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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alabama students participate in Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum

The 12th annual Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) will take place from June 6 to 10 on the campus of Troy University.

YLF delegates are chosen through a statewide competition that seeks students with disabilities who have leadership potential. The group reflects the state's demographic makeup in terms of geography, gender, ethnicity, and types of disabilities.

About 37 students statewide are expected to attend this year's forum. To be eligible to participate, students had to have a disability, be a junior or senior in high school, and be between 17 to 21 years old to apply.

The five-day event seeks to equip high school students with disabilities with valuable leadership skills.

" YLF provides an opportunity unlike any other for young people with disabilities to realize their leadership potential," said Becky Fields, interim YLF coordinator. "We encourage all of the students not to put unnecessary limits on their academic and career goals."

During the forum, delegates will learn about self-esteem, self-advocacy, career choices, independent living, and assistive technology, Fields said. They will write a Personal Leadership Plan (PLP) to assist them in becoming leaders in their communities.

In addition to their other activities, the group will spend a day in Montgomery, where they will tour the Capitol. While in town, delegates will attend a Mentors Luncheon and interact with and get advice from other people with disabilities.

But YLF won't be all work for the delegates. To develop their social skills, they also will be treated to a swim party, a dance, and a talent show.

The Alabama Governor's Youth Leadership Forum is a program of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, the state agency whose mission is to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.