

# Abby Lance Attends Granite Girls State

By Abby Lance  
Granite Girls State

I spent the first week of my summer vacation at a program called Granite Girls State at Franklin Pierce College in Rindge. While it sure didn't feel like summer vacation, it was way more fun than I had imagined it would be!

Girl's State is a government/political program, sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary, solely for girls who have completed their junior year in high school. From the beginning it was fast paced and full of learning, but not at all in a school-like way.

Each girl is part of either the Federalist or Nationalist party, as well as living in either a town, city, or county (depending on her dorm room location) and a random district, one through five. The first order of business was to elect party officials and work on a platform. Each party was supposed to have five issues that would become the planks in their platforms.

Party unity was also very important. Both the Feds and the Nats made up cheers, which were used in the dining hall on occasion, as well as at the party rally on Wednesday.

After party caucuses we had our first guest speaker, the only male speaker we had all week. Senator Lou D'Allesandro, vice president of the New Hampshire Senate, spoke to us about his position and job in the senate.

Later that day we filed to run for town, city, or county positions, depending on where we "lived." We also had Senator Molly Kelly address us about the New Hampshire State Senate.

The next day we held elections for our local government positions and were instructed about what each level of government controls and how their meetings are held. Then we spent most of the day planning and executing mock meetings, which were very authentic and very, very funny. Our guest speaker that day was the Honorable Linda Foster, Deputy Speaker of the New Hampshire House of Representatives.

The next day we filed and had primaries for the state government positions: 12 senators, a governor, and five members of the governor's council, one from each district. We were addressed by the Deputy Attorney General of the State of New Hampshire, Anne Edwards. She spoke to us about her office and its role in government.

We had party meetings the rest of the day to plan for the party rally held

that night. Each party found a creative way to present their platforms, as well as their candidates for each position.

The Nationalists held a Miss Granite Girls State beauty pageant, in which each candidate was a participant and stood for one of their major platform issues.

The Federalists held a Spice Girls concert, in which each Spice had a different platform issue which she sang about.

Thursday was a big day with governor, council, and senate elections! After these results were announced, elections were held to elect President of the Senate, Speaker of the House – all the girls who had no other elected state government



Abby Lance ran for Granite Girls State Senate this year.

position were members of the House – and House and Senate attachés.

That night there was a beautiful inauguration for the governor, Megan Turner, and her council. All the girls dressed up and looked their finest.

Friday was perhaps the hardest day of the whole week. Each member of the Senate and House of Representatives had to write a bill and turn it in on Thursday night. On Friday morning the House and Senate were divided into committees with bills to discuss. After committee meetings were done, full House and Senate meetings were held. Each bill that was passed by one house was immediately sent over to the other to be discussed. In total six bills were sent to the governor and her council to either veto or pass.

We ended the week with a tearful graduation ceremony that included pomp, ceremony, speakers, and the awarding of several awards and scholarships. We were only together for a week, but it felt like we'd all known each other forever. I know some of the friends I made at Girls State I won't easily forget.

All in all it was a very fun, tiring, and informative week. I encourage any girl who has completed her junior year in high school to attend this program – especially if you're at all interested in politics.



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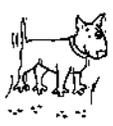
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