

Trevor Tobey, TX – 2022

Washington Week was amazing in many ways from hearing from top officials in our government to meeting some of the most intelligent people across our country. Speakers like Senator Cory Gardner, Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy, and Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta were truly inspiring. However, the most significant insight I gained this week was best synthesized by Senate Historian Dr. Betty Koed when she said “failure doesn’t mean it’s the end of the story. Failure means you try again.” Washington Week was one of the best weeks of my life because of the insightful lessons I learned, and the wonderful friendships that were formed.

People (including me) often view government as a system of bureaucrats championed by heartless politicians who are constantly pursuing power rather than serving their constituents. While I will not lie and tell you that Washington Week totally transformed this view, I will admit, that this week humanized my view of what government is all about. I learned from all sides of the aisle that hope is important, love is boundless, and service is the backbone of a life in politics. These lessons reassured my desire to serve and make a difference in my community and my country. I enjoyed exploring the crux of every branch of government, hearing from experts in their fields, and gaining first-hand knowledge of the complexities that drive public policy in our country. One of my favorite activities this year, where I learned the most, was in the diplomacy simulator guided by the state department. I was on the delegation of Egypt, and it was wonderful learning all of the needs, negotiations, and personalities that drive diplomacy on a world stage.

However, even more important than the lessons I learned along the way, are the friendships that will last a lifetime. I met some of the most intriguing people from across our country who held so many diverse yet defensible views on every aspect of public policy. My favorite part of this week was my military mentor group. I was in the best group known as the Grizzle Bears led by Captain Catherine Grizzle, and we had so many interesting discussions where we explored areas like education, housing, and federalism. I am team Grizzle Bears for life, and this week would not have been the same if it was not driven by some amazing delegates and a wonderful leadership team that guided and planned this week. Whether it was staying up late debating policy, or simply learning about what other delegates are doing to give back to their communities, this week formed bonds that are driven by a joint interest in making our world a better place. Among this group, I was elected most likely to become President of the United States, and I hope to live up to that title.

Washington Week was full of education, memories, and bonds that I will never forget. I am thrilled to be a part of a group that will truly change the course of world history, and I look forward to seeing what our generation will do to address the pressing challenges that face our country today.