

Teen PNA Member Wins Trip of a Lifetime

By: Katrina Odrobina

My name is Katrina Odrobina and I belong to the Polish Women's Alliance Group 451 and the Polish National Alliance Lodge 1758. I live in Chicago, Illinois and attend Lane Tech College Prep high school where I am a senior. I plan to attend college and am going to major in Elementary Education. During the summer, I was an intern at the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago because I am a volunteer in the Science Achievers Program.

Recently I was very happy to win a two-week all-expense-paid trip. I wrote an essay on the topic, "What Does the United Nations Mean to Me?" The Oddfellows and Rebekahs, a philanthropic organization, sponsors the competition for teens, 16-17 years old.

Along with a group of seven other students from Illinois, we flew together from O'Hare Airport to Philadelphia. While we were there, we saw the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall (where the Declaration of Independence and Constitution were signed), the Betsy Ross house, Christ Church (the oldest church in America), and other sites along the way.

The next day we left for New York. While in New York, we visited the United Nations in the morning and took part in several meetings and discussions, primarily about global warming and other issues of global interest. In the evening, we went to the Top of the Rock (a sightseeing attraction where you go on an Elevator to the top of the Rockefeller Center building); there was really a great view of the city from there. During the next day on our way to the ferry to go to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty, we saw Ground Zero and St. Patrick's Cathedral. We walked down Wall Street and saw the Stock Exchange. The visits to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty were exciting and we All learned a lot and had a fun day. While in New York, we also walked down Fifth Avenue and saw a Broadway Play entitled "In the Heights".

We next went to Ottawa, Canada. The group of about 170 teens was divided into three different buses. It was an 11 hour drive from

New York to Canada, so the sightseeing started the next day with a visit to the Parliament buildings. We spent the Fourth of July at Niagara Falls, where we saw an amazing fireworks display.

On our way back to Pennsylvania, we went through New York and stopped at the Corning Museum of Glass. When we got back to Pennsylvania, we went to the Hershey Factory. We saw how the Hershey kisses are made and they gave us free chocolates.

Next stop was Gettysburg, which was educational, but it was also fun since I enjoy history, and our tour guide told us stories about what happened instead of just reading off facts.

Our last stop was Washington, D.C. We visited the Arlington National Cemetery, the Lincoln Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian, the Holocaust Museum, the Capitol Building, the Washington Monument, the World War II Memorial, the Supreme Court Building, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt State Park. We only walked past the White House, but We had an amazing time in Washington, D.C.

On our last day, we drove all the way back to Philadelphia since everyone's flights left from the Philadelphia Airport.

Another interesting feature of our trip was that each night we had different roommates, so that way we got to know as many different people on our trip as we could. There were teens from across the United States as well as Norway, Finland and Canada. The next morning when it was time to leave it was sad since many of us probably won't see each other again, but we promised to keep in touch with emails and calls. All in all, I would say that this was both an educational opportunity and an enjoyable trip of a lifetime.