



# AMERICAN LEGION JERSEY BOYS STATE

*"A WEEK THAT SHAPES THE FUTURE"*

Sponsored by THE AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF NEW JERSEY

JUNE 22-27, 2014; RIDER UNIVERSITY, Lawrenceville, NJ

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## Jersey Boys State Announces Annual Awards for Statesmen and Staff

LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ – On Friday, June 27, American Legion Jersey Boys State (ALJBS) Director David Bagatelle and senior staff announced several award annual winners for the 69<sup>th</sup> Session.

“While every second of Jersey Boys State is enjoyable, announcing our award winners is a very special moment and honor,” said David Bagatelle, Director of American Legion Jersey Boys State. “These awards espouse the spirit of American Legion Jersey Boys State.”

Award	NAME	HOMETOWN	LEGION POST #
Todd Eaton Award	Jake E. Tennenbaum	Cherry Hill	372
Gordon A. Vreeland Award	Michael J. Bizzoco	Sicklerville	372
Samsung Nominee	Nicholas Pellitta	Flemington	284
Harry V. Groome Award (staff)	Anthony Lori	Whippany	155

### Todd Eaton Award

Since 2002, Jersey Boys State has honored one statesmen each session who selflessly serves his fellow statesmen and the program during the week. The honoree receives a \$1,000 scholarship to aid his college education. Each senior counselor of ALJBS' eighteen cities submitted one candidate whose record was reviewed and later interviewed by the ALJBS Senior Honors Committee.

Todd Eaton, a statesman in 1986, volunteered for eight years at Jersey Boys State. In his remembrance, the award is given to the statesman who best represents the spirit of the program—someone who does not seek the spotlight, but rather takes care of his fellow statesmen and dedicates himself to help others achieve their goals.

In 1946, Harold "Chief" Eaton, grandfather of Todd Eaton, served as the founding Director of ALJBS. Chief Eaton continued to serve as Director until his death in 1984. Under Chief Eaton's leadership, Jersey Boys State developed into a model Boys State program for many other states and a format that is copied by many other programs to this day.

### Gordon A. Vreeland Award

Since 2009, Jersey Boys State has honored one statesmen each session who best exemplifies dedication and achievement in the program. The honoree receives a \$1,000 scholarship to aid his college education. Each senior counselor of ALJBS' eighteen cities submitted one candidate whose record was reviewed and later interviewed by the ALJBS Senior Honors Committee.

Gordon A. Vreeland has the distinction of being the longest serving Jersey Boys State staff member at 54 years. Vreeland dutifully volunteered every year from 1959 to 2014.

### Samsung Scholarship Nominee

The New Jersey Samsung Scholarship nominee will compete nationally for the annual Samsung American Legion Scholarship. The nominee receives a \$1,000 scholarship immediately and will be eligible for an annual \$20,000 national scholarship. The nominee was selected after a series of interviews and reviews of his academic record, community and extra-curricular involvement and financial need.

Since 1996, Samsung Corporation has awarded scholarships to Boys and Girls State delegates from across the country to show appreciation for U.S. veterans who came to Korea's aid during the Korean War. The scholarship is limited to direct descendants or legally adopted children of a wartime veteran who served on active duty during at least one of the periods of war officially designated as eligibility dates for American Legion membership.

### Harry V. Groome Award

This award is given annually and honors the most outstanding staff member of the all-volunteer staff of Jersey Boys State. Many of the staff volunteer their time in preparation throughout the year during the "off-season" for the weeklong program.

Harry V. Groome is a founding father of the Jersey Boys State program. Groome served as Assistant Director and right-hand man to Harold “Chief” Eaton, the founding Director, for many years.

**Throughout the week-long program, statesmen:**

- Heard from notable speakers including Senator Robert Menendez, Senator Cory Booker, Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno, Congressman Leonard Lance, CBS 3 Philadelphia’s Jessica Dean, US Senate candidate Jeffrey Bell, former Congressman Bob Inglis (SC), among many others;
- Visited the ALJBS College Fair featuring nearly 100 institutions from across the country;
- Attended leadership and career seminars featuring business executives, military representatives, political consultants, law experts and journalists, among other professional experts;
- Elected the 69<sup>th</sup> ALJBS Governor on Thursday, June 26; and
- Elected two Boys Nation Senators on Friday June 27, who will represent New Jersey at the annual American Legion Boys Nation program in Washington D.C., from July 18-26, 2014.

Notable ALJBS alumni include Governor Christopher Christie (Boys Nation Senator, 1979), Senator Robert Menendez (1971), Senator Cory Booker (1986), Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito (1967), Congressman Leonard Lance (1969) and Assemblyman Herbert Conaway (ALJBS Governor, 1980).

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**About American Legion Jersey Boys State (ALJBS)**

In its 69<sup>th</sup> year, ALJBS is a week-long experience that educates and motivates New Jersey’s youth so that each statesman may become a citizen leader dedicated to service, respect, and Americanism. Together, the delegates form the mythical “51st” state of the union each year, where they elect their own local, state, and national representatives. Activities at ALJBS include legislative sessions, general assemblies, court proceedings, athletics, band, and career seminars, among many others. All expenses associated with attending ALJBS are typically donated by a sponsoring American Legion Post, a local business, or a community-based organization. To learn more, please visit [aljbs.org](http://aljbs.org).