

Dear American Legion Post 337,

I would like to thank you for sponsoring my stay at Boys State this year. The experience that I had was one like no other. The memory, friends and bonds that I made there will last a lifetime. I won't lie to you, when I first arrived at Morrisville I thought that the whole experience was going to be dry and boring. Like why would I waste my summer going to some lame camp? This thought couldn't have been more wrong. My stay there was so great and enjoyable that I would do it all over again. The only negative that I can think of is that the requirement list for what you have to bring is inadequate in that you simply need more clothes. Boys State provided us three shirts that we were required to wear all the time besides for PT in the morning. It was ridiculously hot with high humidity during the whole week and only having three shirts, well you can get the picture. That would honestly be my only complaint.

The one thing that shocked me the most was that the majority, if not all, of the boys there were recommended by their school to attend. My school has a blind eye to the Boys State program for reasons unbeknownst to me but one thing is for certain, since I am the vice president of our national honor society I am going to introduce it to our board so that many more talented individuals can experience true leadership and Americanism. I am the only individual from Johnstown to attend Boys State in a very long time and I want that to change.

Overall my experience at Boys State was excellent. I can't express in words how privileged I was to be among the most patriotic boys in all of New York. I have never felt such a rush of patriotism as when all 1,100 boys all stood up and sang the national anthem with pride. We were not singing with our lungs but with our hearts, and I am truly touched by that

experience. By the graduation ceremony on the last day, everyone begged and pleaded to the director on stage so that we could sing it again. Every time we sang it got louder and more fueled to the point where they had to stop us on the third time. It truly is regrettable that many boys will miss out on this experience.

Thank you for allowing me to have this once in a lifetime experience that ultimately made me a better person and a stronger leader. This was a strong platform that I used to prepare myself for my application to the United States Military Academy at West Point and I sincerely thank you for that.

Respectfully,
Jake T. Wesley