2027 RGVLS JR. Leadership Program Guidelines

EDUCATION YOUTH & PROMOTING AGRICULTURE

- All applicants must be a registered member and in good standing of a 4-H or FFA Chapter. All JR Leadership candidates applying for this program must list their leader's certification information at the bottom of the application. No eSignatures will be accepted; both the applicant and parent/guardian signatures must be original.

- Applications will be accepted from candidates registered in 6th through 12th grades. The classifications are as follows Intermediates (6^{th}-8^{th}), Senior 1 (9^{th} – 10^{th}), and Senior 2 (11^{th} – 12^{th}). JR. Leadership candidates must reside in Hidalgo, Starr, Cameron or Willacy Counties.

- Applications must be completed by the candidate; responses must be original and in their own words. All submissions will be screened for AI-generated content; detection of AI-generated content will automatically disqualify the candidate from consideration.

- Application deadline is **Wednesday, August 12th at 5:00 p.m**. Only electronic submissions will be accepted.

- The candidate selection is scheduled for **Saturday, August 15th** and the 2027 JR Leadership Class selections will be released by the RGVLS office after this date.

- All Youth selected will be required to attend a mandatory orientation and training scheduled for **Saturday, September 26th at 2:30 p.m. at the Event Center.** There will be a $20 registration fee that will be collected on this day of the meeting.

    - *If someone should miss the class or is not available on that day no make-up class will be held. The candidate must contact the committee chair on their withdrawal from the program, and the first alternate will be called up into that position.*

    - *All paperwork certifications, payment of the registration fee, sizing of uniform shirts ($40), and a review of the assignments will be covered at this meeting.*

- After the mandatory training meeting in September all communications will be with the <u>parents only</u>. We do not collect candidate phone numbers or email addresses. ***Parents signing the Youth applications acknowledge that they are responsible for supervising their child's presentation while in uniform on the show grounds. Example: Shirt tail tucked in, personal presentation neat, exhibitor wrist band displayed appropriately, and blue jeans or long pants worn while in uniform. All Youth will be evaluated by the shift managers while the Youth are on duty. Only the child is needed for these mandatory assignments.***

- A list of events the JR. Leadership group will assist/work with are as follows:

    - **Horticulture Wildflower Project** – This is now a mandatory project since many candidates are involved in projects that weekend. All leadership Youth are going to be challenged to bring at least 1 new exhibitor to this event. There will be no other way for the leadership candidates to collect points for this activity.

- **Boot Run** – This is a newer event held prior to the show dates. We will discuss this at the training, but it is anticipated that not all leadership Youth will be needed. It is an early morning event that will last until about noon. More details to come.
- **New Agriculture Educational Exhibits** – This year each candidate will be required to work this exhibit; more information to come.
- **RGVLS Rodeo Assistance** – All Youth are required to work at least 1 night at the rodeos.

- **The leadership event schedule will be released in late January 2027. At that time the parents will call in requesting work slots. Be prepared to have a Plan A and a Plan B. Parents, please be aware that there should be minimal to no changes once you have committed to a work plan.**

- During all scheduled events, each candidate will be recognized by their uniform shirt and their exhibitor wrist band; this will be used as their ID badge. These wrist bands will not be ready until late January 2027 and the leadership committee will keep you informed on the distribution process. All parking and other gate pass needs for the Youth are to be handled through the club managers and school advisors.

- **Leadership Oral Interviews and Awards Program**

  - The oral interviews and selection of the 2027 leadership awards will be held on **Saturday April 3, 2027.** This date will give all exhibitors a chance to compete without the pressures of the show duties. The judge's decisions are final and there will be no appeals process to their decisions.

  - New for this year; all assigned activities before and during the show will now earn the Youth points. The points earned will be added as part of the scoring system for the final Oral Interview. The quantifying categories and evaluation methods will be discussed at the mandatory orientation and training.

  - Each age bracket, Intermediate, Senior 1 and Senior 2 will have a belt buckle awarded for the high point candidate. In addition, there will be 3 rosette ribbons for the top places in each age category. We will continue with the rule that once a candidate wins a belt buckle in their age division, they are not eligible to compete for another buckle until they age up to the next classification.

  - All Youth will receive a leadership banner from RGVLS that recognizes their leadership services to the show.

Please note failure to follow instructions included in this guidance will have the application denied for consideration.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Olga Lopez Caltzontzint, Chair of the Committee at 956-207-3702 or email olgacaltz@gmail.com.
Ms. Lopez is employed but she will make herself available as quickly as possible.