

Dear Indiana Bar Foundation,

First and foremost, thank you so much for selecting me as one of Indiana's delegates to the United States Senate Youth Program. Washington Week was truly a once in a lifetime experience and the memories I made will stick with me forever. I am extremely grateful for the time, energy, and resources the Indiana Bar Foundation devotes to selecting Indiana's delegates.

Alex Yom and I had the opportunity to listen to and meet with so many influential people in Washington, D.C. Throughout the course of the week, we heard from President Obama, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, journalist Jonathon Capehart, Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, Senators Gardner, Alexander, and Hirono, and many others. We were also able to meet personally with Senator Coats and Senator Donnelly. All of the speakers were extremely optimistic, even in the face of the polarized and pessimistic attitude that often surrounds politics, and reaffirmed my faith in this nation's leaders. Although I may have had different opinions than some of the speakers, their willingness to listen to opposing viewpoints and answer controversial questions was encouraging. Alex and I also had the special opportunity to give introduction and appreciation remarks for Brian Lamb, founder of C-SPAN and Indiana native, before and after he interviewed many of the delegates on his Q&A program. Speaking with Mr. Lamb and appearing on C-SPAN were a few highlights of the week.

Although the experiences the United States Senate Youth Program provided have made a huge impact on me, the delegates from around the country have had an even larger influence. Never before have I been surrounded by such passionate, intelligent, and considerate peers. I am sure the relationships I formed will continue for years to come.

I have yet to decide what career path I will take, but the experiences I had in Washington, D.C. have made it clear to me that I want to be a public servant. I do not know what my future job will be, but as President Obama told the delegates, "Know what you want to do, not what you want to be." I am still figuring out how I would like to make a difference through government, but I have taken President Obama's advice to heart and am no longer worried about having a certain title or holding a particular office.

Thank you again for the work you put towards selecting the Indiana delegates for the United States Senate Youth Program. I am confident future Indiana delegates will have as transformative of an experience as I did, and I am grateful they will have the opportunity thanks to the Indiana Bar Foundation.

Sincerely,

Brooke Hanes