



**Girls Inc. of Omaha Annual
Trip 2019
New York**



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Anticipation

I've been waiting on this trip since my birthday, February 20th. I've been waiting to see the staff, especially Ms. CT and my friends. This whole week flew by with ending school and focused on packing for the trip. The day of us leaving I was full of excitement. I was ready to leave. – Jamia


It has always been a dream of mine to go to New York City so I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunities. I was so excited that I packed 2 days in advance. - Jazzy

The months leading up to the trip, I was so excited, I couldn't wait to start packing for the Big Apple! When it came down to the last two days, I grew more and more excited. I couldn't wait to see who was on the trip with me. I couldn't sleep the night before. – Ra'Quel

I remember when my mom told me that Girls Inc. was going to New York. I didn't think I was going to actually go but then on my birthday, May 19, I opened my card and there was a little poem that said I was going on the trip. I was so excited...I was very nervous to leave my mom for so long. I have never been away from my mom for this long. - Peija

I was nervous preparing for this trip. I kept thinking of things I may have forgotten to pack. I was also nervous that I might get car sickness from the long drive. I was also very excited because I was going to New York! – Mariah

These last couple of days have been hectic. I had to do last minute shopping on Wednesday not to mention graduation. – Taylor B.



I woke today like it's finally that day. I was so happy and excited. I didn't even stress pack because I was used to it. I was ready to see old faces and many new faces so I can get to know new people and help them enjoy this trip as much as they can. – Asnina

NYC!!! I've been counting down for way too long...I never thought I would get a chance to go on this trip. Shout out to Girls Inc. the girlFRIENDS, and anyone else who made this possible. – Fatuma

Getting Started

It's the first day of the Girls Inc. New York trip 2019 and I would just like to start my journal by thanking the staff for coming with us. This is only my 3rd trip with Ms. CT, Ms. Roberta, and Ms. Sheebie but I am always grateful to see familiar faces taking care of my well-being in new environments like New York. I'm also very thankful to Ms. Angie for coming on this trip with us. I don't know her very well but I'm glad she's here to experience this with us. Again, I am very thankful to be here even though we are only on the bus. I can feel how amazing this trip will be. Love from all over! – Famo



I thought it was cool that we invited Girls Inc. of Lincoln with us this year. Though I have not got around to everyone I got a chance to introduce myself to Hana, Darionna, and Semhar. I was sad to hear they thought I was younger than my actual age, but, oh well. – Taylor B.

Here we are again on another amazing trip! I want to start my journal off by thanking those who made it possible for me to attend this trip. I want to thank Ms. CT first because without her we wouldn't have these adventure-filled trips. So, thank you Ms. CT for all you do! I would like to thank my awesome and beautiful and mom because she came out of her pocket for me to

have money to spend. She wants me to live life to the fullest and I love her for that. I thank the people who helped donate to the trip. I know we all appreciate you. Ra'Quel

My Mom and I rushed to Girls Inc. we thought we were late. I found out later I wasn't and that my two best friends weren't going to go. I was disappointed but decided I wasn't going to let things I can't control change how I feel about this trip....I also found out that we could have our phones but I left mine at home...Ms. CT said after we were on that this trip could make or break phones, that we could rewrite history. - Asia

As soon as the bus came, I helped to load it up. I asked questions so things could run smoothly. I helped where I was needed and not where I wanted. – Jamia

When we were loading the bus is when I was starting to calm down and realize there is no reason to be nervous...I was so worried that I wouldn't have anyone to talk to during the trip but as soon as I found out my friends Aniellia and Kaitlyn were going, I knew either way I would still have a mice time. - Peoja

We're on the bus now and I just got done loading everything on. I'm very excited. - Frankie

We were used to the trips so that when packing things on the bus we didn't need any teachers' help. We had it under control!!! - Asnina

Everyone was already by the bus loading it. When they told us to pick our seats we got on to rows of saved seats. We were being yelled at by girls. They were giving us real attitude. Then a girl named Aniellia helped us find seats...I hope o one poops because we sit right by the bathroom. - Maray

It took a long time [to pack the bus] but it was worth it. It took a long time because everyone was packing food. – Dee

The bus is way better than last year. We have leg room and sleep room. - Kaionna

Leaving is happy and sad because I'm leaving my sis and I'm always with her. – Lawrenceia

The day of departure I met some of the Girls Inc. girls from Lincoln. They are very nice and I am glad they had the opportunity to come on the trip with us. – Ra'Quel



When I finally saw the bus, I was amazed. I didn't think the bus would be so fancy. My ride experience consisted of watching HULU, listening to music, and sleeping. So far, I am having a great trip. Last thing, this is my 3rd trip with Girls Inc. – Jamia

I got to say I was happy about the bus ride because I was finally able to catch some shut eye. – Taylor B.

So, we get on our bus and Maray and I ONLY want to sit by each other. So literally every seat was taken. There were coolers in the back so this Aniellia girl helped me move them so Maray and I could sit together. - Dee

I've always wanted to go to New York; we are heading there now. – Angel

I played UNO with Jazzy twice and I lost both times. – Angel

I met new girls and introduced myself to make them feel as welcomed as possible and assured them that we are going to have lots of fun. - Kaionna

When we were about to pull off the girl in the seat in front of us yelled, "Yo, who took my beef jerky?" No one answered. Dee then told her we saw Aniellia with a bag of beef jerky. That started something. So she...got really mad. - Maray

This girl in front of us had...beef jerky and someone took it and she was really mad. LOL. But right now I am currently contemplating if I should get my chips because I am soooo hungry. I kid you not. – Dee

We started the bus with a very made Desi wanting her beef jerky. We kept hoping someone would find her beef jerky cause we really didn't want to hear no fussing Desi but eventually she got it back...We are thankful. – Asnina

My Girls Inc. sister was upset about losing her beef jerky and I hated to see her that way. I was thinking about buying her a new one but luckily, they found her jerky. I want everyone to have good and positive vibes on this trip. Once in a lifetime is what I say. – Fatuma

"Who took my beef jerky!!" As my seat mate Desi yells it out. Such a great way to start the trip. I'm pretty sure by now people (the girls) know Desi as the beef Jerky Girl. – Habiba

The trip has barely started before I declared it to be the worst start of a trip in my five years of traveling with Girls Inc. So, it was all because of my beef jerky and I feel bad because I probably made a bad first impressions

to the girls that never met me. Hear me out! I love Teriyaki beef jerky. I say my jerky on the seat and when I came back it wasn't on my seat anymore! I freaked! I asked everyone face-to-face did they have my jerky and guess what everyone said? They said no. I was so annoyed and frustrated! I text my mom and my friend. This was literally my face.

I calmed myself down by reading my book It's called A Long Way Down. It's about a young black boy seeking revenge for his brother's death. I read 60 pages within 20 minutes and immediately took a nap afterward. I must say that 45-minute nap was much needed. I woke up to go to work [this morning] at 6 and was working by 6:30. I attended an African American Conference this morning for my job. I used the opportunity to network and gained so much knowledge. As of today...I set a goal to buy a plot of land! After I left the conference, I had lunch with my Grandma Cheryl, one of my favorite humans! It's her birthday and I HAD to spend time with her.!! - Desy

I feel like the ride here was way better than the one last year and I am glad to say my feet did not swell up and my sleep was way more comfortable. Overall, the ride here was 10X better than last year. – Taylor B.

We stopped in many different places to rest our legs or use the restroom. – Taylor M.



We just got back from our first rest stop. We had chicken, fruit, pickles, & potato salad. So far, me and the Lincoln kids have been hanging out together. Too cool to converse with the Omaha girls. (Kidding but low key serious. Too introverted for this stuff.) – Semhar

Dinner was great so shout out to whoever made that chicken. It was great. – Fatuma

We stopped along the way and had dinner in Iowa, Chicken, bread, potato salad, fruit, etc... It was very tasty. - Peija



Shout out to Ms. Donna for the fried chicken. It was the bomb.com! Every year she makes the best chicken and I ate about 8 pieces! - Desy

So, it's currently 7:06 pm. We're back on the bus. It's kinda fun. The bus is cute and the people are nice. Oh, I almost forgot, we just ate some good food! Some wings and watermelon...Maray and I...cleaned up olives that were spilt. So now it smells like some weird olives [on the bus] ... But the sun is going down and everyone is just chilling now. – Dee

Me and Dee have been vlogging through Snapchat. – Maray

We aren't in New York yet but it's already been fun. We stopped at a couple of rest stops but my favorite was the Biggest Truck Station. – Elliana

I am so ecstatic to be heading to New York, especially with Girls Inc. I appreciate the fact that we make it into a road trip because we get the scenic route to our destination and get to make stops such as the World's Largest Truck Stop. I did not know this place existed but I am happy it does. – Somer

We just left the World's Largest Truck Stop and the last time we were there, years ago, I got in trouble. Just as I tried to whisper to Fatuma, if she remembers getting in trouble with me, Ms. CT says out loud, "Last time we were here, girls got in trouble." and she looked right at us. That was so funny! - Desy

This morning I woke up at our time @ 6:24. I was really hot. LOL. My whole body was numb. I've never slept on a bus before but I prefer my bed. – Dee.

We have been on the bus for two days now. I'm writing horrible because the bus is shaky. - Kaionna

Buffalo, New York & Niagara Falls



It was a really bumpy ride. - Lawrencia

Today God woke me up in New York. I'm still very grateful to be here. - Kaionna

Around 12 noon we entered Buffalo, New York. – Jamia

Though the morning was rough and we were behind our schedule, the afternoon at the Niagara River made up for it. I did not expect it to be such a big deal but after hearing about it and seeing it in person, my opinions have changed. - Somer

Apparently, Buffalo had the first Tesla

alternating current. – Semhar

I got to learn so much about Niagara Falls. - Kami

I saw the Niagara River for the first time. There were so many beautiful bridges...and boats all over the river. – Maray

I learned that the Niagara River flows North instead of South. I've never heard that before. The river splits into two branches, east and west, by Grand Island. – Jazzy

Our [tour guide] told us how ice covered this whole river years ago and it's crazy to believe because of how big it is. - Kaionna

While driving through the city, we passed Buffalo Grand Hotel, the one we are staying at tonight. They have a waterfall in front of their building and the girls said, "Look! There it is! Niagara Falls!" - Asia

Once we got to Buffalo, I was immediately captivated by the buildings. The architecture was so beautiful and interesting. Once we got away from the main area and headed closer to the Niagara River, the scenery was very nice and calm. - Hana

We met our Tour Guide. He was very nice and kind. He went into great detail about...Niagara Falls. [He told us] the falls were not there 12,000 years ago. - Jamia

Our first stop was the hotel. We picked up our tour guide...His name was Mike and he was very nice. I want to thank him because he gave us a lot of information about Buffalo and Niagara Falls. - Taylor M.

