



For Immediate Release

Contact: For questions about your state's delegates, alternates or selection process, please contact your state selection administrator: Ms. Julie Arnold at jarnold@rrps.net or 505-867-0711, ext. 304. For general information about the United States Senate Youth Program, please contact Program Director Rayne Guilford at 800-425-3632 or rquilford@hearstfdn.org. Also see www.ussenateyouth.org.

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

January 11, 2016, Washington, D.C. -- Senators Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich today announced the names of the two students who have been selected as delegates to the 54th annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) that will be held March 5 – 12, 2016 in Washington, D.C. André Gonzales of Las Cruces and David Rivero of Lovington were chosen from across the state to be part of the group of 104 student delegates who will attend the program's 54th 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.

André Gonzales is a senior at Centennial High School and serves as the chairman of the Las Cruces Public Schools Student Advisory Council. André's commitment to developing and expanding sustainable partnerships between local public officials and New Mexico youth continues to guide his passion for youth advocacy and public service. After finishing his undergraduate degree in public policy, André will continue this important work as a change agent for New Mexico students.

(more)

**UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM
2016 Delegate Announcement**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PAGE -2-

David Rivero a student at Lovington High School, serves as the Student Body president, yearbook editor-in-chief, National Honor Society vice president, and Key Club vice president. David also holds leadership roles in the community, which includes owning and operating his own food truck, and representing students as the NEA student liaison. He plans to attend the University of Southern California to pursue his interest in entrepreneurship and public service.

Chosen as alternates to the 2016 program were Allison Wilton, a resident of Fort Sumner, who attends Fort Sumner High School and Katherine Wang, a resident of Los Alamos, who attends Los Alamos 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 Ms. Hanna Skandera, Secretary of Education.

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 exceptional 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 2016 54th annual Senate Advisory Committee are: Senator Cory Gardner of Colorado, Republican Co-Chair; Senator Mazie Hirono of Hawaii, Democratic Co-Chair; Senate Advisory Members: Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Michael B. Enzi (R-WY), David Perdue (R-GA), Tim Scott (R-SC), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Robert P. Casey (D-PA), Patrick J. Leahy (D-VT). Each year, the Honorary Co-Chairs of the program are the Vice President of the United States and the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders.
