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Wyoming Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program
Students Headed to Washington, D. C. and to Receive \$10,000 Scholarship

January 10, 2023, Washington, D.C. —The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) announces that high school students Ms. Phoebe Elaine Allbright and Ms. Sophia Gomelsky will join Senator John Barrasso and Senator Cynthia M. Lummis in representing Wyoming during the 61st annual USSYP Washington Week, to be held March 4 — 11, 2023. Phoebe Allbright of Lusk and Sophia Gomelsky of Laramie 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 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.

Phoebe Allbright, a junior at Niobrara County High School, serves as the Wyoming Future Business Leaders of America's (FBLA) state secretary. In addition to holding state office, she is the vice president of her local FBLA chapter and the secretary of her local Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) chapter. She is a two-time national qualifier in both organizations. Phoebe is also a member of her local National Honor Society chapter. She has been a representative in Student Council and has served her Class of 2024 as the treasurer since her freshman year. She helps her community by volunteering at her county library alongside her FBLA chapter and helping her 4-H club host monthly community service projects. She is also currently serving National FBLA as the communications/social media director of the Mountain Plains Region Council. Phoebe's future plans include pursuing an undergraduate degree in business management and public relations, and eventually owning her own business.

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UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM

2023 Wyoming Delegate Announcement
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Page -2-

Sophia Gomelsky, a senior at Laramie High School, serves as the Wyoming DECA state president, an organization with a focus on business and entrepreneurship. She also serves as the Speech and Debate Team captain, Mock Trial co-captain, and has held leadership positions in theatre, such as student director, assistant choreographer, and several lead roles. Sophia's successful public speaking and competitive career include representing Wyoming at DECA Internationals, national circuit debate, and the National Mock Trial competition. She is also Wyoming Girls State governor, advocating for youth involvement in political processes across the state. She has helped plan a local food drive, rent relief initiative, and mural painting project, and disseminates election information, assists with voter registration, works as a student election judge, and canvasses for local candidates. She is a legislative intern, and worked as a page at the state legislature during the 2022 budget session. She represents the Student Body through the Laramie Youth Council, Youth Advocacy Board, National Honor Society and as a Student Council representative. Sophia's future plans include double majoring in political science and international studies with a minor in Spanish at the University of Wyoming.

Chosen as alternates to the 2023 program were Ms. Caroline Hope Di Senso, a resident of Cheyenne, who attends Cheyenne East High School and Ms. Karina Catherine Lea, a resident of Thermopolis, who attends Hot Springs County 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 Wyoming delegates and alternates were designated by Brian Schroeder, Wyoming 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. Now more than 6,000 strong, alumni of the program continue to excel and develop impressive qualities that are often directed toward public service. Among the many distinguished alumni are: Senator Susan Collins, the first alumna to be elected U.S. senator; Secretary of Transportation and former Mayor of South Bend Indiana, Pete Buttigieg, the first alumna to be appointed as a cabinet secretary; former Senator Cory Gardner, the second alumna to be elected U.S. senator and the first to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives; former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, the first alumna to be elected governor; former Chief Judge Robert Henry, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit; former Ambassador to West Germany Richard Burt, former presidential advisors Thomas "Mack" McLarty and Karl Rove. Additional notables include former Lt. Governor of Idaho David Leroy, Provost of Wake Forest University Rogan Kersh, military officers, members of state legislatures, Foreign Service officers, top congressional staff, healthcare providers and other university educators.

Members of the U. S. Senate Youth Program 2023 annual Senate Advisory Committee are: Senator John Hickenlooper of Colorado, the 2023 USSYP Democratic Co-Chair and Senator Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, the 2023 USSYP Republican Co-Chair. The full USSYP Senate Advisory Committee consists of the vice president of the United States and the Senate majority and minority leaders who annually serve as the program's Honorary Co-Chairs; two senators, one from each party, serving as acting Co-Chairs who each have keynote speaking roles, and an eight-member bipartisan senate panel, four senators from each party, who lend their names in support. Serving on the Advisory Committee for the upcoming program are: Senator Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin, Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey, Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, Senator Jon Tester of Montana, Senator Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee, Senator Bill Cassidy, MD, of Louisiana, Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas and Senator Cynthia M. Lummis of Wyoming.

For more information please visit: www.ussenateyouth.org