Our tour guide, Mike, did a very good job of explaining a lot of the attractions to us. He told us how the Rainbow Bridge was finished and opened in 1942. Mike also guided us through New York State Park. He told us about the largest whirlpool. Thank you, Mike, for a wonderful tour today. Although we weren't able to freshen up at the hotel, I still had a good time seeing the Niagara Falls and riding the boat through the mist. - Ra'Quel

The tour guide was telling the group about the history of the area. My favorite fact was that the city Buffalo is actually mispronounced. The original word is Buff-a-LU. - Hana

...Facts I learned: 3,160 tons of water flows over Niagara Falls every second. The three waterfalls [Niagara, Bridal Veil, and American] combine to produce the highest flow rate of any waterfall on earth. - Mariah

We're in New York and we can see the mist from Niagara Falls. It can be from 75 to 300 ft. high. It's not exactly "How I Met Your Mother" like scenery, but I love it. - Semhar

We went across the bridge. The tour guide asked if we can look to our left. I looked down instead because I'm scared of heights. - Aniellia

Fun fact: I never knew Canada was next door to Niagara Falls. I found out by going to the site and when the girls were talking about it. - Habiba

The water in the falls never freezes because it moves too fast. - Dee

Heading out on the boat and seeing [the falls] at the base was amazing. However, I did not expect THAT much water & wind. It made it fun, though. I also enjoyed the movie of the adventurers at Niagara. I thought the stories and acting were amazing...I find it interesting that all those people survived that dangerous water and height but also sad that multiple people died. It's interesting how much the Niagara Falls holds so much life and yet a lot of death. But it is still a breathtaking view and experience. - Somer

Niagara Falls was the best place I have ever been. - Angel

[REDACTED]

The info, the stories, the view were so fascinating. When we went to the middle [on Maid of the Mist] it felt like the gates of heaven were open and we were going in. (LOL). Thanks to the tour guide, Mr. Mike, for all of the info and the postcards. I will definitely send one off to Noelle (my mentor). – Fatuma

It was magnificent! I'm literally still in awe. The water was this beautiful blue that looked like white smoke rose from it. The falls released the best breeze I've ever felt. - Desy



I was relieved when I found out we were finally in Buffalo but I was not thrilled about not showering. Once we got on the Maid of the Mist, I then realized that it was a good thing we wore raggedy clothes because we got super wet and the water stunk. – Taylor B.

When we got on the boat, I didn't really expect to get soaked but I was wrong. – Elliana

The funny thing is Ms. Sheebie told Peija it was only going to be a mist. Turns out it was like a shower. - Aniellia

The Pro: The boat ride and being able to laugh about getting soaked.

The Con: Was the fact that we were all soaked and wet and cold at the same time. - VicTaijah

The Maid of the Mist ride was amazing. The fact that just across the water was Canada was so interesting. We go through the gift shops then finally to watch the film. This is a close second favorite out of all the things we did. It told the story of the Native American tribe and who the Maid of the Mist was... Then there were three stories of people who went over the falls. Unintentionally or not, the people starring in the stories all survived. – Hana

Niagara Falls was really interesting, as well as the Maid of the Mist. You see this stuff on the internet and you learn about it, and when you get the opportunity to see it in real life, it's amazing. – Taylor M.

OK, this was really fun. We went on a board wearing big, blue rain ponchos, which I 100% kept. The boat was called "Maid of the Mist." On the ride I saw the Rainbow Bridge, and the full expansion of the falls. It was more than I could have expected. The boat has a ton of history, too. It was named after this Native American Woman (Lelewala) who rowed herself off the edge. Some believe she did it because she didn't want to dishonor her tribe by refusing marriage. Legend says you can still see her in the mist TODAY. There was also a 7-year-old that got tossed over the edge of the falls after his boat turned. The Maid of the Mist found him. The movie didn't show him having any physical injuries, but I bet he got hacked. – Semhar



There were so many people that did scary stunts on Niagara Falls and only have of them survived. One stunt that really caught my eyes was the lady [that went over the falls in a barrel] with the cat. I couldn't understand how the cat came out white when he was black at the beginning of it. Must have been God's work. It was fun that we got to get an up-close look of Canada. - Habiba

At the bottom of the waterfall it was like walking into a hurricane. I've never been beaten up that badly by anything. Ever. - Asia

This time we actually went underneath the waterfall and got soaking wet. - Peija

The boat ride was so amazing. I felt like I was in heaven or entering heaven. Like I took the amazing quote off of Ms. CT's shirt, "Some people want it to HAPPEN; Some with it would HAPPEN; but Girls Inc. makes it HAPPEN." Yes, I changed it up but it's still good because it's true. - Asnina

They said I would just be misted [on Maid of the Mist]. No, I was soaked. The water was so cold but it was so pretty. - Angel

I learned that the mist is more like a rain shower. - Desy

At first, I was nervous because I didn't want to get soaked. At the end, it turned out to be very fun...it turned out to be very thrilling. - Peija

I liked getting wet. - Jazzy

I thought it was funny how they said it would be just misty, but it was way more than just misty. - Frankie

As we loaded onto the boat, we were on the bottom so we didn't get as wet. The girls in the front got soaked. Dee stayed dry. - Maray

The boat was cool. Literally. - Dee

When we were riding the boat to go closer there were so many birds in one area. It was kind of cool. - Frankie

When I look at the waterfalls it makes me stay calm cause I can hear them crashing at the shore. It makes me feel more alive than ever. - Kami

When we were walking to get on the boat and to look over the [observation] deck, there were people from





India, China, Italy, etc... It was very cool to see so many cultures. In our elevator there was a couple from Italy. – Maray

Niagara Falls gets about 17 million people a year. - Asnina

On the boat tour, the mist from the waterfalls were pleasant until we got closer to the falls. As the boat tour continued, I witnessed the small rainbows that were in the mist. - Caroline

Once we got back to the visitor center, I read some of the historic facts about [Niagara Falls] and I learned that it was 167 feet high and it consists of three waterfalls that straddle the Canadian border. I also learned they use river water to generate hydroelectric plants to make power. I really appreciate [tour guide] Mike for taking the time out of his day to come and tour Niagara with us. – Taylor B.

I learned a lot...Like the first real settlers were French replaced by the British after the war. - Asnina

After the boat tour, our guide took us to the movie theater to see a short film about the key moments in Niagara's history. The most interesting thing I learned from that is how many people pulled stunts at the falls. Another thing I learned was the amount of erosion that happens at the falls and how they have used technology to slow the rate of erosion. – Caroline

It's been a mostly informative day, honestly, and there were so many questions I had all day that I never had answer so I decided to write them down and answer them myself:

Q1: During the beginning of our ride, the guide to Niagara told us a story of a guy named Sal that mapped out and drew Niagara Falls and I wanted to know, "Did the pictures every get printed to a book?"

A: It was actually hard to find the answer to this even after looking through all of book websites and history sites but because the guide kept referencing it, I think someone did and I'm interested in reading it.

Q2: How does the Niagara Falls move? (Like how does it go from this place to there and which direction)

A: After a quick search, I found that Niagara Falls is moving upstream, closer to the Eerie River as it moves. It moved 7 miles in 12K years and will be father in 12K more years.

Q3L In the 1960's there was an accident where a boy named Roger & his 16-year-old sister got caught in the Niagara River stream and Roger fell over the [falls] but survived to tell the story. In the story, they were also there with their dad's friend but they never said what happened to him.

A: I think I found this out later by Ms. Roberta but it turns out that he was in the middle of the river without a life jacket and fell over [the falls] and died I don't know why they don't mention it in the movie (probably to glorify Roger's survival) but I would have wanted to know.

There were more questions I had that I want to be answered but they can be asked later so it's all cool. I always like learning new things so it's always great to ask questions. – Famo



My favorite part of today was going to Cave of the Winds and Goat Island. We first picked up our tour guide, Mr. Mike, and he told us a little back history about the American Falls and Goat Island. We went through the activity center and stopped in a theater that played a clip about how Niagara Falls came to be. I liked the effects that the video showed and how it made it more interesting. We then head to Cave of the Winds and went on an elevator that took us down 175 feet...When we got down, the smell was unpleasant but once you got to see the attraction, it went away. - Taylor M.

Our tour guide asked, "Who knows who Tesla was?" Famo answered that he is best known for his contributions to the design of the modern alternating current (AC). Good job, Famo. – Ms. Roberta

Before our group got to experience the waterfalls again, we had to watch an informational video. I learned plenty about Nikola Tesla and his work with Niagara Falls and how his ideas got electricity to people...Everyone got ponchos and sacks and we headed to the elevator. The elevator was hand-carved and took 2 years to finish. It took us down 18 floors in 30 seconds. Getting out, we all experienced the falls' true power. The mist was light at first but the higher you got the more powerful the water. Everyone was drenched. That was one of my favorite memories so far. – Hana



We got some shoes for when we were getting wet. – Maray

We were given the most comfortable shoes I have ever worn. - Desy

We had to wear sandals so we don't get our regular shoes wet. - Kami

My favorite part about today was visiting Cave of the Wind. My feet got ice cold. – Jazzy

Cave of the Winds was amazing!!!...The sign before we came in said get ready to see 600,000 gallons of water and as I came to the bottom tier and witnessed and her the white waters fall and crash into the rocks, I notice how big of a deal that was. As I looked out, I was filled with happiness as I got to see two full rainbows. I also got to see the settings of the stories from yesterday. The view was amazing. - Somer



I did not want to get wet today but I really wanted the experience of being close to the water falls. The forceful water of Cave of the Winds made me feel free at last. Got me thinking and feeling like it washed my sins and bad spirits away. – Jamia

There were these platforms and the one at the top was the “hurricane deck.” Half of it was basically right next to the falls so you got SOAKED. I wasn’t gonna go but Hana forced me into it. She got 9 people to say I should do it so I didn’t. My socks got REALLY wet and fun fact - I’m still wearing the sandals they gave us because my socks are wetttttttttt. - Semhar

At Cave of the Winds we went to all 3 levels. At first there was very little water, but the view was beautiful. – Caroline



We went to the Falls but this time we did the close-up version. – VicTaijah

I did it. I really did it. It was really fun. We took video pictures. I got so wet, I just went back in the water with Ms. Sheebie and we danced and walked the rest of the way and looked over where we were. Overall, I had more fun than I thought. - Aniellia

It was so fun at Cave of the Winds that we went back to get wet at least 3 times and we weren’t planning to get that wet. – Asnina

The water and wind were so strong. Water is so gorgeous, but deadly. - Desy

The Cave of the Winds trip takes you closer to the waters of Niagara Falls than you thought possible. The best part is going to the “Hurricane Deck” and the water there hits hard. It feels like you’re getting hit by ice but in very cold liquid form. I ran in the Hurricane twice and had to adjust my eye contact because the water was coming down so fast, I thought my contacts were going to fall out. Hopefully, in the future, I can share this fun experience with my kids and show them what kinds of fun I had when I was in Girls Inc. - Habiba



Cave of the Winds was very wet and fun. We went twice. At first, I was like “No, I’m not going in and to the top” but as I kept walking, I was thinking Like I don’t think I’m ever going to do this again for a while do let’s do it. I’ve had the most fun ever. - Fatuma

I went to the Hurricane Deck. It was so fun. Dee & I took some cute pictures. – Maray

When we went up to the top, which is called the Hurricane, I didn’t want to pull out my phone because of all the water but I did because I wanted to capture this moment. – Taylor M.

We were inches away from the falls...At the hurricane level it was super windy; the hurricane level is the highest. Today overall so far was a good day. My clothes are still wet. But let me tell you, it’s only day 3 and I already don’t want to leave. New York just has all the good vibes. It’s a drama-free tip. Everyone is so funny so all we do is laugh. I still don’t know very many people but I met this girl named Desi. She sits in front of me &* she coooool. Last night I slept in a room with Maray, Taylor B. and another girl – still can’t remember her name. But she and Taylor are funny funny. Had me and Maray laughing all night. I’m kind glad this trip wasn’t all Lincoln girls because I know all & all they like is drama. – Dee

I got the chance to take some good pictures. I took a couple with Anillia and she was soaked and you could obviously tell she’s having a good time because her hair was literally dripping like she never had a poncho on. – VicTajjah

I was really iffy about the agenda for this morning which was the Cave of the Winds attraction. I really don’t like getting wet when I have clothes on, but you only live once, so why not live it the best you can. As I got closer to the Hurricane, I grew more excited. When I got under the water it was so cold, I felt like I was at a waterpark under the bucket that drops water on you. I actually enjoyed Cave of the winds and would want to go back in the future. -Ra’Quel



Towards the end, the bird pooped on my but it's OK because we are in their environment. – Jamia

I was scared of the birds because they kept pooping everywhere. - Kaionna

I didn't expect to get pooped on by the bird at all. – Mariah

Ms. CT got pooped on by a seagull. Not a happy camper. – Ms. Roberta

Ms. CT got booboo'd on by a bird and her reaction was priceless. – VicTajah



Ms. Ct got pooped on! LOL! She said, "This hand will never be the same," with a disgusted look. It was so funny. - Desy

I've got to say Niagara Falls is a smelly place and it was funny when the bird pooped on Ms. CT. She reacted way better than I expected. – Taylor B.

