or GregHall@yblueridge.org, OR Brianne Pietronicco, School Registrar, at 757-593-2768 or BrianneP@yblueridge.org.

OVERVIEW

BLUE RIDGE LEADERS' SCHOOL: MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Since its inception in 1922, YMCA Blue Ridge Leaders' School (BRLS) has retained its basic philosophy of training teens to be leaders in all aspects of YMCA health and wellness. For youth and adults, BRLS develops teaching and performance skills, builds self-esteem and leadership qualities, enhances leadership training with the local Association, and strengthens traditional Christian values that foster the essential unity of spirit, mind and body for all.

Blue Ridge Leaders' School is committed to training teens to be leaders in their local YMCAs. It is a school environment, not a camp, with a curriculum designed to maximize the benefit to Leaders' Division participants (ages 13-18) as well as Senior Division participants (ages 19 and up). All attendees in the Leaders' Division will receive a pass/fail grade.

A hallmark of the School is its profound structure and high standards of:

- **Behavior** – Positive personal attitude and conduct is required.
- **Physical Participation** – The daily pace is fast and demanding. 100% involvement is a must.
- **Individual Performance** – Hard work and striving for personal improvement is expected of all.
- **School Honor Code** – It is to be acknowledged and upheld.

SCHOOL HONOR CODE

"I will honor my Creator and the standards of conduct and spirit of the YMCA Leaders' School. I will strive to excel as I develop in spirit, mind and body. At all times I will represent caring, honesty, respect and responsibility and will not tolerate anything else in myself and others."

EXPECTATIONS FOR CLUB ADVISOR

Each club must have an identified adult Club Advisor present at the School for the entire week. The Club Advisor will enroll in the Seniors' Division, unless serving on school staff, and must be 19 years or older as of May 31, 2021. The role of the Club Advisor will include, but is not limited to:

- Participating in a webinar prior to School.
- Ensuring that **every** member of his/her club has fully met the minimum requirements for attending.
- Ensuring that **every** member of his/her club is fully aware of the purpose, standards and policies of the School.
- Monitoring and assisting any member of his/her club not performing up to standard in any class/activity.
- Assisting any member of his/her club with restrictions on physical mobility. Transportation to/from classes is not provided by the School.
- Securing reimbursement for lost keys and/or any damages to the facility caused by any member of his/her club.
- Ensuring that follow-up treatment and care is provided for any member of his/her club who becomes injured or sick and coordinate such with the appropriate School staff member.
- Paying for all medicines required for any member of his/her club that becomes injured or sick.
- Maintaining a written list of all medications and oversee the administering of all medications for the members of his/her club.
- Attending all meals - Mealtime is used to make announcements. Leaders' Division participants are required to attend all meals (and other activities). Therefore, it is expected that the Club Advisor will set the example by attending every meal/activity as well.
- **Advisors carry the ultimate responsibility for the health, safety and participation of their Leaders.**

Any member of the Senior Division, Observer Division or School staff who leaves campus must check out with the School Office. If a Club Advisor leaves campus, he/she must notify and designate another adult as responsible for his/her club while away.

PARTICIPANT DIVISIONS

1. **Leaders' Division** enrollees are teens ages 13-18 years as of May 31, 2021 who are active members of their local Leaders' Club (or willing to serve as the nucleus of a developing club). All should have demonstrated personal leadership skills at the home Association and proven that he/she is ready for more intensive training.

Blue Ridge Leaders' School is a leadership development School focused on health and wellness. Therefore, it is imperative that participants possess certain basic physical proficiencies. **All leaders will participate in a fitness assessment as outlined in this guide.**

2. **Seniors' Division** enrollees are adults, ages 19 and up as of May 31, 2021 who are actively involved in the local Leaders' Club program. All Club Advisors must be registered in the Senior Division unless serving in a school staff role.

YMCA Staff/Seniors that desire YUSA Continuing Education Credits for Blue Ridge Leaders' School participation will need to register on Y LINK (link.ymca.net) and set up an account.

