



February 1, 2023

For Immediate Release

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Utah Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program Will Head to Washington D.C., Receive \$10,000 Scholarship

SALT LAKE CITY – The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) announced that high school students Ms. Savannah Cali Harlan and Ms. Jena Marie Mahoney will join Senator Mike Lee and Senator Mitt Romney in representing Utah during the 61st annual USSYP Washington Week, to be held March 4 — 11, 2023. Savannah Harlan of Salt Lake City and Jena Mahoney of Heber City were selected from among the state's top student leaders to be part of the 104 national student delegation. Each delegate will also receive a \$10,000 college scholarship for undergraduate study.

The USSYP was created by Senate Resolution 324 in 1962 and has been sponsored by the Senate and fully funded by The Hearst Foundations since its inception. Originally proposed by Senators Kuchel, Mansfield, Dirksen and Humphrey, the Senate leadership of the day, the impetus for the program as stated in Senate testimony is "to increase young Americans' understanding of the interrelationships of the three branches of government, learn the caliber and responsibilities of federally elected and appointed officials, and emphasize the vital importance of democratic decision making not only for America but for people around the world."

Each year this extremely competitive merit-based program provides the most outstanding high school students - two from each state, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education Activity - with an intensive week-long study of the federal government and the people who lead it. The overall mission of the program is to help instill within each class of USSYP student delegates more profound knowledge of the American political process and a lifelong commitment to public service. In addition to the program week, The Hearst Foundations provide each student with a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship with encouragement to continue coursework in government, history and public affairs. All expenses for Washington Week are also provided by The Hearst Foundations; as stipulated in S.Res.324, no government funds are utilized.

Savannah Harlan, a senior at Judge Memorial Catholic High School, serves as an elected senior core member of the Student Council. Civic engagement is her passion, and her dream job is to become a U.S. senator. Last summer, she was able to represent Utah as a Senate Page, allowing her to work and learn on the Senate floor. In the classroom, she has been able to advocate for other students as a peer minister. Savannah has also been able to use her political activism as an ambassador for the Utah Period Project and has made an impact on her school by founding the Female Alliance Club. As president of her school's Rotary Interact Club, she spearheaded several service projects and has also volunteered as a classroom intern at The Children's Center of Utah. These leadership roles and community service have helped Savannah discover that she wants to work in public service. She would like to major in political science before attending law school.

Jena Mahoney, a senior at Wasatch High School, serves as the Student Body president. She was elected the Junior Class representative and was selected as her school's Social Science Sterling Scholar. As the student representative of the 9/11 Day of Service board, Jena planned events alongside city officials to honor veterans in her community. She is also a student ambassador for the Period Project, a campaign to end period poverty in Utah by passing House Bill 162. She is the senior representative of her local JustServe chapter, allowing her to give back to her community by organizing service events, and is currently partnering with the Christian Center of Park City Food Pantry through the Center for Advanced Professional Studies to develop a hunger awareness marketing campaign. Jena plans to major in international relations with an emphasis in political science, and eventually pursue a career in international public service.

Chosen as alternates to the 2023 program were Ms. Sojung Bok, a resident of Washington, who attends UT SUCCESS Academy and Mr. Noah Canada, a resident of Park City, who attends Park City High School.

Delegates and alternates are selected by the state departments of education nationwide and the District of Columbia and Department of Defense Education Activity, after nomination by teachers and principals. The chief state school officer for each jurisdiction confirms the final selection. This year's Utah delegates and alternates were designated by Sydnee Dickson, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction.

During the program week, the student delegates will attend meetings and briefings with senators, the president, a justice of the Supreme Court, and leaders of cabinet agencies, among others.

In addition to outstanding leadership abilities and a strong commitment to volunteer work, the student delegates rank academically in the top one percent of their states among high school juniors and seniors.

For more information about the program, please visit www.ussenateyouth.org

www.schools.utah.gov