

National Grange Youth & Young Adults



TM

2026 Program Guide

NATIONAL GRANGE YOUTH DEPARTMENT PROGRAM GUIDE

Grange Youth, Leaders, and Directors

It is exciting to be entering into a new chapter with the National Grange Youth Department. I am excited to work with each of you as we aim to make our youth Grange Strong. As many of you know, I have served the National Grange in various capacities over the last decade and a half, and I am honored to have been asked to step back into the role as the National Grange Youth Director. It is my goal to help develop programming that will grow and inspire our youth to grow Grange Strong—for their Grange, their communities, and for themselves. Developing leaders who are confident and passionate about the Grange's mission and vision helps us create a future stronger than ever, preserving the Grange's legacy for generations to come.

The National Grange Youth Department exists to guide, equip, and inspire young people as they grow into active, confident, and engaged leaders in their communities, their Grange, and the world around them. We believe youth are not only the future of the organization—they are an essential part of the present. Through meaningful programming, hands-on leadership development, and opportunities that build character and skill, we strive to create pathways for youth and young adults to discover their voice, follow their passions, and make a real and lasting impact.

Our goal is to cultivate informed and capable young leaders who are prepared to make a difference in rural America and beyond. Participants will gain exposure to civic engagement, legislative advocacy, membership development, and leadership training designed to grow their personal strengths while strengthening the Grange as a whole. Whether they feel called to serve their local communities, speak boldly on issues that matter, or build innovative programming that welcomes new members into the Grange, the Youth Department provides the tools, mentorship, and encouragement to take the next step with confidence.

This is a place to learn. A place to lead. A place where youth are empowered to stand tall, use their voice, and shape a brighter future for the generations to come.

Together, we grow.

Together, we lead.

Together, we shape the future of the Grange.

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns by emailing Youth@NationalGrange.org.

Fraternally,

Samantha Wilkins

National Grange Youth Director

1ST EDITION

January 2026

This version of the National Grange Youth Program Guide replaces all prior versions and will take effect beginning in February 2026.

For any additional updates or for more information, visit the National Grange Website at www.nationalgrange.org.

Questions or comments should be directed to:

National Youth Director

Samantha Wilkins

210-838-7892

youth@nationalgrange.org

Or

National Grange Regional Youth Advisory Council

Great Plains: Mandy Bostwick (KS)

Eastern: Gail Switzer (PA)

Northeast: Jaimie Cameron (CT)

Western: (TBD)

Midwest: (TBD)

YOUTH PROGRAM BOOK OUTLINE:

In this program book, you will find a thoughtful, intentional focus on four key areas that guide youth as they grow, serve, and lead within the Grange and their communities. These focus areas—**Community Service, Legislative, Agriculture, and Growth/Leadership**—reflect the Grange's values and provide meaningful opportunities for youth to develop skills, build confidence, and make a lasting impact.

Through **Community Service**, youth are encouraged to identify needs in their local communities and take action through hands-on projects that promote compassion, responsibility, and civic pride. This area helps youth understand the importance of service and the power of working together to support others.

The **Legislative** focus area introduces youth to advocacy, public policy, and the legislative process. By learning how to express their voices respectfully and effectively, youth gain a deeper understanding of how local, state, and national decisions impact agriculture, rural communities, and everyday life.

Agriculture remains at the heart of the Grange. This focus area allows youth to explore the role agriculture plays in sustaining our communities, economy, and environment. Youth are encouraged to learn about farming, food systems, sustainability, and agricultural innovation while gaining appreciation for those who work to feed our nation.

Finally, **Growth and Leadership** are woven throughout every aspect of the program. Youth are challenged to discover their strengths, develop leadership skills, and step into opportunities that build confidence, teamwork, and responsibility. Through mentorship, hands-on experience, and leadership roles, youth are prepared not only for future involvement in the Grange but also for leadership in all areas of life.

In addition to these four focus areas, this year's programming will include opportunities for youth across the country to **learn about and celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States of America**. Through special activities, educational projects, and service initiatives, youth will explore our nation's history, civic responsibility, and their ongoing role in shaping its future. This milestone provides a meaningful way for youth to connect Grange values with patriotism, service, and active citizenship.

Together, these four focus areas create a well-rounded program that equips youth to learn, serve, lead, and grow—today and for the future.

COMMUNITY ALL-STAR PROGRAM

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

Submission Form: <https://grange.biz/youthallstar>

The **Community All-Star Program** is designed to encourage youth to actively serve their communities while developing leadership, compassion, and civic responsibility. Youth will track their community service hours throughout the year, celebrate milestones, and recognize outstanding dedication to service. While all service is valued, one youth will be honored as the **Community All-Star of the Year** for exceptional commitment.

Service Tracking:

- Youth will track all community service hours from September 1, 2025, to August 31, 2026
 - Service may include:
 - Grange projects
 - School or church service
 - Community clean-ups
 - Volunteering with nonprofits
 - Agricultural or environmental service
 - Youth-led service initiatives
 - Hours must be logged on the **service log sheet** and signed by a Grange leader or project supervisor.

