

DECEMBER 2020

UNITED STATES SENATE
YOUTH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



In recognition of exemplary service to the
United States Senate Youth Program
and the
United States Senate Youth Alumni Association
GEORGE B. IRISH
March 7, 2020

POST OFFICE BOX 1798 | WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-1798

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (2020-2022)

President.....	Gil Valadez (DE 1997)
President-Elect	Amanda Patarino (CO 2012)
Vice-President.....	James Brown (CO 2008)
Secretary	Taylor Oster (ND 2012)
Treasurer	John Selmon Blakley, Sr. (MI 1976)
Liaison Officer	Katie Jo Luningham (KS 2006)
Parliamentarian	Erika Nash (UT 2009)
Communications Director.....	David Zavadsky (WI 1990)
Technology Director	Ryan Gavin (ME 2009)
Alumni Programs Director	Victoria Cundiff (CO 1973)
Central Regional Director.....	James Kinsky (IL 2011)
Eastern Regional Co-Director	Johnson Elugbadebo (IL 1998)
Eastern Regional Co-Director	Nicholas Hanson (IL 2007)
National Capital Region Co-Director.....	Sarah Lanford (TX 2014)
National Capital Region Co-Director.....	Jordan Rippey (TN 2006)
Northern Regional Director	T.J. Clark (IL 2013)
Southern Regional Co-Director	Victor Agbafé (NC 2015)
Southern Regional Co-Director	Andrew Abreo (LA 2004)
Western Regional Director.....	Ryan Montgomery (OR 2012)
Immediate Past President.....	Andrew Bradley (IN 1996)
Executive Director.....	Michael S. Sundermeyer (MO 1969)
Deputy Executive Director	John Spisak

INCORPORATING MEMBERS

OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

John Selmon Blakley, Sr. (MI 1976)
Wendy Jo Peterson (WA 1978)
Michael S. Sundermeyer (MO 1969)

FOUNDING MEMBERS

OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Wendy Jo Peterson (WA 1978)	David F. Zavadsky (WI 1990)
Jonathan Lee Morton (AL 1990)	Robert R. Middleton (DC 1966)
Megan Nelson (WA 1998)	Randy L. Brantley (NC 1981)
Scott Shapiro (WA 1988)	Chandini Margaret Bachman (AZ 1970)
Norman L. Fortenberry (LA 1979)	Christine Drager (AK 1988)
Craig W. Hulvey (ID 1968)	Nathan J.A. Humphrey (CA 1990)
Kirby Lee (IN 1993)	Christopher Trott (FL 1999)
Michael S. Sundermeyer (MO 1969)	John Selmon Blakley, Sr. (MI 1976)
Michael Buckley (MA 1985)	James T. Molloy
Dan Brown (MS 1987)	Gladys S. Hundley



PRESIDENTS

OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

1999-2004

John Selmon Blakley, Sr. (MI 1976)

2004-2006

Robert R. Middleton (DC 1966)

2006-2008

Randy L. Brantley (NC 1981)

2008-2010

Norman L. Fortenberry (LA 1979)

2010-2012

David F. Zavadsky (WI 1990)

2012-2014

Rachel M. Lowe (OR 2000)

2014-2016

Chad Robinson (DE 2001)

2016-2018

Michael Gonzales (NM 1973)

2018-2020

Andrew Bradley (IN 1996)

2020-2022

Gil Valadez (DE 1997)

★ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ★

GIL VALADEZ (DE 1997), USSYAA PRESIDENT

Dear United States Senate Youth alumni and friends,



Gil Valadez (DE 1997)
Photo by Jakub Mosur

As 2020 comes to an end, on behalf of the USSYAA board and representing our nearly 7,000 alumni across the globe, we wish you a warm and safe holiday season and the brightest hopes for 2021. Our thoughts and love are with those who have been most directly affected by the pandemic; from those serving on the front lines, to those who have taken ill, or sadly to those who lost someone close. Health, healing, and joy to all.

Our alumni association has come so far in the two decades since our inception. Our board stands on the shoulders of the leaders who came before us and built a great foundation. Your newly elected board has been hard at work since we were entrusted with our mandate last March at our annual meeting. Though for most us that was our last public event, we have met dutifully on laptops across the country and held a series of events, as well.

We feel an urgent sense of duty that our two-year term, culminating with an incredible celebration of 60 years of the United States Senate Youth Program in 2022, represents a critical juncture to take our alumni association programming, engagement, and influence to the next level.

To achieve our audacious goals, we will **need all of you!** In many ways. **So please get involved.** Over the next two years we will focus on three distinct and critical areas that we feel will set us up for the next two decades and beyond:

- **Modernize our technology & infrastructure:** new website, database, this newsletter, new mediums, and much more to come

- **Continue building our connection and alignment with the Hearst Foundation and USSYP;** Rayne Guilford, her team, and the board are amazing, and inspiring partners
- **Engaging all of you – our Alums – to the next level** in seamless transition from Washington Week, to students, through esteemed careers in public service and the private sector, and culminating as engaged retirees!

We look forward to discussing all of this with you in the months ahead. You are welcome to attend our monthly board meetings (email me), join our committees, or work on or attend regional events. This year, just as Washington Week will be virtual, our awards ceremony and mentoring tables will also be virtual. The board is hard at work to bring you an amazing experience and we look forward to seeing all of you at our event on Thursday, March 18. We will soon announce our honoree for the Rosalie Wynn Hearst Distinguished Public Service Award and are thrilled to announce that we will recognize our Founding President, John Selmon Blakley, with the James T. Molloy Alumni Service Award. Given the flexibility, we will shift our annual meeting to a later date this year. More to come on that in March.

I'll close by recognizing all of our alumni who are serving our country from the military, foreign service, public service, and civil organizations. We honor those who ran for office, no matter the outcome. As a reminder we are strictly a non-partisan, civic focused, alumni organization for the USSYP and are very proud of our alumni base across the entire political spectrum. In an era of hyper-partisanship and division, I for one am very proud to count myself among the ranks of our alumni – from students to retirees – who I know will work to bring our country together both through service and leadership.

In service,

Gil Valadez

“Every accomplishment starts
with the decision to try.”

JOHN F. KENNEDY

ALUMNI PROGRAMS REPORT

VICTORIA CUNDIFF (CO 1973)

In each of the past years, the Scholarship Committee had the wonderful and humbling task of reviewing a record number of applications for the Rosalie Wynn and George Randolph Hearst Scholarship. Each year, in Mom Hearst's spirit of helping alumni with their continuing educational needs, the USSYAA provides grants of up to \$5,000 to one or more alumni pursuing graduate studies that will lead to careers that promote public service and the public good.