Participants in the Seniors' Division can select from an array of specific classes as well as assist in the Leaders' Division classes. Many of the Leaders classes utilize extra help via the Seniors' Division. The Seniors' Division participants will receive a schedule at check-in. Other important information will be presented at the initial meeting of the division on Saturday evening. **This meeting is mandatory for all Seniors!** The time and location will be announced at the Opening Assembly.

3. **Observers' Division** enrollees are typically the spouse and/or children of School staff and must be approved by the School Director and for **extenuating circumstances only**. Observers are not permitted to actively participate in any Leaders' Division or Seniors' Division class/event without approval of the School Director.

The local YMCA Branch Executive Director must indicate (by signature on application) approval for all participants representing his/her local YMCA.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The School Standards of Conduct provide structure so group members can live and participate together in a positive Christian environment. All participants in all divisions are expected to display the highest standards of YMCA leadership, human relations and good moral character. **The Leaders' Club Advisor should discuss these standards with each member of his/her club prior to attending the School.** Neglect of these standards and/or behavior that is detrimental to the mission and purpose of the School and/or jeopardizes the safety of any of the participants may result in dismissal from the School. In the case that someone is dismissed, all travel costs are the responsibility of the local YMCA.

All participants should be aware that Blue Ridge Leaders' School is a tobacco, vaping and alcohol free environment and no illegal substances are permitted.

Additional Standards of Conduct that apply to LEADERS' DIVISION participants include:

- Fully participate in all classes and School activities unless excused by the School Director or his designee.*
- Receive a passing evaluation in all classes and behavior situations.
- The opposite sex is not permitted in living areas.*
- Leaders may not leave campus unless approved by the School Director or designee.
- *Call to Quarters, Call to Room* and *Lights Out* are to be observed as scheduled.
- Consistent display of positive behavior and Christian values throughout the week.*

*Additional standards of conduct that apply to SENIORS' DIVISION participants as well.

CURRICULUM

The Blue Ridge Leaders' School curriculum is progressive and class selections are based on the year of attendance:

- **1st Year:** Basic Leadership; Science of Fitness I; Aquatics; Feeling Great; Character Development; Evening Clinic.
- **2nd Year:** Leadership (by age); Science of Fitness II; Kids in Motion; Basic Games, Sports Elective; Evening Clinic.
- **3rd Year:** Leadership (by age); Biomechanics; Coaching or Officiating Youth Sports or Junior Lifeguard; HEPA; Program Elective OR Sports Elective; Evening Clinic.
- **4th Year:** Leadership (by age); Wellness Concepts I; Advanced Character Development, Program Elective; Sports Elective; Evening Clinic
- **5th Year:** Leadership (by age); Image 101; Health Elective; Advanced Character Development; Sports Elective; Evening Clinic.
- **6th Year:** Leadership 18, Sixth Year Summit; Experiential Learning (two periods); Open Elective; Evening Clinic.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Leaders' Division participants are evaluated daily and required to:

1. Be early/on time for all classes/activities.
2. Fully participate in all classes/activities including assemblies, meals and evening activities.
3. Successfully participate in fitness assessment mid-term. The only exception will be due to illness/injury monitored by the School medical staff.

The final pass/fail grade is based on attitude, leadership ability and participation in all aspects of the School (classes, clinics, evening activities, etc.) and a written test score in each class (minimum score of 70 out of 100 required in both in order to pass).

Any exceptions must be approved by the School Director **prior to enrolling in the School** through a request by the Club Advisor. Certain accommodations may be made for permanent disability where reasonable, and based on a physician's statement and approved in advance by the School Director. Other medical situations, **with prior approval of the School Director**, should be documented with a detailed physician statement. This documentation should be presented at School check-in. Requests to exempt all physical fitness assessments will not be considered. The School is fitness-oriented and those unable to participate in any of the assessments would be unable to fully and safely participate and successfully complete the curriculum.