All-Star Service Levels:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| ● Rookie Helper
10+ hours | ● Service Captain
75+ hours |
| ● Community Player
25+ hours | ● All-Star Elite
100+ hours |
| ● Team Leader
50+ hours | |

Service Tracking Sheet can be found here: [Service Tracking Sheet](#)

Submit your service tracking sheet along with your application for the Community All-Star Program via the online submission form found here: <https://grange.biz/youthallstar>

WIB & JUNE JUSTI COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

Nomination Form: <https://grange.biz/youthcommservice>

Purpose:

To honor a Youth or Young Adult who has gone above and beyond to serve his or her community.

Description:

Community Service has long been a pillar of the Grange, providing members with meaningful opportunities to engage with and support the communities in which they live. Wib Justi served as the very first National Grange Director of Youth Activities, alongside his wife June, dedicating 18 years to fostering leadership and service among young members. Known for their unwavering positivity and signature response of *"I'd be delighted!"*, the Justis exemplified joyful service, mentorship, and commitment to others.

This award will be presented to a youth or young adult who reflects that same spirit—serving others with enthusiasm, dedication, and a heart for strengthening their community.

Nomination Requirement:

- Community, Pomona, or State Granges can nominate a young person for this award, as well as State Presidents and State Youth Directors
- Nominations can be made for a Youth or Young Adult, aged 14-25.
- Nomination applications will be reviewed by a panel of judges who will select the award recipient.
- The recipient will be announced at the National Grange Convention and will receive a special award.

Entry:

- Online Application includes the following:
 - How nominee possesses an attitude of service
 - Description of a particular service project in which they participated
 - Impact made as a result of the nominee's service
- All online applications must be received by September 1, 2026.

HONORARY YOUTH DELEGATE EXPERIENCE

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

Submit your application here: <https://grange.biz/youthdelegate>

PURPOSE

The Honorary Youth Delegate Experience is designed to cultivate knowledgeable, passionate young advocates who understand the Grange's legislative process or desire to learn it, and who feel empowered to shape the future of rural America. This program honors the legacy of John Trimble — a dedicated Grange leader who believed deeply in education, civic responsibility, and youth involvement.

Participants will have the opportunity to serve as an **Honorary Youth Delegate at the National Grange Convention**, gaining first-hand knowledge of policy development, debate, and decision-making within the Grange. Individuals will be selected at the National Grange convention to serve the National Grange for one year as participants in the Honorary Youth Delegate Experience. They will serve the National Grange throughout the following year, culminating at the next National Grange Convention, where they will serve as an Honorary Youth Delegate. During their year, they will learn and participate in Grange legislative work through committee assignments, mentorship, and learn about and participate in hands-on advocacy engagement.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

National Grange Convention Experience

- Attend the National Grange Convention as the **Honorary Youth Delegate**
- Sit with the delegate body during resolutions hearings and discussions.
- Participate in committee sessions, workshops, and legislative briefings, prior to and during the National Grange Convention.
- Provide input in discussions when youth or young adult perspectives are valuable.
- Develop a written reflection or summary report following Convention participation.

Year-Long Legislative Engagement

Throughout the year of engagement, the participant will:

- Serve on at least one National Grange Legislative or Policy Committee.
 - This will be one of the five external committees for a complete policy experience
- Participate in virtual meetings and work sessions as assigned.
- Assist in reviewing resolutions, researching policy topics, or preparing youth-friendly summaries.
- Receive mentorship from National Grange leadership, staff, or appointed committee managers.
- Prepare a mid-year update on learning, involvement, and advocacy efforts.

HONORARY YOUTH DELEGATE EXPERIENCE

(cont.)

Eligibility

- Must be a Grange Youth or Young Adult member (recommended ages 18-25).
- Demonstrated interest in policy, civic engagement, debate, or public service.
- Active involvement in a Community and/or State Grange
 - And be a member in good standing
- Commitment to completing year-long expectations.

Application Requirements

- Completed application questionnaire.
- Short personal statement on *why legislative advocacy matters to rural America and the Grange*.
- Letter of recommendation from State Youth Director, Community Grange leader, or State Grange President
- Agreement to attend the National Grange Convention and actively participate throughout the program year.

Participant Output & Program Completion

To complete the program, the participant must:

1. Present one program-related workshop, article, or resource for youth engagement.
2. Complete one year of external committee participation and advocacy involvement.
3. Submit an end-of-year summary to the National Grange Youth Director.

Upon completion, the participant will be recognized at the following National Grange Convention and formally acknowledged as an **Honorary Youth Delegate Graduate**.

WASHINGTON, DC EXPERIENCE

Submission Deadline May 1, 2026

More information and the application are available at nationalgrange.org.

The 2026 **Washington, DC Experience** will be held in Washington, DC, on July 11-15, 2026. This experience doesn't just start and stop in Washington, DC, though. This will be a multi-year event to promote youth engagement at the local, state, and national levels of the Grange.

This experience will be sponsored by the National Grange with the understanding that the youth who participate (ages 18-25) will make a four-year commitment to the National Grange. Details on the commitment expectations are below.

The National Grange will provide up to \$2,000 in sponsorship for each youth who applies and is accepted into the Washington, DC Experience. Participation in this program requires a four-year commitment, during which each participant is expected to fully and actively engage with all program requirements.

In return for this commitment, the National Grange will cover the participant's expenses to Washington, DC, and will invite the participant's members to the annual National Grange Convention at their own expense at the end of the participation period. If a participant fails to meet the outlined expectations in any program year, they will be required to reimburse \$500 of the \$2,000 sponsorship amount for each year in which the requirements are not met. Each year, up to 2 outstanding participants may be selected to return to Washington, DC, to help train the next class.

