

Azeem Khan, WV – 2019

I find it extremely difficult to explain how incredible the United States Senate Youth Program is and the impact it has had on my life. The speakers we were able to listen to, the buildings which we were able to walk in, and the monuments we witnessed firsthand were all incredible. Among all these amazing experiences, none could compare to the people we spent all this time with. My fellow delegates were truly inspiring. In a time where politics seems to be so divisive and partisan, they showed that we can passionately disagree on issues but understand that we both want what we believe is best for the country. We got to see people who may agree or disagree with politically but are doing what they believe is best for the country. Across the political spectrum, they all emphasized to us that public service is a truly noble calling. I know that I will certainly keep this close in mind for the rest of my life.

Another incredible aspect of the program was our Military Mentors. These men and women are truly inspiring. They were some of the most amazing people that I've ever met. I know that many of my fellow delegates including myself were also inspired by our Military Mentors' commitment to serve our country and defend us all. We are forever grateful for that and all the guidance that they gave us over the week. This is a part of the program that cannot be appreciated until you get to meet these people who are so real, but take on such important jobs for our country.

Of all the places we went, the one that was the most special to me was the Kennedy Caucus Room. I thought about how decades ago two of my heroes, President John F. Kennedy and Senator Robert F. Kennedy both launched their presidential campaigns from there in 1960 and 1968 respectively. Imagining all the history that had taken place in that room and the giants who had walked in that room was an amazing moment for me. It helped me realize that these figures weren't giants, but men and women of this country who made the most of their opportunities. I can't wait to see what my fellow delegates do to change the world and I'm proud to call them my friends. I hope that one day we too will make the most of our opportunities, whatever they are, to do our part to make this a more perfect Union.