



NEWS RELEASE

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Nebraska Students Selected For 2024 U.S. Senate Youth Program

Student photos are available using the following link.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YaDdhtwzkfPE93YqWXtuyJ-7lw8oBQKp?usp=sharing>

The Nebraska Department of Education is pleased to announce the names of two students selected as delegates to the 62nd annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) held in Washington, D.C. March 2-9, 2024. Hannah Tang of Lincoln East High School in Lincoln and Isabella (Bella) Meyer of Boone Central High School in Albion Nebraska were chosen from across the state to be part of the group of 104 student delegates who will attend the program's Washington Week.

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. The program is designed 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. The overall mission of the program is to help grow 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.

Isabella Meyer, a senior at Boone Central High School, serves as the vice president of her Senior Class. Bella is a high-achieving, politically active student who excels in civic service, advocacy, and statewide leadership. Through platforms such as Congressman Adrian Smith's Youth Advisory Council, the Nebraska attorney general's Youth Conference, and the American Legion Auxiliary Girls State and Girls Nation programs, she advocates on behalf of her home state. Through leadership positions and involvement in 16+ organizations, including the National Honor Society, the Future Farmers of America (FFA), the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), varsity band, 4-H, and varsity speech, Bella has demonstrated her passion for advocacy. As an 8-time state champion, 44-time gold medal recipient, and esteemed national competitor, she is one of the nation's most prominent young writers and public speakers. Bella intends to continue her mission of advocacy and service in college, where she plans to earn a degree in international relations, and later a J.D. in law, before pursuing a life of public service.

Hannah Tang, a senior at Lincoln East High School, serves as an officer on the National Honor Society Advisory Board. She is the founder and president of Nebraska's first American Cancer Society high school chapter, where she established an initiative to deliver dozens of letters to local hospitals. Tang is the Science Olympiad captain, a volunteer coach for her local middle school's Science Bowl program, and the founder of the "Dear STEM Sisters" blog. Outside of the classroom, she researches pancreatic cancer at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her work has been published in *Cancers*, a peer-

reviewed scientific journal, and presented at the International Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) BigData Conference. In addition, Tang enjoys mentoring the next generation of female changemakers in science, applying this mission in her role as the varsity Speech captain. There, she developed a lecture series regarding politics and economics for new speakers. She plans to double major in public health and political science before undertaking a dual-degree MD/Master's of Public Health program.

Chosen as alternates to the 2024 program were Mr. Jacob Eduardo Dominguez, a resident of West Point, who attends West Point-Beemer Jr/Sr High School and Ms. Amelia-Michelle Nangatie Forlemu, a resident of Lincoln, who attends Lincoln Southeast High School.

The chief educational officer in each state selects the delegates after nomination by teachers and principals. This year's delegates were designated by Dr. Brian Maher, Commissioner of Education.

During Washington Week, the student delegates attend meetings and briefings with senators, members of the House of Representatives, Congressional staff, the president, a justice of the Supreme Court, leaders of cabinet agencies, an ambassador to the United States, and senior members of the national media.

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