Youth ages 18-25 will commit to the growth and development of youth programming across the country with a willingness to keep growing, keep working, and keep moving the Grange forward into the next generation.

To learn more about the requirements and expectations to participate in the Washington, DC Experience, please visit:

[Washington, DC Experience Information](https://nationalgrange.org)

RURAL IN ACTION: FROM FIELD TO FUTURE

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

Submission Form: <https://grange.biz/youthruralinaction>

Rural in Action helps youth explore agriculture in a practical, creative, and accessible way. Participants choose an agriculture topic, complete a hands-on or research-based project, and share what they learned through an easy submission format. The focus is on learning, effort, and impact, not access to land or expensive materials.

Eligibility: 14–25 years old, Grange member in good standing, Individual or small team (2–3 participants)

Project Categories (Choose ONE): Participants select one category that best fits their interests and resources:

Grow It - *Hands-on growing projects*

Examples: Container gardening, Backyard or school garden, Herb, vegetable, or flower growing, Hydroponics or indoor growing

Raise It - *Animal or livestock learning projects*

Examples: Caring for small animals, Poultry projects, Research on animal care, nutrition, or welfare, Virtual or observational livestock studies (for those without animals)

Ag Awareness - *Education and outreach projects*

Examples: Social media campaign on agriculture, Educational poster or brochure, Short video explaining where food comes from, Presentation to a school or community group

Ag Innovation - *Future-focused or problem-solving projects*

Examples: Research on sustainable agriculture, New ideas to reduce food waste, Technology in agriculture, climate-smart farming practice.

Required Project Components: Each submission includes:

1. Project Summary (1 page max) to include the following: Project title, Category, Why did you choose this project, What did you learn

2. Project Evidence (Choose **ONE** format): 3–5 photos with captions, A short video (3–5 minutes max), A digital poster or slideshow (5–8 slides)

3. Reflection Questions (short answers): What surprised you most about agriculture through this project? How does agriculture impact your daily life? How could this project help your community?

IGNITE LEADERSHIP

Find your lead. Create your impact.

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

Submission Form: <https://grange.biz/youthignite>

IGNITE LEADERSHIP is a hands-on leadership development program designed to help youth discover their unique leadership style and put it into action in meaningful ways. Every young person leads differently, and this program is built on the belief that leadership is not one-size-fits-all—it starts with understanding who you are and how you influence others.

Through guided activities, discussions, and self-discovery tools, participants will explore their strengths, interests, and leadership approach. Youth will learn how different leadership styles work together and how their individual style can serve their Grange, school, and community.

The program goes beyond learning by challenging youth to create and lead a project that reflects their leadership style. Whether it's organizing a service project, advocating for an issue, supporting agriculture, or leading a team effort, participants will turn ideas into action and make a real impact.

IGNITE LEADERSHIP encourages confidence, creativity, teamwork, and responsibility while helping youth build practical skills such as communication, planning, problem-solving, and decision-making. Most importantly, it empowers youth to step forward, lead with purpose, and discover the difference they can make.

IGNITE LEADERSHIP is where leaders are sparked, ideas come to life, and impact begins.

Find the steps along with more program info here:

[IGNITE LEADERSHIP-Find your lead. Create your impact. Instructions.](#)

NATIONAL GRANGE YOUTH OFFICER TEAM

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

Application Form: <https://grange.biz/youthofficerteam>

The National Grange Youth Officer Team is a group of youth and young adults from across the nation who have the opportunity to represent not only their State Grange but also the National Grange as National Youth Officers at the National Grange Convention.

The team will participate in opening and closing drills, open a morning session of the convention, and conduct the order of business for the convention delegation. This is a great opportunity for the youth and young adult officers to grow as leaders and represent Grange youth and the future of our organization.

Purpose:

- To allow youth and young adults the opportunity to learn from the Officers of the National Grange and gain a perspective of the duties those officers hold.
- To engage in leadership growth and learn what it means to hold such an important leadership position.

Requirements:

- Must attend all youth activities while attending the National Grange Convention, including workshops, service projects, practices, and any other events as directed by the National Grange Youth Director
- Must be prepared before the convention with officer duties specific to your office. Officers will be notified early of the office in which they will serve. Officers with speaking parts must memorize their lines prior to the convention.
- Officers are responsible for funding their own transportation, rooming, and any costs associated with attending the National Convention. A small stipend will be awarded to youth officers who show exemplary participation.
- Officers must enter at least ONE contest from any National Grange Department. You'll be asked to note which contest you entered on the application.

Application Requirements:

Please complete the online application, which will require you to also submit the following:

- A 4X6 headshot photo of yourself
- A letter of recommendation from your State President or your State Youth Director
 - The letter must note if the applicant is an active member in good standing
 - The letter must state why you recommend the applicant to serve as an officer
- Contest you have entered for 2026 (see above requirements)
- A 4 - 5 sentence bio about yourself
- A paragraph (4-5 sentences) on how the Grange has impacted you.

REGIONAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

Application Form: <https://grange.biz/youthambassadorsteam>

A leadership opportunity for young people to represent the Grange, serve their communities, and promote agriculture and civic engagement.

The National Grange Youth Department is transforming the traditional Youth Ambassador Program into a Regional Program. This program is aimed at growing and developing stronger leaders across all Grange Regions.

