

Eman Massoud, AZ - 2021

USSYP Washington Week Reflection

Some would say waking up at 6:00 AM every morning during one's spring break is a hassle. The difference between them and me would be what I'm waking up for. The United States Senate Youth Program Washington Week was a new experience for me. I have no idea how to explain how thankful I am to have gotten the opportunity to participate.

I have grown so fond of my Military Mentor group, and Major McClain. Something I wasn't expecting was to connect with everyone so quickly but what a pleasant surprise. I'd never spoken to most of my fellow delegates in the personal Zoom calls so I was nervous about what to expect. Thankfully everyone was very open and welcoming. The conversations that went on during those breaks are ones I'll never forget. I gained a different opinion and true discussion every day when we gathered. Watching my fellow delegates from all over the states ask questions to famous speakers or ordinary conversation in zooms kept me in awe. I'd never met people as distinguished as them.

Never in my lifetime would I have thought, "Today I'll be listening to Justice Thomas speak," or "I think I should ask Norah O'Donnell a question?" This program has provided me with a better understanding of who I'd like to be and the connections I want to make. The light-hearted laughter my fellow delegates shared is something I hope to hear in real life. I'm utterly thankful to all the organizers and the tech team for making such an important program accessible during this pandemic. Even though, every time a classmate asks me how the program went and I reply with "Just wow," I hope people know I'm just shocked. I'm impressed by the organization, speakers, delegates, conversation and unity. I can't say how honored and thankful I am to be a part of something so special. This entire program will always have a lasting effect on me.