

NOMINATION INSTRUCTIONS

OBJECTIVES

The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP), funded by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, is sanctioned by the United States Senate under the authority of Senate Resolution 324, passed by unanimous vote on April 16, 1962. The program was developed for outstanding high school student leaders interested in political science. The objective of the program is to provide these students with opportunities to observe and converse with elected and appointed government officials at the national level.

Program Format

The State Superintendent of Schools, in accordance with the rules outlined below, selects two elected high school students. The selected students will receive an all-expense-paid one-week trip to Washington, D.C. Two alternates will also be selected to replace primary delegates in the event that they are unable to participate in the program. The program will be held March 1 - 8, 2025. Plans are being made to have students meet with their State senators, members of the cabinet, and other government leaders. Students will also tour many of Washington's historic landmarks.

Scholarship

A \$10,000 scholarship, subject to the conditions and requirements established by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, will be awarded to each student participating in the program. Additional information concerning the scholarship will be provided to each delegate upon their arrival in Washington.

Eligibility Rules

1. High school juniors or seniors, currently serving in any of the following elected or appointed positions during school year 2024 - 2025 are eligible for nomination:
 - a) Student Body president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer;
 - b) Class president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer;
 - c) Student council representative;
 - d) Student representative elected or appointed (appointed by a panel; commission or board) to a local, district, regional or state-level civic, service and/or educational organization approved by the state selection administrator; or
 - e) Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) commander or leader.

Note: Students serving in elected or appointed positions not mentioned above are not eligible to participate. If the student council or class organization of a school has an elected or appointed position that is not listed who has been a delegate to Washington Week and received an USSYP scholarship is not eligible to participate.

2. Participation in academic clubs and/or educational competition programs or conferences does not qualify a student for the USSYP, although many students who qualify participate in programs of this nature. The positions listed below do NOT qualify the student for the program:

Attendance or officer position at Boys/Girls Nation/State summer conference;

- a) Member of the National Honor Society (serving as an elected officer for the organization for the entire school year is acceptable);
 - b) A founder or chair of a self-created group; and
 - c) A participant or officer in Mock Trial, Model U.N., or other academic club, conference, or competition.
3. Students must be a United States citizen or legal permanent resident at the time of application, and currently enrolled in a public or nonpublic secondary school in the state in which at least one of their parents/guardians legally resides. A student attending a school in a state other than the student's state of legal residence of either of the student's parents/guardians is also not eligible. (For exemptions refer to the USSYP brochure under How to Qualify #2)
 4. All students, regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation are eligible for selection if they are currently serving in an elected position as outlined in #1 above.

Nominations

Each school may nominate one eligible student. The following suggestions may be helpful in conducting the process at the school level:

1. Assign one person to coordinate the initiative and serve as a contact person;
2. The assigned contact person will submit the nomination form, 2024 - 2025 Senate Youth Scholarship Activities Form, the Activities Summary Form, one-minute video in the mp4 format, student transcript, and recommendation letters;
3. Disseminate information about the program by using all channels of communication;
4. Ask teachers to encourage eligible students to participate;
5. Use a screening process to select a nominee. The Hearst Foundation advises that the selection be based on a demonstration of leadership ability, high scholastic standing, demonstrated ability to achieve, clear speech, logical thought processes, and community involvement with participation in a wide selection of activities on and off campus. Nominees should also have a strong knowledge of, and interest in government studies and public service; and

6. Ensure that the nominee meets the eligibility requirements. Schools who nominate ineligible students will forfeit their eligibility to participate in the program.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1. Using the attached nomination form, email the school's nomination to:
ussyp.msde@maryland.gov.
2. If you have any questions regarding the nomination form, please contact Michele Moore by email at michele.moore@maryland.gov or by phone at (410) 767-0358.
3. **Deadline Date and Time:** Nomination form, a one-minute video in MP4 format, and all other required documents to submit by email must be received by **Wednesday, October 9, 2024, no later than 1:00 p.m.**
4. The students will be notified by email of the exam date(s) and location(s) on or before **Friday, October 18, 2024, by 10:00 p.m.**
5. The top ten scoring students will be notified by email to the students' email address on or before **Friday, November 8, 2024**, of their selection to participate in the interview process at MSDE.
6. The top ten scoring students will be interviewed by a panel of MSDE staff on Wednesday, **November 13, 2024**. The interview panel will select two delegates and two alternates to represent Maryland in the program.
7. The State Superintendent of Schools will provide the names of the two selected students and two alternates to the Hearst Foundation. The Hearst Foundation will notify the student delegates and the two alternate delegates of their selection by the end of February 2025. MSDE cannot release the names of selected students until after the students are notified by the Hearst Foundation.

The exam questions will reflect many of the current political issues and significant individuals in state and federal government. Students should also have knowledge about the Constitution, government structure, and congressional, presidential, and judicial responsibilities. Students will be expected to apply their knowledge of government and analyze government issues. It may be helpful to review weekly news publications and government/civics textbooks.

NOMINATION REQUIREMENTS

To apply for consideration in Maryland, a student must be selected by his/her principal as the school nominee. The student must be a junior or senior and must hold an elected or appointed position in student council or class government. The student must complete the nomination form, the activities form, submit a letter of recommendation from his/her activity advisor, and a copy of his/her official academic transcript.

1. Submit the following: Nomination Form, Senate Youth Scholarship Activities Form, and Activities Summary Form by Wednesday, October 9, 2024, from a school administrator.
2. Submit a letter of recommendation from the advisor of the activity in which the student holds an elected position.
3. Submit an official academic transcript.
4. Submit a one-minute video by October 9, 2024, in the format of MP4 on the following topic: What personality trait do you possess has been the biggest asset to you in leadership positions?
5. Ten semifinalists will be interviewed in-person at MSDE on Wednesday, November 13, 2024. Candidates who are not notified by November 8th can assume that they have not been selected as a USSYP state semifinalist.

Rules

1. Only **ONE** nominee can be accepted from each Maryland secondary school.
2. The student must hold an elected office in student council, class government, JROTC, or civic or educational organization. (officers and representatives are included.)
3. The student must be a member of the junior or senior class during the 2024-2025 academic year and a resident of Maryland.
4. Nominations and all other required documents and video must be sent to Maryland State Department of Education, by email to ussyp.msde@maryland.gov by **Wednesday, October 9, 2024**, no later than 1:00 p.m. in one email by a school administrator.
5. For questions related to the nomination process or scholarship eligibility, please email Reginald Burke at reginald.burke@maryland.gov or call (410) 767-0313.