

SUMMARY OF RULES AND CRITERIA
2016-2017 United States Senate Youth Program – INDIANA

- I. In order to be eligible for nomination, each nominee must be:
 - a. A permanent resident of the United States;
 - b. A resident of Indiana;
 - c. Currently enrolled for the entire year in the 11th or 12th grade in a public or private high school in Indiana; home-school students are also eligible; and
 - d. Currently serving in an elected or appointed capacity for the entire academic year, in student government or in a civic or educational organization, representing a constituency, such as:
 - i. Student body president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, or
 - ii. Class president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, or
 - iii. Student council representative, or
 - iv. Student representative to district, regional, or state-level civic or educational organizations
 - e. Cannot have been selected as a delegate to Washington, D.C. in past years.

- II. To participate in the program;
 - a. Delegates must be able to remain with the group throughout the entire program week. No tours or trips will be permitted by individual Delegates while traveling to or from Washington, D.C. or while in Washington, D.C. This policy includes any other outside activity, conference, scholarship competition or event of another organization which is conducted in Washington, D.C. or the surrounding area during the time frame of the USSYP week.
 - b. All travel is scheduled during these time frames pending weather conditions and flight availability, no exceptions. The program requires that the student completely block both arrival and departure days to receive the travel benefit.
 - i. Arrival: **Saturday, March 4, 2017**
 - ii. Departure: **Saturday, March 11, 2017**

- III. Special arrangements:
 - a. No arrangements for individual religious practices or services other than dietary guidelines will be made during the Washington week. This policy will be strictly observed from the time the student delegates arrive at the Washington area airports, train station and program sites until they return to their home states.

- IV. Selection process:
 - a. Nomination of outstanding junior or senior by high school principal. If home-schooled, may be nominated by church or civic leader.
 - b. Selection of ten finalists by panel including Indiana Bar Foundation, Indiana Department of Education, and Indiana Association of School Principals, based on:
 - i. Nomination form signed by principal;
 - ii. Student essay on a given topic relating to the U.S. Government and the political process.
The essay is the major factor in the selection process.
 - iii. One-page student resume;
 - iv. Letter of support from principal (from church or civic leader if home-schooled).
 - c. Ten finalists complete a written examination and an individual interview in Indianapolis, **9:30am to 4:00pm, Saturday, October 29th, 2016**. NOTE: All expenses, including transportation to and from Indianapolis, are the responsibility of the local school and/or parents or guardians of the finalists. Tests and interviews will only be done on this date.

V. Criteria for selection of ten finalists:

- a. Nomination form: filled out completely and must bear the signature of the student's high school principal.
- b. Student essay:
 - i. Should take and defend a position on the assigned topic:
“Remember democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide.” Do you agree or disagree with the opinion expressed here? Why or why not? What evidence can you offer to support your position?
Essay should be specific, concise, well-organized and free of errors in grammar and spelling.
 - ii. Must be 350 – 500 words in length, written by the student;
 - iii. Should be typewritten; and
 - iv. Should have a title at the top of the page, reflecting the view of the essay.
- c. Student resume: should be one page describing the student's accomplishments, work experience, service to family, school and community, etc.
- d. Letter of support from principal: Should help to document the student's accomplishments in student government and contributions to school and community.
- e. All documents post-marked by **September 30, 2016** and mailed to the Indiana Bar Foundation. Electronic submission of documents will not be accepted.

VI. Indiana Bar Foundation process for selection:

- a. Teams of reviewers will read all submitted essays blindly (separated from the applicant's name and application materials). Each reviewer will assign numerical scores to the essays based on their clarity, thoughtfulness, persuasiveness and quality of writing. The applications of the top ten scored essays are then reviewed to confirm that these applicants meet all the eligibility criteria. The ten top-scoring applicants who also meet the eligibility criteria are then invited to come to the Indiana Bar Foundation for the written exam and individual interviews. Each portion of the written exam and interviews are scored. The applicants with the top two highest scores at the end of the day are chosen as the Indiana Delegates. The two applicants with the next highest scores are selected as the Alternate Delegates.

VII. Notification of finalists:

- a. The ten students who have been selected as finalists will be notified by a phone call and email to their principal in October of 2016. Principals who have not received notification by the end of October will know that their nominee has not been selected. The ten finalists will also receive a packet of information via email with an acknowledgment receipt requested.

VIII. Criteria for selection of two Delegates and two Alternates:

- a. Written test: students should perform well on objective and essay questions relating to state and federal government and U.S. political systems.
- b. Individual interview: students should demonstrate an understanding of current events and political issues of concern to the U.S. Government and general public, while having:
 - i. The ability to communicate effectively;
 - ii. The ability to deal with diverse opinions and viewpoints; and
 - iii. Good personal presentation.

IX. Notification of Delegates and Alternates:

- a. Delegates and Alternates will be selected in November 2016. Their packets will be sent to the Hearst Foundation for approval. Once the Hearst Foundation finalizes the choices, the Indiana Bar Foundation will be given clearance to announce their names to the public and they will be notified. This will likely be announced in December by the Hearst Foundation. At that time, the Hearst Foundation will send Delegates information on travel arrangements, rules regarding student activities and behavior while in Washington D.C. and regulations governing the use of college scholarships.