

Future Presidents of America

Alumni Highlights
Summer 2025



AT THE BENJAMIN HARRISON PRESIDENTIAL SITE



Future Presidents of America

Newsletter 2025



Future Presidents of America in front of the Benjamin Harrison Monument downtown Indianapolis.

A Look at Another Incredible Week of Civic Engagement

We did it again, a week of getting to know each other while experiencing accomplished speakers, unique adventures, and new ideas. As an alumnus, you will recognize some of the adventures like the history walk with Dr. Dan Miller, the etiquette of a formal luncheon, and placing a wreath on the grave of Benjamin Harrison. The addition of the escape room last year was repeated and solved, establishing the first contact between campers.

Some new and different experiences were added to the agenda, and the Thursday Evening Alumni Honor Ceremony was an inspiration! We had a *record* number of students in attendance. They received the new alumni pin, and four former leaders shared on stage with the audience how Future Presidents of America has influenced their lives today. Current and past members - stay posted for information about how you can participate in the formation of an Alumni Association.

There were several new speakers this year, along with some of our favorites from the past. From a hardworking woman winning an election against the odds, to military generals, to sports team officials, all the local leaders who came this week had a powerful story to share. They inspired everyone, including some special guests visiting from the new partner presidential sites. We got to host them for a week, learning from their sites and sharing ours. – Roger Hardig, Vice President of Education, and Jennifer Hodge, Gracia Johnson Floyd Presidential Fellow

Confidence & Qualifications		Monday, June 23rd
Official Welcome	<i>Constitution & You</i>	
The Situation Room	Christina Hale	
Board of Directors	Teresa Bennett	
Duty, Honor, & Sacrifice		Tuesday, June 24th
Walk Shop: Dr. Dan Miller	Major General Lyles Sam Odle	
	<i>Hail to the Chief</i>	
Poise & Policy		Wednesday, June 25th
Rep. Danny Lopez	<i>Deborah Daniels</i>	
<i>Art of Etiquette</i>	<i>Rights and</i>	
Formal Luncheon	<i>Responsibility</i>	
E Pluribus Unum		Thursday, June 26th
Judge Ryan Gardner	Remnant Trust	
<i>Coming to America</i>	Steve Campbell	
Mayor Chris Jensen	Alumni Evening	
Communitas & Civitas		Friday, June 27th
Crown Hill Cemenary	The Honorable	
Robin Winston	Steve David	
Jenry Morsman	Graduation	

Profiles in Leadership

A collection of local leaders, all of whom have contributed to Indianapolis and provided their mentorship this week.

- **Christina Hale**, Political Figure and Administrator
- **Sam Odle**, Senior Policy Advisor for *Bose Public Affairs Group*
- **Major General R. Dale Lyles** of the National Guard, Retired
- **Deborah Daniels**, Former US Attorney and Assistant US Attorney General
- **Judge Ryan Gardner**, of the Marion Superior Court
- **Mayor Chris Jensen** of Noblesville
- **Steve Campbell**, Political Figure and Media Director for the Colts
- **The Honorable Steve David**, Former State Supreme Court Justice and Lawyer for *Church Church Hittle and Antrim*
- **Robin Winston**, Political Figure and Marketing Consultant
- **Jenry Morsman**, Great, Great, Great-Grandson of Benjamin Harrison

Content Experts

Specialists in Indianapolis who generously shared their expertise with the young leaders this week.

- **Teresa Bennett**, Former Assistant Vice Chancellor for the IU Indianapolis Office of Community Engagement
- **Dr. Dan Miller**, Historian and the CEO of Historical Solutions LLC
- **Andrea Neal**, Author and Educator
- **Renaë Weghorst**, Etiquette Indianapolis
- **Remnant Trust**, Public Education Organization, Through Primary Sources

Click on the experts' names to learn more about their achievements and contributions.