At this year's annual dinner, the USSYAA recognized 2019 Rosalie Wynn and George Randolph Hearst Scholarship winners **Andrew Connery (OK 2009)** and **Amanda Patarino (CO 2012)**. After high school, **Andrew** attended Yale University, where he obtained a joint B.A. and M.A. in political science. He then spent four years in D.C. and on Capitol Hill, where among other things, he assisted in supporting efforts leading to the passage of President Obama's Trade Promotion Authority. He also worked for a congressman who introduced comprehensive immigration reform as well as on a number of political campaigns throughout the country. His journey then took him to Columbia Law School, where he excelled in moot court and was active on the Columbia Business Law Review. Andrew was particularly pleased to receive the school's highest award at graduation, the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Prize. He is currently an associate at a law firm in New York and next year will begin a Federal District Court clerkship.

Amanda, who is well known to many of our alums through her active work to welcome new delegates to Washington Week at the career tables as well as her work to unite alums at a variety of alumni events, studied government and international politics at George Mason University in D.C. She then worked at a not-for-profit supporting the presidential transition and continued her studies in government at Harvard's Kennedy School, where she has earned a Master of Public Policy to obtain practical skills and a deeper understanding of politics to better work as a government leader. Amanda also participated as Senator Michael Dukakis' summer fellow where she had the opportunity to focus on the challenges of state-level public service. She has a passion for considering how to heal political divides and has written for the Kennedy School Review on evaluating processes for political appointments. Since graduation, Amanda has returned to Colorado and joined McKinsey & Company as a consultant, and continues to be an active member of the USSYAA board.

As 2020 draws to a close, we are pleased to announce that due to increased alumni contributions, we are able to provide four scholarships to outstanding applicants. Two alums from the Show-Me State showed their talent and commitment and received scholarships of \$5,000: **Sunny**

Ablatt (MO 2015) and **Daniel Carter (MO 2014)**. Two more talented alums were awarded special merit scholarships of \$2,500: **Kristina Pedersen (KS 2012)** and **Trasa Cobern (DoDDS 1993)**. Each has charted an innovative and creative path to leadership and service. You will be learning more about them in future newsletters and we would like to introduce this year's winners to you now.

Sunny, a first-generation Uyghur immigrant raised in the Midwest, flew through college at a fast track and will be concluding her medical education next year prior to starting her internship in general surgery. It is hard to imagine a more "hands on" career. Sunny hopes over the long term to have an impact on medical service beyond the hospital setting by working to develop and offer new perspectives on health care legislation. While in medical school, she has been an active volunteer at both nursing home and long-term care settings. Sunny was able to work with colleagues in responding to COVID-19 by reaching out and organizing others to assist seniors living in group facilities away from loved ones. She focused on medical concerns, as well as keeping these high-risk groups connected to the larger world during the current crisis.



Scholarship committee member Chandini Bachman (AZ 1970) with 2019 scholarship winner Amanda Patarino (CO 2012). Photo by Jakub Mosur

Daniel obtained a degree in philosophy at Saint Louis University and then moved, as he says, "just down the road" to Washington University Law School where he has already had the opportunity to work for the Solicitor General of Missouri on issues reflecting and shaping public policy, including important questions of Constitutional Law. He has engaged in extensive volunteer work for his church and his community as well as published scholarship. On top of that, he has been a member of a brass choir. After graduation next year he will be embarking on a judicial clerkship. We may expect to see him in future government service.



Photo Credit: Jakub Mosur

TREASURER'S REPORT

JOHN S. BLAKLEY, SR. (MI 1976)

USSYAA operates on a cash basis and for the period January 1, 2020, through November 30, 2020, the year-to-date (YTD) expenses were \$33,877.65. They consisted of scholarships, the Washington Week annual event dinner, regional events, and various operating and administrative costs.

Assets of the USSYAA are held at Fidelity Investments and consist of mutual funds, exchange-traded funds, and common stocks. The YTD rate of return is 45.60% as compared to the S&P 500 Index of 14.02% for the same period. The rate of return includes dividends/interest, realized and unrealized gains/losses.

USSYAA's Finance Committee manages its investments with goals to maximize the portfolio assets and to support the organization's Mission Statement. Contributions from members are a critical part of the alumni's goals to increase its scholarship awards and programs to ensure future success. Tax returns are available online at ussyaa.org/about/taxreturns.

ALUMNI PROGRAMS REPORT *continued from page 4*

Kristina Pedersen's path has taken her to Montreal, where she is pursuing a Master of Fine Arts degree at Concordia University. Through her work, she has shown how an arts career can serve the public. She served as an artist in residence with high school students in rural Texas and then taught documentary media in Chicago to adults before attending Concordia. She has worked to help others learn to discover, document, and tell their stories, and has engaged in a variety of volunteer activities ranging from teaching photography to collaborative fiction, and helping others be heard. She plans to return to Chicago to teach after obtaining her degree. If you meet her at an upcoming event, virtual or live, remember to ask her about her opening class discussion on "Things You Should Know."

Trasa Cobern's path has included completing an undergraduate degree in political science, taking time to raise a family, and teaching United States History to eleventh graders (maybe some will become USSYP delegates). After a distinguished teaching career, she is currently enrolled at Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio, where she is pursuing a master's degree in American History and Government. Trasa is devoting her efforts to volunteerism and bettering her community. In 2016, thanks to a challenge from her students, she ran for and won a city council seat in her small Texas town of 40,000 people. She has served on two nonprofit boards and writes historical and veteran-focused posts for the Texas Veterans Land Board. Trasa continues to be involved in local politics and assisting with political campaigns, helping to improve the world through her public service.

Congratulations to all for their outstanding work, commitment, and promise for a great future. All of the applicants were inspired by Washington Week and are carrying forward ideas and commitments encountered there. We encourage all eligible alums to consider applying in the future for the recognition and financial support the scholarship program provides. Of course, we could not continue to provide scholarships without the support of all alums. Please consider making a contribution to the USSYAA to support these scholarships.



TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

RYAN GAVIN (ME 2008)

We have been working on two digital projects this year: building a new website for the USSYAA, and upgrading our membership database. Our new website will be the central source for news from alumni across the country and the world, easy registration for events, applications for our scholarships, new ways to communicate with our members, and other exciting features like photos and yearbooks from years past. Starting soon, alumni will be able to log in and share personal updates, professional details, and more in our revamped database. Work on both of these projects is largely complete, and will wrap by the end of the year. We're excited to debut them for you in early 2021! If you have comments or suggestions about how our digital presence can be used to further our mission, please email technology_director@ussyaa.org.

