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**David Jung**

1228 Amberstone Lane  
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10th September 2018

Dear Members of Post 246,

Unfortunately, I was unable to expand upon the content of what I had learned on just one page of my card. Therefore, I wanted to take a moment to do justice to describing what the Boys State experience represents for myself and for any and all students who may be interested in attending.

Over the last two months, I've had the time to reflect on my experiences at Boys State and supplement them with knowledge from my high school civics class. By doing so, I have grown to appreciate the lengths that the American Legion has gone to create a thoroughly exciting and immersive educational experience. As I learn about the tenets of our Constitution in government class, I reflect back on the times where our knowledge was tested in the forms of oratorical competition, legal argument, and legislative debate. This hands-on approach has not only allowed me to understand the intricacies of our state government but also analyze some of the most pressing issues of our times with a keen eye.

For me personally, Boys State has been a life changing experience. Even though many organizations tout their programs as so, I truly believe that Boys State has been a turning point in my life. In Sacramento, I learned what it meant to unite and work together as a band of brothers. Never have I have ever been around such uniquely talented students driven not by desire for personal gain but by the pureness of their character. At one point, I found myself in the same room as a videographer, a journalist, a lawyer, and a policy expert, to craft the delivery of our party platform, late into the night. Time and time again I was inspired by the infectious enthusiasm of those who worked long hours alongside myself.

Additionally, my experiences there have allowed me to evaluate my own identity as a leader. Before, I had always considered myself a leader who leads through powerful oratory and assertiveness as the face of an organization. Through my work, I've grown to love leadership from behind the scenes as both a talent manager and a delegator. Helping other people's strengths shine felt like my personal calling. I enjoyed building close relationships with these delegates and concentrating the wide variety of their ideas into a singular focus.

As Whig Party Secretary, I worked hand-in-hand with the Party Chairman in enacting a unifying campaign that was characterized by integrity. We refused to resort to mud slinging and crude insults. Although it is easy to tease and rib, our job was to win over delegates through genuine

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policy arguments that took the process seriously. Anything less would have been disrespectful to the American Legion and the organizers of the event.

Our Whig Party Platform reflected the thought and care that went into running our party. We established our three fundamental pillars: Application, Aspiration, and Appreciation. All three pillars had two components representing both our Boys State constituency and our real world constituency. Through Application, we sought to admit delegates who did not pass the Bar Exam as active paralegals and advocate know-your-rights workshops/legal clinics for underprivileged communities. Through Aspiration, we sought to help delegates create their own interest-based businesses/nonprofits on-campus and support small business partnerships for large state projects. Finally, through Appreciation, we sought to show our respect for veterans on-campus and reduce the backlog of medical benefits for veterans in the VA system.

I have never worked harder for a period of three days in my entire life. Obsessively, our party committee would work with two hours of sleep a day, skipping all meals. Even though it was painful, it was one of the most rewarding experiences that I have ever had.

Finally, this entire process has taught me what being a public servant truly means. I was honored to have the opportunity to speak with veterans on campus. I had an especially heart-felt and profound conversation with Mr. Gerry Richards, an Elections Counselor. I was distraught that certain individuals who excessively insulted students while pandering to adult counselors had received Boys Nation nominations ahead of those of us who worked diligently with integrity. However, Gerry gave me advise that I will forever keep in my heart.

- 1) Honest intentions will always shine brightest in time. Be patient. Be diligent.
- 2) There will always be pretenders who jump to the front of a crowd in a bull run - far away from danger - and declare themselves leaders by virtue of being at the front. However, true leaders - leaders with genuine courage - are not those first in-line. They are the first to start and the first to risk the dangers that come with being trailblazers.

I am grateful to the members of the Mt. Diablo Post for giving me this once in a lifetime opportunity. As I pursue a career in public policy, I hope to look upon the examples set by our veterans and serve as a defender of the dreamers, the less fortunate, and the brave.

Sincerely,



David Jung