



JSA SUMMER PROGRAMS

RESIDENT ADVISOR JOB DESCRIPTION

At JSA Summer School, Resident Advisors (RAs) work closely with talented high school students, university faculty, the Summer School Director and fellow staff. They wear many hats, often simultaneously. Major responsibilities can be divided into six categories:

- **ACADEMICS • ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION • SUPERVISION • ROLE MODEL**
- **NON-PARTISAN ADVISOR • JSA CHEERLEADER**

In these roles, RAs gain a variety of skills and are integral to the success of the program. The Resident Advisor Internship is a full-time residential position. RAs should not make additional academic or employment commitments during the period of Summer School. Under the direction of the Summer School Director, training for the following responsibilities will take place during the week of Staff Orientation and in sessions throughout the summer.

1. ACADEMICS: Resident Advisors are responsible for providing academic counseling to Summer School participants. Many students struggle with the challenges of term paper writing, time management, and public speaking. Listening to students rehearse their first speeches, reading a first draft of a term paper, or helping a group review for a test - all fall within the framework of academic counseling. Of equal importance is the friendly word of advice. RAs should provide participants with hints on using the university library, studying, writing, and speaking in front of a group. This support will often make the difference in a student's success. Resident Advisors are not classroom teaching Advisors. They do not grade or proctor exams, and they do not critique Debate Workshop. However, RAs do guide students in their Debate Workshop research, listen to practice debates, and encourage students by sitting in on debates.

2. ADMINISTRATION/ORGANIZATION: Resident Advisors keep the Summer School running smoothly by performing a variety of administrative and organizational tasks. They staff the Summer School office from early morning until late at night. Office responsibilities include creating schedules, tests, and other handouts; copying assigned reading materials for professors (either in-house or commercially); answering phone calls from parents and vendors; purchasing and/or distributing copies of daily newspapers, as well as other tasks as needed. RAs also work closely with the Summer School Director to plan and organize student activities, including dances, the Talent Show and off-campus trips.

3. SUPERVISION: Resident Advisors are essential to the enforcement of Summer School rules of conduct. This role can be one of the most challenging and uncomfortable responsibilities for RAs, particularly if you have never held a supervisory position. However, RAs are expected to fully support and enforce the JSA Summer School rules. Reasonable rules include standards of personal behavior, rules that protect the group, and guidelines that protect the living environment. When rules are violated, Resident Advisors must intervene immediately and notify the Summer School Director. The penalties for violating serious rules vary. For some violations, students will be sent home. If the Summer School Director discovers that a Resident Advisor has not notified him/her of a serious violation, the Resident Advisor may be dismissed. Please note that any information another Resident Advisor or student may share with you cannot be considered confidential. If a student or RA wants to share information with you but demands confidentiality, you must decline. This policy protects you, the Summer School Director, and The Junior Statesmen Foundation. This rule will be among those discussed with the students on opening day.

4. ROLE MODEL: Resident Advisors are role models for Summer School students. Since they are successful, career-oriented adults, RAs can help students focus on their own goals in life. Therefore, Resident Advisors must behave in a manner fitting their position. They must obey the rules scrupulously and be above reproach. Just as important, Resident Advisors must be free of prejudice and should treat all students and fellow staff members with respect. They must work closely with students regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religious, cultural, or socioeconomic status. All forms of harassment, by students and staff, will not be tolerated. If Resident Advisors encounter harassment or bullying among students, they must counter it quickly with their own actions and persuasive discussion. The Summer School Director must also be notified to ensure that the problem is appropriately addressed.

Resident Advisors ARE NOT permitted to drink alcoholic beverages or use illegal drugs while they are employed by The Junior Statesmen Foundation. Also, RAs are not permitted to smoke in front of students, in any of our offices, or in Resident Advisor dorm rooms.

At Speakers Program activities, Resident Advisors are very important role models and supervisors. The speakers are our esteemed guests, and students should respect them by dressing appropriately, listening attentively and quietly, and posing thoughtful questions during the question and answer period. Resident Advisors should communicate the expectation of this behavior to the students verbally, as well as by example in their own dress and behavior.

5. NONPARTISAN ADVISOR: JSA Summer School is a political leadership program that attracts students who are highly political. We want you to use your time with Summer School students to help them become more aware of the diversity of politics. While the students are with us, we want them to discover the foundations of diverse political thought and explore where they fit in the political spectrum. We do not want to change their viewpoints; we want to help them develop and refine their own views. Resident Advisors are expected to encourage Summer School students to explore their own political and ideological convictions. Any attempts by Resident Advisors to push their own political agenda on Summer School students will not be tolerated.

6. JSA CHEERLEADER: Almost every Summer School Resident Advisor Intern has a prior association with the Junior State of America. Many are former State and Regional Officers. This is not a coincidence. JSA Summer School was founded to identify and train future JSA leaders. Resident Advisors provide a link to the organization. During Summer School, small group sessions on JSA will be held. Resident Advisors and current JSA officers will lead these discussions. In addition, Resident Advisors will be asked to include their JSA connections when they introduce themselves at Opening Session and during their remarks at Graduation. Throughout the program, Resident Advisors will have frequent opportunities to talk informally with students. At mealtimes, at the pool, on the bus, and in late night chats, Resident Advisors are encouraged to share their JSA memories with the students.

These six broad categories provide only an overview of the responsibilities of a Resident Advisor at a JSA Summer School. As you may recall as a former student, things can change in a moment's notice at a JSA Summer School. As a prospective Resident Advisor, it is important that you understand that RAs need to be flexible team players that approach the position with a good attitude. If you do so, we can assure you that your experience as a Resident Advisor Intern at a JSA Summer School will be as rewarding as your participation as a student.

All interested candidates should apply at: summer.jsa.org/ra-application

Questions? Please direct inquiries to JSA Summer Programs via e-mail: summer@jsa.org or call 800-334-5353.