Cave of the Winds was really fun. I was able to make it to the top of the hurricane part. - Mariah

The Cave of the Winds was definitely a place to remember. – Jamia

There were so many spots for us to take beautiful pictures. – Taylor B.

I learned that Harriet Tubman brought 400 people to Buffalo so they could cross to Canada. – Dee

I was really glad for the experiences and I am thankful for Mr. Mike. He was an amazing [tour guide] and I wish to have him again. – Asnina

Niagara Falls was a very beautiful place to see. Now that I've seen it I would love to take my family back and

experience what I did. – Jazzy

Niagara Falls was the largest body of water I have ever seen...I thought the rainbow shining over it was a myth because I learned a little bit about it in school. Now I know the rainbow isn't a catfish. – Kaionna

We got to see the Horseshoe Falls close up and all I could think about was how did that boy survive falling down it? - Desy

Mr. Mike was an amazing guide. – Desy

Several of the girls climbed up on the Tesla statue for a photo. I have to admit that his lap was begging for a photo op. Although, as Aniellia noted, the real photo op was when they were boosting themselves up into his lap. – Ms. Roberta



Seneca Falls, New York: The Home of Women's Rights

The first [museum] was a women's hall of fame, the walls were covered with plaques and women's names and a small biography of them and their achievements. The second place was a more guided tour and had more information specifically about the suffrage movement. I liked this tour more because it had a story-telling element because the tour guide was leading the way for us. Today was very informational and I got to get to know more girls. – Hana

I loved looking at all the amazing women... - Maray

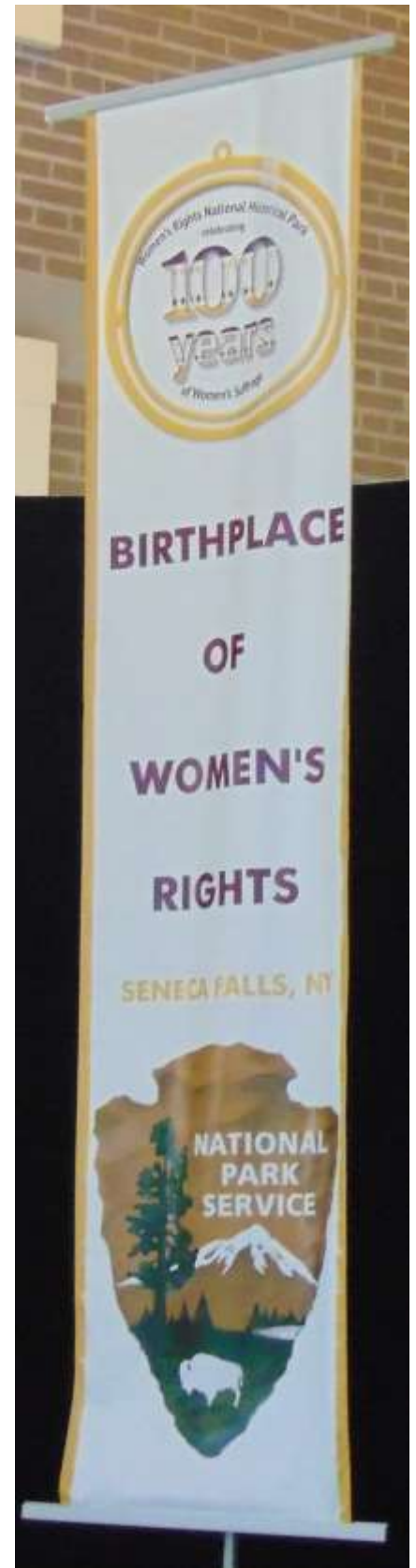
"The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off." – Gloria Steinem. When I had first heard this quote, my immediate thought was, is someone playing LEMON? Because the quote is also the first words said in the song. Then I remembered where we were and was actually really surprised by the actual meaning of a quote I thought was just randomly said in a rap song. Curious about WHY it was said, I researched the lyrics of the song by N.E.R.D. and it was really eye-opening. It turns out that the artist was inspired by the quote and many other issues on discrimination.

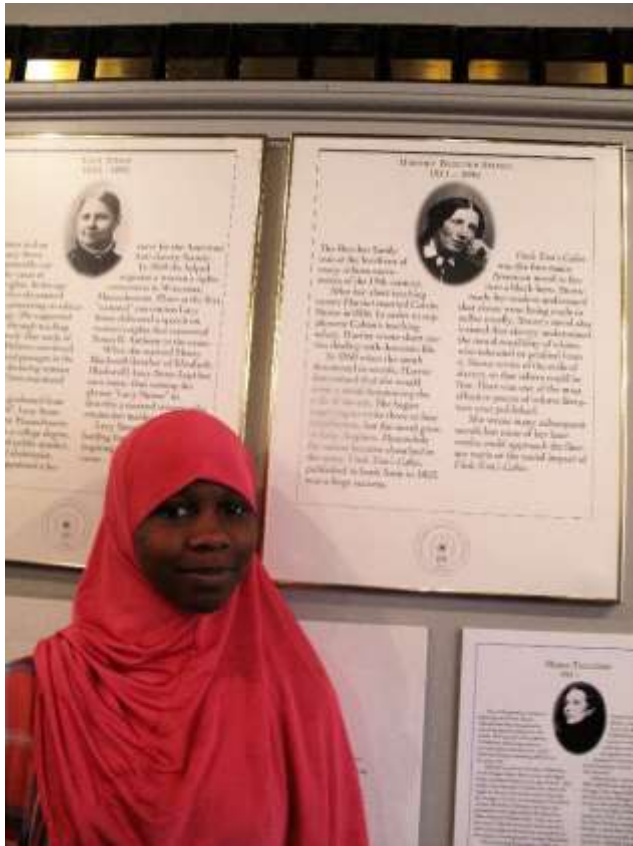
Hate! You keep askin' me where I'm from
Hate! About the borders and, "Did I run?"
Hate! Keep askin' how I feel 'bout guns
There's a light and dark army, which side you choose? Oh
Hate! If not now then when?
Hate! And if not me then who?
Hate! Don't drink the Kool-Aid, my friends
Hate! I tried to tell y'all about this dude

The fact that it took me this long to realize how political and progressive the words of a song are that I have listened to so many times is ridiculous. It inspires me to look at the lyrics and words of something I see more often. - Famo

Oprah Winfrey was in the Hall of Fame. - Kaionna

I thought it was cool to see all of the different women and what they did when they were alive or [are] still doing today. – Frankie





The National Women's Hall of Fame was amazing, to see the accomplishments and hard work of women being recognized and acknowledged.

Today my favorite part was the National Women's Hall of Fame because this proves women can make a change/difference in the world. I realized there were only 4 recognized Native American women. Sacagawea, Wilma Mankiller, Winona LaDuke, and Sarah Winnemucca. It's good they made a change but then we need more on the hall of fame. My other woman I want to take about is Lucille Ball. She is from an old TV show called, "I Love Lucy." I watched this show with my mom a lot. She was so funny. But I also saw so many inspirational quotes like Abby Keller Foster, "Go where least wanted, for there you are most needed." – Angel

A quote that I like from Lucille Ball that really stood out to me is, "I'm happy that I have brought laughter because I have been show by many the value of it is so many lives, in so many ways." That quote really speaks about me because...if you know me, I'm mostly the one to crack a joke or make you laugh. Sometimes in life the way to get through...is to make people like you or at least noticed that's how you'll get around and meet new people. I brought Lucy up because she was one of the ladies in the Women's Hall of Fame. Lucy used her special talent, which is comedy, to be known and build her career...She has gotten big and popular for it, which I lover about her. – Habiba

The Women's Rights Museum was very, very interesting. I've never actually through deeply of being a woman without thinking about my race. Learning about women's rights was something to appreciate because I am a female. I love learning and Girls Inc. never failed to make me feel empowered. - Desy





I thought it was really interesting especially because there was more than one Native woman's plaque which made me pretty proud and happy that my race/heritage is getting acknowledged. - Elliana

I learned that only 4 Native women had been inducted out of 250+ women I would love to see all of the Native women that got elected to Congress this year like Sharice Davids and Deb Haaland. - Jazzy

By far my favorite thing today was looking at the National Women's Hall of Fame. The person that caught my eye was Lucille aka Lucy from "I Love Lucy." When we did not have cable, I used to always watch that show and it was super funny. It always made me laugh. When my grandpa was alive, we always watched old TV shows because that's what he grew up on and when watching older shows, it reminds me of him. - Taylor B.

Learning more in depth of what all women go through, not just blacks either. - Jamia

I learned a lot and have a better understanding of the hardships that women had to go through.... - Elliana

It was really nice learning and hearing about the women's rights and how they did a lot to get our rights. - Asnina

I read a lot about our historical women throughout their years of living. All I can say is that these women deserve to be talked about way more than they are. These women fought for a lot of the things we have today, such as voting. Overall, today was fun and educational. - Ra'Quel

We went to a women's history place where we learned about women's rights in the 1800's. The historian who showed us the exhibits was really good at explain the story behind the women and their meeting. I also found the structure really good for remembering characters. Well, not *characters*. These were REAL people. - Semhar

I learned about how many women worked to create a voice and give them their basic rights. - Caroline

The Women's Museum & Hall of Famer were very informational. It was fun because we got to visit the place where it all began. And we got to hear the stories telling about their lived sealing with men, and not being treated equal...On these trips we go on every year, it's not just a vacation. It's also an education trip and I'm thankful for that. - Taylor M.

The history was so interesting. - Maray



It made me very furious to hear all the things the women in the past had to do to receive any kind of rights. And before I was educated on the topic, I told myself I would not vote because it would not matter with all the types of people we have that do grimy things. But us women, especially of color, had to suffer and fight in order to vote and do anything so I will change my state of mine and vote because every vote matters. – Taylor B.



I think it's crazy how some women tried so hard to change the world and how women were treated, but we still get told what we can and can't do with our bodies and many other things. - Frankie

At that exhibit, there was this one guy who had the slavery equivalent of a vegan store; anything that was touched by a slave wasn't sold. Instead of cotton, they had wool. Instead of rice, they had corn and wheat. The townspeople threatened to run him out of business, and that dude stood his ground and said he didn't care. What a lad. - Semhar

New York

This morning I woke up in a good mood because we were about to travel to NEW YORK CITY! I was so excited because seeing Times Square and the Statue of Liberty have been on my bucket list for a while. Some of my family was jealous because I'm making it to the Big Apple before them. They told me I am very lucky because a lot of kids my age don't get the opportunity to travel, so I am very thankful for what I have. - Ra'Quel

We had changed busses. The process of switching busses went faster than I thought. The new bus wasn't all that to me. It was much smaller than the first one. – Mariah



I did not like the fact that we had to change buses. I woke up kind of upset. We all thought that the buses we be switched by the time we ate breakfast. The bus was a downgrade – barely any leg room and no food/drink placement. This is the day we are traveling to NYC so it was a 4-hour drive. – Jamia

Today was a very long day. We started off loading the bus because we had to get a new one. That took a lot of teamwork and we all worked together to accomplish that. – Taylor M.