Future Presidents of America

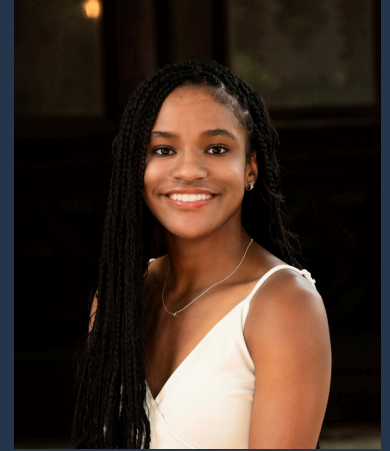
Class of 2025



Rylee Lightfoot-Brooks
Warren Central High School



Brenna Cornelius
Franklin Central High School



Alahna Dix
Pike High School



Jacob Harris
Lawrence High School



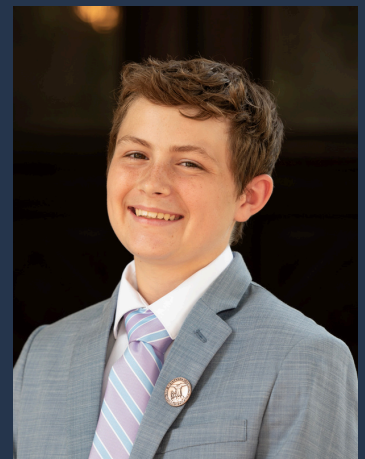
Julia Herstein
Noblesville West Middle School



Michael Korde
Beech Grove High School



Corde Leinenbach
Jasper Middle School



Roggen McCallister
St. Richards Episcopal School



Zophialyn Miller
Lebanon Middle School



Elizabeth Olubanjo
Ben Davis High School



Prudence Peng
Sycamore School



Gavin Sigua
Park Tudor



Joshua Skidmore
Old Castle Academy



Mikhaela Starnino
Creekside Middle School



Charles Webber
Orchard School



Monday, June 23rd

Raising of the Flag

The young leaders met every morning to learn proper flag etiquette, recite the Pledge of Allegiance, and share a silent moment of honor.



Mike Back, a long time volunteer, leads the future leaders in raising the flag.



The Situation Room

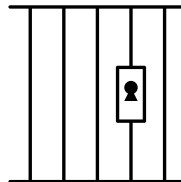


The Situation Room, the moment where the future leaders cross paths for the first time. An immersive icebreaker, themed to help tell the tale of the 23rd President of the United States, Benjamin Harrison.

Here, the future leaders had to work together, figuring out clues and reading through artifacts to obtain the codes they needed. Like true leaders, they used communication and cooperation to open the final box and break out of the situation room!



Both teams
escaped in under
40 Minutes



Constitution & You

The students were assigned to two groups and asked to pick a topic they were passionate about. While working together, they found common ground and debated various social, economic, and environmental issues. This is where the young leaders began to find their political passion.



Christina Hale Shares Her Story

Former state representative of the 87th district of Indiana, joined the Future Presidents in the afternoon to share guidance, her story, and the “why.” Hale started the week off with a motivating approach, being our first speaker, and an important one, as it marked the young leaders’ first contact they acquired.



Teresa Bennett’s Seminar On Networking

Professor Teresa Bennett finished the first day of camp with lessons on making connections, teaching students how to communicate properly in a professional setting. With her experience as the former vice chancellor of Indiana University, Indianapolis, Office of Community Engagement, it was no question that she would prepare them for the Alumni Night that was approaching later in the week.





Tuesday, June 24th

A Walk To Remember

Dr. Dan Miller walked the students on the exact path Benjamin Harrison took the day he decided to join the Civil War infantry. With every step around downtown, students reflected on the power of choices and how they impact us profoundly every day.



Sam Odle and His Staff



On the top floor of the Sales Force Building was Sam Odle, waiting with his colleagues and a stack of lunches for the students. Here, he provided his professional insight and allowed a space for the young leaders to ask questions about their own professional development.