Up to two Regional Youth Ambassadors may be selected in each region. These Ambassadors will be catalysts for the development of youth programming in those regions and will become the National Grange Youth Team. They will work closely with the National Youth Director, Youth Advisory Council, and youth directors/state presidents across their region to bring programming, leadership development, and education to the states they represent.

Region Breakdown

GREAT PLAINS- Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado

MIDWEST- Ohio, Minnesota, Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin

WESTERN- California, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Hawaii, Alaska

EASTERN- Florida, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Washington, DC, New Jersey

NORTHEAST- Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts

Eligibility

- A member in good standing with active involvement in their local Grange.
- Ages **16–20** (Youth Ambassadors), **21-25** (Young Adult Ambassadors)
- Active involvement in a Grange for at least **12 months**.
- Interest in agriculture, community service, and leadership.
- Must be able to make a full one-year commitment to the program.

Selection Process

- Application submission.
- Interview with the regional committee.

REGIONAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM (CONT.)

Ambassador Responsibilities

- Represent the Grange at events, fairs, and meetings across the region.
- Lead or support one community service or ag-literacy project.
- Promote youth involvement in Grange programs.
- Maintain positive communication and monthly updates to the National Grange Youth Director.
- Create social media content about programming and projects.
- Attend the Washington, DC Experience.

Training Provided

- Orientation on Grange values and expectations.
- Public speaking and leadership training.
- Legislative Advocacy training.
- Guidance on media etiquette and event representation.

Recognition

- Certificates and pins.
- Spotlight in newsletters and/or social media.
- Swag.
- Moments to share your year of experience at the National Grange Convention.

Application Components- Via Online Submission

- Personal information.
- Short essay/letter of interest.
- Summary of Grange involvement.
- Reference from a Grange leader.
- Headshot.

Interview: Applicants meet with an interview panel of 3–5 people.

Appointment: Selected ambassadors serve a **one-year term**. (November - November)

JUNIOR MENTOR AWARD

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

Nominate online: <https://grange.biz/youthjuniormentor>

PURPOSE:

To honor a Youth or Young Adult who makes an impact by serving and mentoring Junior Grange members.

DESCRIPTION

Grange Youth and Young Adults play a vital role in shaping our organization's future by uplifting, encouraging, and engaging with our Junior Grange members. Their involvement helps build confidence, foster a sense of belonging, and create meaningful experiences that last for years to come.

This award recognizes individuals who demonstrate exceptional leadership, mentorship, and dedication in guiding Junior Grangers — those who step forward with patience, enthusiasm, and a heart for service. Through their example, they inspire the next generation to grow, lead, and carry on the rich legacy of the Grange.

Nomination Requirements:

- Community, Pomona, or State Granges can nominate a young person for this award, as well as State Presidents and State Youth Directors.
- Nominations can be made for a Youth or Young Adult, age 14-25
- Nomination applications will be reviewed by a panel of judges who will select the award recipient.

Entry:

- All applications must be received by September 1, 2026
- Application includes the following:
 - Why the nominee should be selected for this award
 - How the nominee has impacted Junior Grangers
 - List specific activities, projects, etc. that the nominee participated in or led to impact Junior Grangers

Recipients will be announced at the National Grange Convention and will receive a special award.

SEEDING THE FUTURE CHALLENGE

Invite one. Welcome many. Build the future.

Deadline: September 1, 2026

Submission Form: <https://grange.biz/youthgrowthchallenge>

PURPOSE

The **Seeding the Future Challenge** invites youth to play an active role in strengthening the Grange by personally inviting others to become involved. This program emphasizes the power of relationships—sharing your own Grange story, building genuine connections, and welcoming new members with warmth and encouragement. Youth are challenged to lead by example, helping others discover the fellowship, service, and leadership opportunities the Grange offers. Every invitation, conversation, and act of hospitality helps ensure the Grange continues to grow, thrive, and remain strong for generations to come.

HOW IT WORKS

- Youth earn credit by bringing in new members (youth or adults).
- A new member counts when they:
 - Join a local Grange
 - Pay dues

LEVELS OF GROWTH:

Seed Planter - 1 new member recruited

Growth Builder - 3 new members recruited

Community Cultivator - 5+ new members recruited

Youth Membership Champion - Most new members recruited in a program year

All entrants to the **Seeding the Future Challenge** will be recognized by the National Grange Youth Department. Special recognition will be published and announced for the Youth Membership Champion!

DISTINGUISHED GRANGE YOUTH MEMBER

Deadline: September 1, 2026

Submission Form: <https://grange.biz/distinguishedyouth>

Grange Youth (individuals) may qualify for this award by completing enough of the following requirements to earn 100 points.