We got a new bus. I like how our bus driver interacts with us so shout out to her as we traveled to the big city. - Kaionna

As we drive, I realize New York [State] is not what I expected at all. The country literally had homes everywhere, unlike Nebraska. I was shocked to see all the mountains or maybe they're hills., I don't know. - Desy

The view on the way to New York was great. I couldn't really believe I was coming into my dream. - Fatuma

Today we actually made it to New York City! This was my dream and now I can check this off my bucket list. - Angel

When we arrived in NYC it was so beautiful and eye-catching. – Jamia

The funniest thing happened. We got off the bus & this girl was like “New York, I’m here!” Just super loved it. It was hilarious. - Dee

It is really busy in New York but really beautiful. – Lawrenceia

The view was spectacular and so beautiful. – VicTaijah

I was really excited to get to New York because I wanted to have that feeling that everyone has when they step in the Big Apple. I stayed up the whole ride because I wanted to see the way in to New York City. When we started to drive in, I instantly pulled out my phone and started cheesing really hard. All I could hear in my herd was the song Alicia Keys sang about the city. I was happy to see the tall buildings, the city lights, and the people. – Taylor M.

In the movies, New York is exactly how it seems. The people walking extremely fast and rushing to get where they're trying to go. - Kaionna

Looking at all the buildings and people within New York makes me feel overwhelmed. I would never be able to live in a city this big. – Jazzy

We finally made it to New York!! Gosh, it's absolutely beautiful. The way the buildings tower out over the streets (which are absolutely littered with people) makes you, or at least me, feel like I'm witnessing something...amazing? Important? Larger than myself. And at the same time, I'm “witnessing,” I'm also a part of it. A part of New York City. - Semhar

All around New York there was history. – Caroline

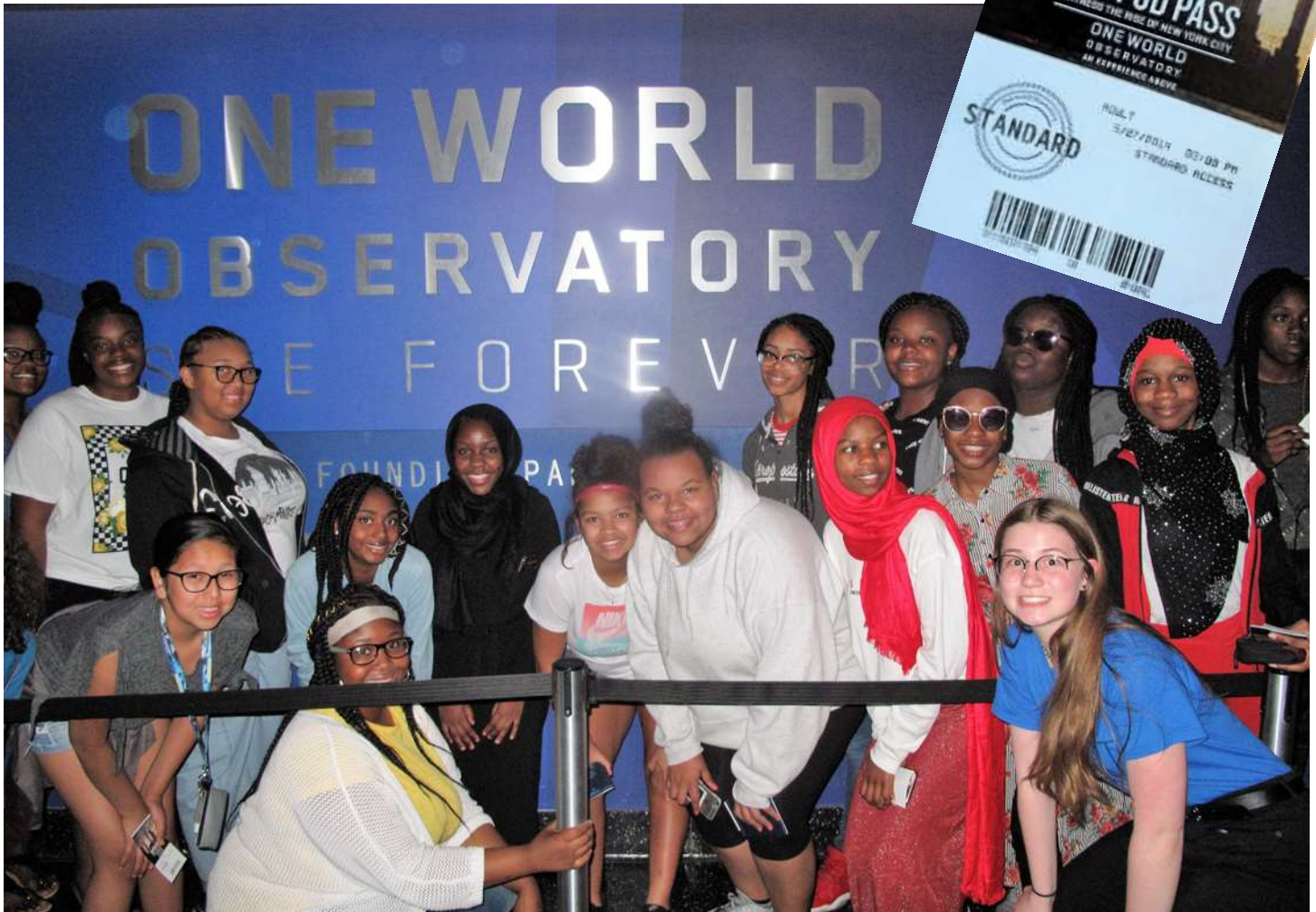
Shout out to the bus driver. She knows lots of information about the City and I'm glad she pointed things out. The tour guy is also great because he doesn't leave anything out. He points out tons of interesting things. New York is a whole other galaxy...The people are everywhere. I would be scared to drive. They aren't cautious at all. – Fatuma

Mr. Mike is our guide of the crazy city. - Desy

New York was everything I expected, so beautiful and huge. The view was just amazing. – Kaionna

Traffic was crazy! Seriously! Within 20 minutes our bus was hit on the side mirror. And guess what...? Yup, the driver that hit us kept on driving. - Desy

One World Observatory



On the drive to One world we saw the coolest stuff! Chelsea Pier is a hang out spot where people play hockey, basketball, and on the 3rd floor they shoot SUV!...We saw a rock memorial for the Irish built from rocks in Ireland, that was real dope. - Desy

The One World Observatory was fascinating. - Jazzy

I am afraid of heights and we have gone on a lot of high things on this trip. But when you actually get to the top it is really not that bad. - Kaionna

Everyone was scared but I wasn't because I love heights. – Asia



We went to One world Observatory. It was really scary and high. – Lawrencia

We ended up going to the tallest tower where I honestly cried because of it. But look, I still made it up there. - Aniellia

We got onto the elevator and I was nervous. As we went up and up, my ears began to pop by the second. - Peija

Today really tested me. We went in the third tallest building in the world and I was literally so scared because we were so high in the air (I'm afraid of heights). Every time I moved, I felt like I was going to fall through to the ground. – Frankie

I am a person who is scared of heights and wouldn't do anything that involves height, but going to the One World Observatory and getting to see the City of New York from up above was so BEAUTIFUL!! I mean, every angle of the city looks amazing from above and I enjoyed it. - Habiba

There were girls crying. I felt bad for them but it was so pretty. - Maray

After we went through security and got our tickets, we went on the elevator [where] we went up 102 floors....I had a 360° degree view above Manhattan. It was incredible to see the view of the city...Seeing the city from an aerial view was humbling. – Caroline

Just the effort put into the design is incredible. You can tell the person who designed the 9/11 memorial and One World Observatory is some genius with a fat bank account and a team of people to tell him he's an icon. Is it bad to assume the designer is a man? All architects are Ted Mosby's in disguise and you can quote me on that. – Semhar

One World Observatory was really neat but I've never felt to nervous and my legs felt like jelly. – Elliana

The view...was so beautiful, words don't even explain.
VicTaijah

A view to die for. – Desy



9/11 Memorial and Museum

The day I have been waiting for has come. I've been talking about 9/11 so much at school and the tragedies that have happened and all the events leading to it. I wanted to see it in real life. It's just so sad....As I was up in the elevators I was thinking "wow, people really jumped from this high." Those people didn't deserve it at all. It was a pick or choose situation and sad reality some died either way. When I saw the memorial, I saw some kids [memorialized] in there which really surprised me as I didn't expect that. I couldn't imagine how they felt. But I loved the museum. I'm glad I got to experience it. - Fatuma



When we saw the 9/11 memorial and we went to the museum, my heart sunk. Everything in my head was going crazy and I had a lot of emotions. For me, it's the difference between learning about it in school and really seeing it in person and getting the information first-hand. I couldn't imagine that day and how people felt...I'm happy that we got this opportunity to learn about our history, and to honor the people that died in this tragedy. – Taylor M.



But in all seriousness, the 9/11 Museum was really powerful in its imagery and facts. I remember a specific room where over 2,000 photos of the victims were posted on the wall. Seeing the people that died brought a much more literal and personal connection with the attack. They're not just numbers, you know? There was even an area with a projector playing descriptions of the people in detail, along with excerpts of interviews with loved ones. It's heartbreaking. - Semhar

We then went to the 9/11 Memorial. There were big areas with all of the people's names who died that day, 1 section for tower 1 and another section for tower 2. There was a waterfall for both towers that let the water flow down into a square. – Maray



We went to the 9/11 Museum. It's so surreal to be in the city that it happened in. I've learned about it all my years of school...I'm a very sensitive person so

seeing some things got to me a little bit but I'm extremely glad I got to experience that even though I was only 2 months old when it happened; it still happened. – Kaionna

If I'm being honest, seeing the stuff in the museum it me hard. I thought it was very, very sad that that happened. – Frankie

Mr. [Mike] said something that stuck with me once we arrived at the Memorial. He said, "To you guys, this is history. To us, we live with it because we were here." The hurt in his voice...was apparent that 18 years later the hurt was still living as it happened yesterday. - Desy

I kept getting emotional being there. I would have been terrified if I was on that plane and saying that through the phone that they have been hijacked. I remember being at school my last hour and there was someone that had stabbed someone and when they started yelling "Code 9, Code 9, we are going on lockdown," we started running for safety because we didn't know if there was a shooting attack or not. Some people were crying and calling their parents because it was that serious. We were on lockdown for like 2 hours. Still after school there were cops everywhere news there because it was just crazy. Being at that 9/11 museum was devastating, seeing all those pictures and all those calling family, friends, saying their last moments and saying goodbye knowing that'll be your last time hearing from them. - Asnina

The [9/11] museum was very educational and nice...I learned that the fires were ongoing for 110 days. That was the most surprising thing I heard...I liked how at the museum we were able to listen to the conversations on the dispatch with the firefighters. – Mariah

Just remembering that almost made me cry. – Kami

I thought I knew all of the info about 9/11 from school. But when I walked in and started looking around more, I realized otherwise. – Peija

The memorial was gorgeous! Breathtaking! Weird word to describe the burial ground to thousands. - Desy

The most memorable museum we visited was the 9/11 museum. What made it special was getting to see where the two twin towers stood. Realizing the significance of the tragedy and ow it impacted people. When I was young, I didn't get what all the fuss was about. Until years later. Especially now. – Jamia