Major General R. Dale Lyles



59th Adjutant
General of Indiana



In an important message, the students were told that perseverance was key to any work, especially in the armed forces. The retired general motivated the young leaders to channel their potential and change the world with their passions.

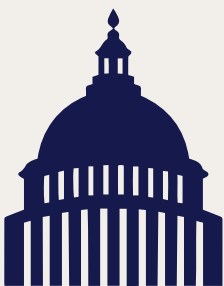


Andrea Neal



The Constitutional Expert

Andrea Neal, an educator, conveys that civics education is essential, as it gives people the knowledge and tools they need to become active, informed participants in democracy. By learning how government works, citizens' rights and responsibilities, and how decisions are made at local, state, and national levels, the young leaders gain a clearer understanding of their role in shaping their communities.



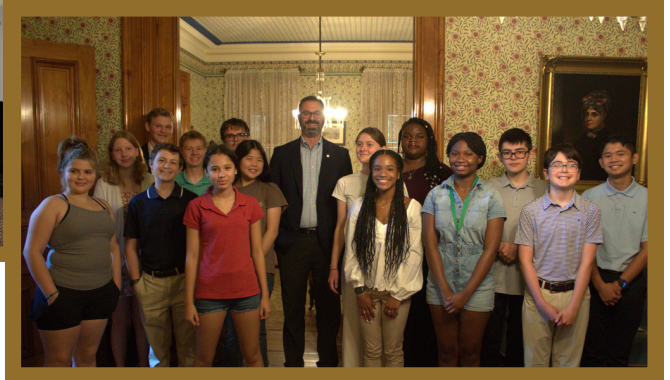


Wednesday, June 25

A “pep” talk was given to the students, a similar one to that Representative Lopez hears with Pacer Team Members when he is not in legislative session.



Representative Danny Lopez



Renae Weghorst

Meal Etiquette

What's On The Menu?

- Starter:** Seared Salad
- Main:** Bone-in Chicken and Fresh Vegetables
- Desert:** Lemon Cake



“Surprising and underrated” are the words the campers would use to describe learning table etiquette. Weghorst guided the students through their gourmet meal, teaching them the tips and tricks of a successful business dinner.

Deborah Daniels tells her path to success

A former U.S. Attorney and U.S. Assistant Attorney General, Deborah Daniels shares her extensive experience in criminal and civil investigations. A woman born into a law family, she also is the sister of former Governor Mitch Daniels.





Thursday, June 26th



Judge Ryan Gardner



Judge Ryan Gardner is a judge of the Marion Superior Court, where he currently specializes in the Family Division, after serving as a magistrate in the Juvenile Court.

Judge Gardner, greatness from small beginnings, a man who dedicates his life to his practice. He showed the future leaders the importance of a work - life balance, and that even the best leaders need to take a step back sometimes.

Mayor Chris Jensen



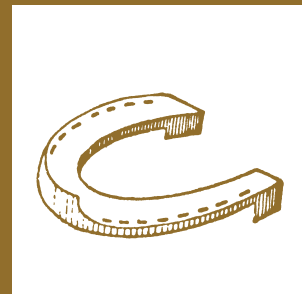
The current Mayor of Noblesville came to the site, describing what the day in the life of an elected politician was like. Mayor Jensen shared his favorite and most difficult parts of his job, as well as the importance of giving back to your community.