★ ALUMNI DINNER ★



GEORGE B. IRISH

RECIPIENT OF THE EIGHTH JAMES T. MOLLOY ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD



George B. Irish is Eastern Director of The Hearst Foundation, Inc. and the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, a position he assumed in January 2009.

Irish retired from the Hearst Corporation in December 2008 following a 43-year career that began in the mailroom of his

hometown paper and concluded at the helm of one of the nation's largest newspaper operations. Irish joined Hearst in 1979 via the *Midland Daily News* in Michigan, where he was named publisher following Hearst's acquisition. In 1982, his newspaper career took him to another Midland, this one in Texas, where he served as publisher of the *Reporter Telegram*. Later he served as publisher of the *Beaumont (TX) Enterprise* and finally the *San Antonio (TX) Light*.

In 1993, Irish moved from Texas to New York City to become vice president of Hearst Corporation and deputy general manager of Hearst Newspapers. In 1998, he was named president of Hearst Newspapers and senior vice president of the Hearst Corporation. Irish served on the Hearst board of directors from 1996 until his retirement.

Irish has held numerous leadership responsibilities within the newspaper industry and has been active in civic organizations in each community in which he has lived. He served as the chairman of the Newspaper Association of America. He currently serves on the executive committee of ArchCare, the New York Diocese healthcare organization, and the Inner-City Scholarship Fund in New York City. He previously was vice-chair of the United Way of New York City and was a trustee of the Newseum in Washington, D.C.

Irish has received many prestigious awards from his profession and from many organizations he served over the years. Two awards that he cherishes came from his alma mater, Millikin University. The Decatur, Illinois, university awarded him an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters and named him one of its Top 100 Living Alumni. He and his wife, Jeannie, have four daughters and seven grandchildren.

“The three requisites of leadership are character, courage, and judgment.”

CHUCK HAGEL



SECRETARY CHUCK HAGEL

RECIPIENT OF THE ELEVENTH ROSALIE WYNN HEARST
DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD



Chuck Hagel was the 24th Secretary of Defense, serving from February 2013 to February 2015. He is the only Vietnam veteran and the first enlisted combat veteran to serve as Secretary of Defense.

Hagel served two terms in the United States Senate (1997-2009) representing

the state of Nebraska. Hagel was a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations; Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs; and Intelligence Committees. He chaired the Foreign Relations International Economic Policy, Export and Trade Promotion Subcommittee; and the Banking Committee's International Trade and Finance, and Securities Subcommittees. Hagel also served as the Chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China and the Senate Climate Change Observer Group.

Previously, Secretary Hagel was a Distinguished Professor at Georgetown University, Co-Chairman of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board, and Chairman of the Atlantic Council. He served as a member of the Secretary of Defense's Policy Board, Secretary of Energy's Blue Ribbon Commission on the Future of Nuclear Power, Systemic Risk Council Board of Directors, and as a member of the Board of Directors of Chevron.

Prior to his election to the U.S. Senate, Hagel was president of McCarthy & Company, an investment banking firm in Omaha, Nebraska. In the mid-1980s, Hagel co-founded VANGUARD Cellular Systems, Inc., a publicly traded corporation. He was President and CEO of the World USO, Private Sector Council (PSC), and Chief Operating Officer of the 1990 Economic Summit of Industrialized Nations (G-7 Summit). Hagel also served as Deputy Administrator of the Veterans Administration under President Ronald Reagan and Deputy Commissioner General of the 1982 World's Fair.

Some of Hagel's current commitments include service on the Board of Trustees of RAND; Advisory Board of Corsair Capital; Senior Advisor to GALLUP and to the McCarthy Group; Centennial Scholar, Georgetown Walsh School of Foreign Service; Distinguished Scholar, University of Nebraska at Omaha; Distinguished Statesman at the Atlantic Council; Board of Directors of Public Broadcasting Service (PBS); Director and Founding Member of the American Security Project; and Advisory Board Chairman of the HillVets Veterans Organization.

He is the author of the book, *America: Our Next Chapter* and was the subject of a 2018 book by General Daniel Bolger titled, *Our Year of War*, and a 2006 book by Charlyne Berens titled, *Chuck Hagel: Moving Forward*. He is a graduate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Hagel and his wife, Lilibet, have a daughter (Allyn) and son (Ziller).



Pictured left to right: TJ Clark, Sarah Lanford, Emma Watson, Caleb Cade

ELECTIONS PANEL BRINGS CAMPAIGN INSIGHT

SARAH LANFORD (TX 2014)

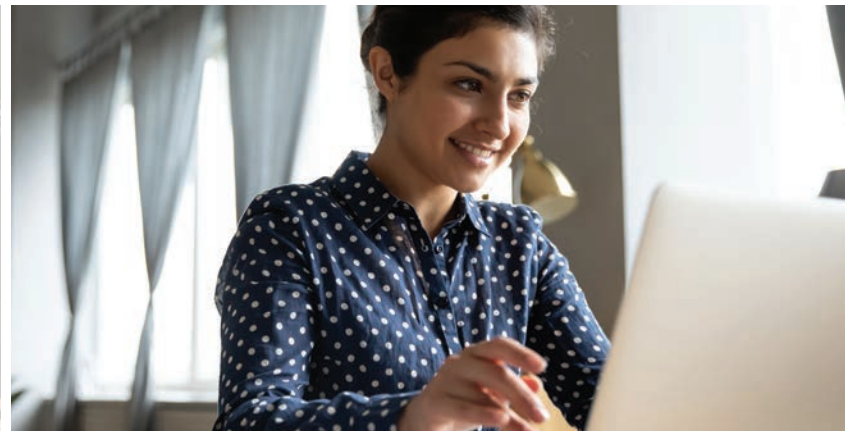
In October, National Capital Region Director **Sarah Lanford (TX 2014)** hosted an elections panel discussion via Zoom meeting with three campaign staffers who were working the 2020 cycle. **TJ Clark (IL 2013)** shared his experience working as Deputy Political Director for Congresswoman Lauren Underwood and highlighted the importance of local elections. **Emma Watson**, a Mobilization Strategist for MJ Hegar's Senate campaign, provided insight about balancing a campaign job with graduate school, and **Caleb Cade**, the Communications Director for Diane Mitsch Bush for Congress, spoke about how COVID-19 altered the political landscape and increased equity in campaign jobs. The elections panel recording will be available on our new website when it launches, and the board is looking forward to hosting more online panel discussions in the near future!



