

## Daniel Hadi, OR – 2023

The great seal of the United States is a unique symbol of our country and national identity. In 1782, our founding fathers adopted the great seal with a bald eagle bearing an olive branch in its left talon and clutching thirteen arrows in its right talon. In front of the eagle stands a shield composed of thirteen stripes and on top of the eagle, there is a crest with thirteen stars. Often forgotten is what the eagle clutches in its beak: a scroll with the motto *E Pluribus Unum*, which means “Out of Many, One.” This is the powerful motto of the United States of America. Out of many diverse groups of people, one nation emerges.

The phrase *E Pluribus Unum* can be traced back to Cicero's *De Officiis*, specifically his discussion of family and social bonds as the basis of societies. Cicero states, "When each person loves the other as much as himself, it makes one out of many."

Serving as a delegate to the 61<sup>st</sup> United States Senate Youth Program has been the honor of a lifetime. In a world where political demagoguery is rewarded with televised news segments and viral five second clips, it is easy to forget our individual responsibility to promote mutual understanding and respect between people of different political beliefs. Through the generosity of The Hearst Foundations and the United States Senate Youth Program, 104 young changemakers within their respective communities were given an opportunity like no other—to connect, learn from, and engage in dialogue with dozens of our nation’s current and future leaders. The Senate Youth Program gave us the opportunity to practice *E Pluribus Unum* and uplift bipartisan civic engagement.

From eating dinner next to the Constitution in the Rotunda of the National Archives to speaking with General Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Senate Youth Program was a portal into every outlet of federal public service, whether it be in the executive, legislative, judicial, or military. In this “Olympics of public service” strangers became best friends all while learning about how the government can be used as a tool to change lives.

The United States is home to over 300 million people, from different races, ethnicities, genders, religions, and political affiliations. The Senate Youth Program reminded me that despite these differences, we remain one nation united under one flag.