

Justin Chan, DE -- 2018

The great senator Angus King once said that “we have two ears and one mouth, we should listen more than we should speak.” The humbling remark was my attitude during my one-week journey with 103 other delegates. Not only did we hear from speakers such as John Lewis, Associate Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch and the Librarian of Congress, but also the ideas and remarks of our fellow delegates. Spanning from around the United States and around the globe, there was a maturation of my views of the world because of the new perspectives from others that enlightened how others see the issues that concern them as well, and their impacts on their communities.

Throughout our tours from Mount Vernon to the Pentagon, we were blessed with the knowledge and heritage of our nation. This event has also allowed me to reflect on the simple sacrifices that everyone has made to the development of this nation, from the noble farmer to the great industrialist, the creation of our nation was built upon the works of everyone from different statuses, cultures, and backgrounds. The U.S. Senate Youth Program helped promote this by bringing all peoples of the highest merit and skill, but more important of different experiences that truly immerse you into the understanding that America is for all and is the melting pot of the United States.

I now have a new gained respect for the environment due to one of the fellow delegates, Brian Conwell who addressed the problems in Alaska, or the other viewpoints regarding banking regulation from my co-delegate from Delaware, Vyshnavi Kosigishroff. With more controversial topics such as gun control and immigration, I have listened to the stories and experiences of fellow delegates, connected them with their pathos, and was extremely proud for their stance on what they believed, whether I had disagreed or not.

On a more personal note, this was one of the few times that I had to interact with students at the same or exceptional caliber than I had witnessed back at home. Due to this, I was more than humbled to just listen rather than speak for most of the program as a choice. I felt it was more necessary to understand the viewpoints of others than just the experiences of kid that lived from the eastern seaboard for his entire life. I leave with a remark that my father once told me from Lao Tzu such that, “those who know do not speak. Those who speak do not know.” I implore those who take on the challenges and experiences that this program envelops on them, to be humbled and listen to the knowledge and experiences that others have, to take them in, and finally to understand that we all are in this world together for the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.