

# TENNESSEE 4-H CONGRESS

Tennessee 4-H Congress serves as a forum to crown the state winners in the Leadership and Citizenship projects as well as the State winners in the Speech Contest.

It also serves as a citizenship activity as it relates to state government. Each county selects delegates to attend that are designated as either Senators or Representatives. Delegates debate mock bills on the actual Senate and House floor, and meet with their state legislators.

## Location and Date

Tennessee 4-H Congress will be held at the Sheraton Downtown in Nashville. The hotel is within walking distance of the State Capitol Building, Legislative Plaza, the War Memorial Building and TSU Downtown. This event is generally held in late March or early April. Check the Region Calendar for the exact date.

## Eligibility

To be a delegate to Congress, the 4-H member must be either a 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grader who has never been to Congress as a delegate before. All delegates are required to write an essay prior to Congress. The Region will provide the essay winner a full scholarship to Congress. The State will also award the winner a \$50 savings bond. The theme for the essay will be given in the information sent to counties each year.

Winners in Citizenship, Leadership, and Public Speaking also win a scholarship to Congress. Winners can also serve as delegates if they qualify. Only delegates can run for office or vote in elections.

Honor Club membership is **not** required to be a Congress delegate. Only candidates for office are required to be Honor Club members.

## Proper Attire

Tennessee 4-H Congress is a “dress-up affair” for delegates and agents. Delegates will have the famous 4-H Congress sweater to wear which will require dress pants or skirt and ties for boys. **Agents and volunteer leaders attending should dress in professional attire as well.**

## Competition

Region winners in the speech contest, and, state finalists in the citizenship and leadership projects, will compete in their respective state contests at Congress. For more information on Public Speaking, see Contests. These members, along with the 4-H Performing Arts Group, will also produce the *Congress Citizenship Pageant*. They are required to arrive in Nashville a day early for rehearsal.

The Congress History Bowl will also take place during this event. Participants must have qualified for this event at the Region Congress Readiness Day. For more information on the History Bowl, see Contests and Achievement.

## **Officers**

Three officers will be elected during Congress: 4-H Congress Governor, Speaker of the House and Speaker of the Senate. Any delegate who attends Congress can run for one of the three offices providing they have been initiated into the State 4-H Honor Club. Any and only Representatives can run for Speaker of the Senate and Representatives only for Speaker of the House. A Region caucus is held on Sunday night to nominate a Region candidate for each office. For more information, see the section on State and Region Officers.

## **Cost and Quotas**

The cost for each delegate to attend Congress will be determined by the state each year. There will be no charge for winners and adult leaders (see Leader info below). Agents who are assigned will be required to pay for their room and be reimbursed through their normal expense report. Quotas are based on the Senior High enrollment in each county. As this number could change from year to year, quotas will be sent to the counties along with other Congress information each year.

## **Congress Readiness Day**

Each Region conducts a Congress Readiness Day to prepare delegates for their experiences at Congress. It is strongly recommended that each, delegate, volunteer, and assigned agent attend this event. Please refer to the regional calendar to find the date of the Congress Readiness Day in your Region.

## **Leaders**

The Regional Office strongly encourages each county to select an adult volunteer leader to attend 4-H Congress. There is no registration fee for leaders who have not attended Congress in the previous five years.

## **Legislative Visits**

Each county delegation is strongly encouraged to visit with their respective State Senators and Representatives while at Congress. These visits should be coordinated by the 4-H Agent prior to Congress. These visits are usually scheduled for Monday afternoon.

## **Staging**

Agents assigned to Staging will also be required to arrive at Congress one day earlier to assist in the production of the Congress Citizenship Pageant.