You know when people speak of 9/11, I think of my people – Muslims. But then I say to myself, in our culture we don't hurt others so whoever hurts others, we don't really claim them as ours...Islam is a peaceful religion...We...believe that if you hurt people...you are really not what you say you are. Getting to see the National September 11 Memorial Museum meant a lot. I may not have been fully ready to understand what happened on that day. Since I was a baby, I can tell that it meant something very deep to the people that had experienced and saw everything that went down on that very day. - Habiba

The 9/11 memorial was great. The fountains with every person who passed during 9/11 engraved was so heart-breaking. The amount of people who died and those who were affected is horrible. The memorial did a good job remember the people, the world Trade Center, and showing how this traumatic event doesn't define New York or America as a whole. That we are stronger than hate and we can rebuild from disaster. My favorite part of the memorial was a room with a projector. It would project the name of someone who died on 9/11

with a small biography and an audio of family/loved one talking about the person. It shows that people are still affected by this time but more importantly it tells the story of those who passed to others. – Hana

It was so daunting to see the photos of how many people died...The story that touched me the most was a little girl headed home after a project. She was heading toward 7th grade and was stopped. – Caroline

The museum was sad...The firefighters reached floor 35 by 9:21 am. The captain, “Paddy,” used an office phone to communicate with the police to tell them how many victims were going to be down. He reported the fire to be above the 75th floor. All of the 11 responding members of ladder 3 inside the building at 10:28 a.m. died...About 50,000 people worked in the Trade Center every day. - Maray

Being [at the 9/11 Museum] made me think a lot. Like I feel I take a lot of things for granted. Like I never know when my last day will come. I realized today that I’m kind of self-centered. I’m probably going to work on that because it’s kind of rude. Like I don’t think I care enough. I need to care a little more than I do. I’m probably going to start being more considerate of other people’s feelings & thoughts... - Dee

The Museum of 9/11 made my stomach drop. It was so real and it was hard to see artifacts, walk down the stairs next to the survivor stairs, see photos of victims, and hear their names being read. Extremely touching. - Desy

The 9/11 Museum was extremely overwhelming and coming into New York gave me the chills. – Asia

The worst part of it was when the passengers were making the phone calls to their families and saying their last goodbyes. - VicTaijah

I really liked the 9/11 Museum. It really helped me get a better understanding of the attacks and people’s perspectives and a little bit of behind the scenes. - Elliana

All of the information was very sad but it was very interesting to know what actually took place on 9/11. I want to tell our tour guide, Mr. Mike, I am sorry for his loss. Mr. Mike lost his cousin to this tragedy. Losing a loved one is never easy especially when it is unexpected. – Ra’Quel

We looked up our tour guide’s cousin. She went by Vickie, was 27 years old, and left behind a husband and young daughter. It angers me how people can be so cruel and kill so many innocent people. Since today is Memorial Day, I would like to thank all the military people and first responders that died during 9/11. – Jazzy

I like how the people of New York took the time out to include as many names of the lost on the memorial and try to include all their pictures in the memorial. I also like how they put leaves in place of [the people] that did not have pictures to represent them. That was a nice touch. I also like how they have a mural of the ironworkers who helped create the Twin Towers and helped reconstruct and clean up what was left after the fatal attack. I thought it was especially nice of them to include the people from the Pennsylvania attack in the memorial. Not many of us learned about this in our history class and today was my first day hearing about it. Overall it was a great experience and I am glad to say that I learned more about this event in person rather than at school. – Taylor B.

Our tour guide had lost his cousin in 9/11. That made me very upset. There was a thing where you can research the named so I did. She was a very beautiful woman. That was very sad to see how people can even do that. – Angel

Walking & Driving Tour

Today we did a whole lot of walking. - Habiba

Times Square is very beautiful at night with all the lights. – Mariah

Times Square is so, so pretty. Especially when it starts getting a little dark. – Kaionna

I was amazed by what I saw. – Kami

It's just amazing! Lights, vendors, signs, people! I've never experienced such a city. - Desy

Times Square blew my mind. I almost tripped a couple of times because I was so mesmerized by everything around me. – Elliana



...We went to Times Square and I'm not going to lie, it made me really emotional because it made me miss my family because I wished I was able to share these experiences with them. - Frankie

Maybe I sound a bit starry-eyed but the way the lights and electric billboards blow up Times Square is breathtaking. How can I go back home when I've experience something so...shiny? - Semhar

Times Square was super exciting. However, I do not like how women exploit themselves with their chests out. Hopefully we will get more time tomorrow night to see all of the stores. – Taylor B.

The view was very nice today. The tour guide was very elaborate about everything. I mean, he points out everything. - Fatuma



We walked around Times Square. Our tour guide showed us the New Year's ball drop, Good Morning American studio, and the Lion King Musical... He told us a tip before we left about people who will give you CD's, ask you for your name, and then you will be charged for a CD you didn't want. Other leaders also told us about pick-pocketers and to be safe with our belonging. I love New York but honestly the risk of scammers and thievery is too high...- Hana

The last thing I enjoyed was the NBC studios...I watch the tonight show and etc... It was the illusion painting on the wall that inspired me to keep doing the art that I love. Because one day I would want to have a painting of my own in a very important building. – Jamia

I really enjoyed the driving tour because some of the people mentioned like Denzel Washington and Duke Ellington were people my grandpa really liked and he was my favorite. – Taylor B.

I am glad that I got to see Julliard. At home I am going to brag about it. – Mariah

We went to see Julliard which was cool. The only way I know it is from "The Fosters." – Angel

Today in New York City we went by Julliard...it was very big and made me feel like I need to start trying harder in life. – Peija



The Dakota Apartments start at \$10 million! 10 MILLION!! I would love to see the inside. Not only was it 10 million, but you have to buy it. NO RENTING! - Desy



I really liked Central Park. I've only ever seen it in movies and to see it in real life was amazing. - Elliana

I liked going in to Central Park. It looked like a great place to do yoga or go for walks. I think if I lived here, I would be way more active because there is so much walking we can do. - Taylor B.

We walked through Central Park. It was like we weren't in New York. - Asia

The singer [at the tiled Imagine spot] sang very beautifully and I was noticing this is how some people make their living. - Taylor M.



I learned about Seneca Village, a free black community. - Desy

I got to see the bridge that the movie **Home Alone** filmed a scene at...Thank you Mr. Mike for explaining to us where everything took place. – Ra'Quel

Central Park was very beautiful and big and had lots of area and just open space. **Jessie** and **Enchanted** were both filmed in that park. I was happy to see the girls all happy about everything and, me, myself, I love sight-seeing. - Fatuma



We got to see the Rose Garden where John Lennon's song **Imagine** was recognized...We walked through a section full of art. It looked like we were in Rome...in the 1800's with yellow, blue, and white designs. – Maray

I thought driving through Harlem was interesting. – Elliana

Harlem was home to famously know history. Columbia College. - Desy

Our tour guide did an awesome job of explain the buildings, the streets, and all of New York history. We learned today. - Kaionna

We also went to the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, which was super interesting. - Semhar



Going to the [Schomburg] Center for Research in Black Culture was very fascinating. The first room had tall black touchscreen structures that have information about many civil rights activists, including photos and some on audio to message to listen to. After that room, we headed upstairs to another space with newspapers, articles, photos, and other documents about African Americans. The man who started the idea of this center was told by his professor that African Americans have no history and this place proved the professor wrong. Photographs and documents of black people doing normal things and being in groups and organizations



humanized them, showing that they are worth something, that we are equal, and we do have a history that is important. On the way out, our tour guide pointed out a poem by Langston Hughes, I haven't read Langston Hughes' poetry/writing, but the poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" was beautiful. – Hana

I liked seeing the picture of the black girls with their poofy hair out. That's the way it should always be. I think no one should feel ashamed of it. – Fatuma

The Schomburg was literally like a high five. If I could have stayed longer to explore, I would have. - Desy

One [thing] that stood out to me at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture was "A dream...a song...half-soled shoes...dancing shoes...A tear...a smile...the blues...Sometimes the blues mixed with the memory...and forgiveness of our wrong. But more than that, it's a freedom. Guarded for the kids who came along. Folks, that's the heart of Harlem." By Langston

Hughes - Habiba

At the Schomburg Center...the photographer Moneta Sleet, Jr. took many of Dr. King's photos which shows he is committed to the research.



We saw things from [Martin Luther King, Jr.'s] papers and pictures from the Civil Rights Movement. - Maray

I already know [Martin Luther King, Jr.'s] story but I learned about another man [Bayard Rustin?] who was out of the public eye because he was gay & homophobia was bad back then. That was probably the most interesting part. - Dee

We visited Harlem and the [Schomburg] black history center. At the center we saw much memorabilia from Malcom X and MLK... - Caroline

Something that hit me deep is standing where Malcom X died...I was at a loss for words! It's a moment I will cherish. The walls of the hall where he gave his speech were decorated with the most beautiful murals of Malcom X. Seeing the staircase where he was taken down after he was shot made me feel humbly blessed to have the opportunity to be there. – Desy



Today we went past where Malcom X was killed. – Dee

We got to see exactly where [Malcom X] was shot and the wood he was standing on when he was shot. - Maray





I do wish we could do the [full] Apollo tour because that looked nice. – Mariah

Alrighty the Apollo was gorgeous. – Semhar

Going to the Apollo was also amazing because my great aunts told me before I left that hoped I came so I could show them. – Taylor B.

My favorite spot was Jesse's house because that was a great show. I have always loved Debbie Ryan which is the main character. – Taylor B.

I got to see the pent house that one of my favorite Disney shows was filmed in. – Ra'Quel

We saw the building where Jay-Z and Solange got into it on the elevator. - Desy

We walked the High Line to 23rd St. - Maray

We walked the High Line. It was very beautiful and cool how reusable they are. - Jazzy

We went to the High Line and walked... We went to

Rockefeller Center. We learned that the founder was a Russian immigrant. – Caroline

The High Line was...a great place to chill. - Fatuma



We are headed to Times Square and I am very excited and ready to shop. – Mariah



I want to thank Ms. CT for taking us to Times Square even though her ankles were swollen and she was tired, she took her time from resting to take us out. Thanks to her once again. – Asnina

Right now, we're in Times Square but it's raining. I honestly don't care. I still really want to go and besides, when's the next time I'll get this chance. Also, when did some rain hurt anybody? – Elliana

Last night we went to Times Square. I was so exhausted but I still went because that's what I've been waiting for...I applaud Ms. CT for sacrificing her sleep to do something we all wanted to do today. - Kaionna

I love New York so much! – Angel

Sylvia's



It was wonderful. I swear the cornbread here is amazing. – Angel

The macaroni was DELICIOUS! – Jazzy

...We had a good lunch at Sylvia's. - Frankie

Lunch was great. The mac and cheese tasted different and the chicken was great. - Fatuma

I never had food that good. EVER!
But it had some good cornbread.
– Dee



I ate everything on my plate. – Habiba

The mac and cheese was very good and that was the best part. – Taylor M.

