

## Alex Wong, NV — 2021

When I first learned that I had made it through the rigorous selection process to be named a United States Senate Youth Program Delegate from Nevada, it was thrilling. I knew immediately that I had a very special opportunity to absorb and learn from a program steeped in history.

The fact that the 2021 Washington Week made history, being the first online program in all the years of USSYP made it all the more remarkable. I'm incredibly grateful to everyone at USSYP who put together a program that featured some of our nation's most distinguished citizens; messages from President Biden, to Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, to CBS anchor Norah O'Donnell, astronaut Scott Kelly, and my military mentor, Major Martin just to name a few.

I will always be extremely honored and will forever remember being given the opportunity to ask Dr. Anthony Fauci a question during his session with us. I asked him, "What do you think is the most important thing my generation can learn from this pandemic?" Dr. Fauci answered, "The importance of being in a difficult situation, and the importance of *working together* to get out of it." He went on to say that we've been challenged with a pandemic the likes of which have not been seen in more than 100 years and that when you're fighting a common enemy, yet also fighting with each other, the common enemy will win.

This pandemic that we've all been through together might well be the defining moment in history for my generation. Having the privilege of being involved in the USSYP program, I'm grateful to have met and learned from youth leaders and esteemed leaders from around the nation. I'm inspired by the experience and believe its impact on me will be lasting.

I'm very grateful to the Senators from Nevada, Senator Cortez Masto and Senator Rosen and most especially the Hearst Foundation, the United States Senate, and all of those who've contributed to making Washington Week and the USSYP 2021 program so incredibly meaningful and amazing.