Upon successful completion of all criteria in all sections the Leader will receive a School patch signifying his/her year of accomplishment. Leaders who fail the School curriculum will receive no patch and must repeat the entire curriculum the following year. Leaders who fail the School for a second time may not be allowed to return to the School in the Leaders' Division. Retesting will not occur except in extreme circumstances wherein the problem is not related to a lack of preparation on the part of the Leader.

The Club Advisor is responsible for monitoring and assisting any member of their club not performing up to standard.

FITNESS ASSESSMENT & PROCEDURES FOR LEADERS' DIVISION

All Leaders' Division participants will complete a personal Healthy Living assessment. **The Club Advisor is responsible for working with the leaders to help them take ownership and strive for their own fitness goals.** One goal of Blue Ridge Leaders' School is to inspire the leaders to commit to a healthy lifestyle. During the leaders' first year the assessments will be used to establish a baseline for the Leaders & Advisors to know where they are starting from and to establish the expectations for their second year. Components of the assessment will include crunches and straight body pushups with an initial target according to age/gender averages, flexibility, and target heart rate. Each subsequent year will build on the goals from the previous year.

1. Target Heart Rate – Leaders will be shown how to find their heart rate during the first day of classes. To assess the heart rate for the leaders we will use a 3 minute step test
 - a. $220 - \text{Age} = \text{Maximum H/R}$
 - b. $\text{Maximum H/R} \times 50\% \text{ \& } 80\%$ gives the zone for Target Heart Rate
2. Push-Ups – The Leader will lie face down with hands under the shoulders, legs straight and slightly apart with the toes supporting the feet. The Leader will straighten the arms, keeping the back, hips and legs straight. The Leader will lower the body until there is a 90-degree angle at the elbows (i.e., the elbows will be parallel to the floor). At that point the Leader will then straighten the arms. This will count as one push-up. **We will place special emphasis on keeping the head up and in line with the trunk.**
3. Crunches – Subject lies supine on mat with knees bent at 90° and feet on floor. The arms are extended to sides with fingers touching a piece of masking tape. A second piece of tape is placed beyond the first piece 12 cm apart.

Set metronome at 40 beats per minute. At the first beep, the subject slowly lifts the shoulder blades off the mat by flexing spine until finger tips reach the second piece of tape. At the next beep, the subject slowly returns shoulder blades to mat by flattening lower back. Subject repeats curl-up in time with the metronome (20 curl-ups per minute). One repetition is counted each time shoulder blades touch the floor. Subject performs as many curl-ups as possible without stopping, up to a maximum of 75 repetitions. The test is terminated if the cadence is broken.

4. Flexibility – (sit & reach) using the below procedure:
 - Subject sits with knees straight
 - Yard stick or tape on floor between subject's legs
 - Instruct subject to reach and hold
 - Ensure subjects knees are held straight
 - Measure to nearest 1/2". Score is best of 3 trials.

SCHOOL LIFE

HOUSING

Blue Ridge Leaders’ School is conducted on the campus of YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly (a YMCA conference center) in Black Mountain, North Carolina. Leaders’ Division participants are housed in one of seven dorm facilities separated into male and female quarters. A limited number of rooms have self-contained baths. Others utilize locker room- type bath facilities.

All bedding is furnished for all participants. **Leaders’ Division participants must bring towels (3 recommended) for the week.** Laundry facilities are not available on campus.

School staff members are housed in the same buildings and on the same floors with Leaders’ Division participants. A member of the staff is designated as the “Dorm Leader” for each area and coordinates all supervision by other staff members. Group Counselors (selected from the Leaders’ Division) are also housed adjacent to the members of their groups.

It is important that the Leaders’ Club Advisor remember that he/she is responsible for their club members at all times throughout the week. Rooms will be inspected prior to occupancy and at check out by the Group Counselor and a member of the School staff. Should damage occur to a room or any other facility, the person(s) involved are accountable to Blue Ridge Assembly. For lost room keys there is a \$20 charge.

