

## TEXAS BOYS STATE 2020 (VIRTUAL)

ONE EXAMPLE OF AN APPRECIATION EMAIL TO SPONSORING AMERICAN LEGION POST 178 IN FRISCO, TEXAS. EMAIL RELEASED WITH PERMISSION.

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From: S. Varghese [2020 Virtual Texas Boys State Delegate]  
Date: June 14, 2020 at 10:16:33 PM CDT  
To: [American Legion Post 178]  
Subject: Boys State 2020 - In Review

Good evening Mr. Marshall,

First and foremost, I'd like to express my sincerest gratitude for being selected to attend such a phenomenal program. It has been an honor to be recognized by the American Legion, and I know that this experience will remain a highlight of not only my high school career, but of the life that God has planned for me.

As for Texas Boys State itself, despite the lack of physical attendance, was executed unbelievably well. Yes, there was the occasional hiccup in technology, as well as the occasional interruption of the unruly. However, as a whole, we managed to pull off the impossible. Furthermore, the fact that we were one of only two states to do so was - for lack of a better word - epic.

It is hard to describe just how much I learned and gained from Boys State. I have a far deeper understanding, and therefore appreciation for government. I used to look at politics and government from a birds eye view, not quite realizing its intricacies. It had never occurred to me just how much work went into serving in the government, let alone at the state level. I also have a newfound respect for our great state. Having grown up in Illinois, I didn't really have any land loyalties. I didn't even know certain states had their own pledges! But upon learning the rich history of the state of Texas, as well as learning by doing - quite literally living the life of a government official, I have never been so proud to be a Texan, and I now have no plans of leaving the state for silly reasons such as weather.

I have seen leaders in the past, having attended a somewhat similar conference just last year. However, this program made me see a different side of leadership, and its characteristics. I was immediately humbled upon the start of Boys State, as I had decided in my mind that I would be running for mayor of my city. I gave my hastily written speech, and I can say with utmost certainty that I was blown away by my fellow statesmen. They were all exponentially stronger than me, and I realized that these people not only have experience and accolades, as it turns out that we all have that in common. These people are charismatic, forward thinking, and very passionate. Sometimes, it was just their voices that made me want to vote for them. There is just so much that goes in to being a strong leader, giving great speeches, and campaigning for oneself, and none of this had dawned on me up until this past week. It showed me my strengths, as well as my many weaknesses, all the while giving me countless examples and incredible figures to look up to and learn from. I was able to hear unforgettable stories and valuable insights on events of both the past and the present, thus cultivating a distinctly well-rounded perspective.

The camaraderie aspect of Boys State, once again in spite of the lack of physical proximity, managed to creep its way into our conversations [and] we would stay in calls for up to an hour just talking and getting to know each other. We made the most of what we were given, and as a result we were able to make unique and lasting friendships. I hope that one day we might run in to each other, and reminisce about the crazy experience that was Boys State 2020.

Once again, thank you for the memories, and I hope that I will go on to live as a strengthened and more appreciative citizen. Lord willing, I'll be able to work for the government one day, serving our great state, and our great nation.

Sincerely,  
S. Varghese

