

Dr. Michael Johnson
Commissioner

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Department of Education
and Early Development

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

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Two Alaska Students Named to U.S. Senate Youth Program

JUNEAU -- Two Alaska students have been named as delegates representing Alaska at the 60th annual U.S. Senate Youth Program, which will be held virtually March 6-9, 2022. The delegates selected are Adelaide Poulson, a senior at Sitka High School, and Braxton Zink, a senior at Ketchikan High School. Leiah Kittams of Petersburg and Tahlia Gerger of Juneau have been selected as alternates.

During the program week, the student delegates will attend online meetings and briefings with senators, the president, a justice of the Supreme Court, leaders of cabinet agencies, and senior members of the national media, among others.

"Congratulations to Adelaide, Braxton, Leiah, and Tahlia," Commissioner Michael Johnson said. "Their selection to the U.S. Senate Youth Program recognizes their commitment to academic excellence and community service. We are thankful for this opportunity which will continue developing their leadership skills."

Adelaide Poulson, a senior at Sitka High School, serves as the president of the National Honor Society. Additionally, she is the Student Body secretary, the senior class vice president, co-president of Youth for Sustainable Futures and pep club, and co-captain of the girls' cross country team. Adelaide gives back by volunteering extensively for nonprofits in Sitka, organizing trash cleanups, and serving as a community tutor. She hopes to major in human biology at a four-year college and then attend medical school.

Braxton Zink, a senior at Ketchikan High School, serves as president of the Student Body. He is a dedicated leader for students in Ketchikan and has been involved in school government since seventh grade in myriad roles. He spearheaded his Student Council's transition to virtual governance last year during COVID interruptions and organized outdoor communal events to boost student morale. Braxton also serves as president of the Ketchikan Youth Court and plans to continue in leadership roles after graduation.

In addition to the unique learning experience, each delegate will receive a \$10,000 college scholarship from Hearst Foundations.

The U.S. Senate Youth Program recognizes high school juniors and seniors serving in student government who display outstanding leadership, academic achievement, community service, and the ability to read, write, and think clearly and effectively. The selection process is based on two essays, academic transcripts, college admission test scores, and two letters of recommendation.

Alaska students interested in applying for the 2023 program should visit www.ussenateyouth.org.



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*The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development provides information, resources, and leadership to support over 130,000 students in 505 public schools across the state of Alaska. The mission of the department is to ensure an “**Excellent Education for Every Student Every Day.**”*

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