



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Portville Girl Selected as Representative for National Leadership Conference

CATHARINE YOUNG August 18, 2009

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**ALBANY** - Nikita Warner, a student at Portville Central School, was one of only 98 young women selected nationwide to attend the annual American Legion Auxiliary Girls Nation held in Washington, D.C. last month, according to Senator Catharine Young (R,I,C - Olean).

The premier leadership conference, held this year from July 18-25, is for girls entering their senior year of high school. The focus of the program is to teach girls about leadership, patriotism and the United States government while staying in Washington D.C.

“Nikita has all the makings of a great leader and this was an opportunity for her to see how government and democracy work on a national level,” said Sen. Young. “She is self-motivated, intelligent and charismatic, and has a tremendous future ahead of her.”

Nikita was one of two outstanding citizens, known as “senators,” who was selected at the 49 Girls State sessions held across the country to represent their state at Girls Nation. Held this year at the State University of New York in Brockport, Girls State is a week-long program designed to teach high school students about state and local government.

Approximately 400 students attended this year’s state session and Nikita was elected by her peers to serve as the Girls State’s Supreme Court Chief Justice. Nikita was sponsored by the Portville American Legion Auxiliary.

Similar to the state sessions, a key component of the Girls Nation program involves mock senate sessions complete with caucusing and debating of bills that range in topic from personal to political interests. Campaigns are held to elect party officials, a vice president and Girls Nation president.

“It was an experience of a lifetime that I will remember for the rest of my life,” said Nikita.

In addition to their legislative forums, the “senators” heard from distinguished guest speakers and visited the Pentagon, Arlington National Cemetery, the White House and other memorials in the Washington D.C. area. Their visit to Capitol Hill included meetings with their respective senators and representatives.

Daughter of Jeff and Karen Warner, Nikita plans to major in political science and secondary education.