

PROGRAM VIEWBOOK



Senate

Page

Program

A legislative service
and leadership development program



“My father was on the board of supervisors, and he was a little bit in politics. We went to see the local legislator in the House – I. T. Wilkinson - from Kenbridge. My father supported his opponent, so I didn't get anywhere there. It turned out that my first cousin did, and we came down here together. If I couldn't get the job there (House), we thought we would try the Senate.

We went to see our Senator over in Farmville, and he sponsored me. It was right after the depression, times were tight and a job for me would help.

That's how I got started.”

~ Julian Winn
Class of 1936-38



1944

Limits implemented on years of service

“The Senate shall elect seven Pages whose term shall be four years,” according to the Rules of the Senate. Prior to 1940, it appeared as though a Senate Page could serve without term limits. This is one of several rule changes that would follow about age requirements and specifics governing Page appointments.

1850

Earliest surviving record of service

Senate Journal: Tuesday, December 3

Members of the Senate ironed out their differences about the appointment of one page and one doorkeeper, a deliberation that appears to have spanned over several days. The Senate appointed William McCauley as a Senate Page in early December with a salary of \$2.00 per day. He is believed to be the first Senate Page appointed in the Senate of Virginia.

1968

Vincent Tucker (Norfolk)

First African-American to serve as a Senate Page



Vincent was one of 11 to serve as a Senate Page this year. He had ten classmates: W. Doak Bane, Edwin Brooks III, John Dickinson, Proal Heartwell, Wm. Isaacs, Claude Kelly Jr., Mathew Melvin, Robert McClintock and John Truman.

36 *Journal of the Senate of Virginia.*
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1850.
William M. Ambler, Esq., a Senator returned to represent the district composed of the counties of Fluvanna, Goochland, Louisa and Hanover, being duly qualified, appeared and took his seat in the Senate Chamber. Crawford Turner and John Thompson, Esquires, appeared and took their seats.
Mr. Carlile offered the following resolution:
Resolved, That the Speaker appoint a Page, to act as such during the pleasure of the Senate, and that two dollars a day be allowed for his services.
Mr. Rives moved that the resolution be laid upon the table, and on the question being put thereon, was disagreed to by the Senate. Ayes 11—Noes 17.
The ayes and noes, upon that question, being required by Mr. Edmiston, seconded by Mr. Deneale, were as follow:
Ayes—Messrs. Dennis, (Speaker,) Rives, Barbee, Daniel, Carrington, Turner, Deneale, Thompson of D., Catlett, Ambler and West—11.
Noes—Messrs. Woods, Tribble, Thompson of A., Horner, Carlile, Pitts, Shackelford, Opie, Tate, French, Stanard, Grantham, Edmiston, Cowen, Thomas, Layne and Ward—17.
The question was then put, upon the resolution, and agreed to by the Senate.
On motion of Mr. Layne,
The vote, on yesterday, rejecting the resolution to appoint a Second Door-keeper, was re-considered. Ayes 14—Noes 13.

1970

Additional Pages titled as Messengers

The Senate began appointing Messengers to serve in the same capacity as Pages, along with receiving the same rate of pay and adhering to expectations when it came to decorum. The Clerk of the Senate made such appointments at the recommendation of a Senator who did not have a Page appointment for that particular year. The role of a Messenger was identical to that of a Page. The title of Messenger would be retired in 2015.

Present Day

The Senate Page Program was reorganized and rebranded to focus on leadership development. In 2017, Forty-six Senate Pages were appointed from an applicant pool of 191. The class size and number of applicants were record-setting.

Senate Pages have been an integral part of Virginia's upper chamber since at least 1850. We have a tremendous responsibility to secure the future of that tradition as we strive to inspire and prepare the next generation of representatives, town managers, county administrators, public safety officers and civic leaders.

1971

Sallie McCutcheon (Henrico)

First female to serve as a Senate Page

"The program was an all-male tradition, but I still wanted to do it. I didn't take no very easily. I pleaded my case and Lieutenant

Governor Reynolds courteously reiterated the all male tradition thing, but he said he would try to make it work. This had to be taken to the Senate Rules Committee which sounded ominous. At the time he was battling a brain tumor that later took his life, but he took a risk and appointed me! Quite a brave move on his part."



1980-91

Uniform amendments

The Senate Chamber had been redecorated and accented with red carpet and drapes, so each Senate Page was issued a red blazer to coordinate. Grey slacks and skirts, along with a white top, completed the uniform attire. A more professional-looking, navy blue blazer uniform guideline was adopted in 1991. Boys wore grey slacks and girls wore grey skirts.

