



May 6, 2024

For Immediate Release

Contact: Cuong Nguyen, prevention specialist
801-538-7790 · cuong.nguyen@schools.utah.gov

Utah State Board of Education Hosts Banquet to Honor "Do the Write Thing" Finalists

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) recently hosted its 24th annual "Do the Write Thing" banquet. The annual event served as a platform to recognize the ongoing efforts of students across the state who participated in this valuable initiative to address youth violence.

The 2024 Utah "Do the Write Thing" Challenge has yielded a remarkable cohort of finalists, representing 13 schools throughout the state. Among these standout individuals, Zayden Maughan and Adeline White, both from South Ogden Junior High, emerged as Utah's distinguished finalists.

Sponsored by USBE Prevention and Student Services and the National Campaign to Stop Violence, the Do the Write Thing Challenge offers seventh and eighth grade students an opportunity to examine the impact of youth violence on their lives, and to communicate, through writing, what they think could be done to help prevent youth violence. The Challenge emphasizes personal responsibility by encouraging students to commit to taking positive steps towards change. By emphasizing proactive engagement, the program strives to help students break the cycle of violence in their homes, schools, and neighborhoods.

"We are thrilled by the overwhelming turnout for the Do the Write Thing Challenge. Seeing over 1,500 students engage in meaningful discussions about youth violence is a testament to their commitment to creating positive change in their communities. These young voices are not only speaking out against violence, but are actively contributing to solutions. This program empowers students to take

ownership of their futures and inspires hope for a safer, more compassionate Utah," said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Sydnee Dickson.

Zayden and Adeline will attend the National Recognition Ceremony in Washington D.C. this July, where they will work alongside Utah's congressional representatives, and attend a reception hosted by the Ambassador to the United States for the State of Kuwait. Their submissions will also be published in a book at the Library of Congress. Their dedication to promoting peace and addressing youth violence also designates them as Utah Ambassadors for Peace.

www.schools.utah.gov