

Houston Bodily - UT - 2011

Among the many experiences I have been involved with in the last few years concerning government and politics, none have served as a more enjoyable and greater learning experience than Washington Week with the US Senate Youth Program. Between all the incredible speakers, the fascinating places we visited, and the many remarkable people we met, it is hard to pick just one absolute favorite instant. Each moment, from meeting the President in the White House, hearing from prominent speakers, to the extravagant dinners each night, and the wonderful tours of museums and monuments, contributed to such an overall amazing and unforgettable event.

There are however, three specific experiences that came from Washington Week which I am most grateful for: the military mentors, Associate Justice Clarence Thomas speech, and the other delegates I was able to meet.

It's unbelievable how much a soldier goes through to fight and protect our country. Having the chance to talk to many of the military mentors and hear their stories about their service in the Armed Forces really left me humbled and amazed. It reminds me that so much is done by these men and women for our safety and world peace of which we take for granted. I cherish the privilege I had to thank them for their sacrifices and their undying patriotism for this country.

Having an interest in pursuing a career as a judge, I found myself captivated by Associate Judge Clarence Thomas as he proceeded to explain that the law is the only factor in determining decisions and writing is where most argumentation is done. He explained the importance of truly listening to both sides. He further explained that one must read to be honest and learn to do the right things even when it may be hard. He also explained that concern for others along with humility is crucial to success.

The experience that will have a lasting impact on me for years to come has been the time I spent getting to meet all the other delegates and learn from them. Not only did it impress me how many brilliant young men and women were represented by our country, but it also gave me a renewed sense of humility and political interest as every conversation I had with one of my fellow delegates provided me with new insights and knowledge. Furthermore, it inspired me to continue to achieve to my own potential and then improve my talents that I might further contribute to society so that I might follow down the path that these future leaders of America will take.

I would like to sincerely thank the United States Senators, the Hearst Foundations and everyone who made this program possible. I am so grateful for the scholarship that I have received and recognize the responsibility I have in using it to better prepare and serve my fellowmen. The United States Senate Youth Program is the most outstanding, educational program that a student can experience and I know that my life and many others have been changed for the better by the USSYP, which has definitely influenced my life and my goals in the future.