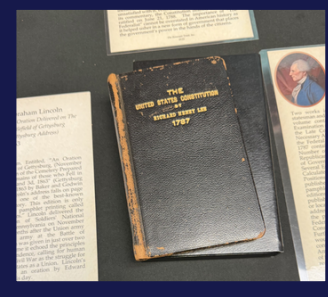
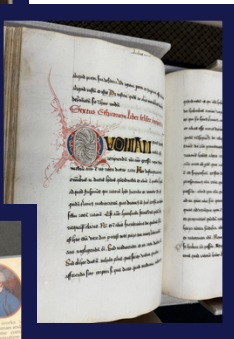
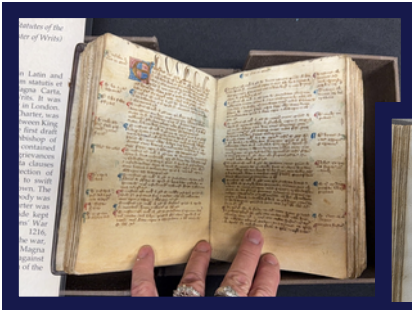
Steve Campbell



Steve Campbell has over twenty-five years of working experience that the young leaders were able to absorb in one talk. From Deputy Mayor, to a Professor of Journalism and Public Relations, to becoming the Vice President of Communications and External Affairs for the Indianapolis Colts.



The Remnant Trust



Something new for Future Presidents of America was the inclusion of the Remnant Trust, an organization that makes it easier for anyone to access historical documents.

Some primary sources the students were able to access were:

- 1350 - *Magna Carta* Manuscript
- 1598 - Aristotle, *Politiques*
- 1710 - Galileo's *Dialogues*
- 1776 - Thomas Paine's, *Common Sense*
- 1855 - Fredrick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom*

Future Presidents of America Alumni Event



Robbie Rodenbush,
Class of 2022



Kye Benford,
Class of 2022



Paige Fleming,
Class of 2021



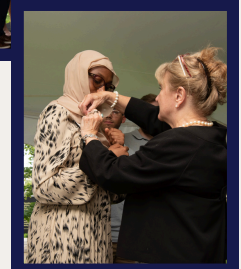
Stuart Anker,
Class of 2015

Four of our former Future Presidents of America students attended our alumni night to offer words of encouragement and share their experience in the program with the current and past members. The four of them came to the stage, announced by Roger Hardig and Charles Hyde, before giving their speech. They were then “pinned” by Jennifer Hodge and thanked for their contribution of leading the way for future alumni.

Alumni, We Want *Your* Feedback

Please email: rhardig@bhpsite.org for more information and to stay involved

The Future Presidents of America Alumni Association is vast, and keeps growing. With partner sites expanding their programming and with the rise of more alumnus internally, we want your input on the expansion and the creation of this network.



“...I do not mistrust the future.”

Benjamin Harrison, 23rd President of The United States
March 4th, 1889



**Friday,
June 27th**

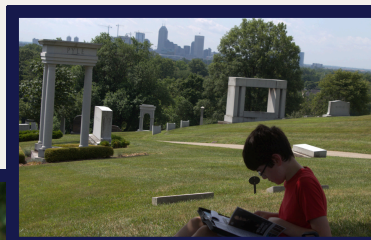
**The Honorable
Steve David**



Appointed by former Governor Mitch Daniels, the Honorable Steve David shared stories of his impressive law career. From championing justice reform, to getting on 48 Hours, it was evident that he has a lot of great advice for the young leaders.

Benjamin Harrison's Grave

At Crown Hill



As one of the last stops for the young leaders, it is imperative that the camp's resolution be as engaging as it started. Therefore, the students went to the third-largest non-governmental cemetery in the United States. Here, they recited their own letters at Benjamin Harrison's grave. They also got to see James Whitcomb Riley's grave, the writer of Harrison's original obituary.

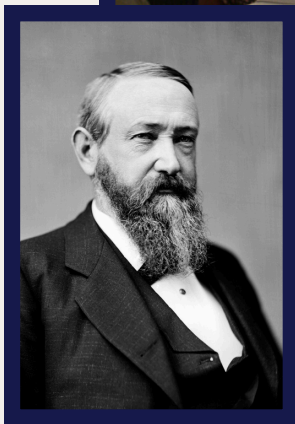
Robin Winston's Guidance



Robin Winston has always been committed to making a difference. He served as the Lieutenant Governor Frank O'Bannon's representative to communities across Indiana. He spent time getting to know the students, learning about their interests, and finding ways to connect them with other experts in their fields.