TUCSON MEET-UP: GATHERING SAFELY IN A PANDEMIC

Alumni in the Western Region coordinated a meet-up at Blanco in Tuscon, Arizona, on September 4, 2020. This was the first chance that the 2020 Arizona delegates had to meet with other alumni of the Senate Youth Program. With a separate, physically distant area on the patio providing ample opportunity for masked conversation, this small-scale gathering showed that even in a pandemic it's possible to meet safely and share some time with fellow alums.

Pictured, left to right, are Christopher Chesny (OK 2008), Meena Venkataramanan (AZ 2017), Melanie Rice (LA 1993), Victor Anaya (AZ 2020), Ashton Redd (AZ 2020), and Christopher Brown (DD 2008).



UPCOMING FORUM: HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE COVID ERA

Eastern Region Co-Directors **Nicholas Hanson (IL 2007)** and **Johnson Elugbadebo (IL 1998)** are planning a virtual event in late January or early February focused on the personal and professional implications surrounding COVID and its effect on those pursuing higher education. This event will feature commentary and Q&A with a panel of USSYP alumni who have experience in taking time off of school because of a personal reason or a professional opportunity, and will help alumni to sort through the pros and cons of a gap year, pursuing employment or an internship, or attending classes online. Further details will be shared via email in early 2021.

★ ALUMNI NEWS ★

Class of 1970

Chandini Bachman (AZ 1970) says, “Hang in there! Twenty twenty means perfect vision.” Her perfect vision is for Americans to work together instead of pulling apart. During January, she traveled to Crete, Greece, for two weeks with her meditation community and then on to San Francisco with her sister, Sara, for a family event in Oakland. She stayed healthy! She is grateful that in 2006 the United Nations FAO trained her about pandemic survival preparations. The UN motto was, “Survive well to serve well.” She was not taken by surprise and began her preparations by Valentine’s Day, including buying a recumbent stationary bike trainer. She has stayed safer at home alone since enjoying her last social gathering: the USSYAA alumni dinner at the Mayflower Hotel on March 7. By the winter solstice on December 21, she will have completed walking all 13 remote 2-mile races of the Sri Chinmoy Grand Prix, thus becoming a designated “Superhero,” which she finds pretty exciting under the circumstances. Zoom has become a portal for singing practice, chair yoga, and family gatherings. As a reviewer of our scholarship applications, she is so grateful to learn more about the varied aspirations of our alumni/ae. She wishes everyone well.

Class of 1971

Stephen Duprey (NH 1971), a USSYP classmate of Susan Collins, was elected to the New Hampshire House of Representatives in 1972, just one year after being in the program. He recently completed 20 years of service on the Republican National Committee where he served on numerous committees, including chairing the 2016 Presidential Primary Debates Committee and the Presidential Primary Nominating Process Committee. He served as NH Republican Party Chair for almost eight years – the longest serving chair since the party was founded. Stephen was also a senior advisor to John McCain, and served as a pallbearer at the senator’s funeral. He is now a member of the Advisory Council of the White House Historical Association, which works to preserve the White House and enhance the knowledge of the history of the President’s House.

Class of 1975

After a 37-year career on the faculty at the University of Wyoming, **Carol Frost (AK 1975)** became Professor Emerita of Geology on March 1, 2020. She thoroughly enjoyed serving as the 2020 President of the Mineralogical Society of America, continuing with her research, and seeing her last graduate student complete his thesis. She is looking forward to continuing to pursue her science on what she considers her permanent sabbatical. She adds, “I will never

forget arriving at the Mayflower Hotel in 1975 after an 18-hour journey from Anchorage, Alaska, to meet ‘Mom’ Hearst behind a table in the most magnificent ballroom I’d ever seen in my life. It was just the start of an unforgettable week. I never dreamed I’d return to Washington, D.C. many years later as National Science Foundation Division Director for Earth Sciences (2014-2018), and I credit my experiences in the Senate Youth Program as inspiration.”

Class of 1976

Jim Fotter (WY 1976) is in his fourth year as the Executive Director of the Oregon Education Association, and just completed his 40th year in public education. He was recently elected as the Board Chairperson of the Q Center, a community center that supports LGBTQ+ people in the Portland area.

Class of 1978

David Stebenne (MD 1978) reports that his new book *Promised Land: How the Rise of the Middle Class Transformed America, 1929-1968* (Scribner, 2020) was published this year. He is a professor of history and law at the Ohio State University.

Class of 1982

Joseph Perkins (IN 1982) was elected to the role of Chair of the Board of Trustees of Martin University for 2021. Martin University is the only PBI (Predominantly Black Institution) of higher education in the state of Indiana.

Class of 1983

Cori Ulrich (DODDS 1983) had the following to share: “It’s been quite a year. I feel lucky that family and friends have been OK health-wise and have managed the situation well. But that doesn’t take away from how hard it has been for everyone. I feel very fortunate too that my company (RealPage, Inc.) has had a good year – probably in part because our software services allow our customers (rental real estate communities) to manage and even enhance their operations virtually. So while I have spent much of the year working from home, as have many of my colleagues and peers, not that much has changed. That said, learning to negotiate agreements and transactions on Zoom and developing video conferencing skills became something new to learn and now seem, if not predictable or comfortable, at least normal. I have continued to connect with my friends who are local and far away. I look forward to 2021 being much more like 2019 than 2020, but I will be OK either way. I wish all the best to my peers as well and hope the same for them.”

continued on page 10

Class of 1985

Michael Auslin (IL 1985) writes, "Instead of splitting the year between Palo Alto and Washington, D.C., my family and I (including our college-age son) spent March onwards in the D.C. suburbs. It was still a busy year, as I published my latest book, *Asia's New Geopolitics*, a book of essays on the leading trends in the region along with some history and reportage. I also headed up a joint project between the Hoover Institution at Stanford University (where I am a fellow) and the Foreign Policy Association, to produce a special edition of *Great Decisions*, focused on the key foreign policy challenges facing the next president. In addition to the now-ubiquitous Zoom webinars and other writing, I've started a new book project on America's first encounter with the Pacific world, during the years of the Constitutional Convention, the French Revolution, and the expansion of imperialism around the globe."