1971-76

Staff additions and uniform attire

In 1971, Mary Catherine Plaster (Chatham) was hired as the first evening chaperone and James Gray Neale (Keysville) was hired as the first day supervisor of Senate Pages. The Pages wore a green blazer to coordinate with the Senate Chamber. Bendinger Brothers, Inc. manufactured blazers for the Page class at a cost of \$32.50—\$42.50 per garment. In 1976, James Tucker, II (Richmond) and Shirley Whetstone (Richmond) were hired to supervise the first study hall for out-of-town Senate Pages.



“I have thoroughly enjoyed coming back to engage with the current Senate Page classes. They are learning about the state government side and how the decisions there filter down to local government. It is just good to be able to influence the future leaders.”

~ R. Morgan Quicke, class of 2000



The Setting in Which Participants Work and Learn

Virginia's Capitol is the second oldest working statehouse in America and the first Roman temple style public building in the New World. The Capitol has been the scene of many historical events of importance to Virginia and the nation. In war and peace the Virginia State Capitol has endured as a symbol of Virginia's representative government and a reminder of important American principles.

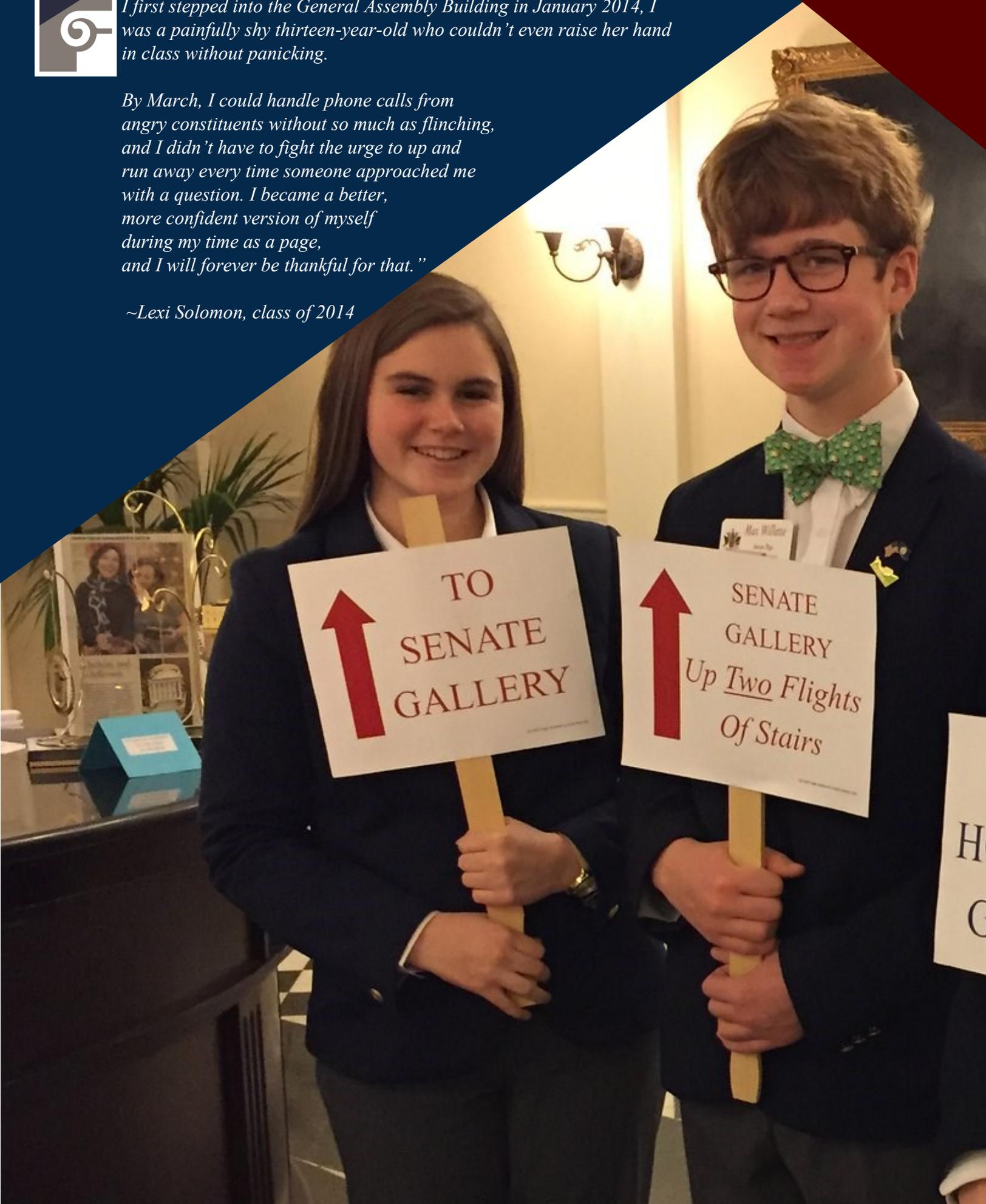




"I owe so much of who I am today to the Senate Page Program. When I first stepped into the General Assembly Building in January 2014, I was a painfully shy thirteen-year-old who couldn't even raise her hand in class without panicking.

