

I attended North Dakota Governor's Schools in 2017 and again in 2018. Now, halfway done with my college career I can still see the impact that the program has had on me in my academics, my peer relationships, and my view itself on the state of North Dakota.

A lot of young people don't believe that North Dakota has opportunities for them and unfortunately their first instinct is to get out of here as soon as they go to college. I know this because I also thought this way and wanted to leave North Dakota, until I had attended NDGS.

By attending North Dakota Governor's Schools on the NDSU campus, I quickly discovered that North Dakota was not a place to leave for bigger cities, or fancier expensive colleges, but instead it was a place to be embraced with its own unique opportunities and education just as good as anywhere else.

My first year in the program I had the chance to work along side graduate students studying biochemistry and performing experiments in a professional lab setting. As a young high schooler I had no idea these things were even possible to do in North Dakota. As naive as it sounds, many students believe North Dakota doesn't have opportunities like these.

My second year I got to study architecture and explore the city of Fargo through a unique perspective. Once again this program had shown me that you don't need to leave North Dakota to get the "big" opportunities that so many students are chasing out of state, but can instead stay here.

Before ultimately deciding to go to Minot State to study Communication Disorders, I was accepted in NDSU and the U of M twin cities for their architecture programs. The competition for each was very tough, but I can whole heartedly say that I don't think I would have been accepted into either of those programs, except for the edge that NDGS gave me over other applicants. The students that come out on the other side of this program are some of the brightest and smartest people I have had the privilege of meeting.

Now here at Minot State, I am still stepping into leadership roles that first started with NDGS. I serve as the Vice President of State Affairs in our student Government Association, and I am a head delegate for the North Dakota Student Association, along with being a Student Ambassador for Minot State.

I hear a lot of lawmakers, and politicians come in to speak at NDSA meetings, and so many of them say to us that we, the young people are the future of North Dakota, but yet cutting a program like this tells us that young people aren't worth your time, aren't worth your investment and we aren't worth your resources. So please, put action behind those words I keep hearing, and prove us wrong when you hear us say that the representatives and senators only care about their personal interests. Funding NDGS will show young people that big opportunities are possible in state, it develop their leadership skills for when its our time to take over, and most importantly, give us pride to be from North Dakota.