

Sagar Raghavan, PA – 2026

“What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?” - Mary Oliver (and Brian Kamoie)

About a month ago, I was posed this same question, as I had the honor of attending the United States Senate Youth Program as one of Pennsylvania's 2 delegates. The program involved a scholarship and a week in DC: the well-known "Washington Week." I entered confused about what it meant to serve the common good and the balance I could strike with my own ego—how can we choose between *our* goals for an ideal world and the "correct" path we need to take to serve *the people*? I would come to learn a quite bit about this topic over the course of just 7 days.

During the week in DC, I had the opportunity of a lifetime to network with 104 other like-minded peers; get great mentorship from military officers like Army Ranger Major Sprouse and Navy SEAL Lieutenant Commander Jordan Spector; meet with one of Pennsylvania's Senators, Dave McCormick; and hear from a variety of speakers, including former Maryland State Delegate Mark Shriver, Nevada Policy Official Evan Gong, and Senator Ed Markey of Massachusetts.

Of all the speakers, however, the one who stood out most to me was Brian Kamoie, whom I had the honor of introducing. Mr. Kamoie's background in the government, especially working in FEMA, was fascinating! What stood out more, though, was his asking us *that one question*. "What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

And it got me thinking. One wild and precious life.

What is it that I plan to do? I've always had my mind set on impacting the world in some way, living a life that fulfills my need for a legacy. But how does that uplift others? I'm often found obsessed with living my life the way I want to live it, and public service comes second. But if we have one life—only this one—then I can't put one first, because the other's time may never come. So how can I balance my values with the world's? The question sat in my mind through the rest of that week.

As we traversed DC and gained deeper and deeper knowledge about the public space, I kept asking myself this same question. We heard countless times how much we, as youth, need to act in order to protect our democracy, serve the public, and truly make waves in our world. I left Washington Week inspired, but still confused.

Now, three weeks after leaving DC, I'm still thinking about that same question. And I have an answer (for now, anyways): impact comes in a number of ways. From finance to healthcare, we can always make a change. I believe that if we all strive to make impacts in some tangible way, our "more perfect union" can form on its own. That's my working theory, anyway—I'm tweaking my vision for my life and the future every day. I'm not sure I'll find my perfect answer anytime soon, but I do know one thing: we have one wild and precious life. It's up to us to decide what to do with it.