

Kyla Trotter, NV – 2022

My United State Senate Youth Program experience was truly unforgettable. From meeting talented delegates, hearing from important officials, and conversing with my senators, this program has given me so many one-of-a-kind opportunities.

After acceptance into the program, the coordinators enabled all the delegates to connect before the program. This has led to some truly iconic and memorable interactions and conversations; I have never been able to meet such a diverse group of ambitious people before, so this was very refreshing. It was exciting to see new perspectives during our Military Mentor group discussions ranging from favorite foods to pressing societal issues. I have no doubt that all of the delegates will continue to do remarkable things and make a positive impact on our world.

During Washington Week, I got to hear from some notable leaders and even ask a few questions. One of the speakers that made clear to me the significance of this program was Justice Anthony Kennedy. One of the delegates asked him what his most memorable case was, and he ultimately responded that it was *Texas v. Johnson*. Learning about this case a few months ago in my AP government class and now getting to hear from one of the justices that presided over the case, put this once-in-a-lifetime experience into perspective. Also, getting to hear from NATO's Ms. Carmen Romero and UN Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield was enlightening during this time of global crisis.

The final day of the program was the highlight of my Washington Week experience. As someone interested in technology, its societal impacts, and its world-changing potential hearing from the FCC Chairwoman and the USCYBERCOM Chief of Staff was particularly engaging. Major General Isaacson gave a talk that was both insightful and technical. I learned more about the USCYBERCOM division and the defense this division provides both domestically and abroad. Major General Isaacson gave thorough answers to our questions about cybersecurity's far-reaching importance, especially regarding the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the increasing prevalence of cyberattacks. He also emphasized the importance of building partnerships and networks that are critical for our future success as leaders and offered life advice that I know will be helpful as my fellow delegates and I branch out into the world. Major General Isaacson's assurance and demonstration that there are many paths to public service have reinforced my desire to serve through a career in technology. Following up that speech with the Deputy White House Climate Advisor Zaidi's presentation allowed me to gain deeper insight into what actions are being taken to fight global warming. My goals are to research and develop technologies that can move us toward a more sustainable future, so these discussions will help me as I explore the intersection between these fields.

Finally, I met with both Nevada senators, Senator Cortez Masto and Senator Jacky Rosen. They were both welcoming of questions and enthusiastic to speak with me and my co-delegate; I am very grateful that they were able to make time to speak with us and share some life lessons they have learned during their careers in public service.

Although Washington Week was online this year, I believe the connections I have made will remain strong, and the lessons I have learned will stay with me well into my future. Thank you to all the speakers, delegates, and coordinators for making this an incredible experience.