Class of 1988

Having grown up in Massachusetts, **Laura (Harris) Clubok (MA 1988)** has spent the past 20 years in central Ohio. In addition to practicing as a pediatric occupational therapist (OT) since 1999, Laura is raising two daughters (ages 17 and 14) with her husband Ken. Laura is grateful to own and operate her own private therapy company, serving children with a diverse set of developmental, emotional, and learning difficulties. In addition to the joys and challenges of helping children discover and realize their potential, over the past few years Laura has mentored numerous college students who are pursuing a career in the field of OT. Laura also has been active as a volunteer and leader in the Columbus Jewish community, serving on the boards of two local organizations. In her free time, Laura enjoys exercising, reading, cooking, and learning and practicing compassionate communication/nonviolent communication through programs of the Compassionate Communication Center of Ohio (<https://www.speakingpeace.org/>). To this day, Laura credits her desires to contribute to others and effect change in others' lives to her experiences in the United States Senate Youth Program.

Class of 1994

In August, **Fernando Saldivar (CA 1994)** moved to Nairobi, Kenya to become the Global Policy and Advocacy Officer for the Jesuit Justice and Ecology Network Africa (JENA), where he has been missioned for two years as a further step in his formation as a Jesuit towards eventual ordination to the Catholic priesthood. In May he completed his M.A. in Social Philosophy at Loyola University Chicago and his thesis, "Africa in the Economy of Francesco: Rethinking the Ethics of the International Financial Order at the Intersection of Tax Justice and Catholic Social Teaching," will be published in the inaugural issue of the *African Journal of International Economic Law*.

Class of 1995

Michael Lawlor's (MT 1995) law firm, Lawlor & Co., represents many Montana hospitality businesses (restaurants, bars, breweries, theaters, hotels, etc.) most impacted by COVID. He has been able to help the industry by working with state government alcohol regulators to achieve some temporary rules allowing for delivery, takeout, and other options not normally available in Montana. Additionally, he was chosen by the governor-elect and lieutenant governor-elect to serve on their transition advisory team to find new leadership for the Montana Department of Revenue. Congratulations, Michael!

Class of 1999

Kevin McAdam (CO 1999) and his wife, Christine, have four children: Christopher (12), Eleanor (10), Finnean (6), and Philippa (3). They live in Denver, where Kevin grew up. Kevin is a litigator with Holland & Hart, an Am Law 200 firm with offices in D.C., Alaska, and across the Mountain West.

Class of 2003

Travis Jordan (WY-2003) accepted a new position with the Wyoming Attorney General's Office as an Assistant Attorney General in the Water & Natural Resources Division. In his new role, Travis is responsible for managing the state of Wyoming's natural resource litigation in federal court. During 2020, Travis also completed a multi-day river rafting trip down a remote segment of Utah's Green River.

Class of 2005



Patrick Martin (IL 2005), Principal and Midwest Director of Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies, has been named to the 2020 *Crain's Chicago Business* "40 under 40" list. Working out of Cozen O'Connor's Chicago office, Martin directs the firm's government relations and public advocacy efforts in the Midwest. His practice focuses on advising large national and

international companies in the healthcare, energy, financial services, retail, transportation, cannabis, and higher-education industries, helping them to manage their most complex government affairs matters and distinguishing himself by providing sophisticated advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels. Patrick has also received recognition from *The Hill* newspaper as one of the "Top Lobbyists of 2018" and again in 2019 in the "Hired Guns" category.

continued on page 11

This year, **Will Haun (CT 2005)** and his wife welcomed their third child – their first son – into the world. George William Haun was born on September 15, 2020, and has brought smiles to his parents' faces (and his two big sisters) from that day onward. This year also brought Will the honor of briefing *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia* before the U.S. Supreme Court, publishing his first *Washington Post* op-ed, and preparing to argue an important religious autonomy case before the Supreme Court of Texas right after the new year. For all of this year's struggles, Will and his family were blessed to have so much more time together at home, and to grow closer to their parish. Will hopes to see and reconnect with several USSYP alums – virtually or personally – in 2021!

Class of 2006

Chanda Choun (CT 2006) works as a senior technical consultant and recently started a new cybersecurity solutions business that will primarily employ workers in America's economically underutilized areas. He was additionally a local election candidate for Arlington County Board in Virginia and continues to serve in the U.S. Army Reserve part time at Fort Meade, Maryland.

Class of 2007

Nicholas Hanson (IL 2007) departed the Marines last summer to attend graduate school with the Harvard Kennedy School MPP/Harvard Business School MBA joint degree program. He completed the first year of the program in the spring and opted to take a leave of absence given the educational impacts of COVID-19. He joined a defense technology start-up called Vannevar Labs which has a mission to use the most advanced Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning software in Silicon Valley to provide technology solutions to the national security establishment.

Since her time with the US Senate Youth Program, **Captain Emily Basset, USN (Military Mentor 2007)** served as the first Commanding Officer of USS Manchester (LCS 14), and then as the Reactor Officer of the Navy's newest and most powerful aircraft carrier, the USS Gerald R Ford (CVN 78). She writes, "Excellent tours and soul-filling opportunities to serve my country and work on teams with dedicated sailors! Now, my title is 'Force Nuclear Propulsion Officer, CNAF det Bremerton.' It means I am involved in maintenance planning for the two nuclear powered aircraft carrier projects at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, WA. I LOVE IT! It's great professionally because I get to use my past experience to help plan for the future. It's also great personally, because I get to live in Seattle with my husband and two kids (ages 7 and 9), without the uncertainty of constantly getting underway on a ship's schedule! Plus, Seattle is my hometown, so as I look to 'what's next' with my life, I am happy I am exactly where I plan to be for the future – a huge shift, given my history of Navy moves!"



Army Lieutenant Colonel **David Schulz (Military Mentor 2007, 2008)** and Navy Commander **Jonathan Ahlstrom (Military Mentor 2018)** both served as U.S. Senate Youth Program Military Mentors and spent a year together as White House Fellows. David served as a Senior Advisor to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and also as a policy advisor to the

White House Chief of Staff, while Jonathan served as a Senior Advisor to the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development. They both had an amazing year, traveling to several locations in the U.S., as well as an international policy trip to South Korea and Japan. They worked together on a number of important initiatives and learned how to work in the complex interagency of the U.S. government. Completing his fellowship, David was hand-selected by the Army to serve at the newly formed Army Futures Command in Austin, Texas. In addition David and his wife welcomed their first child into the world! In parallel, Jonathan was selected by the Navy for command and he and his family moved to Yorktown, Virginia, where he took command of the nuclear attack submarine USS Columbus (SSN 762). Jonathan and his wife and four children are integrating into their new home and exploring the historic area in which they now live. Both David and Jonathan have regular contact with the amazing delegates they were privileged to connect with during their time as mentors. Both David and Jonathan are available to any USSYP Alumni interested in applying and becoming future White House Fellows.

