



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

August 3, 2022 — The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) is pleased to announce that the state departments of education nationwide have begun the selection processes for the **61st annual Washington Week to be held March 4 – 11, 2023**. 104 student delegates will be chosen to meet their U.S. senators and other government officials during the comprehensive education, leadership and public service learning experience, and each delegate will receive a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship. The 2022 Washington Week was held online due to the pandemic and a decision regarding the 2023 program being held in person or online is to be determined this fall.

The USSYP was created by Senate Resolution 324 in 1962 as stated in 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.”

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., or into an online forum, 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. The \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship is given to each student in the name of the United States Senate, with encouragement to continue coursework in history, government and public affairs. 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. The Hearst Foundations have fully funded and administered the program since inception; no government funds are utilized.

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 alum to be elected U.S. senator currently serving in her fifth term; current Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, the first alum to be confirmed as a Cabinet secretary; Jaime Harrison, current chairman of the Democratic National Committee; former Senator Cory Gardner, the second alum to be elected to the U.S. Senate 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, the first alum to be elected governor; former Ambassador to West Germany Richard Burt, and former presidential advisors Thomas “Mack” McLarty and Karl Rove.

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Additional notables include Rogan Kersh, provost of Wake Forest University; former Lt. Governor of Idaho David LeRoy; former President of the Progressive Policy Institute Robert Shapiro; and many 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 Pennsylvania delegate selection is administered by Mr. Kusniez in cooperation with representatives from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Pennsylvania Association of Student Councils, & PA Bar Association. Delegates must be juniors or seniors and elected or appointed student officers for the 2022-2023 academic year. 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 student is serving a constituency in a high-level leadership position for the entire academic year. Delegates must reside in Pennsylvania and each high school is only allowed to nominate ONE Student.

Names of students selected will be formally announced in early January 2023. Interested students should contact their high school principal, school counselor, history or government teachers or Mr. Kusniez (senateyouth@pasc.net). The application deadline for Pennsylvania is Friday, October 7, 2022.

The 2023 program brochure with detailed rules and additional information about the selection process may be accessed on www.pasc.net/scholarships under the U.S. Senate Youth Scholarship section or on the USSYP website www.ussenateyouth.org.
