

Greta Cahill
Animas High School
Archer, Celeste Durango

From: Archer, Celeste
Sent: Tuesday, February 19, 2019 2:07 PM
To: Archer, Celeste
Subject: FW: COSLI 5 year renewal Letter

Dear Legislative Members,

My name is Greta Cahill and I was a part of the 2018 class of Colorado Student Leaders Institute. During the summer of 2018, I learned and grew so much in leadership, collaboration, and most of all as a engaged individual in our state. I would like to share my experience as well as thank COSLI for what it has provided me.

Before coming to COSLI, I had some experience with leading groups and working together to solve issues we saw in the past as well as issues we are faced with presently, but these skills were never really refined. I felt stuck in what I was doing, and didn't know exactly what I wanted to do to help my community or solve issues we see. COLSI was brought to my attention through a fellow Advisory Board Member, and I quickly began working on my application. As I submitted it, I was really hoping to get into this program. I was so excited to hear that I was accepted and would be heading to Denver for a month to learn, explore, and create. Little did I know, that this would be one of the best and influential months of my life.

One of the most important things COLSI has taught me is that everyone has their own perspective on everything and that is beautiful because we can use those differences to challenge our ideas, refine our work, and mostly open our eyes to new and different perspectives. This is something that is so important in the world right now and COSLI does an amazing job teaching us to use this effectively. Throughout the program, we had discussions about the issues we see in Colorado and the U.S, like homelessness and undocumented immigration. I found that in the room of 96 students, there were 96 perspectives on those issues and because of this, we were able to discuss topics and open our eyes.

In the month we spent in Denver, we got the opportunity to work with the CU Business School in order to create our own business. This is one of my favorite parts of COSLI because of the personalization you could have with creating your business. My group and I decided to tie our business into an issue that is faced every year in Colorado, wildfires. While working, I learned vital skills in entrepreneurship and the ever changing business world. We learned how to effectively calculate profits, present business ideas, outline ideas for future promotional ideas, and work together with 21st century technology to create high quality products for our consumer. These skills were well taught through lessons we had through CU Denver Business School as well as our own mentor we had throughout the four weeks.

Due to these skills I have learned, I have found tremendous success in my own fundraising endeavors back in my community. As president of my Interact club, we found that the waste of single use plastic in our community could be decreased and so we started selling reusable metal straws around town to fundraise our international trip we are planning. With the skills I learned from COSLI's business project, I feel like I can contribute more thoughtful wisdom when it comes to marketing our fundraiser. After implementing these skills, we have gained a lot more business!

One of the things that I hold most dearly to my heart about COSLI was the friendship I built with the other students at this camp. I remember on the first day, we were all having orientation and I was scared. Being in a big city with people who I wasn't friends with yet was kind of intimidating to me, but one of the RA's stood up and said, "This is the COSLI family!" At first, I thought that the month was going to be too short to make great friends, but I made some of the closest friends I have

had during this program. Being able to spend a month having genuine conversations and working through projects was irreplaceable. I grew so much in the collaborative skills I was missing and learned to work with others to refine and present projects that we were proud of. While doing this, I became so close with my fellow students, who impact me daily. I would not replace the friendships I created in this program for anything and the people who I got to spend so much time with are people that I will always stay in contact with.

Along with this, Celeste and Kayla are such an inspiration to me. I have learned that in order to be a leader, you need to be motivated, hard working, and above all, kind to those around you; traits that they encompass everyday. The opportunities that they give students during and after the program has ended are incredible; in addition to this, they are always ready to support you in whatever you need.

Colorado Student Leaders Institute has provided unique learning experiences for me, where I have gotten to tour the Denver Arts Museum or learn about the building of Red Rocks. These are something that I would have never saw if it weren't for COSLI. One of the most unforgettable field trips we went on was the American Furniture Warehouse, where we met Jake Jabs. This was one of the first field trips we went on and I learned a lot about the way he created a name for himself in Colorado. Being a leader in furniture design and manufacturing, Jake Jabs took us through the *39 Keys of Business Success*, which gave us a lot of insight on the business' we were creating. It was so much fun to see how a huge business such as American Furniture Warehouse worked as well.

After coming home from COSLI, I realized how much I have changed and grew. I felt like I had a new, fresh way of looking at problems in my community and how to go about solving them. COSLI is a program that is truly a once in a lifetime experience and I would give anything to go back and hang out at the dorms having a dance party, or having a discussion about the homelessness laws we have in Colorado. I have learned the freedom and the responsibility of independence and college life and have gained new friends and skills in all kinds of areas intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. I have found new ways to handle the stress that comes with high school and how to deal with challenging projects in a group setting. And I have COSLI to thank for all of it. Without this program, I would be lost in what to do to spark change in the world we live in today. I found my voice at COSLI that I will use for the rest of my life, whether that be standing up for what I believe in or using it to help others. I found a new spark this summer and can not wait to see where my new found skills take me in life.

COSLI is essential to the state's youth engagement, which is so important in today's world. The experience and exposure to business, current issues and the policies being implemented for them, and the interpersonal and intellectual skills gained at Colorado Student Leaders Institute is incomparable to those found in a typical classroom. The state of Colorado and the world needs young leaders who are trained and willing to take on the big issues we face as we embark on the journey to greatness, and I can confidently say that COSLI creates and supports those leaders.\

Thank you,
Greta Cahill