

Colin Frosch - WV - 2011

I enjoyed every minute of my week in Washington DC for the US Senate Youth Program. I also really appreciated the hard work and dedication of all the people who worked hard to make this week a great success and an experience that will stick with all 104 of us for our entire lives. While in DC I got to meet many new people from around our country who like me wanted to make a difference in our world. Even though many of us shared ideas, principles, or backgrounds, I also learned a lot about other cultures, religion, political ideologies and other states. This just goes to show that how the US government operates wasn't the only things we learned during this packed week.

One of the most meaningful experiences of my week in DC was the Senator's reception on Wednesday night. Even though Jay Rockefeller couldn't come to the event, he sent us one of his employees who I enjoyed meeting and discussing our pasts in West Virginia. I was delighted to meet Senator Joe Manchin. He is from the town I live in and I have had the opportunity to meet him in the past while he was governor of our "wild and wonderful" state of WV. Not only was it inspirational to talk to a man who has gone from an average "Joe" in small town Fairmont to a wonderful Senator. I greatly enjoyed speaking with Mr. Manchin and was amazed by the interest he had in me and the other delegate from WV. He listened to everything we said and asked many questions. When I told him what school I went to and where I lived I quickly realized how small this world is when he asked if I knew his grandson and nephew who have gone to school with me in the past. I gladly responded yes. He even went out of his way to meet both of our military mentors and speak with them as well. I could see that he was really appreciative and grateful for having this experience to meet the future of our state and country. After he finished talking with us he gave both of us an autograph and went over to the group of many other eager high school delegates, to meet and greet, shake hands, and give autographs. Not only did he show up but he also did all this which set him apart from all of the other senators. Even though he had only been part of the Senate for a few months he took well to meeting all of us. It meant a lot to me to be able to meet these important people in our country and share our ideas with them.

Another thing I enjoyed, besides meeting so many influential people, was walking through the great monuments, buildings, and offices, that have either played a great role in our countries past, commemorate great events and leaders, or still play an active role in our country today. All of these experiences thrown together into one week of visiting DC are what made my experience with the US Senate Youth Program so unforgettable and so impactful on my future. I would like to thank again all those who played roles in the planning and execution of this wonderful weekend. I'm sending a special thanks out to Lieutenant Young from Illinois who was nothing short of a spectacular military mentor, thank you!