

I almost feel a bit ridiculous saying 'best week ever', however this is the truth. The people, the places, and experiences, totally unparalleled and all in one week. Meeting the President is a once-in-a-lifetime experience, but so is being with 103 other students who value government and the common good and the future as much as I do is truly what was extraordinary. I could spend pages reciting all the highlights, all the great speeches and the always interesting Q&A sessions, the memories ingrained in me forever, however this would not even be an accurate depiction of Washington Week 2009. There was never a dull moment. There was always someone excellent to converse with, an amazing sight to see, or a world-class meal to enjoy. The generosity displayed by the Hearst Foundation was astounding. No detail was overlooked, we were treated like royalty and saw the best of what Washington had to offer. I can honestly say I came home a changed person. The value of public service has never been so evident and real to me.

To all the other delegates, I am so glad to have met each and every one of you. It was humbling and exciting. I fully expect to see many of you become the next world leaders and policy makers. Never before have I ever felt so connected with people that I have only known for one week's time that are from all walks of life and from all over our great nation. Each one of you had something unique and inspiring to offer.

A woman by the name of Barbe-Nicole Clicquot Ponsardin once said "The world is in perpetual motion, and we must invent the things of tomorrow. One must go before others, be determined and exacting, and let your intelligence direct your life. Act with audacity." Albeit this is one of my favorite quotes, I hope we can all take something from it. The potential of USSYP 2009 is unimaginable. Time will only tell what good we can do for humanity.

Mark Mace -IN

