

Jonathan Larson – NE

On March 6, 2010, I left for Washington, D.C. to take part in the United States Senate Youth Program, a week-long event that made a significant impact on my life. Throughout the meticulously organized “hustle and bustle” of the trip, I was constantly amazed by the speakers, the events, and my co-delegates.

The speakers at the Senate Youth Program were excellent. I especially enjoyed Chief Judge Robert Henry, Senator Richard Lugar of Indiana, Ambassador Merra Shankar, and Mr. Brian Lamb. All had a certain candor about them that kept us focused on what they were saying and, at the same time, entertained us. In addition, the tours of the capitol building and the White House were incredible, and I quite enjoyed the opportunity to meet the senators from my state.

However, the overall impression I will take from that week in March will be how a very diverse group of teenagers from around the country were able to come together and bond. Though the group often had differing ideologies, political backgrounds, and beliefs, it did not prevent them from becoming close friends. All were inspired to make the world a better place. That cooperation and respect is what our country needs in its future and is what I will strive for in mine.

Washington Week at the U.S. Senate Youth Program was one of the highlights of my life. Not only was I able to hear many inspiring speakers, tour our capital city, meet the president, and make many new friends from every corner of the United States, but I also became extremely motivated and excited about helping those around me. The program, above all, stressed public service. It is a lesson I shall take to heart.