Requirements must be met during the qualifying period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

REQUIREMENTS:

Leadership & Participation

- Attend 50% of Community Grange meetings. *(10 pts)*
- Serve on a Community, County, or State Youth Committee or help organize a small youth leadership team within your Grange. *(5 pts)*
- Participate in at least two youth planning or leadership meetings (local, state, or virtual). *(5 pts)*
- Attend and actively participate in a youth-focused event such as camp, retreat, lock-in, conference, or leadership training (in-person or virtual). *(10 pts)*
- Assist with or participate in a youth activity at State Session or another Grange-sponsored event. *(5 pts)*

Skills, Communication & Competition

- Compete in or assist with Speech, Sign-A-Song, Grange Trivia, or another approved youth contest at any level (local, state, or national). *(20 pts)*
- Write and submit an article, reflection, or report about youth involvement, leadership, or a Grange event for a Grange newsletter, website, or social media platform. *(5 pts)*

Advocacy & Service

- Participate in an advocacy or legislative activity, such as attending a legislative day, writing a letter/email to an elected official, participating in a civic forum, or assisting with a Grange advocacy effort. *(20 pts)*
- Write 5 letters/emails to an elected official advocating for a change in policy that the National or State Grange supports. *(10 pts)*
- Organize or actively participate in a community service project through your local or state Grange. *(15 pts)*
- Submit or assist with an application nominating a youth or young adult for the Wib & June Justi Community Service Award or the National Grange Junior Mentor Award. *(5 pts)*

DISTINGUISHED YOUTH (CONT.)

Leadership Development & Representation

- Apply for, serve as, or assist a Youth Ambassador, or similar youth leadership role at the local or state level. *(10 pts)*
- Serve as a Youth Officer, help with opening/closing ceremonies, or assist in a leadership role at a community Grange meeting or State Session. *(5 pts)*

Outreach, Membership & Promotion

- Use personal or Grange-affiliated social media to regularly promote youth activities, Grange events, or leadership opportunities, and follow the National Grange on Social Media. *(10 pts)*
(List platforms/usernames)
- Participate in a youth membership or recruitment effort, such as inviting new members, assisting with an open house, participating in a membership seminar, or mentoring a new youth member. *(20 pts)*

Innovation & Support

- Work with your Lecturer, Youth Chair, or another Grange leader to help develop or pilot a new youth-oriented program, activity, or competition at any level. *(20 pts)*
(Example of a program designed)
- Participate in or help raise funds for the National Grange Foundation Youth Fund, or contribute personally toward a collective donation goal. *(15 pts)*

PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

Submission Deadline November 1, 2026

Submission Form: <https://grange.biz/youthpublicspeaking>

The **public speaking contest** is designed to help youth find their voice, build confidence, and share their ideas clearly and with purpose. Through this experience, participants strengthen communication skills that will serve them in leadership roles, school, and everyday life.

GUIDELINES:

Each submission must be from a Grange member in good standing and meeting the age requirements listed below.

Contestants may submit both an **in-person AND a video** entry.

AGES:

- Youth- 14-20
- Young Adult- 21-25
- Alumni 26+

PREPARED SPEECH:

- **TOPIC:** *America at 250: Honoring Our Past, Shaping Our Future*
- **TIME:** Minimum of 3 minute Maximum of 5 minutes
- **PRESENTATION:** Presenters may use props, PowerPoint slides, displays, etc.
- **OUTLINE:** Presenter must submit 3 copies of their speech outline for the judges (Online video submissions must submit one outline digitally)
- **QUESTION:** Each participant will be asked 1 question related to their speech and will be given 1 minute to answer the question asked by the judges.

SUBMISSIONS:

- **In-Person:** A person wishing to compete in person at the National Grange convention must submit their interest to the National Grange Youth Director no later than **November 1, 2026**. It must be verified by their state youth director and/or State Grange president that the entrant is the state winner.
- **VIDEO:** Participants wishing to compete in the Video Prepared Speech category must submit their video to the National Grange by **November 1, 2026**. All submissions must be provided as a **YouTube link**; no other forms of submission will be accepted. The video must have clear, **audible sound**, and the speaker's **entire body** must be visible in the frame for the duration of the speech.
- Best of show winners will be selected in both the video and in-person entries.

SIGN-A-SONG CONTEST

Submission Deadline November 1, 2026

Submission Form: <https://youthsignasong>

The Sign-a-Song Contest is designed to give youth a fun and creative way to express themselves through music and performance. This contest encourages participants to develop confidence, communication skills, and stage presence while interpreting a song in a way that reflects their personality and style. Beyond performance, the contest fosters teamwork, creativity, and self-expression, allowing youth to explore the arts in a supportive environment. By participating, youth gain valuable experience in public presentation and performance, while celebrating music as a tool for connection, inspiration, and leadership within the Grange community.

GUIDELINES:

Each submission must be from a Grange member in good standing and meeting the age requirements listed below.

Contestants may submit both an **in-person AND a video** entry.

THEME: This year's Sign-A-Song Theme is '**America's 250th**'. Each participant is encouraged to select a song that showcases their patriotism and honors the 250th anniversary of the United States

CATEGORIES:

- **Novice** – is beginning to learn sign, has had no more than three sign language classes, and has entered the sign-a-song contest no more than two times.
- **Hobbyist** – signs on an occasional basis and strictly for fun. One who has entered the sign-a-song contest more than two times.
- **Group** – Two or more people signing the song.

SUBMISSIONS:

- **In-Person:** A person wishing to compete in person at the National Grange convention must submit their interest to the National Grange Youth Director no later than **November 1, 2026**. It must be verified by their state youth director and/or State Grange president that the entrant is the state winner.
- **VIDEO:** Participants wishing to compete in the Video Prepared Sign-A-Song category must submit their video to the National Grange by **November 1, 2026**. All submissions must be provided as a **YouTube link**; no other forms of submission will be accepted. The video must have clear, **audible sound**, and the presenter/s **entire body/bodies** must be visible in the frame throughout the performance.