Class of 2008

Ben Farber (NJ 2008) recently launched a personal and professional development coaching practice after completing formal training and accreditation by the International Coach Federation. He would be happy to offer a free coaching session to any USSYP alumni who are curious about coaching. Feel free to get in touch at ben@forwardperspectivenow.com!

Class of 2009

In May of 2020, **Andrew Connery (OK 2009)** graduated from Columbia Law School as a recipient of the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Prize, the highest honors available upon graduation. This was possible in part through his being awarded the USSYAA Hearst Alumni Scholarship. Additionally, a scholarly note he wrote on fairness and bias in international arbitration was published in the *Columbia*

continued on page 12

Business Law Review. In November, he started work as an associate at the law firm Cravath, Swaine & Moore.

While pursuing his M.A. in American Studies from Leipzig University, **David Shoup (MA 2009)** came to Bucharest for a study-abroad term and ended up staying through the entire pandemic period thus far. David initially signed on as editor to one of the last English-language news and culture print magazines in Romania, but the organization folded at the start of lockdowns in Europe last winter. He has since transitioned into an editing role at the developing *Financial Crime Digest*, a media platform of London-based Aperio Intelligence that will be launching online in early 2021. The digest primarily covers the latest news relating to US and European sanctions and financial crime enforcement actions worldwide. David would enjoy getting in touch with any incoming or recent USSYP alumni interested in journalism, the politics of Central or Eastern Europe, or pursuing study abroad or work opportunities in the region; he can be reached at davidmshoup@gmail.com.

This past year, **Brad Lentz (WI 2009)** was honored to be selected as the USSYP Assistant Senior Military Mentor. A submarine officer in the Navy, Brad also served as a USSYP Military Mentor during the 2019 program. With Washington Week 2020 canceled due to the pandemic, Brad was unable to serve this year, but looks forward to carrying out his duties and giving back during the 2021 virtual Washington Week.

Class of 2010

2020 has been a deeply challenging and rewarding year for **Matt Breuer (VT 2010)**. After an extremely challenging year for early-stage businesses, Matt stepped into a new role at Buffy (buffy.co) as Chief Marketing Officer this October. A few short days later, Matt married his partner of six years, Elena Garrido-Shaqfeh, and they eagerly await the chance to celebrate their marriage with friends and family in 2021.

Class of 2011

Big changes have occurred in the life of **Megan MacInnes (NH 2011)**. She writes, "I'm excited to share that this summer, I married the love of my life, Brandon Fleischer. Instead of the big celebration we'd planned, which we hope to host next year instead, we had an intimate backyard ceremony with our loved ones joining us on Zoom. We also moved (temporarily) from New York City to my hometown in New Hampshire, and I left my job at the NYC Mayor's Office in September. A few weeks later, I started a new remote gig doing digital marketing at NEPC, an investment consulting firm, and I love my new job. We're making as much lemonade out of lemons as we can, and wishing everyone health, joy, and a better year ahead."

Jordan Rasmuson (MN 2011) was married to his wife, Emma, this past September on a perfect day on Pelican Lake. He also shares that he was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives, and will start his term in January 2021.

Adam Caldwell (NC 2011) is looking forward to continuing his work as a regional representative for recently reelected Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC). Adam, his wife Sarah, and son Braston are excited about welcoming the newest addition to the family, Everett, in February.

Class of 2012

Major Ricardo Rodriguez (Military Mentor 2012) has checked in with greetings to all 2012 delegates.

Patrick Corcoran (OH 2012) is currently in his third and final year at New York University School of Law, after spending his summer working remotely for Debevoise & Plimpton LLP in New York City, where he'll be returning full time after he takes the bar next summer. This semester, he is interning at the Mission of the Republic of Maldives to the United Nations through NYU Law's UN Diplomacy Clinic.

At the start of 2020, **Monica DiLeo (CT 2012)** moved from New York to Brisbane, Australia (with her Australian partner), to begin a Ph.D. program in Political Economy. This ended up being a fortuitous move, both academically and in lifestyle, as Queensland has been largely COVID-free since the first months of the pandemic. If there are any other USSYP alumni in Australia or New Zealand, Monica would love to connect, and can be reached at monica.dileo@uq.net.au.

Scott Syroka (IA 2012) just wrapped up his time as the Director of States Paid Media with Biden for President HQ. He welcomes connecting with other alumni if they're ever in the Des Moines area post-pandemic. He can be reached at scott@scottsyroka.com.

Before the world shut down, **Amanda Patarino's (CO 2012)** last flight (and last time in a bar) was the USSYAA annual weekend. Since then, she graduated from the Harvard Kennedy School with a master's degree in Public Policy, moved back home to Denver, and started working at McKinsey & Company as an associate.

Joshua Childs (WV 2012) has had a very busy year. He graduated from the University of Michigan with master's degrees in Public Policy and Urban & Regional Planning and started a new job as a Development Manager with a nonprofit affordable housing developer in Arlington, VA.

continued on page 13

And, as a silver lining for 2020, he knocked out his first (and second!) 100-mile bike rides on the beautiful Greenbrier River Trail in West Virginia.

Class of 2013

Cormac Broeg (IA 2013) received his Juris Doctor from the University of Iowa College of Law and became admitted to practice law in the state of Iowa this year. But, his greatest news of all is his engagement to be married to Humaa Siddiqi of Roselle, Illinois. In January 2021, Cormac will begin work as an Associate at the New York office of Mayer Brown LLP.

Kyle Campbell (AL 2013) graduated from The University of Alabama School of Law in May 2020 and passed the Maryland Bar Exam in October. He now serves as Associate General Counsel to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), a public sector labor union representing 1.4 million members throughout the United States. He plans to move to Washington, D.C., when the pandemic subsides, and looks forward to reconnecting with everyone during Washington Week.

Class of 2014

Sarah Lanford (TX 2014) has spent the majority of 2020 social distancing and working from home. During quarantine, Sarah has developed a deeper appreciation for her family, community, and friends. In March, she joined the USSYAA Board as the National Capital Region Director, and in June, she served as a Senior Counselor for Texas Bluebonnet Girls State's first-ever virtual session. Sarah has been organizing locally for Arlington Democrats since 2018, and in November, she was elected Area Chair for the Northern Virginia metro corridor. Sarah is a Policy Associate at the National Academy for State Health Policy, where she works with state legislators to make prescription drugs more accessible and affordable.

