



NJDOE News

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Two New Jersey High School Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program

Two New Jersey high school students were recently selected for the United States Senate Youth Program, an annual initiative geared toward educating youngsters in American politics and government.

Matthew Greenfield, a student at Fair Lawn High School in Bergen County, and Jason Karl of Rutgers Preparatory School in Somerset County, were chosen for the program, which begins on March 1, 2004.

"Jason and Matthew are already leaders in their schools and community," Commissioner of Education William L. Librera said. "Their selection to the United States Senate Youth Program showcases and honors their leadership skills and abilities. The Department of Education is proud of both of them."

The two seniors will spend the week of March 1 in Washington, DC, participating in a host of activities aimed toward honing their leadership skills and nurturing their interest in government issues. The two youths will learn about senatorial procedures, bipartisanship and leadership. Both students are leaders in their school communities in more ways than one.

Matthew Greenfield is the current captain of his school's debate team and a member of Future Business Leaders of America and the Temple Shalom Senior Youth Group. In addition, Matthew serves as President of the Fair Lawn High School Student Government Association and has held elective office as a member of the American Legion Boys Nation program.

Jason Karl's credentials are equally impressive. He currently serves as the Editor-in-Chief of his school's newspaper and as captain of the varsity soccer team. Jason is also Rutgers Preparatory School's Student Council President and a participant in both Model Congress and the Governor's School of Public Issues.

The U.S. Senate Youth Program began 41 years ago. Each state is invited to select two high school students to attend the week-long program. The students also receive a \$5,000 scholarship and all expenses in Washington are covered. The program is open to public and private schools.

Both Jason and Matthew said their interest in government and politics plays a large role in their activism and that what they learn in Washington will only benefit their future goals and plans.

"I believe that the opportunity to interact with our nation's leaders would guide me in defining my leadership skills and further inform me so that I can form my own ideas and opinions about politics," Jason Karl wrote in his application essay. "I feel as though I could greatly contribute to the program with my leadership experience in student government and great interest in public policy."

"For an aspiring young leader as myself, intrigued by the world of government, I cannot imagine an experience which may provide more potential for personal and educational growth than the United States Senate Youth Program," wrote Matthew Greenfield. Participation in the program would present an opportunity to "explore myself, to redefine my goals...and to investigate my own political values and beliefs."

Two other students were selected as alternates: Joseph Hack of Immaculata High School in Somerset County and Mackenzie Snyder of Southern Regional High School in Ocean County. The alternates will attend in the place of one or both of the winners should they be unable to participate. Joseph Hack is a member of his school's football team, Mock Trial club and YMCA Youth in Government club. Mackenzie Snyder is President of her school's Student Council and a member of Model Congress and French club.

The Department of Education administers the program. Once applications are distributed and collected, the DOE convenes a panel of experts in social studies and government and selects the students based on the following criteria: leadership qualities, academic standing, community involvement and clarity in speech and thought.

The Senate Youth Program is one of many initiatives encouraged by Governor James E. McGreevey, Commissioner Librera and the Department of Education to improve teaching and learning in New Jersey.