



August 10, 2016

Dear High School Principals, Counselors, and Scholarship Coordinators:

2017 UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM

I am pleased to announce the 55th annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP). Sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, the California Department of Education (CDE) coordinates this competition for outstanding juniors or seniors who are interested in pursuing careers in public service. All public and private high schools in the state are invited to nominate up to two juniors or seniors to participate.

Four finalists, consisting of two delegates and a first alternate and second alternate, will be selected by the CDE to be California's USSYP representatives. The delegates will participate in a week of intensive study of the federal government as guests of the United States Senate from March 4–11, 2017, in Washington, D.C. The Hearst Foundation will pay expenses for the delegates, including transportation to and from D.C., lodging, and meals. In addition, each of the delegates will receive a \$10,000 college scholarship from the Foundation. Alternates attend the events in Washington only if the delegates are unable to participate.

Students must be nominated by their high school principal and principals may nominate up to two students. Nominated students must be high school juniors or seniors currently serving in an elected or appointed capacity in a student government, civic, or educational organization for the entire 2016–17 school year. In addition, nominated students must be a permanent resident of the United States and currently enrolled in a California public or private secondary school.

Information regarding the 2017 USSYP application and scholarship is on the CDE USSYP Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/us/>. A hard copy is available upon request. The deadline to apply is **Saturday, October 1, 2016**.

California Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye and I established the California Task Force on K–12 Civic Learning, which produced the report *Revitalizing K–12 Civic Learning in California: A Blueprint for Action*. The report highlights the importance of our students gaining civic skills so that they become informed voters and community members. It is available on the CDE Civic Education Initiatives Web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/civicedinitiative.asp>.

If you have any questions regarding the USSYP, please contact Dina Fong, U.S. Senate Youth Program Coordinator, by phone at 916-319-0551 or by e-mail at dfong@cde.ca.gov, or David Carriker, U.S. Senate Youth Program Assistant, by phone at 916-319-0173 or by e-mail at dcarriker@cde.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Tom Torlakson

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