The food at Sylvia's was super good. We had chicken, mac & cheese, and green beans. Nobody liked the green beans, which I find odd. Green beans are tasty. The cornbread was super good, too. - Semhar

I loved the food. It was amazing. I loved the cornbread and mac & cheese. – Maray

I honestly liked the food, especially the cornbread. We had a lot of laughs and I got to talk to other people in the group and learn their names. - Elliana



American Museum of Natural History

One place I still can't believe we got into was the American Museum of Natural History. When we drove past there was a line around the block and when we went inside, I could see why. – Caroline

The Natural History Museum was so cool. We visited many exhibits that were educational and simply amazing. The models of animals were breathtaking and so realistic. The planet side was also interesting to read and look at. I would love to come back for that place alone. – Hana

The museum we went to today was amazing. I learned about the Big Bang Theory. – Frankie

We saw dinosaurs, Native Americans, birds, and all kinds of things. - Peija

The dinosaur was the best exhibit. – Mariah

1. I learned what made life on earth, well, at least the water.
 2. There was nothing on earth but rock and it wasn't fun.
 3. Oh no we got hit by an asteroid
 4. Wait those asteroids had water. Since our ozone layer hadn't been formed yet, all the water evaporated in .08 seconds.
 5. Clouds
 6. Rain, and lots of it
 7. The world is just a fat ocean
 8. Fast forward to a small bacteria at the bottom of the ocean that starts all life to ever exist ever
 9. Cambrian explosion which is the invention of fish
 10. Oops volcanoes exist it's land time
- Semhar

Going to the "Night at The Museum" was amazing. I learned almost 4 million years ago, one of our earliest ancestors left a trail of footsteps in soft ground which soon hardened into an impression. Those ancient footprints, found in Laetoli, Tanzania, remind us that our earliest ancestors evolved in Africa. - Asnina





I weigh 204 lbs. on the sun. – Dee

The American Museum of Natural History was huge. It was nothing like the movie. It was full of stuff that was just crazy! Statues, clothing, tools, art, and ore. It had things coming from the ceiling, things on the floor, everywhere! - Desy

I loved the African exhibit. It made me feel like I was back home. I love learning more and more about my culture. - Fatuma

At the plant section of the Natural History Museum, we watched a video that was very interesting. - Jazzy



I loved the American Museum of Natural History. When I walked in...I didn't even know where to start. I saw so much but so little. I wish I could go back... - Asia

We saw many types of dinosaurs that I didn't know were in the same classification... In the exhibit there were many interactive computers and timelines to show the life in which the animals existed. – Caroline

I absolutely loved being at the museum and especially liked reading about global warming in one of the exhibits. – Famo

My favorite part about today was the museum – to see everything and the natural history was amazing. I really loved the ocean exhibit. It looked real but it wasn't. You could tell the artist put a lot of detail into it They took their time and it showed. – Taylor M.

I enjoyed seeing the Tiki from the Night at the Museum. – Taylor

B.

There was so much to look at and read. - Maray

I loved the dinos and the Big Bang Theory video - it made it look 3D. – Angel

My sisters and I kept saying, "What if the animals came out? What would you do? Where would you go out?" - Fatuma

Stardust Diner

Today was very hard to wake up because of the late night [shopping in Times Square]. – Mariah

I was super tired this morning but I guess that's what I get for going to Times Square. – Taylor B.

We started off today pretty good considering I was so tired last night. - VicTaijah

The saying "late night, early morning" very much applies to this trip. I woke up at 6:05 and had to be down in the lobby at 6:35 a.m. 😞 - Desy

This morning we walked to the Stardust to eat a delicious breakfast. They were a great welcome to our morning by singing to us. – Jamia



...The waiters were singing while we were eating and I liked how confident they were, so confident and danced. I wonder what makes them so confident because I could never do that in front of people, let alone in a diner. - Frankie



I love how each and every worker sings and has such great energy. I love how they come early morning and don't complain and put on a great show for us. I love them dancing, the welcoming and smiling. This is the best way to start my breakfast and morning especially after the day/night we had yesterday. - Fatuma

My favorite song they sang was *Be Our Guest* from **Beauty and the Beast**. They had a guy running with a flag, two guys doing a kick dance, and at the end confetti was released. – Jazzy

They sang and danced with us! They were really entertaining and nice. I would highly recommend the place to visitors. - Desy

OMG Ellen's Stardust Diner was something else. Like it was so fantastic...I haven't been to a restaurant in Omaha that has people singing, especially early in the morning...I loved

the end with all the confetti. I'm glad it didn't come in my food. I was so focused on the people performing I wasn't eating much. - Asnina

This diner was like no other diner that I have been to. At this diner, they sing to use while we are at our table. They sing, dance, and just have fun. I felt good about helping the singers out in the future with their careers. I gave money that goes to the dance classes they have to take. I feel good knowing that I put my money to some good. – Ra'Quel

The staff were very interactive with us and I give them 5 stars because the food was great and the customer service was excellent. – Taylor M.

Hoping and dreaming is something people do freely, every day, wanting to reach new heights in their lives and having a dream seemed to be a recurring theme today. At the Stardust Diner this morning, our waiters and waitresses told us how they're all actors wanting to perform on Broadway. Their dreams are to be on the big stage. - Famo

The food was good and when [one girl] was singing I didn't think she could get any higher but yet she did. - Asia

It was cool and the food was super good. – Dee

I ate French toast, sausage, and eggs... I loved listening to all the waiters sing. My favorite song was *Under the Sea*. The guy was very good at the accent. - Maray

It was cool to see the people sing who want to be on Broadway. - Angel

I usually don't write about breakfast, but the Stardust Diner is truly something to write about. I didn't know what I was expecting but I am glad with what I got. The food was good but the real showstopper was the singing waiters. They were so confident and talented and I personally loved each and every one of the waiters' performances. – Hana

Ellen's Stardust. Where to start? I love how they came early in the morning to work to sing for people with full energy with a big dream to make it big one day. - Habiba

Overall, I think [Stardust Diner] was my favorite restaurant. – Elliana

I've never been to anything like it. It woke me up, too. - Kaionna

...trust me, it was quite the time. - Semhar



Triangle Shirtwaist Factory



Now we're driving to the Triangle shirtwaist Factory. I read a book when I was younger about the factory. By luck, I happened to realize it was in New York. I'm so excited to see something I read about in real life. One of my favorite things about traveling with Girls Inc.! I just saw the factory building and I couldn't believe I was on the site where 146 girls, my age and younger, died. That's something that sticks with you, you know? I thanked Mr. Mike because he didn't have to take us there but he did. - Desy

I was wanting to see [the Shirtwaist Factory] because I learned about it in school and it was sure a sad thing, but yet it made a difference in the work history. It happened in 1911; 146 women died. - Angel

The manager didn't want to pay them and locked all the exits. When the fire broke out, the girls were trapped and had to jump down and they all died as a result. - Caroline

I thought it was really cool because I did research on that building and what happened there in my ELA class...It was very sad but it was cool to see the building. - Frankie The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory was very interesting. As Mr. Michael said, we should be grateful for all of the women who died that day. - Elliana



Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island (and Grand Central Station)

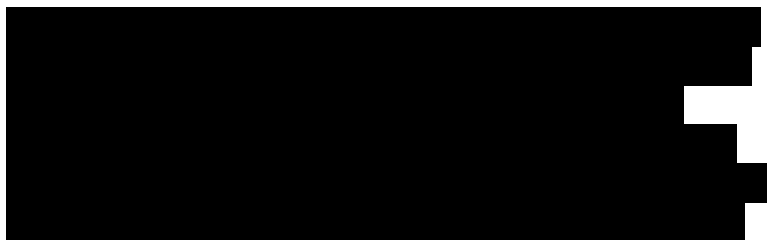
When we experienced the wave of the boat, I got a little sick. – Jamia

[The boat] gave me a headache because of the motion. – Mariah

When we boarded the boat, I felt a little sea sick but it went away eventually. – Elliana

When we were on the boat I started to feel sick. My head was hurting really bad. - Taylor

We took a boat. I was skeptical about getting on it. It was a bit rocky but it wasn't that bad getting on. – Kaionna



The boat water was really calming and the wind was good. – Dee

It was really cool to see [the Statue of Liberty] but it didn't look as big as it looks in the movies. - Frankie

The Statue of Liberty was smaller than I imagined, but it was still beautiful. She was originally a bronze color but over time, due to weather and oxidation, she became the greenish color she is now. – Jazzy

We had a boat ride to the Statue. It came with a nice view of Manhattan! The fog set it perfectly and the water breeze was coo. - Desy

The Statue of Liberty, or Liberty Enlightens the World, was a gift from France to congratulate [the US] on abolishing slavery, which proves to be a very ironic gift considering Africans were treated as less than whites long after they were "freed." – Semhar

I learned...she faces France and she has broken chains on her leg and one leg is up because she is stepping into freedom. - Fatuma

The highlight of my day was taking the board to see the Statue of Liberty! I have always wanted to learn the significance of the statue. Thanks to our tour guide for telling everything there was to know about the statue. Today is our last day with Mr. Mike, so I want to thank you for all you have done because without you we wouldn't have had as good of an experience. – Ra'Quel

We watched a short film about how [the Statue of Liberty] was created from the ground up. - Peija

[The Statue of Liberty] was way smaller than I thought it was in movies. It was very pretty, though. We took some good pictures. Then we went to Ellis Island. It was very upsetting just because it seems very hard for the people that were there. It was mostly hard in the point of time. – Angel

The Statue of Liberty was a little smaller than I expected but it was still exciting to see. It was nice to hear the history behind it and hear the poem that was on the pedestal (I never knew). - Elliana

We went to see 3 short films about how the statue was first just an idea of Frederic August Bartholdi. Throughout the exhibit there was much information about the symbolism in the items she has on. - Caroline

The best part of NYC was going to view the Statue of Liberty and the different islands. I can finally cross that off my bucket list, going to the Statue of Liberty. – Jamia

Now we have Ellis Island, the immigration control center that died out once boats became obsolete. Things that made you undesirable include:

- Being incurably sick
- Being disabled
- Nasty impoverished



-Your race (or ethnicity) is lame

-Irish

- Semhar



Our tour guide gave us an informal talk on how Ellis Island came to be, about how people didn't always get to cross. They had to have good health and more. Sometimes they had to be separated from their family. – Dee

In order to come to the U.S., you had to have \$25, good health, and no job. There was a stairway that was divided into 3 – one because you were going to New Jersey, Manhattan, etc.... right! Another staircase was for people who were going to Pennsylvania, Virginia, etc.... The middle staircase is for the people who stay. They don't get to go anywhere. – Maray



...I would cry if I got separated from my mother.
- Habiba

I learned how immigrants go through. They have to be asked 35 questions and pass a health exam. – Asia

Elizabeth Taylor went through Ellis Island. - Desy

Ellis Island is where the European people came to be set free for the "life of gold." It's crazy how people changed their names and how they kept track. - Fatuma

After the Statue of Liberty, we went to Ellis Island, the UN, and Grand Central [Station]... At Ellis Island, we learned about the immigrants, how they came through and started a new life. – Caroline

On our way to Ellis Island, I was curious to see if my great great, great, great, grandpa/ma/aunts/uncles/cousins (not really sure) were in the museum. I didn't get to see them in the museum but Mr. Michael gave me some info to look them up online and I ended up finding most of my relatives.

