



63rd Annual

UNITED STATES SENATE
★ YOUTH PROGRAM ★
EDUCATION • LEADERSHIP • PUBLIC SERVICE • RESPECT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Questions about your state's delegates, alternates or state selection process:
Mr. Tim Kalgreen at tkalgreen@inbarfoundation.org.

For general information about the United States Senate Youth Program:
Program Director Ms. Rayne Guilford at rguilford@hearstfdn.org or (800) 425-3632.

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

January 13, 2025, Washington, D.C. —The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) is pleased to announce that high school students Ms. Sophia Ruihong Fu and Ms. Calleigh Clare Neal will join Senator Todd Young and Senator Jim Banks in representing Indiana during the 63rd annual USSYP Washington Week, to be held March 1 — 8, 2025. Sophia Fu of Carmel and Calleigh Neal of Avon were selected from among the state's top student leaders to be part of the 104 national student delegation that will attend meetings and briefings with senators, the president, a justice of the Supreme Court, leaders of cabinet agencies, and other officials throughout the week. Each delegate will also receive a \$10,000 college scholarship for undergraduate study.

The USSYP was founded in 1962 by the sons of William Randolph Hearst and the senate leadership of the day -- Senators Kuchel, Mansfield, Dirksen and Humphrey – in response to the deep divisiveness and national anxiety following the McCarthy era. They outlined a plan to encourage America's most talented young people to consider public service as an important, life-long, and noble pursuit, sponsoring Senate Resolution 324, which passed unanimously. As stated in founding testimony, the program strives "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 two outstanding high school students 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. Each student will also receive a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship with encouragement to continue coursework in government, history and public affairs. The Hearst Foundations have fully funded the program since inception; as stipulated, no government funds are utilized. ([United State Senate Resolution 324](#))

Sophia Fu, a senior at Carmel High School, serves as the president of the Math Honor Society. Under her leadership, the society has raised over \$1,000 and reached over 200 students through speaker seminars, math competitions, and community events. She is also the president and founder of IndyINTEGIRLS, a nonprofit organization that has partnered with organizations such as Eli Lilly and Company, MiTek, and Craig Newmark Philanthropies to provide opportunities for girls and gender minorities in STEM. Sophia's work in data bias, statistical machine learning, and cancer diagnostics have been recognized by the Society for Science, U.S. Department of Defense, American Statistical Association, and China Association for Science and Technology. She has also produced several internationally acclaimed historical documentaries, which have been shown at Stanford University, National History Day, the Lombardo Family Foundation, and the Asian American Scholar Forum. She has studied abroad in Jeonju, South Korea on a fully funded Department of State scholarship. Since her trip, she has spoken with community leaders and Department of State officials on the importance of youth involvement with study abroad, cultural connectedness, and global awareness. Additionally, Sophia is part of the Stanford Korea Sejong Scholars, where she researches science, technology, and Korean society through the Stanford Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. In college, Sophia hopes to study science, technology, and society to become a policymaker.

(more)

UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM

2025 Indiana Delegate Announcement
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Page -2-

Calleigh Neal, a senior at Avon High School, serves as president of the Student Body, where she promotes comprehensive educational experiences in her school, including work with performing arts, business clubs, and sports. She is a National Merit semifinalist. As a Distinguished Young Woman of Avon, she will compete in the Distinguished Young Women of Indiana scholarship program. She served two terms as Indiana youth governor in the YMCA Youth and Government program where she served as Indiana youth advocate and speaker of the House. Calleigh is the 2024 Optimist International Oratorical Contest World champion. She is a semifinalist for the Coca-Cola Scholars program and a state semifinalist in the Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen award. She is actively involved in her local Vacation Bible School and has created and led Avon's Youth Civic Engagement Council to work directly with the town council, enhancing the local community with initiatives such as developing community gardens and registering young voters. She has been a four-year member of the golf team. She is a three-time top 5 finalist in Indiana DECA's State Career Development Conference and represented Indiana at the 2022 International Career Development Conference. She has a love of musical theatre and has been active in show choir and more than a dozen theatrical productions. Calleigh hopes to study public policy and economics in college.

Chosen as alternates to the 2025 program were Ms. Dani Rae Montgomery, a resident of Westfield, who attends Westfield High School and Ms. Shivani Ankit Desai, a resident of Carmel, who attends Brebuef Jesuit Preparatory 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 Indiana delegates and alternates were designated by Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education.

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 6,200 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; Representative Sarah McBride, the second alumna to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives; 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, and former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, the first alumna to be elected governor.

Members of the U. S. Senate Youth Program 2025 annual Senate Advisory Committee are: Senator Thom Tillis of North Carolina, the 2025 USSYP Republican Co-Chair and Senator Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire, the 2025 USSYP Democratic Co-Chair. The full USSYP Senate Advisory Committee includes the vice president of the United States and the Senate majority and minority leaders, and four senators from each party who lend their names in support. Serving on the 2025 Advisory Committee: Senator Susan M. Collins of Maine, Senator John Cornyn of Texas, Senator Jerry Moran of Kansas, Senator Pete Ricketts of Nebraska, Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, Senator Catherine Cortez Masto of Nevada, Senator Tina Smith of Minnesota and Senator Peter Welch of Vermont.

For more information please visit: www.ussenateyouth.org

###