



Dear Legislative Delegates,

Welcome to your 2021-2022 YAG Competition! My name is Zoe Klein and I am your 2021-2022 Lieutenant Governor.

In my first year in Youth and Government, I was privileged with hearing almost as many campaign speeches as you'll hear this year. Every candidate talked about Youth and Government being a big family. I was a pessimistic fourteen year old - I didn't believe them. I couldn't imagine myself becoming close enough with the members of this program to call them family.

In my first year in this program, I almost got it. I thought of the members of this program as almost-family, like a distant cousin who you've met once or twice or an aunt who's mentioned over Thanksgiving dinner. But through COVID, I felt closer to the members of this program than six feet. We managed to transcend zoom screens and Instagram Direct Message chat-boxes to welcome one another with open arms. I can confidently say that now y'all are like maybe half- siblings to me.

I hope that you all will continue the tradition of making one another feel like family this year. From arguing bills and proposals to not-badgering your witnesses, you have something in common with the person you're debating. You are tied together by an endless commitment to civic duty. There is no doubt that you will find one another in court rooms and in legislative chambers in years to come.

Also remember that you belong here. Keep your head held high, because you are among the best and brightest in our state - which, by extension, means that you are among the best and brightest in the country. You are gaining skills that will follow you into adulthood, regardless of whether or not you choose to pursue a career in government. You are killing it. Never doubt that.

I intend to do my best to remind you of your power in this program and above all to be a resource. Whether you need a question answered or a half-sibling-aunt-distant-cousin to lean on, I will welcome you with open arms.

Keep your head held high, keep your mind and arms open, and, in the words of Former Governor Vivienne Garner, drink water.

Sincerely,

Zoe Klein
2021-2022 Youth Lieutenant Governor