JUDGING:

Submissions will be judged based on overall performance and use of sign language. Props and costumes are permitted. Contestants must sign their name and song title before beginning. And the contestant must inform the audience of the type of sign language they will be using. Best of show winners will be selected in both the video and in-person entries.

250TH CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS CONTEST

Celebrating America's 250th Birthday

Submission Deadline September 1, 2026

The America 250 Creative Expressions Contest invites youth to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States through artistic and creative expression. This contest encourages youth to share what America means to them by using creativity, storytelling, and imagination. There is no “right” way to participate—only an opportunity to express ideas, values, and hopes for the nation’s future.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE: This contest is open to any youth-aged person (age 14-25), and they *do not* need to be a Grange member.

Choose from one of the following categories. Only one entry per person per category.

Creative Categories

Visual Arts

- Drawing, painting, or mixed media
- Digital art or graphic design
- Photography or collage

Media & Storytelling

- Short video (3–5 minutes)
- Photo story or slideshow
- Creative social media campaign

Creative Writing

- Poem
- Personal reflection or short story
- Letter to America (past or future)

Interactive Celebration

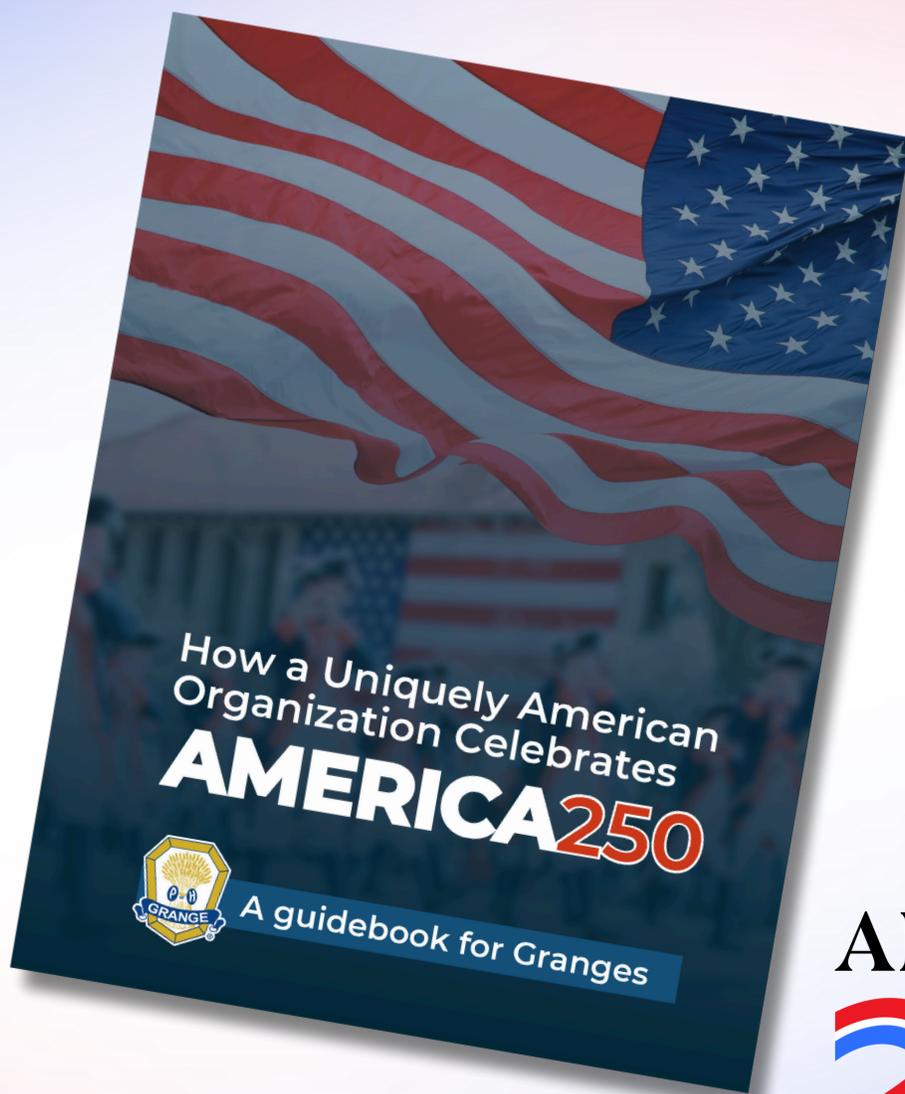
- Board game
- Card game
- Interactive activity about American history or civics

Submission Requirements

Each entry must include:

- Name, State, Email, Address, Phone Number
- Project title and Chosen category
- Submissions can be sent to youth@nationalgrange.org or by mail to Samantha Wilkins, 21578 Pleasanton Rd, San Antonio, TX 78264

Celebrate America250 with the Grange



Grangers of all ages are encouraged to participate in America's semiquincentennial - 250 years of patriotism, freedom, and shared values.

The *Guidebook for Granges* can be accessed at
<https://grange.biz/America250>

PARTICIPATE IN PROJECT SUSTENANCE



What is PROJECT SUSTENANCE?



Project Sustenance is the National Grange's signature program, designed to align and elevate the community-based work Granges are already doing through three clearly defined pillars:

FOOD SECURITY

Food Security projects focus on improving access to affordable, nutritious food while strengthening local food systems. Granges may consider community gardens, seed libraries, food pantries, meal programs, or partnerships with local farmers, schools, and food banks. These efforts can address hunger, reduce food waste, and promote healthy eating, while reinforcing the vital role agriculture plays in every community. Food Security initiatives help ensure neighbors have reliable access to food today while building stronger, more resilient food networks for the future.

