

## **David Fillmore, NM – 2019**

Popular sovereignty is only effective in as much as we participate. When we do not engage in this unique opportunity, we willingly forfeit our country's blessings and admit into our democracy the predatory ideals of oppression. In an incredible system of checks and balances, the check the people hold over elected officials is perhaps the most important. It is incumbent upon us, as indelibly marked in the Constitution, that we the people are the last stand. Politicians reflect our policies if we show them what we demand. We can vote out bad leaders, vote in good ones, and directly impact the inner workings of our government. We have to be aware. The key is being knowledgeable, educated in our decision making. Should we shirk our responsibility, we would be failing our country.

From the president of the United States who handles every moment with aplomb, to the sanguine secretary of Urban Development we have met with and corresponded with some of the most respected leaders in the world. Serious discussions of how to serve our countrymen were sparked, these conversations are how we learn, how we grow ourselves to fulfill our responsibilities.

The 2019 United States Senate Youth Program was an opportunity that has fundamentally altered the course of youth across the country, and these youth have already begun to influence the country itself. This program will propel the leaders of tomorrow into a place better than those in their shoes years before. This is how we improve, this is how we develop. It is well known that history is doomed to repeat unless a society educates the younger generation. We as a nation have progressed the way we have because we have been willing to teach and educate, but in politics there is a massive hole for real youth experiences.

The Senate Youth Program is one of a kind in this regard. The program builds with an eye to the future, which is really all we have. Progress, change, improvement, all would be impossible without understanding of the past. This program works, it already has. Senator Collins, for example, would not be the prestigiously successful woman she is now if not for her participation in the program as a youth. An in-depth understanding of the Senate, the federal government, and the relationship between our three branches of government is what is needed. It will come from the Giants, then it will come from us.