

Dear AAUW of Minnesota,

I would like to extend an enthusiastic *thank you* for the allowing me the opportunity to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders at the University of Maryland, College Park, May 31 – June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017. For me, this opportunity would not have been possible without AAUW of Minnesota.

The conference was eye-opening. There is something beautiful and empowering about being in the same space as hundreds of other women leaders fighting for equity. Leaving the conference, I was more motivated to make change than ever before.

The conference days were filled with 90 minute sessions, key-note speakers, and networking. The sessions I attended, and most resonated with me were: #ShinyCampus, which is the movement of empowered women empowering other women, Feminist Self-Care, which taught me how to preserve through the hard-times of being a feminist, and Self-Care to Recharge your Leadership, where I learned how to recharge after if I feel exhausted in my activism efforts.

At the Women of Distinction Awards Ceremony, I most connected with the speaker, Amanda Nguyen. Within listening to Amanda speak I realized that any person can make change in the world. Amanda wrote the Sexual Assault Survivors' Bill of Rights – which passed unanimously through the U.S House of Representatives – all within 7 months. She showed me that you do not have to be famous to make change – something I really needed to understand.

Thank you, AAUW of Minnesota, for granting me a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the most profound conference for women leaders.

Rosemary Pechous