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- Corrections
- Circulation Services

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- Ohio
- West Virginia
- National
- International

W.Va. politicians serve as guest instructors

By **MICHAEL D. McELWAIN**, Review Staff Writer

At the 2005 **Mountaineer Boys State** meeting, participants were given tips, suggestions and advice from one local politician and the state's governor.

At the week long event that took place June 12-18, West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin and Del. Joe DeLong (D-Hancock) both served as guest instructors.

"It's a unique privilege to be invited to participate in the Boys State program again this year," DeLong said, adding, "These young men have a clear vision for the future and have an energy that I find very refreshing to be around."

The meeting took place in Jackson's Mill located just outside of Weston, W.Va. Participants consisted of approximately 400 high school boys who completed their junior year. Students are chosen to attend the camp based on performance and by those who possess the skills needed to be future leaders.

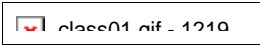


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According to DeLong, the emphasis of the camp is to teach future leaders about rights, privileges, duties and responsibilities of American citizenship.

Some of those responsibilities and duties carry over to to the staff of volunteers as well.

"Many of the Boys State staff are using their only summer vacation time to work with these young men. They do it year after year. That ought to give people some type of indication of just how special this program and its participants really are," DeLong said.

As part of a long tradition, the state governor visited the camp. Manchin used the opportunity to speak to the group about the importance of participation in government.

This year marked the 68th session of **Mountaineer Boys State** which originally formed in 1936. It is now the second oldest Boys State class in the nation.

To date, the **Mountaineer Boys State** program has graduated nearly 20,000 young men from all across West Virginia.

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