

Providence Andrews, IL – 2019

USSYP

When I first heard that I was going to receive the United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) scholarship, I was completely overwhelmed and excited. The program is such an incredible opportunity and I was actually going to be a part of it, but I was also afraid. All the delegates are extremely intelligent and involved and they were so above my caliber. I immediately felt that I would not belong and that I would feel isolated among so many amazing people; however, when I arrived it felt like all of us were greeting each other as friends.

The week was so amazing. We got to interact with so many kind speakers who were proud to be there and speak with us. Oftentimes as high schoolers, I think we get ignored and looked over because of our age, but during the week people were actually interested in our perspectives and opinions. The Military Mentors were so happy to share their stories of how they ended up in the service and where they wish to go in their future.

All the venues were fantastic and the food was wonderful. Going to Arlington was so sobering to see the graves of so many men and women who have given their life for their country. Going to the Library of Congress I could not help but gape at the architecture and incredible mosaics. This program has given me the chance to see so many things that I don't think I ever would have without it. I can only give my thanks to the Hearst Foundations, USSYP staff, and my fellow delegates for giving me an experience that I will never forget.