COMMUNITY & PERSONAL RESILIENCE

Community & Personal Resilience projects help individuals and communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from challenges. This may include disaster preparedness efforts, mental health awareness, wellness programs, emergency supply drives, or activities that strengthen social connections and reduce isolation. These projects emphasize building strong relationships, local leadership, and support networks so communities are better equipped to adapt, respond, and care for one another during times of change or uncertainty.

SELF-SUSTAINABILITY

Self-Sustainability projects build practical skills and long-term independence for individuals and communities. Granges might host workshops on gardening, food preservation, financial literacy, home efficiency, or skill-sharing across generations. Other ideas include tool libraries or repair events. By empowering people with knowledge and hands-on experience, these initiatives promote confidence, adaptability, and a culture of self-reliance that strengthens both individuals and the community as a whole.

Learn more and access ideas and resources at
<https://www.nationalgrange.org/projectsustenance>

National Grange Child Protection Policy

The National Grange is committed to providing an environment that is safe for all minors, Juniors and Youth, during National Grange events and activities. This National Grange Child Protection Policy (Policy) is designed to protect our young people, instill confidence in those entrusting us with their children, and protect adult volunteers and staff from allegations that may be unwarranted.

The National Grange has ZERO tolerance for abuse of anyone, especially our minor members under the age of 18. The Safe Gatherings requirements below are mandatory and must be met before working with minors under the age of 18 at all National Grange or Regional Grange events and activities. It is recommended that each State Grange follow and adopt this Policy as well.

SAFE GATHERINGS REQUIREMENTS

- Any individual, aged 18 and above, working directly with minors under the age of 18 must complete a safety training course and national background check through Safe Gatherings. All reports are kept confidential by Safe Gatherings.
- The Safe Gatherings training course, background check, and reference checks must be completed and the certificate secured BEFORE arriving at the event or activity where the adult is assisting. It is suggested that adults complete this training at least one month prior to the National Grange or Regional Grange event or activity.
- It is required that the Safe Gatherings training course be completed every two years.
- Participants must submit the certification email to: information@nationalgrange.org. The Safe Gatherings fee must be paid upfront. Reimbursement is provided by the National Grange by submitting proof of passing the course, payment receipt, and the National Grange ACH Form.
- The training can be found at <https://safegatherings.com>.

GUIDELINES and SAFE PRACTICES

When working with minors (youth under the age of 18) or organizing events in which minors are participants, the following guidelines shall be practiced.

General:

- All adults working directly with minors shall secure the Safe Gatherings certification.
- At all National Grange or Regional Grange events or activities, each State Grange must provide its own chaperone(s) for minors.
- There shall be a minimum of two unrelated, non-cohabitating adults present in all settings. Being alone with a child (other than your own) of any age is never appropriate.

- General “Rule of 3” – At least 3 people shall be present at any one time, whether it is youth together or adult chaperones with youth in and around the event or activity.
- Minors shall not be left unsupervised at any time.
- Adults shall use responsible behaviors. Adults shall not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while working with minors.

Health & Emergencies:

- Each year, minors (ages 0-17) shall have a completed National Grange Medical Permission Form on file with the National Grange prior to participation in any National Grange or Regional Grange event or activity. No adult can treat a child unless consent is given by a parent/guardian.
- At least one adult at the event shall be certified in CPR and First Aid to provide medical care within the scope of their certification. All treatments provided shall be logged and documented.
- In cases of emergency, the minor will be transported by at least two adults to the closest medical facility OR emergency services will be called. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the chaperones and leaders on site will continue trying to reach the parent/guardian and alternate contact while treatment is initiated.

Ages and Ratios:

- Adults working with minors shall be at least 18 years of age and at least five years older than the minors being supervised.
- A minimum of two unrelated, non-cohabitating adults with each group of minors is required with adult to minor ratios as follows:
 - High School – 2:10 (two adults per every 10 minors)
 - Elementary and Middle School – 2:8 (two adults per every 8 minors)

Driving and Travel Guidelines:

- No adult, unless a parent/guardian, shall transport a minor alone to and from events.
- No minor shall transport other minors, unless related, to and from events.

Rooming Guidelines:

- For overnight events: Minor participants shall be provided their own beds whenever possible and shall always room with participants of the same age range and gender or be provided with individual rooms. Minor participants shall only room with an adult (over the age of 18) if there is dormitory or cabin-style sleeping available and either another participant or two unrelated, non-cohabitating adults share the same space. Dormitory or cabin-style rooms shall house only one gender. Minor participants shall never sleep alone in a room with an adult, unless a parent/guardian.

- Sleeping rooms are only for the participants assigned to those rooms. Event leadership shall keep a written record of all individual participants by room.
- Sleeping rooms shall not be a gathering place for other participants.
- There shall be a process in place for a nightly check-in and assurance that all participants are in their assigned room for the night. Check-ins shall be done in person, not by message passed through another participant or by phone or text.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Each participant (minors, youth, and young adults) must sign the National Grange Code of Conduct each year prior to attending any National Grange or Regional Grange event or activity. Parents/guardians shall be given a copy. The National Grange Code of Conduct can be found on the National Grange website. Please submit completed National Grange Code of Conduct documents to youth@nationalgrange.org.