The Descendant's Visit



While history may seem distant, the stories and memories passed down enable us as a society to learn from our past. The Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site can help connect the 23rd president's legacy through the modern-day connection with the family.



Jenry Morsman, Benjamin and Caroline Harrison's great-great-great-grandson, and his daughter, Abby.

Visiting Colleagues

In addition to all the wonderful speakers who visited us for the week, various colleagues joined us. These remarkable educators added to our week, learning from our Future Presidents of America camp as well as theirs. We are thankful for their participation and look forward to future visits.



Cynthia Klenke
Education Director, Abraham
Lincoln Presidential Library



Brent Holmes
The Hauenstein Center at Grand
Valley State University.



Randall Cotts
Education, Gerald R. Ford
Presidential Library.

A Special Thanks

to our dignitary, Gracia Johnson
Floyd, for her generous support
to Future Presidents of America.



We Were Not the Only Site Civically Engaged this Summer

Future Presidents of America here at Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site has grown a lot. In addition to our colleagues coming to us, we also got a glimpse of our their camps were doing.

Future Presidents of America 2025

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library



Students get unique access to an original copy of the Gettysburg Address.



The Lincoln Presidential Library Leaders asking questions inside the Illinois State Senate.

The Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library



Students posing outside Woodrow Wilson's childhood home.

The Wilson Presidential Library Leaders sitting inside the Pierce - Arrow Limousine "Chariot of the President."



The Students visiting with Stanton City Council.

SECOND TERM 2025

Future Presidents of America, Second Term, is offered to Alumni who want to return for another camp session. Instead of the speakers coming to the site, the students travel to hear local leaders at their place of employment. The three days were packed, with the students attending the Marion County Courthouse, Indiana State House, Crown Hill Cemetery, and finishing with the Indiana State Archives.

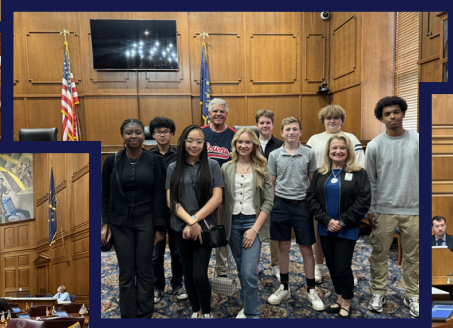
Day 1

US District Court



Indiana State House

Day 2



Crown Hill Cemetery

Day 3

Indiana State Archives



Thank You To Our Staff:

This camp would not have been possible without the generous support of our staff, volunteers, and donors. We thank them for their help putting together Future Presidents of America 2025 at the Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site!



MOLLY BEAUSIR



ASHTON GIANAKOS



CHARLIE HYDE



ROGER HARDIG



JENNIFER HODGE

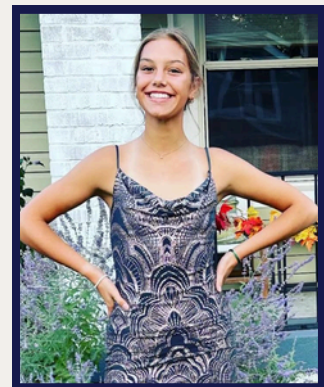
And To Our Ambassadors and Volunteers:



MAKOTO BUROKU



MIKE BACK



MARLEE SCOTT

Thank you for reading!



Benjamin Harrison Site is committed to public service and lifting up the leaders of tomorrow. We were happy to have hosted yet another year of Future Presidents of America, and look forward to many more years to come!

Yours Truly,

*Benjamin Harrison
Presidential Site* 😊

**Ready to get
more involved?**

Email Roger Hardig or Jennifer Hodge

rhardig@bhpsite.org
jhodge@bhpsite.org

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