ALL participants are expected to maintain their living quarters in a secure, clean and orderly manner. Group Counselors and Dorm Staff will inspect Leader Division rooms daily.

CHECK IN

Check-in begins Saturday, at 12:00 noon and closes at 4:00 pm. Check-in occurs in the lobby of Eureka Hall. A member of the School staff will be available to assist you if needed. Dorm rooms are not ready for occupancy until after 2:00 pm. Arrivals after 4:00 pm **may** be granted for extenuating circumstances only if approved by the School Director. **There will be absolutely no Sunday arrivals after 7:00 am.**

The School officially begins with “Call to Dorms” at 4:15 pm on Saturday.

CHECK OUT

The School ends with the Closing Assembly on Saturday, (approximately 10:30 am). All enrollees are expected to attend.

DAILY SCHEDULES

On the opening Saturday, all Leader Division participants and Group Counselors will report to their dorms at 4:15 pm for room inspections, a meeting with their counselor and the first meal at 5:30 pm. Following the meal, the entire School assembles for the evening vespers, and the School is underway. The schedule below runs Sunday through Thursday. A special schedule for Friday will be provided and reviewed during the week.

Daily Schedule

- 7:00 am..... Reveille
- 7:45 am..... Breakfast
- 8:45 am..... Morning Assembly
- 9:15 - 11:40 am..... Classes
- 12:00 - 12:45 pm..... Lunch
- 12:45 - 1:15 pm..... Free time
- 1:30 - 5:15 pm..... Classes
- 5:15 - 6:00 pm..... Free time (Club meetings Monday**)
- 6:00 - 6:45 pm..... Supper
- 6:45 pm..... Vespers
- 7:15 - 8:30 pm..... Clinics
- 8:45 - 9:45 pm..... Evening Activities

Each evening includes a unique event as follows:

- Saturday – Dorm Meeting
- Sunday – Group Meetings with Counselor
- Monday – All School Activity (watch for new additions)
- Tuesday – All School Achievement Events*
- Wednesday – School Dance
- Thursday – Club Meetings** (locations will be assigned)
- Friday – School Show
- 9:45 pm..... Call to Quarters (*Group Meetings*)
- 10:45 pm..... Call to Room (Indiv. Quiet Time)
- 11:00 pm..... TAPS, ALL QUIET, LIGHTS OUT

*Please note current School Achievement records are included with registration materials.

**Organized by Advisor but locations will be assigned by the School Leadership Team.

MORNING DEVOTIONALS & EVENING VESPERS

A club may submit a written/email request to the School Director for consideration in being assigned a morning devotion presentation. To be considered, all presentations must adhere to the following:

- Message must **strongly** reflect Judeo-Christian principles, the purpose of Blue Ridge Leaders' School, and be based on the teachings of the Holy Bible and include a prayer.
- Message must **clearly** reflect the daily subject.
- Message must be positive throughout the entire presentation.
- The total presentation must not exceed fifteen minutes.
- Special effects must be limited.
- Must be able to be presented outdoors or indoors.
- Devotional preview must be submitted to the School Director for review and approval.

Morning Devotionals reflect the daily subject and are presented by clubs selected at previous year's School.

Vespers are presented each evening by one of the Honor Leaders. The daily subjects for morning devotions and evening vespers are:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Devotion/Vespers</u>
Saturday	Opening/Welcome
Sunday	Inclusion
Monday	Honesty
Tuesday	Caring
Wednesday	Responsibility
Thursday	Respect
Friday	Faith
Saturday	Closing thoughts

MEALS

Meals begin with dinner on the opening Saturday and end with breakfast on the closing Saturday. Meal items are labeled with nutritional information to maximize each Leader's ability to select a balanced diet. There are adequate vegetarian options. Gluten-free and other specific needs should be coordinated by advisor and emailed to Brianne Pietronicco, Registrar, at BrianneP@blueridge.org, before May 30. If there are any dietary restrictions please note them on your application.