Class of 2015

This past May was full of celebrations for **RG Pickering (MS 2015)**. He graduated from the University of Mississippi with a B.A. in Biochemistry and Public Policy Leadership, married Sally Reid Boswell, and was commissioned as an Ensign in the US Navy. He is currently in medical school at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland.

Richard Yarrow (MD 2015) graduated from Harvard College and is now a fellow at the Harvard Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. He is celebrating the recent printing of his first academic publication, on the history of elite scientists in early 1900s Germany, in Edward Elgar's Research Handbook on Nationalism. He is hoping to eventually make it to China once the pandemic is over, and would be delighted to chat with USSYP alumni interested in history of science and modern Chinese history and society.

Since his terrific experience as a Military Mentor in 2015, Lieutenant Colonel **Erik J. Smith**, USMC, has had several professional assignments including commanding the U.S. Marine Corps' 2nd Maintenance Battalion aboard Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and graduating from the Marine Corps War College with a master's in Strategic Studies. Currently, he is assigned at the Pentagon on the Joint Staff, selected to the rank of Colonel, and slated to command another Marine Corps battalion in Okinawa, Japan, beginning Summer 2021.

Jordan Cozby (AL 2015) graduated from Yale University this May with a B.A. in History. In June, he began working for Senator Doug Jones as a staffer on Capitol Hill.

In June 2020, **Will DiGravio (MA 2015)** earned an M.Phil., awarded with distinction, from the Centre for Film & Screen at the University of Cambridge, where he studied as a Keasbey Scholar. He now works as a media analyst at Media Matters for America.

Upon completion of his tour as the Governmental Liaison for the Coast Guard's Congressional Affairs Office in D.C., **Mauricio Posada (Military Mentor 2015)** was promoted to Commander and assigned as the Operations Officer and Chief Pilot of Coast Guard Air Station Miami, Florida. After a very fulfilling and enriching career, he and his family decided to retire from the Coast Guard with over 20 years of service and put down roots in Marietta, Georgia. He is now a pilot for Delta Air Lines based out of Atlanta, and living right down the road from his parents and where he grew up. He writes, "I often think back at the remarkable opportunity I had to serve as a Military Mentor and meet some truly amazing delegates that week. I hope all USSYP alums are healthy and well. Happy Holidays!"

Class of 2016

This year, **Elyssa Vondra (WI 2016)** graduated from Penn State with a bachelor's in journalism and digital media as Student Marshal, which is the equivalent of class valedictorian. She bought her first house and moved to Savannah, Georgia, for her husband's job as a teacher. She is currently a remote newspaper editor and was recently accepted into law school.

Since graduating from the University of Missouri – Kansas City in December 2019, **Helene Slinker (MO 2016)** has been serving as a College Adviser with Missouri College Advising Corps (MCAC). MCAC places recent college graduates in partner high schools across the state of Missouri to empower students to go to college and succeed. MCAC partner schools have high percentages of low-income, first-generation students. As a first-generation college

continued on page 14

graduate herself, Helene is proud to be serving in this role and is eager to connect with USSYP alumni who work in areas related to educational policy, equity, and access.

Class of 2017

Emmanuel Berrelleza (NV 2017) is currently a senior at Dartmouth College. He has gained early acceptance to Harvard Law School, and has the opportunity to defer admission for two years. While his plans aren't yet final, he plans to work in education before starting his law school journey.

Ian Muir (ID 2017) graduated with honors this year from Montana State University with a Bachelor's of Science in Cell Biology and Neuroscience. He was able to graduate a semester early due to taking college credits in high school. Congrats, Ian!

Class of 2018

Congratulations to **Noah Harris (MS 2018)** on his recent election as the Harvard Student Body President! Noah is the first Black man to be elected to this role. Noah has focused on cultivating inclusive communities for everyone on the Harvard campus through funding student organizations and initiatives to improve the lives of students. Noah is also the author of the children's book *Successville* that teaches kids they can do anything in life if they are willing to work hard in school, set goals, and develop talents.

Desmond Walker (Military Mentor 2018) had a busy 2020. He was promoted to Navy Commander, earned his second graduate degree (Masters in Business Administration with an emphasis in Human Resources Management), and was selected to become the Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of the USS Bainbridge (DDG 96) out of Norfolk, VA. Congratulations on your accomplishments, Commander Walker!

Class of 2019

Catherine Daniel (AL-2019) is a junior at Troy University where she studies Exercise Science – Pre-Health Professions. She was recently inducted into the Omicron Delta Kappa honors society and serves as the editor for Alpha Epsilon Delta, a health preprofessional honors society. Catherine is also the Vice President of Troy University's Nutrition Club and regularly volunteers with the local hospice center. She is also a writer for the *Bipartisan Post*, which was founded by fellow USSYP 2019 alumni **Tyler Swanson**.

Eli Blaufuss (KS 2019) is now attending the University of Virginia where he intends on double majoring in history and public policy on a pre-law track. Eli was also recently made a member of the Jefferson Literary and Debating Society.

Shauna Young (Military Mentor 2019, Military Mentor Selectee 2020) recently came back from her first military deployment in Qatar where she was the Budget Execution Lead, supporting United States Forces – Afghanistan. She managed a portfolio of about \$3.2 billion, funding mission requirements for the Combined Joint Operations Area and supplying the right resources at the right time. She contributed financial resources to base life support, minor construction projects, and military operations and sustainment for over 14,000 coalition forces.

Ranen Miao (NJ 2019) had the following to share: "The COVID pandemic started just as I began my term as student body president at Washington University in St. Louis. Over the past year, amidst physical distance, I sought to leverage my position to bring people together and tackle the issues my community was facing. We helped start a \$74,000 Food Security Fund for low-income students on campus, extended pass/fail grading in the spring semester, and pushed for university protections for international students. My work in student government has reinforced my passion for public service as a means of helping people, especially during difficult times like these. In my spare time, I've worked to help the unhoused population in St. Louis by donating water and volunteering with Tent Mission to relocate people before a cold winter. This year has been filled with hardship and struggle, but I continue to feel grateful and inspired by the people around me who push me to do more and who showcase the resilience and strength of community."

This past year, **Jay Philbrick (ME 2019)** graduated from the Maine School of Science and Mathematics in Limestone, Maine. He enrolled at Brown University, where he plans to concentrate in economics as well as international and public affairs. He was also elected to be one of Maine's four Presidential Electors in 2020, where he will be casting his vote for President-Elect Biden as one of the youngest Electors in American history.

