

I have visited two foreign countries as well as many varying and fascinating places within the United States and I can honestly say that all of these trips combined cannot equal the experience that I had during Washington Week of the 2010 United States Senate Youth Program! This was my first trip to Washington D.C. and so I was naturally thrilled when I learned in December that I had been chosen by the State of Montana to be a delegate to this program. I knew that the experience would be amazing, but I never could have imagined just exactly how great the week would be. I made many new friends and interacted with the most intelligent young people that I have ever met. The Hearst Foundation as well as the military mentors and everyone else involved with the program gave 104 of America's brightest youth, from every part of the country an opportunity that could not be found anywhere else. The things that I learned and the people that I met as a delegate to the 2010 USSYP will aide me in my future endeavors and because of this I will never forget my week in Washington D.C. in March of 2010.

The list of high level government officials that donated their time to speak to us makes picking out just one or two extremely difficult. Of course any delegate would say that meeting the President of the United States was the most memorable part of the trip, and I would have to agree. The speakers that really stood out to me though were Justice Sotomayor, Senator Dorgan, and Ambassador Shankar. Justice Sotomayor impressed me with her words of wisdom that were presented in a very humble way, she showed us that she is just an average woman who made her way to the top through hard work and dedication. This showed us that the U.S. Supreme Court is not made up of "all knowing beings", but just regular people who have dedicated their lives to justice. Senator Dorgan impressed me by stating the facts with no political overtone. He is not running for re-election and therefore he spoke his mind. I was most impressed by the fact that he felt that he had overstayed his due in Washington and in the best interest of the people of North Dakota he is willing to step down. Finally, Ambassador Shankar delivered a well thought out and orated speech on the importance of international cooperation. This was virtually the only time that we heard about government outside of our own and I felt that she did an excellent job of stressing the importance of U.S. and Indian cooperation in future global affairs.

We visited so many amazing places in that one week, but the sites that most intrigued me were the U.S. Capitol building, the Supreme Court building, and the Newseum. The U.S. Capitol and Supreme Court buildings fascinated me with their beautiful, classical architecture and historic artwork. Just being inside these buildings that are so rich in history was a breathtaking experience in itself. The Newseum was my favorite museum that we visited. This museum presented the history of news and media in the United States in a way that no other museum could. The huge building was filled with fascinating original newspapers and other documents that date back to Colonial America, as well as modern news attractions that will surely make history some day.