At the request of our Honor Leaders and Counselors, Advisors are asked to not distribute gifts or tokens to individual club members during meals, other than necessary prescribed medications or general check-ins.

NAMETAGS & LEADER GROUPS

At check-in each Club Advisor will receive a packet of information including nametags, class schedules and room assignments for each member of his/her club. All participants must wear the nametag at all times, and in a visible manner, throughout the week including all School activities and events. Nametags may not be exchanged with another participant. The nametag is essential in identifying the person as a School participant and serves as the daily meal ticket.

Participants in the Leaders' Division are divided into male and female groups (identified by a number found on the class schedule) according to age. Each group is assigned a Group Counselor selected from qualifying applicants in the Leaders' Division. Beginning with the first meal at 5:30 pm on Saturday the group will eat all meals together with their Counselor. Numbers on the table in the dining hall will correspond with the Leader's group number.

WHAT TO BRING

- 3 Towels (Leaders' Division)
- Personal toiletries
- Workout clothes (tee shirts, tank tops, athletic shorts) for the week
- Nice clothes for Friday evening
- Umbrella/raincoat
- Special equipment/apparel for classes (swimsuit, soccer shoes)
- Paper & pen
- Hand Sanitizer
- Health/accident insurance card
- 2-pairs of athletic shoes
- 2 Reusable water bottles (no energy drinks)
- Swimsuits (**one piece only** for females)
- Spending money (vending machines, store, picture* (*seniors) etc.)

It is recommended that all personal belongings be clearly identified and securely stored. Clothing must be appropriate per activity (so as not to restrict participation and/or compromise safety) and jewelry/accessories are discouraged. Clothing must cover midriff and dresses/tops for banquet must have a modest neckline. Clothing with inappropriate statements, language or graphics is not permitted. Hats and sunglasses are allowed for outdoor use only.

MEDICAL CARE & INSURANCE

In case of illness or injury a qualified staff member will evaluate the condition, administer minor first aid if necessary and assist in coordinating all further treatment. A nurse is on duty at the School. A medical clinic is ten minutes away and two hospitals are located in Asheville. However, it is the responsibility of the Club Advisor to insure that treatment and follow-up care is provided. The Club Advisor for each club must maintain a written list of all medications and oversee the administering of all medications for the members of his/her club.

Blue Ridge Leaders' School does not carry accident insurance coverage. Accident insurance is the responsibility of the individual.

VISITATION

Guests of the School are welcome but must adhere to the following policy. Please share this policy with anyone associated with your Leaders' Club who may wish to visit.

- Opening Saturday, open visitation until 4:00 pm
- Friday, open visitation from 2:00 pm until taps

Check-in at the School office in Eureka Hall is required. Occasionally YMCA professional staff from participating YMCAs desire to visit. This is welcomed, **but requires prior approval by the School Director**. It is preferable that these guests be escorted during their visit and it may be possible that on-campus meals could be purchased from the Leaders' School. All preapproved visitors must also check in at the School office in Eureka Hall upon their arrival.

ENROLLMENT

REGISTRATION AND FEES

All enrollment materials and information will be posted on ymcabrls.org/apply the week of February 19. Advisor registration how-to webinars will be held the week of February 22nd. The online application process will begin the week of March 8th. Individual Leader and Advisor/Senior Leader online applications will need to be submitted with the advisor; all teens must register as part of a YMCA club. Advisor/Senior applications will be accepted on the basis of up to 1 adult to 15 Leaders ratio. Additional Seniors' Division applications will go on a wait list and handled later during the enrollment process.

All registration materials and information will be available for viewing by February 19. The links to BRLS applications will be live beginning March 8th.. **Beginning March 18 at 7pm ET, the club application and template will be open for clubs to apply.** Please make sure your entire club including waiting list is entered in the system before submitting.

Fees cover room, meals, school picture (Leaders' Division) and supplies. Vending machines, store, school picture (seniors' division), etc. are voluntary.