National Grange Code of Conduct

Grange Youth or Junior Grange Department participants must sign the National Grange Code of Conduct each year and submit it to the National Grange prior to attending any National Grange or Regional Grange event or activity.

As a Grange Youth or Junior Grange participant at any National Grange or Regional Grange event or activity, I will:

- Be curious to learn.
- Be knowledgeable about the history of the Grange and the current programs and contests of the various departments of the National Grange.
- Develop my potential for leadership, personal growth, and career success.
- Be respectful to self and others. Make a positive difference in the lives of others.
- Appreciate and promote diversity in our organization.
- Work to positively resolve problems or differences.
- Accept guidance from Grange leaders, staff, and volunteers.
- Follow program rules, curfews, dress codes, policies, and rules of the facility being used.
- Use appropriate language, exhibit good sportsmanship, and be a positive role model.
- Comply with local, state, and federal laws.
- Abstain from the use of alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco during any Grange event or activity.
- Fully participate in scheduled activities and orientations.
- Respect others' property and privacy rights.
- Abstain from bullying, harassment, hazing, and child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect).
- Refrain from all sexual activity/contact during any Grange event or activity.
- Accept personal responsibility for behavior including any financial damage.

Consequences for violating any part of this Code of Conduct may include, but are not limited to:

- Immediate removal from the Youth and Junior Grange Leadership Team, if applicable.
- Removal from participation in the event or activity in which the Code of Conduct has been violated (at the individual's expense).
- Forfeiture or repayment of financial support for the event or activity.
- Sanctions on participation in future Grange events and activities.
- It is the responsibility of all participants to reinforce this Code of Conduct and intervene when necessary to enforce the rules.

Member Name (printed): _____

Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

If the participant is under the age of 18, I have shared the National Grange Code of Conduct with my son, daughter, or ward. We have read, understand, and agree to the above.

Parent/Guardian Name (printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Accepted by the National Grange

Grange Officer Name (printed): _____

Grange Officer Signature: _____ Date: _____

National Grange Medical Permission Form

Please fill out this form COMPLETELY and provide as much medical information as you can for your child. This information will help ensure your child's well-being in case of a medical situation while attending a National Grange or Regional Grange event or activity.

You must fill out a separate form for each child.

ATTENDEE INFORMATION

Name of Attendee: _____ Birth Date: __ __ / __ __ / __ __ __ __

Attendee's gender assigned at birth/listed on medical insurance (circle): Male / Female

Physical Address, City, ST, ZIP: _____

Mobile Phone: _____ Receives Texts (circle): YES NO

Email: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Physical Address, City, ST, ZIP: _____

Mobile Phone: _____ Receives Texts (circle): YES NO

Email: _____

ALTERNATE CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Alternate Contact: _____

Relationship to Attendee: _____

Physical Address, City, ST, ZIP: _____

Mobile Phone: _____ Receives Texts (circle): YES NO

Email: _____

PHYSICIAN INFORMATION

Name of Physician/Pediatrician: _____

Physician Address, City, ST, ZIP: _____

Physician Phone: _____

INSURANCE AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

Insured (Policy Holder): _____ Policy #: _____

Insurance Carrier: _____ Group #: _____

Date of Last Tetanus Shot: _____

Known Allergies: _____

Health Restrictions: _____

Dietary Restrictions: _____

Medical Conditions: _____

PERMISSION FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT (EN LOCO PARENTIS CONSENT)

Although a physician may treat a life-threatening emergency without your consent, consent is required for treatment of any other problem. To prevent delay of treatment, designation of authority should be given to someone who has been chosen to care for your child. We will attempt to notify you before using this designation of authority.

As parent/guardian of the child named on this form, I certify that the bearer of this form has permission to authorize emergency medical care by attending physicians or others he or she may choose in the event of injury, ingestion, or illness. I give the National Grange permission to take my child to the doctor or hospital for emergency medical treatment, should it be needed.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

PHOTO RELEASE FORM

NATIONAL GRANGE



I hereby grant the Community, Pomona, State, or National Grange permission to use my likeness, or that of the minor named below, in a photograph or media representation, in any and all of its publications, including website entries, social media, printed materials, or other media currently existing or yet to exist, without payment or any other consideration.

I understand and agree that these materials will become the property of the Grange and will not be returned.

I hereby irrevocably authorize the Community, State, or National Grange to edit, alter, copy, display, distribute, or use in any other manner for the purposes of publicizing the Grange programs, events, website content, or for any other promotional or marketing purpose. In addition, I waive the right to inspect or approve the finished product, including printed or electronic copy, wherein my likeness appears. Additionally, I waive the right to royalties or other compensation arising or related to the use of the photograph.

I hereby release and forever discharge the Community, State, or National Grange from all claims, demands, and causes of action which I, my heirs, representatives, executors, administrators, or any other persons acting on my behalf or on behalf of my estate have or may have by reason of this authorization.

I am 18 years of age or older, and am competent to contract in my own name, **or** I have the legal right to sign for the minor named below. I have read this release before signing below and I fully understand the contents, meaning, and impact of this release.

(Authorized Signature)

(Date)

(Printed Name)

(Date)

(Name of Minor – Printed)

(Date)

(Minor's Date of Birth)