


YOUTH DRONE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM



The City of Laurel is proud to announce that we are now accepting applications for our first cohort of students for the **Youth Drone Certificate Program** in October 2025. This innovative initiative, launched in partnership with Alpha Drones USA, Incorporated, will empower Laurel's youth to gain cutting-edge skills in the rapidly growing field of drone technology.

The program offers high school students, between the ages of 16-18, the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with drones, learn about aviation regulations, and earn their Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) drone pilot certification. This certification is designed to prepare graduates of the program for careers in aerial photography, surveying, public safety, and more.

To be eligible for the program, applicants **MUST**:

- Be a **resident of the City of Laurel, Maryland**
- Be between **16 and 18 years old**
- Be **currently enrolled in high school** as a:
 - a. Sophomore (10th grade)
 - b. Junior (11th grade)
 - c. Senior (12th grade)
- Have a strong interest in **aviation, drones, public safety, or STEM-related careers**
- Be available to **attend all scheduled training sessions**
- Submit a **completed application package**, which includes:
 - a. Application form (*handwritten or electronic*)
 - b. One-page personal statement
 - c. Letter of recommendation from a teacher, counselor, or mentor
 - d. Proof of residency (*parents/guardians name utility bill, school record, or government ID*)

Deadline to Apply: September 15, 2025 @ 12noon
Submit completed applications to: laurelmayor@laurel.md.us

Application Evaluation Guide



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS (UP TO 20 POINTS)

- 20 points: Meets all program eligibility criteria
- 10 points: Missing one eligibility item
- 0 points: Missing two or more eligibility items



PERSONAL STATEMENT (UP TO 25 POINTS)

- 25 points: Clearly communicates motivation, goals, and interest in drones or aviation
- 15 points: Demonstrates interest but lacks clarity or detail
- 5 points: Weak, vague, or incomplete submission



LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION (UP TO 15 POINTS)

- 15 points: Strong letter with specific examples of the applicant's potential
- 10 points: General support with limited detail
- 5 points: Minimal or non-specific letter



INTERVIEW PERFORMANCE (UP TO 25 POINTS)

(IF INTERVIEWS ARE CONDUCTED)

- 25 points: Demonstrates excellent communication, enthusiasm, and preparedness
- 15 points: Responds adequately with moderate engagement
- 5 points: Minimal effort or unclear responses



COMMITMENT AND AVAILABILITY (UP TO 15 POINTS)

- 15 points: Fully committed and available for all training sessions
- 10 points: Minor scheduling concerns
- 5 points: Uncertain or limited availability



FINAL SELECTION PROCESS:

The applicant with the highest total score in each grade category (Sophomore, Junior, Senior) will be selected for the program. Alternates may be selected in the event that a top candidate becomes ineligible or withdraws from the program.



TIE-BREAKER CONSIDERATIONS:

In the event of a tie, the following factors may be considered:

- Length of residency in the City of Laurel
- Level of community involvement or volunteer service
- Representation of an underrepresented group in aviation or STEM fields

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Application & Parent/Guardian Consent

To complete this form electronically, please visit: www.cityoflaurel.org/ydcp. If handwriting, please print clearly in black ink. Save your file as LastName_FirstName_YDCP_Applicant.pdf. Attach all required documents and email to laurelmayor@laurel.md.us. Use the subject line: YDCP Application - [Your Name]

Section 1: Applicant Information

Full Name: _____

Home Address (Must be in City of Laurel): _____

Applicant Phone Number: _____

Applicant Email Address: _____

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____ Age: _____

Current Grade Level: Sophomore (10th) Junior (11th) Senior (12th)

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

Section 2: Parent/Guardian Information

Parent/Guardian Full Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Emergency Contact (if different): _____

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Section 3: Personal Statement (Required)

Please attach a typed, one-page personal statement (250–500 words) answering the following: Why are you interested in participating in the City of Laurel Youth Drone Certificate Program? What do you hope to learn or accomplish, and how will this opportunity help you in the future?

Section 4: Recommendation Letter (Required)

Attach one letter of recommendation from a teacher, counselor, coach, mentor, or community leader who can speak to your character, work ethic, and interest in technology or aviation.

Section 5: Proof of Residency (Required)

Please submit one of the following as proof of City of Laurel residency (check one):

- Utility bill with guardian’s name and Laurel address
- Report card or school record with Laurel address
- State ID with Laurel address
- Other: _____

Section 6: Student Commitment Statement

By signing below, I affirm that the information provided is true and accurate. I understand that if selected, I am committing to participate fully in the training sessions and activities facilitated by Alpha Drones USA, Incorporated.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submit Application:

Save your file as LastName_FirstName_YDCP_Applicant.pdf. Attach all required documents and email to laurelmayor@laurel.md.us. Use the subject line: YDCP Application – [Your Name]

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