- Joseph Berney – arrived 1834 POB – Ireland ship name – Frapel
- John Grossart – 1907 POB Scotland ship name – Calendoria
- Carl Gustav – 1882 POB Sweden ship name – Spain
- James Christensen - ???
- Elliana

Opportunities – something many of the immigrants hoped for. – Asia

At Ellis Island...immigrants dreamed of a better life in America. Everyone is dreaming for a better future for themselves and maybe one day I'll dream of going to a NYC college. Dreams are fun. - Famo

I got a one pen. Ms. Sheebie bought them for us. – Maray

We just visited [Grand Central Station] and I just remembered scenes from **Madagascar**. - Elliana



Brooklyn Bridge



Then we went to the Brooklyn Bridge. I had to use the bathroom and that was a struggle. – Angel

We then went to see the Brooklyn Bridge. I didn't get to see it for very long because I had to go to the bathroom. The hotel that had the bathroom was so beautiful. – Maray

I liked Brooklyn because it was less cramped than [Manhattan]. - Jazzy

Mean Girls on Broadway

On our way to eat hot dogs...then Broadway! - Elliana

Man, running in the rain to get to the theater was ridiculous because I was wet, wet. Now enough of that. I loved watching **Mean Girls**. The whole time I was wondering, "now can you turn **Mean Girls** into a musical?" But anything is possible if you strive for it and be dedicated to it. – Asnina

We walked (ran/walked) a block in the rain trying to avoid being wet in the theater. Honestly, I think we're having bad luck because we keep getting caught in the rain. The play was absolutely amazing and worth smelling like a wet dog for. It was one of the best plays I've ever seen! It was 100% amusing, the dancing, singing, JOKES, and crowd interaction was on point. I really wish why would have done the Christmas scene from the movie. I was so ready! - Desy

That show was amazing. Like when I say amazing, I mean, like, better than the movie. - Habiba

I loved it. Cady and the plastics were my favorites. They really played their roles extremely well. At the Stardust Diner they said the fill up bucket helps send their servers to Broadway and I wonder if anyone from **Mean Girls** maybe worked there before they made it. - Kaionna



Last night in New York City we got to see the **Mean**

Girls show...The show was very funny and had me learning some things from it. I feel like there were a couple of lessons in that show that stuck out to me. The main one was that you should never have to change yourself to make friends or try and fit in with others. The second one was you should never forget who you are and what you stand for, ever. The show was great and I can't wait to watch the movie. – Ra'Quel

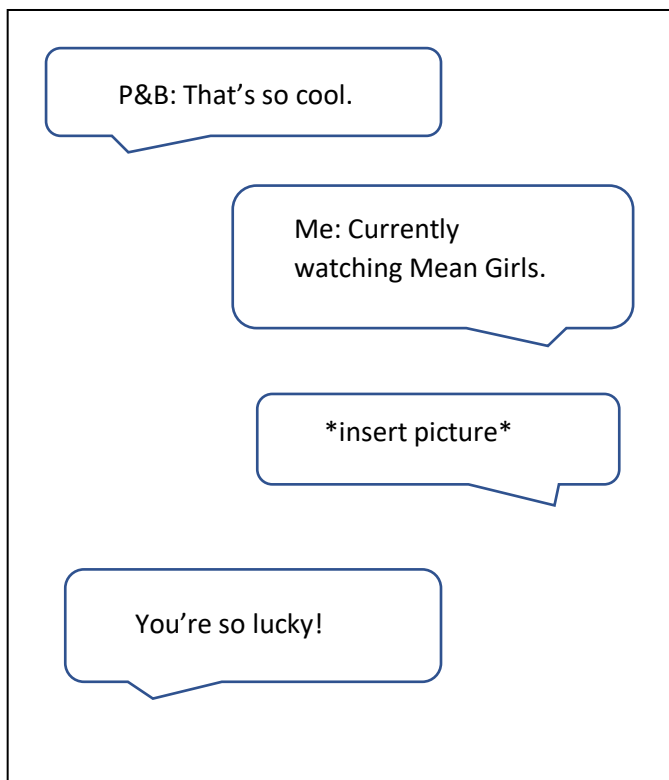
I got to sit pretty close. I was in row J. – Maray

I was excited overall because it was the first time I ever went to a Broadway show. I'm also the first person to do all these things in my family so I'm very thankful to you guys for inviting me. – Aniellia

"You can't sit with us" is what was going through my head all week because I was so ready for the show Mean Girls. We got hot dogs from Frank's and they were pretty good. I liked the onions on the dog because it gave it a sweeter taste. When we were heading to the show it started downpouring. But that still didn't ruin my excitement. We got off the bus and we instantly started running to find shelter. You can tell that the New Yorkers are always prepared for the rain because every time it rains you instantly see a whole bunch of umbrellas pop up. The Broadway show was everything I thought it would be. The whole time, I kept my eyes on the show. There was so much detail in the show and you could tell they took their time. Everything matched the movie, the personalities to be exact. To see one of my favorite movies put into a Broadway show was very cool. Everything was detailed and fit right in. The actors did an amazing job portraying their characters. I was still happy even with my soaked clothes. I kept a smile on my face because I was grateful to be at my first Broadway show Thank you to everyone who made this happen. – Taylor M.

I had a good time at the **Mean Girls** show. I really enjoyed it and loved how everything flowed together and they didn't mess up, not once. My favorite part was when Regina and her crew came out for their first time out and the introductions were bomb. And the funniest scene was when Karen talked about how she wished Halloween was every day and said she wanted world peace. - VicTaijah

I have two good friends, Presley and Brodie, that are huge theatre geeks and know Broadway in & out. Although they love all of this, they have never had the chance to get to go to NYC so I took the chance to take pictures of every musical/theatre related thing in NY. They were really ecstatic to hear about me being able to see **Mean Girls** on Broadway. It was adorable seeing them react to my pictures but it's really sad that they weren't able to experience it themselves.




It was also cool to see that we (Presley, Brodie, and I) had the same favorite songs from the musical, *What's Wrong With Me?* and *Meet the Plastics*. I'm sure they would have loved seeing it live. I now love **Mean Girls** and Broadway just like them. – Famo

The whole performance was amazing. I felt like those actors one day are going to be big actors in movies that will get wonderful recognition if they haven't already. I know they had to have taken drama class in order to be the actors they are today. I remember taking drama my 9th grade year and ended up passing but it was not for me. I act too silly so I would laugh in the middle of whatever we were doing. So, for them to be performing for 2 hours without forgetting lines was fantastic. – Jamia

I loved it. It was the best laugh I've had in a while. It was so cool how well the roles were played. To me Regina George, Gretchen, and Karen were played the best. I didn't expect it to be that good and the singing was great. Now I can say I have been to a Broadway show. – Mariah

We went to a show, **Mean Girls**. It was very mature and very alive. There was not a part where I felt I wanted to go to sleep. - Peija

The show as hilarious but at the same time it made some very good points about problems we have in society. One of those problems was the multiple school shootings along with female empowerment. – Caroline

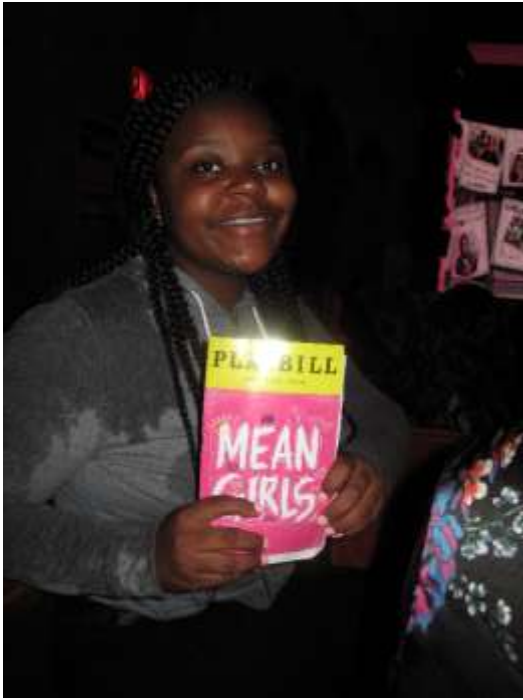
"What is wronggg with me??!" LMAO that was my favorite part and I know everyone enjoyed that. The way the actors played along with the set, the time consistency, all of it was great. The part that fascinated me was when the guy was wearing the pink shirt and Cady took it off and put it right on. It was in an instant. That play was the best part and I  it. - Fatuma

I was surprised I liked Mean Girls because I thought it would be kind...Barbie Doll-ish but it actually had character and lessons. - Asia

I couldn't stop myself from laughing because it was so hilarious...to watch except they used cuss words which I don't approve of. But other than that, they musical was fine and they did a good job putting it all together. Even the songs they sang were good. But I learned that I will never be mean to other girls because I want them to treat me with respect and give them respect even if I don't like that person. I will still be kind to them and treat them how I want to be treated... - Kami

The Broadway show last night was amazing and hilarious. My favorite part was when Damion yelled, "She doesn't even go here." That was probably my favorite attraction we've gone to all throughout New York City. - Jazzy

...We got to watch **Mean Girls the Musical**. I love musicals and all my friends like musicals, too, so I was excited to tell them about it. The musical was just amazing. It was my first live Broadway show and I am very satisfied with my experience. The singing and dancing and one-liners were all so fun and perfect. I can't tell which I like more, the original movie or the musical. I think the musical focused more on the underlying female empowerment message of Mean Girls while the movie focused more on Cady and her life specifically. Since



the script for the musical was written more recently than the movie script, I think the writers purposely added those social justice lines in order to bring attention to everyday problems that people are becoming aware of and recognizing it is a problem in our society. – Hana

Out of everything we have done so far, Mean Girls musical was my favorite. I myself am a musical fan (theater) so that experience made me really happy and now the words/ “my name is Karen my hair is shiny, my teeth are perfect, etc....” are stuck in my head.

Mean Girls was amazing. It made me realize how talented people are. – Angel

I was so surprised at how good it was. The acting was amazing and the people's voices were beautiful. I was also taken by surprise because nobody messed or fell or anything. I thought it was so cool. - Frankie

One, it was really funny. I came in with the expectation that it would be a corny, PG play and while it would be well made, a lot of the ridiculous and dirty humor would be lost. I was real wrong. Like, in what capacity is masturbating with a hot dog not hilarious. Two, their voices were amazing. I really liked “Apex Predator” because they stayed low (relatively) while being super powerful. +100 singing - Semhar

I enjoyed the twist they put on it including informational facts we teens need to know, while being a very humorous show... I think my favorite part was when Karen was talking about her sending inappropriate pictures and being exposed. And a lot of the times they only blame the sender. Of course, they are to blame 65% of the situation. The other 35% to blame is on the person who resent it out because they broke the trust code. – Taylor B.

Philadelphia



Today we woke up and had to refill our stuff on the 3rd bus of this trip.... As we drove to Philly, I had to take a nap! I'm like so tired and my brain hurts from learning. Side note: We taught Ms CT "period pooh" last night. - Desy

Our report time [this morning] was 6:30 and we had to reload the bus. Everyone was working together to get this done. – Taylor M.

Departure time was 8 a.m. We got the bus switched over and the go ahead for depart at 7:59 a.m. Go team! – Ms. Roberta

...The difference that I saw [between] Philly and New York is that there's so much space for you to run and the air is different...more fresh and clean. - Habiba

We stopped at the Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church. [The tour guide] talked about [Bishop] Allen and his background...The church windows were very colorful and decorated with meaning which reminded me of my church back home. – Jamia

We went to the church earlier. It was so surprising that it was from the 1800's and it's still up. Some facts about Richard Allen: Richard Allen was minister, educator, writer, and one of America's most active and influential black leaders. In 1794 he founded the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the first black denomination in the United States. He was born February 14, 1760; died March 26, 1831. He had two wives, Flora and Sarah Bass. – Mariah

Seeing actual stuff from the 1800's was like WOW! History is amazing. - Desy

I didn't get a chance to go in the church but I definitely did some online research so I didn't feel left out. It's the oldest parcel of land owned by African Americans. – Fatuma



The stained glass was so beautiful and each one had a different meaning. I've never seen anything like it. - VicTaijah



I was a little shook when [the guide] told us how old the [church] was. - Frankie

We got to see the first AME Women Bishop in 2000. Her name was Vashti Murphy McKinzie. There were also two other women bishops. Both from 2004. One of those women is a twin of a lady from Girls Inc. [Dr. Carol Mitchell]. – Maray

Dr. Mitchell from the Eureka! program, her twin sister is on the wall of bishops! One of three females to be bishops. Now that's Strong, Smart, and BOLD. - Desy

Reverend Allen helped slaves adjust to free life. – Asia

The churches Richard Allen had were the blacksmith shop 1791 his first church; 2nd was Roughcast 1805; 3rd Brick church 1841; and 4th 1889 the present one...We also got to stand in the blacksmith because they built the present one around that one. It was cool to see his people carry on his legacy and make his name thrive in history. – Taylor M.