By March, I could handle phone calls from angry constituents without so much as flinching, and I didn't have to fight the urge to up and run away every time someone approached me with a question. I became a better, more confident version of myself during my time as a page, and I will forever be thankful for that."

~Lexi Solomon, class of 2014



Program Pillar #1: The Responsible Young Adult

Each Senate Page supports the legislative process through tasks such as staffing committee meetings, answering telephone calls, providing basic concierge services, and speaking to visiting delegations about their experience and role in the legislative process.

Assignments are delegated to the Senate Page class using a team approach with an emphasis on exceptional standards of service.

Teams rotate on a weekly basis to instill responsibility.





“Serving as a Senate Page was an experience that opened my eyes to the significance of state and local government, the importance of strong leadership, and the necessity of statesmanship in our politics.”

*~ Thomas Cannella II, class of 2011**

** youngest ever elected to public office in the Commonwealth of Virginia at the age of 18.*

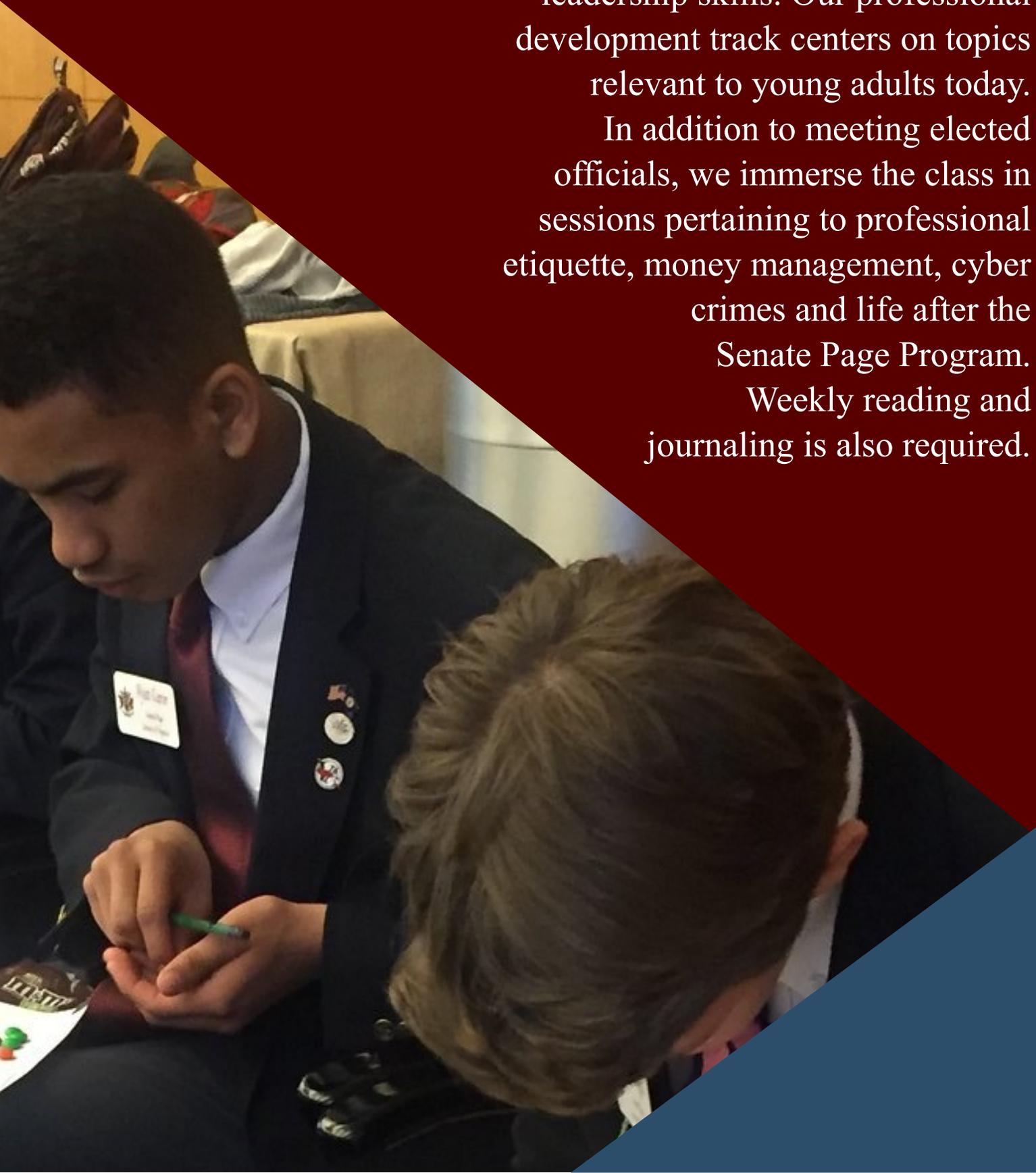


Program Pillar #2: The Evolving Leader

The class will engage in team building scenarios designed to practice leadership skills. Our professional development track centers on topics relevant to young adults today.

In addition to meeting elected officials, we immerse the class in sessions pertaining to professional etiquette, money management, cyber crimes and life after the Senate Page Program.

Weekly reading and journaling is also required.





"I really liked the community service project we did which was donating food to the Central Virginia Food Bank. We raised a little over \$27,000.

When I came out of the Senate Page Program, I went through phases where I wanted to be a lawyer, then I wanted to be a senator and after that I wanted to be a judge. I had my mind made up. However, then I joined the Harvest Foundation and I realized I could do more if I was in the community and making a difference instead of just representing others. I think that my calling is being in the community and actually making a difference."

~ Karli Foster, class of 2013



Program Pillar #3: The Civic-Minded Young Adult

Senate Page service extends beyond the confines of Capitol Square. Each class is required to complete a community service project as a team. In recent years, the program has partnered with a local non-profit group that serves approximately three-dozen counties across the Commonwealth.





“My favorite part of the Senate Page Program was the mock Senate session that we had. I really enjoyed putting what I had learned over the seven weeks into action by becoming a Senator. It was a great final activity because we were able to debate bills and laws that we had created. Most of the Senate Pages, including me, want to go into political office some day, so this program gave us a great first look at what it is like to be a Senator.”

