



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TWO OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM EACH STATE
WILL BE AWARDED A \$10,000 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP AND ATTEND AN IMMERSIVE ONLINE
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM WITH THE NATION'S TOP GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

September 23, 2020, WASHINGTON, D.C. — The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) is pleased to announce that the state departments of education nationwide have begun their annual selection processes for the upcoming **Washington Week ONLINE** which will be held in a fully virtual format for the 2021 program year. 104 student delegates will be chosen to meet their U.S. senators and other government leaders during the comprehensive online experience to be held March 14 — 18, 2021, for the program's 59th annual Washington Week.

The USSYP was created by Senate Resolution 324 in 1962 as stated in supporting Senate testimony from that year, "to increase young Americans' understanding of the interrelationship of the three branches of government, the caliber and responsibilities of federally elected and appointed officials, and the vital importance of democratic decision making not only for America but for people around the world."

Each year, this extremely competitive merit-based program brings two high school juniors and seniors from every state, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity, to Washington, D.C. for an intensive week-long study of the federal government and its leaders. The state departments of education throughout the country select the students through a rigorous nomination and selection process. Each student will also receive a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship, with encouragement to continue coursework in history, government and public affairs. The Hearst Foundations have fully funded and administered the program since inception; no government funds are utilized.

Senator James Lankford of Oklahoma will serve as the 2021 USSYP Republican Co-Chair and Senator Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin will serve as the 2021 Democratic Co-Chair. The full USSYP Senate Advisory Committee consists of: the vice president of the United States and the Senate majority and minority leaders who annually serve as the program's Honorary Co-Chairs; two senators, one from each party, serve as acting Co-Chairs who each have keynote speaking roles, and an eight-member bipartisan senate panel, four senators from each party, who lend their names in support. Serving on the Advisory Committee for the upcoming program are: Senator Richard Burr of North Carolina, Senator Kevin Cramer of North Dakota, Senator Mike Lee of Utah, Senator Roger F. Wicker of Mississippi, Senator Thomas R. Carper of Delaware, Senator Christopher S. Murphy of Connecticut, Senator Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, and Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon. Military officers who serve as elite chaperones and mentors to the student delegates throughout the week are also competitively selected through the Office of the Secretary of Defense, representing one of the longest standing partnerships between a national youth program and the Department of Defense.

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USSYP 2021 Washington Week ONLINE Announcement

In addition to outstanding leadership abilities and a strong commitment to volunteer work, the student delegates generally rank academically in the top one percent of their states among high school juniors and seniors. Alumni of the program continue to excel and develop impressive qualities that are often directed toward public service. Among the many distinguished alumni are: Senator Susan Collins, the first delegate to be elected U.S. senator; Senator Cory Gardner, the second alumnus to be elected U.S. senator and the first to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives; former Chief Judge Robert Henry, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit; former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie; former mayor of South Bend, Indiana and presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg; former Ambassador to West Germany Richard Burt, and former presidential advisors Thomas "Mack" McLarty and Karl Rove. Additional notables include former Lt. Governor of Idaho David Leroy, Wake Forest University Provost Rogan Kersh, military officers, members of state legislatures, Foreign Service officers, top congressional staff, healthcare providers and university educators.

The program agenda routinely includes meetings with senators, the president, Cabinet secretaries, a justice of the Supreme Court, senior members of the national media and other key policymakers. Each speaking event incorporates lengthy and detailed question and answer sessions that are closed to the media. This high-level exposure is precisely what fuels and sustains the delegates' commitment to making a difference in their country, communities, and schools.

The delegate selection is administered by each state's chief school officer in cooperation with high school principals. Delegates must be juniors or seniors and elected or appointed student officers for the 2019-2020 or the 2020-2021 academic year. **Due to COVID-19, students who are unable to serve in qualifying leadership positions for the 2020-2021 academic year may use positions held in the previous year, as verified by the state selection administrator,** and they must reside in the state where they attend school. Eligibility considerations may also be made for student representatives elected or selected (by a panel, commission or board) to district, regional or state-level civic or educational organizations where the delegate is serving a constituency in a high-level leadership position for the entire academic year.

Names of students selected will be formally announced in early February 2021. Interested students should contact their high school principal, school counselor, history or government teachers or the selection administrator for their state. Application deadlines vary by state, and specific information can be located on the state-by-state drop-down menu on the USSYP website.

The 2021 program brochure with detailed rules and additional information about the selection process may be accessed on the USSYP website www.ussenateyouth.org.

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