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August 28, 2011

Mrs. Cecile deJongh
Manager
Financial Trust Company, Inc.
6100 Red Hook Quarter, B-3
St. Thomas, VI 00802

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Dear Mrs. deJongh,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a [REDACTED] at the Charlotte Amalie High School. I had the privilege of attending the Princeton Session of the 2011 Summer School. I would like to thank you for allotting me funds to help me go to the program. Without your help, it would not be possible. I would like to express my gratitude for your help by sharing some of wonderful experiences of the summer with you.

During the school year I heard many stories from my friends about how great the JSA summer enrichment program was. I have always been interested in biology; however when my counselor approached me about applying for JSA I immediately said yes. I applied to go to Princeton University and take the Speech and Political Communications class. I chose Speech and Political Communications because I was not only interested in politics but I wanted to take a college level course in speech. During the first week, we took classes in government and speech with students in the Department of Interior program. These were students that came from not only the Virgin Islands, but also many of the Pacific islands, such as Guam, Palau and the Marshal Islands. In the government class, we learned about basic democracy and the beginning of the US government after the Revolutionary War. In the speech class we went over basic speech presentation, and we gave both prepared and improvised speeches.

After the first week, the other students from the States came and we were able to meet a lot of new and interesting people. My speech and Political Communication class was taught by Dr. Torrence, who was a very good teacher. In the morning we would discuss the speech portion of the class, where we learned about the ways that politicians use tactical speech methods to persuade people. After lunch we learned about how political communication evolved over the years and how media and the public affect policy making in the country. We took many tests and gave three to six minute speeches, one of which was an opening speech for the presidential campaign. The second was a closing speech for either the winning or losing the presidential candidate. Lastly we had to write a paper which was a proposal for a quantitative

content analysis. For my paper I examined how a group of rappers affected gangs and gang related violence in the Los Angeles and Compton area.

I have always been good at writing; however this course has helped me turn my good paper writing skills into even better speech writing. This class was a little difficult for me because I had no former political classes or political background. Often times I had to stay up late to read sixty pages for the next day and also write speeches. I even had to stay up for almost twenty-four hours straight to write my final report.

Although we had classes from Monday to Saturday, we often went on trips to New York. The first time was for Speaker's Day, which was a day where we visited the United Nations and New York University and listened to speeches given by many different people about current politics. The topics included child labor laws, nuclear energy and weaponry, national defense and entrepreneurship. Each of the topics was discussed by a person who had great knowledge of his/her specialty. These speakers were very enthusiastic and I enjoyed them greatly. The second trip was a cultural day in which we were divided into groups and allowed to roam the streets of New York; to shop, go to plays and museums, and even visit the Statue of Liberty. Even though the classes and trips were good, the best part was the fun I had meeting people from all around the United States and the Pacific Islands. I made a lot of amazing friends that came from numerous different cultural backgrounds. It was fun to talk to them and go with them around the town. We often went to different restaurants near the university just to have fun and relax after a hard day of work. The program was very enjoyable, has definitely peaked my interest in politics and I plan to take more political courses in college. The Junior Statesmen of America program has been very beneficial to me. Through the JSA program, I have become more interested in our political system and have learned that even people my age can make a difference in our community and its policies.

Thank you again for making this experience possible.

Sincerely,

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