~ Megha Karthikeyan, class of 2013



Program Capstone: A Mock Legislative Session

The education acquired through the core program components serves as preparation for the program capstone.

The program capstone is an hour during which the class demonstrates what they learned about the legislative process. Pages switch roles with legislators to openly debate topics on which they voted in mock committee. Legislators serve the mock floor session in a Page-like capacity.





“This program is, in my opinion, one of the most important things we do. We hear from so many former Senate Pages, young and old, about what an impact the program has had on their lives.”

~ Susan Clarke Schaar, Clerk of the Senate

Consideration for Admission

Applicants should discuss the program requirements and demands as a family **prior to starting the application**. In addition, the applicant must also discuss the program with the appropriate school personnel such as principals, guidance counselors and teachers.

Applicants seeking admission must be 13 or 14 years of age on the first day of session (second Wednesday in January) and a resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

All components of the online application must be completed by the applicant, with the assistance of parents/legal guardians.

Post-Senate Page Service

Graduates from the Senate Page Program are well-positioned for consideration into high school and college leadership programs; in particular, those facilitated by the Sorensen Institute of Political Leadership at University of Virginia, programs administered through the American Legion, and the U.S. Senate Page Program.

Application Review, Selection and Notification

Members of the Senate, on a rotating basis, along with Senate leaders, appoint 26 Senate Pages each session. Additional Senate Pages are appointed by the Clerk of the Senate. This process is very different than the House of Delegates Page Program, so decisions are typically released in mid-December. All applicants will receive notification from the Senate Clerk's Office.

Program Schedule and Absenteeism from School

Pursuant to the Constitution of Virginia, the legislature convenes on the second Wednesday in January for 46 calendar days in odd-numbered years and 60 calendar days in even-numbered years. Those who receive admission to the Senate Page Program report each Sunday evening and depart each Friday at Noon during the legislative session. Residency in a hotel is required. Admission to the program requires a full commitment on the part of the student and his/her parents for the duration of a legislative session.

More Information

Frequently asked questions, deadlines and up-to-date information is available in the Capitol Classroom section of the Virginia General Assembly website.





Produced by the Senate Clerk's Office
Susan Clarke Schaar, Clerk

For more information, please contact
Senate of Virginia
P.O. Box 396
Richmond, Virginia 23218
(804) 698-7410
pageinfo@senate.virginia.gov