Leaders' Division - Total Fee \$545

Enrollees must be age 13-18 as of May 31, 2021. Enrollees must be active members of the local Leaders' Club or willing to serve as the nucleus of a developing club. All should have demonstrated personal leadership skills and proven that he/she is ready for more intensive training. All must be approved by the local YMCA Executive Director.

Seniors' Division - Total Fee \$615

Enrollees must be age 19 and up as of May 31, 2021, who possess high Christian character and leadership qualities. Seniors' Division enrollees must be actively involved with the local Leaders Club and/or physical education department. All enrollees must be approved by the local YMCA Executive Director.

Club Fee - \$100 per Club (Branch) plus \$150 deposit for each enrollment in a single check or credit card via Square invoice (3% convenience fee applies)

When registering your club, Advisors will need to enter a special code on each Leader's application before submitting. Advisors should then complete the online club application as well as the Club spreadsheet signed by your YMCA Executive. Advisors will be notified if your club is enrolled or waitlisted and payment of deposit will be requested. Deposit must be received within 15 days of acceptance. You will receive your final invoice by May 1 for your remaining balance. Once enrolled, final balances will be due NO LATER THAN June 1. A late payment charge will be charged to all outstanding balances after June 1. The amount of the charge will be either 5% of the balance or \$50 (minimum charge). If enrolled, Advisors may apply for club recognition. **For full enrollment details, follow prompts and information available on the ymcabrls.org/apply page.**

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial Assistance is available to qualifying applicants based on need and available funds. A financial assistance application is available at ymcabrls.org/apply for parents to submit. Maximum award will be \$175 per person. The application must be completed fully using the template provided. Advisor input is helpful to confirm need. Applications should be submitted online by April 1.

DROPS/CANCELLATIONS:

All drops/cancellations must be received in writing. Please notify the School Registrar, Brianne Pietronicco, at BrianneP@yblueridge.org, promptly should you have a cancellation at any time. Doing so will allow someone on the waiting list to attend. Cancellations received after May 1st are subject to the club being charged the full fee for the individual. Exceptions will only be considered for medical/family emergencies and other extenuating circumstances.

LEADERSHIP

HONOR LEADERS

At the close of the School, eight members of the Leaders' Division (four male, four female) are selected to serve as Honor Leaders for the following year.

COUNSELOR SELECTION

Qualified individuals (age, tenure) may apply to be a counselor for the following year's School. Details for applying are announced during the School. Between January and March of each year, Advisors of prospective counselors are contacted for an updated recommendation. Invitations will be emailed shortly thereafter. Counselors are selected on an annual basis, for a one year appointment, using several criteria, especially his/her performance at the previous year's School. A separate application is required for each year.

In order to serve as a Counselor, attendance is **required** at the Counselor meeting, 3:30 pm on OPENING Saturday. Exceptions will be considered for extenuating circumstances only.

SCHOOL STAFF

The School staff is appointed by the School Director on an annual basis, and is comprised of more than 90 YMCA professional directors and adult volunteers from YMCAs throughout the southeast. All have demonstrated expertise in training and possess exceptional abilities in teen leadership development.

The School Leadership Team may be found below.

Greg Hall, School Director. GregHall@yblueridge.org
Brianne Pietronicco, School Registrar. BrianneP@yblueridge.org
Ben Major, YMCA of the Virginia Peninsulas. ben.major@ymcavp.org
Ryan Graham, YMCA of Greater Charlotte. Ryan.Graham@ymcacharlotte.org
Jessica James-Hill, YMCA of Greater Charlotte. JeJames87@gmail.com
Molly D'Avria, Gaston County Family YMCA. MDAvria@gastonymca.org
Jeff Jaehnen, YMCA of Greater Louisville. Jjaehnen@ymcalouisville.org
Kendra Fuentes, Cowart Family Ashford Dunwoody YMCA. KendraF@ymcaatlanta.org
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