



For Immediate Release

Contact: For questions about your state's delegates, alternates or selection process, please contact your state selection administrator: Dr. Elisabeth Egetemeyr at elisabeth.egetemeyr@nysed.gov or 518-474-5922. For general information about the United States Senate Youth Program, please contact Program Director Rayne Guilford at 800-425-3632 or rguilford@hearstfdn.org. Also see www.usenateyouth.org.

New York Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program **--Students Headed to Washington, D. C. and to Receive \$5,000 Scholarship--**

January 8, 2015, Washington, D.C. -- Senators Charles E. Schumer and Kirsten E. Gillibrand today announced the names of the two students who have been selected as delegates to the 53rd annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) that will be held March 7 – 14, 2015 in Washington, D.C. Justin Shapiro of Merrick and Ioana Solomon of Long Island City were chosen from across the state to be part of the group of 104 student delegates who will attend the program's 53rd annual 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. Originally proposed by Senators Kuchel, Mansfield, Dirksen and Humphrey, 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 brings 104 of the most outstanding high school students — two from each state, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education Activity — to Washington, D.C. for 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 \$5,000 undergraduate college scholarship with encouragement to continue coursework in government, history and public affairs. Transportation and all expenses for Washington Week are also provided by The Hearst Foundations; as stipulated in S.Res.324; no government funds are utilized.

Justin Shapiro attends Kennedy High School in Bellmore, N.Y. and serves as the Student Government press secretary. He is a climate leader with the Climate Reality Project, giving presentations on climate change throughout his community, fusing his interest in environmental issues with his passion for political activism. Justin is a semifinalist for the National Merit Scholarship with awards from numerous honor societies. He also plays saxophone and clarinet on the All-State level.

(more)

**UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM
2015 Delegate Announcement**

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Ioana Solomon attends Stuyvesant High School and serves as the president of the Stuyvesant Speech and Debate team, budget director for the school's Student Union, a member of the Communications committee of ARISTA (Stuyvesant's chapter of the National Honor Society) and a columnist for the *Stuyvesant Spectator*. As a Congressional Debater, Ioana has been a finalist or semifinalist at most of the national tournaments she has attended. Among other achievements, she was twice awarded Best Delegate at the Brown University Model UN conferences, has worked on numerous campaigns, and was a member of the United States Crew at the 2014 Atlantic Challenge International Seamanship Contest.

Chosen as alternates to the 2015 program were Laura Hausman, a resident of New York, who attends The Brearley School and Brian Becker, a resident of Rye Brook, who attends Blind Brook 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 former Commissioner of Education Dr. John King, Jr.

While in Washington the student delegates attend meetings and briefings with Senators, House Representatives and 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. The students will also tour many of the national monuments and several museums and they will stay at the historic Mayflower Hotel in downtown Washington, D.C.

In addition to outstanding leadership abilities and a strong commitment to volunteer work, the student delegates generally rank academically in the top one percent of their states among high school juniors and seniors. Now more than 5,000 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; Senator Cory Gardner, the second alumnus to be elected U.S. Senator and the first to be elected to the U.S. House of Representatives; New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, the first alumnus 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, and former presidential advisors Thomas "Mack" McLarty and Karl Rove. Additional notables include former Lt. Governor of Idaho David Leroy, former president of the Progressive Policy Institute Robert Shapiro, military officers, members of state legislatures, Foreign Service officers, top congressional staff, healthcare providers and university educators.

Members of the USSYP 2015 53rd annual Senate Advisory Committee are: Senator Johnny Isakson of Georgia, Republican Co-Chair; Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, Democratic Co-Chair; Senate Advisory Members: Senators Ron Johnson (R-WI), Mike Lee (R-UT), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Patrick J. Toomey (R-PA), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Angus King (I-ME). Each year, the Honorary Co-Chairs of the program are the Vice President of the United States and the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders.
