

## *Hello School Sponsors and SROs!*

We hope you and a team of your students will join YOVASO for the annual Summer Leadership Retreat where leaders from across the state will come together to learn how to be traffic safety advocates for their school and community. The Retreat will be held at James Madison University on July 11-14, 2024.

The Retreat is looking for student leaders, rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders to graduating seniors, who are positive role models among their peers and believe in the importance of making smart choices when it comes to driver and passenger safety. The student(s) should be in good standing with their school, be comfortable working with a diverse team of students from other localities, and be able to actively participate in full days of indoor and outdoor hands-on activities, classroom workshops and presentations, and team building projects. A tentative Retreat agenda will be posted on the YOVASO website by March 15.

The 2024 Retreat promises four days of exciting, motivational, and educational activities to prepare you and your students to lead effective YOVASO safe driving programs in your school and/or community. Students who have a learner's or driver's license will also have the opportunity to participate in the B.R.A.K.E.S. Behind the Wheel Defensive Driving experience (<https://putonthebrakes.org/curriculum>) if they are one of the first 60 to register for the session. We will be transporting all students on JMU buses to Manheim in Harrisonburg, about 5 miles from campus, for this program and other retreat activities. There will also be two sessions exclusively for adult sponsors and SROs during the Retreat, including a session called **Being T.H.E.R.E - Five Ways to Actively Engage Young People**, led by Motivational Speaker Shaun Derek; and a Group Panel Discussion led by parents who have lost a teen and a young driver involved in a fatal crash.

The four-day, three-night retreat includes overnight accommodations, meals, educational/hands on sessions, and materials. The price for each participant is only \$15 or school/youth group teams may register for a reduced fee (see below). The dorm rooms, meeting rooms, and activity areas are all located on the east side of JMU and provide a safe environment for all participants.

Per JMU and YOVASO requirements, background checks will be conducted on all Adult Sponsors and Retreat Staff 18 years or older. Information is on the Retreat registration form for the completion of the background checks.

### Registration:

**Each school or youth group may register a team of up to 6 students\* and at least 1 adult advisor.** An adult advisor/SRO must attend with each student team, participate in all retreat activities and club planning sessions, and serve as chaperones for the students. Registered schools and youth groups will be allowed to sign up additional students if the retreat is not full by the deadline. We suggest you keep a waiting list of interested students and their completed registration forms in case space is available. Students and adults are required to stay overnight in the dorms. (\* The 6 students do not include Retreat Youth Leaders from your school.)

Registration forms are attached and can also be downloaded from the [website](#). Adult advisors and SROs who would like to register online should complete the [Adult Registration Form](#). Students may also register online by completing the [Student Registration Form](#). Registration forms not completed online should be mailed to YOVASO/VSP Public Relations Office at P.O. Box 27472, Richmond, VA 23261.

### Registration Fee:

**YOVASO will be charging a small fee for retreat participants.** This fee helps to offset the cost of retreat materials that aren't funded by our grant and increase attendance accountability for those who register. The fee also helps fund the

cost of retreat t-shirts, backpacks, and lanyards; and helps recover some of the dorm room and meal costs for any no shows. **Note: Payment refunds will only be given for cancellations made prior to the June 21 deadline.**

- **Cost of Registration: \$15 per person or \$75 for a team of 6 students and 1 adult sponsor.**
- **FINAL REGISTRATION DEADLINE: June 21.**

*\* Retreat Youth Leaders will not be charged a Retreat fee.*

#### **Payment Details:**

**Note - School sponsors should provide instructions to students and parents on how to submit the registration fee, with specific instructions on whether the student's fee is turned into you, or a check mailed directly to YOVASO.**

Please refer to the adult and student registration forms for more specific information on payment and an address to mail your payment, if applicable.

#### **Registration Confirmation:**

If registration is completed online, you will be notified via the email you provided that your registration was received. For payment, follow instructions above.

**All registered participants will receive final retreat packets in late June with maps, directions, packing list, and other retreat details.**

Please encourage your students to join us for this exciting Retreat and share the information with fellow teachers, churches and other youth groups in your community. This is an excellent opportunity for students to gain leadership skills, train for peer-to-peer work, and learn key behaviors and skills for safer and more responsible driving.

If you have any questions about the retreat or registration, please call me at (804) 512-4573 or email me at [molly.jackson@vsp.virginia.gov](mailto:molly.jackson@vsp.virginia.gov).

YOVASO looks forward to seeing your school and youth club at the retreat this summer!

Sincerely,

Molly Jackson, YOVASO Marketing and Training Coordinator

Enclosures:

- Retreat Flyer
- Student Registration Form (email [molly.jackson@vsp.virginia.gov](mailto:molly.jackson@vsp.virginia.gov) to request print copies)  
*In an effort to save paper, we recommend registering online at [www.yovaso.org](http://www.yovaso.org) (click on Retreats tab)*
- Adult Registration Form