Abe Baker-Butler (NY 2019) was named a 2020 Coca-Cola Scholar and a 2020 Diller Tikkun Olam Awardee. Last winter, he worked with Gov. Cuomo to secure the successful passage of anti-vaping legislation in New York State. Since April, he has served as National Recruitment Coordinator for Telehealth Access For Seniors, a nonprofit that has donated over 3,000 devices for telemedicine in low-income, elderly communities. In August, he founded FroshVote, an organization which mobilized 1,500 swing-state college freshmen to register and vote in the 2020 election and was featured on the *Today Show*. Abe is currently on a gap year, serving as Fellow to CEO David Harris at the American Jewish Committee (AJC). He will start at Yale University in fall 2021.

continued on page 15

Class of 2020

Victor Anaya (AZ 2020) is currently studying at the University of Arizona with a major in Pre-Med/Nursing. He recently entered into a highly competitive organization, the Arizona Nursing Inclusive Excellence (ANIE) Program, which provides an opportunity to experience the nursing workforce and health care professional lifestyle. He also joined a freshman honorary called the Freshman Class Council. While it has been an “interesting” academic school year, Victor believes he is doing quite well both academically and socially.

This fall, **Nina Faynshtayn (CT 2020)** began her undergraduate career (virtually) at Brown University as a premedical student. For first-years, the official semesters are in spring and summer, but Nina was allowed to take one course during this fall semester and chose “Biotechnology in Medicine.” Throughout the semester, she has been able to engage in service and leadership in the field of anti-sexual violence work. She earned her state certification to become a sexual assault crisis counselor advocate, and has joined an activist organization of Brown students which aims to prevent and educate about sexual violence. Nina is excited to get more involved on campus in the spring and beyond.

This fall, **Giuseppe Di Cera (MO 2020)** started college as a student-athlete in men’s soccer at The University of Chicago, where he plans to major in Economics and Public Policy. In addition to his academic studies, Giuseppe has developed an online resource for students in his community called the Student Opportunities Network, which lists available work and internship opportunities with local businesses and organizations. So far, the initiative has helped over 200 students secure work, internships, and volunteering positions. Before starting college, he interned for Senator Josh Hawley in his St. Louis District Office, where he relayed constituents’ concerns to the senator. And, finally, he received the President’s Volunteer Service Award for his leadership as President of his high school’s UNICEF club, where over the course of three years he helped raise \$12,000 and increase the club’s membership from 2 to 70 people.

Sarah Kim (UT 2020) writes: “I am nearing the end of my freshman fall at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Though my primary focus is geared toward economics and finance, I have additionally taken an international political science course. I’m attending classes from the basement of my home and it has been difficult in the sense I’ve had fewer opportunities to meet my peers, but even then, I’m thankful for my situation because I’m better able to participate in my clubs and webinars offered by my school. Meetings, appointments, and events are back to back, but because everything is virtual, I’ve been able to boost my productivity. There have been many ups and

downs – more of the latter within the past year, but truly, I’m excited for the opportunities that will arise from this situation. Even now, I wonder what Washington would have been like: the experiences I would have had, the people I would have met, and the places I would have seen. I am lucky that my fellow 2020 delegates are very proactive on our group chat, but I can’t help but feel a bit of a disconnect spiritually. I hope that a day will come where I will be able to meet everyone in person.”

William Harris (NC 2020) began his studies at Haverford College this fall as a first-year student and varsity cross country athlete. William is the co-founder of Naturalize Charlotte, an effort to increase naturalizations among eligible residents in his hometown. Over the summer, he led a transition of the project into the city of Charlotte’s oversight. For his contributions, William was chosen by Mayor Vi Lyles to receive the city’s Richard Vinroot International Achievement Award, making him the first individual under the age of 40 to receive this honor. He looks forward to utilizing his Spanish language skills to continue to make an impact in this area, having been admitted to Middlebury Language Schools’ summer Spanish immersion program.



Photo by Jakub Mosur



MAKING A DIFFERENCE THROUGH DONATIONS

As the year comes to a close, we want to thank you for the support you've shown to the United States Senate Youth Alumni Association. Whether you attended this year's alumni dinner, participated in our Elections Panel, provided an update for this newsletter, or supported us with a financial contribution, your activity has helped us to accomplish Mom Hearst's goal of keeping Senate Youth Program alumni connected.

Contributions from our members are the most critical component of our funding structure. In the era of COVID-19, where paid, ticketed, in-person events are not practical (or in some cases permissible), direct financial support of the association is the only consistent way we have of raising new money, and in 2021 we will be looking to you for direct support. The USSYAA has an all-volunteer Board of Directors, with people from all walks of life serving in both advisory and working capacities to bring scholarships, news, and events to past delegates of the United States Senate Youth Program. Your contributions don't pay stipends to directors – they pay the very real expenses of our mission to build avenues of communication among alumni and to provide financial assistance for the professional educational needs of alumni.

To make donations to the alumni association as streamlined as possible, we have established an online donation portal at www.ussyaa.org to facilitate your contribution, which you can make in convenient installments charged to your credit card if you so choose. (Look for the "pledge" option.) If you prefer the tangibility of writing a check, donations mailed to our post office box will receive a confirmation letter from our Treasurer. The USSYAA is a 501(c)(3) public charity; please inquire with your tax professional as to whether your donation is tax deductible and with your workplace as to whether matching funds are available.

In addition to traditional donation channels, the USSYAA is registered to accept donations from the Amazon Smile Foundation. If you make purchases via smile.amazon.com, you can designate the United States Senate Youth Alumni Association as the recipient of the Amazon Smile Foundation's donations. This is a painless way to help the USSYAA receive funds, without doing anything different in your daily life.

Again, thank you for your participation in our activities, whether it be financial, logistical, or by your (virtual) presence at our events and meetings. You truly can and do make a difference.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

DAVID ZAVADSKY (WI 1990)

This year has been a year of global changes, and the United States Senate Youth Alumni Association has certainly not been immune. However, I believe many changes for the alumni association are for the better. We've been retooling our communications approach and updating some of our assets behind the scenes. This is the first year that we've actively asked our Military Mentors to contribute to the annual newsletter, and I think the result is stunning. And even our meetings are a little more personable, with video calls letting us see each other and interact in new ways. (Although I do need to apologize to my fellow board members for seeing my struggle during No Shave November.)

Of course, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge those who provided the strong content for this year's newsletter. It has been a privilege reading about your activities and how you've been thriving, even in the face of adversity. Thank you. This newsletter wouldn't exist without you.