

## **Daisy Farrell, AL – 2021**

As Senior Class president, I am tasked with finding our class motto to be said during graduation. The one saying that has frequented my mind is “Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.” Originally, I thought those moments in my life hadn’t happened yet because I had not visited the wonders of the world or gone on a tropical vacation. I would have never guessed that Washington Week would be full of those moments that take my breath away, but it was. Those memorable moments included speeches from the distinguished guests: Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, Norah O’Donnell, and Dr. Anthony Fauci.

It isn’t often that American citizens are afforded the opportunity to question a Supreme Court Justice, but I earned this once in a lifetime opportunity. It was enlightening to hear that the people appointed to the highest court in the land also see the human dimensions of the cases before them. Also, Justice Thomas opened his talk by telling us the importance of dreams. Dreams are often discouraged when you are from small towns like McIntosh, Alabama and Pinpoint, Georgia.

It is safe to say that the lessons that Norah O’Donnell taught us from writing handwritten thank you notes to never fear those who fear you will stay with me for the rest of my life. While she was explaining the importance of reporting facts and her adventures while being a journalist, I began to think about a career in journalism. Before Washington Week, I was set on a career path in health policy. Now, I am standing on the precipice of unlimited possibilities as the entire world lays at my feet.

Be that as it may, Dr. Fauci, who has been one of the leading physicians during the pandemic, spoke before Norah O’Donnell about how he also had uncertainties when he was younger. Additionally, he profoundly stated that he is modest enough to know he doesn’t have all the answers. I don’t have all the answers either, but Washington Week has equipped me with the tools to know that finding the answers is all part of life.

In our opening ceremony, Ms. Rayne Guilford quoted President Barack Obama when he stated that we have the audacity of hope. Hope that there will be a better tomorrow through the future of this country’s youth. The United States Senate Youth Program has been the vessel of that hope for me. It was an honor to serve as one of the 2021 Alabama delegates, and I hope that one day I can give this program as much as it has given me.