This morning we went to a church that had historical background. Because of my religion I wasn't able to go in. I assumed we'd just sit out for a while & do nothing but Ms. Sheebie went out of her way and bought us donuts. I was so happy for that nice thing...that was heartwarming. - Famo

Thank you to the kind lady who showed us around and helped teach us our black history. #BlackLivesMatter!! #BlackExcellence #BlackMagic – Ra'Quel

At the church I saw Allen's tomb and many historical artifacts, such as some of the original benches, rifles (which were used to intimidate mobs willing to destroy the church), and the book Allen wrote. Once we finished the tour of the church, we went to see the stained-glass windows. The images the windows depicted were stunning and angelic. One thing I could not believe was that they kept up the windows so that we can still see them today. – Caroline

My favorite part about today was the church. Mainly because I didn't expect us to go to a church and I like church. - Kaionna

We drove out to Philadelphia today to explore historic landmarks in US History. We saw the original Liberty Bell and the Centennial Bell, even learning the history behind the Liberty Bell and how it cracked. – Hana



The bell was rung too many times in a certain place which cause a microfracture. And soon it became larger so they drilled to separate the pieces but the process was done incorrectly which caused the crack to get larger until they could no longer ring it because it would crack in half. – Caroline

Getting to see the oldest bell at “America’s Most Historic Mile” was cool. – Habiba

The Liberty Bell weighs 2,080 pounds. – Taylor M.

It was amazing seeing the [Liberty] Bell...I was annoyed when Famo wanted to take a picture of the bell and she politely asked the guy to move over so she can take a picture but he got disrespectful, talking about wait ‘til I’m done but he wasn’t even doing anything. - Asnina

I learned that they don’t ring [the Liberty bell] any more. – Mariah

[The Liberty Bell] wasn’t as big as I thought but it’s crazy how every bit of history gets saved, somewhere, somehow. It’s like they’re here trying to leave a message for us. The crack on the bell runs from the lip toward the crown which makes it automatically recognizable. They tried to repair it in 1846. It failed. [The crack] zigzagged up toward the top which silenced it forever. – Fatuma

That was the first time I ever saw [the Liberty Bell] and over all heard about it. Just from that information, I could tell how important that bell was... Its main purpose is to represent American independence. That to me is very important since I have relatives/ancestors that had to fight for their rights and beliefs. - Elliana

We went to see the Liberty bell and hearing about how it inspired the country inspired me. - Asia

...Our tour guide Mr. Mark...he walks pretty fast so I should have lost a couple of pounds, walking drenched in sweat. He took us to the National Constitution Center. [On the way] he gave us information on each important building... - Jamia

Our guide was such a fast walker! Like soooo fast! - Desy

The tour guide talked like he was the seller at an auction. – Maray

A lot of information our tour guide told us we don’t learn in school so it’s actually nice to learn new things. - Kaionna



I liked the tour guide we had this morning. He was dressed in costume which made it more interesting. - Elliana



Constitution Center

The guy who spoke the whole time [at the multi-media show] wasn't timid. He had a very commanding voice that just gave you chills when he talked. His voice reminds me of commercial talkers. You know, the State Farm commercial, the straight forward talker. The whole film was extraordinary. – Jamia

The man's voice was chilling...I wish I could describe the presentation better. It was projections on the ceiling that had words and pictures and graphics all over the theater! - Desy

We were seated to watch a film I really enjoyed. I loved how the man was on point and would move around and talk with the video and how everything went together. And the crazy thing is my shirt says, We the people" and it literally went with everything we talked about. – VicTaijah

That "We the People" presentation rally spoke to me because sometimes we don't learn these things in school. – Taylor M.

At the National Constitution Center, I liked how they had different ways to keep our attention. A group of girls and I pretended to be a courtroom with cases. It took us 20 minutes to finish and we added a little bit of dramatic effect at the end to make it funnier. - Jazzy

I thought the guy that was giving us the presentation was really good at his job. He reminded me of my 11th grade modern world history teacher who hated giving us book assignments and would rather have discussions because they are more intriguing. – Taylor B.

The show in the theater was very nice. I liked the lay out of it. The man speaking was very dedicated. - Mariah

We got to go inside a building and watch a show and learn about American history during colonial times. – Hana

There were so many things to do. - Frankie


The voting [display] gave me information on how and where to do it. I'm turning 18 this year so I plan on voting and I'm actually excited to do it. - Kaionna

We played a game where we rolled the dice and if we landed on “?” we had to answer a questions. Eventually my team won. - Fatuma

There was one topic they didn't cover and that topic was slavery. I feel like that topic is one many Americans avoid even though it is a major part of our history. During this they failed to mention all of the devices used in some of these documents that were unfair to black people. And how much we are truly in this nation's history. – Caroline

“We the People...” the Constitution starts but yet everything written in there was not applied to women, African Americans, and Immigrants. - Asia

I explored the whole building which was peaceful and wonderful...We came across seats like a court and a TV. We sat down and someone came up with the idea to play Judge Judy. So, for 10 minutes we sat talking over each other trying to figure out who was going to do what. We finally got a case going and then the staff came crashing the fun and told us it was time to go. – Jamia

This was by far my favorite museum we have visited so far. It had lots of hands on things where we could actually have sort of real-life experiences sitting in the courtroom to making promises to become president to voting. I VOTED TODAY!  -Peija

I got to find the Nebraska flag...For some reason I could not find it at first but after I found out when it became an official state back in 1867 in March 1st, I was able to find it hanging up. Our flag is super boring and I am surprised that it does not have a splash of red we are o known for cornhuskers (UNL). – Taylor B.

My favorite part by far was when we were all acting like we were in a court doing a court case. It was truly fun and it was glad that we all interacted with each other. – Taylor B.

There was this area where you could hold a mock trial so nearly all the girls joined to be a judge, juror, lawyer, or victim/witness in our fantasy murder case. We didn't get far but it was fun and somewhat educational. – Hana

I was a lawyer. It was fun and I'm looking forward to finishing off my case with my client strong! - Fatuma

Fatuma was a great lawyer. – Dee

I got to take polls but also play a court trial with some girls from the group (BTW, I pleaded not guilty!) The second court trial, we almost had all the girls join in which made it feel more professional but sadly we couldn't finish it since it was time to go. – Elliana

We did a case in court. It was actually quite fun. And there were times when I couldn't stop laughing...When most of the girls joined, it felt more real. - Frankie

Most of us girls did a court case on our own. It was nice to bond with a lot of the girls and have fun. – Angel

The Constitution Museum was fun. We did a lot of bonding. - Desy

We all pretended Elliana killed her husband and Aniellia was her daughter who was saying she was guilty. And [two girls] were witnesses. – Maray

I also learned about a famous case I'd never heard about. There was this farmer who hexed 3 kids, according to them. In order to break the hex, the 3 kids danced in his house and killed him. Since they're just little kid rats and they plead self-defense, the case went wild. - Semhar



My favorite part was the human interaction amongst my peers. Ms. CT said she did not want out phones out the whole time we were there. We played our old school Girls Inc. games that we used to play every day at Girls Inc. – Jamia

I also noticed while in the Constitution Center and in a lot of different places like at the Women's Rights National Park back in Seneca Falls, they mention taxation without representation and I didn't know what it meant. But while I was there, I found out it meant the resentment of American colonists at being taxed by the British and it came to be an anti-British slogan. I was happy when I finally got the chance to figure out what it stood for. – Taylor B.

While looking in the Museum, I was "sworn in" as President of the United States. – Asia

I was with Jazzy, Frankie, Angel, Elliana, Dee, Caroline, and Aniellia. We all voted then accepted Aniellia to be president. - Maray

Seeing the girls bond at the Constitution Center was nice. I haven't been seeing that lately until today. And seeing how happy they are made me feel like a proud mom. 😊 - Habiba

It was time to get on the bus but it wasn't there yet. So, we decided to dance and play games. This is where everyone joined to play the concentration game... We did that so we could learn everyone's names in case we didn't know or forgot. – Jamia

When we were waiting for the bus to come, I got to learn a couple of games but also learn some of the girls' names. - Elliana



I was also thrilled when we all played hand games and knick knock games while we waited for the bus. Though we are on our 7th day, it was fun that we could all get along to have a good time. – Taylor B.

When we left, we did a group of learning names and Little Sally Walker. – Maray

While we were waiting for the bus...the girls had a nice idea to entertain themselves by playing games. I didn't join at first but it looked so fun, we never smiled so much together as a group. I LOVE THESE GIRLS! ❤️❤️ -Famo



Hershey, PA



As we drove in, I was able to see bushes or sections of grass that spelled out Hershey and...Hershey Kisses. – Maray

I was standing outside the Hershey building and I felt like I was one of the lucky people that won to go to Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. I felt like I had won the Golden Ticket, like it felt unreal. - Asnina

We went to Hershey Park. It was really fun. We got to make our own chocolate and then we rode rides. – Lawrencia

We made our own candy bars and I love that concept. I got a dark chocolate candy bar. I put chocolate chips and pretzel bites into the candy bar...The designing of the packaging was my favorite part because you got to use your creativity for this activity. I was pretty amazed to see the final part of my candy bar. It all came together well. - Taylor

HERSHEY! HERSHEY! HERSHEY! ...I got to make my own Hershey bar. There were a lot of different fillings to choose from to go inside my chocolate bar...My favorite part of Hershey World was seeing my chocolate bar being made. I recorded the whole thing. I liked seeing the chocolate go through the waterfall. I was like CHOCOLATE!! YUM! – Ra'Quel



I was impressed with the system they had for how the bars were made. First you choose a name for your bar...Next you choose your fillings. I chose crisp cookie and chocolate cookie bits. After that you get to watch your bar be made as the machine fills it with goodies you start to smell the chocolate that is about to come through and compact all of your topping to your bar. I forgot you mention you got to choose milk or dark chocolate. After you watch your bar be made, it's sent to a cooler for about 8 minutes. This is so your chocolate doesn't come out soft or melted. You move over to a station where you pick what you want on the wrapper to say, the color, or, if you want, stickers. – Maray

Then I found out we were making our own chocolate bar and I was excited. Like this was amazing – got to create our own bar, and got to name it, and decorate the bar, which I believe mine was the best idc idc idc what anyone says mine was the BEST! PERIOD! ...oh, and in my Hershey bar I put butterscotch chips and pretzels...Once you eat it, you will get chills. That's how good it is. – Asnina



I especially loved being at Hershey Park. Before the trip, I didn't even know the place existed but I am super glad I was able to go and ride a few rides but not many because I can't stand lines, absolutely hate them. But still super grateful for the experience. – Taylor B.

Sweet, creamy, rich – all things you can use to describe Hershey World. As we approached the building you could smell the sweet, delicious smell of chocolate... we got dressed in hair nets and aprons... I made [a chocolate] bar and it didn't turn out perfect but then I thought nothing is every truly perfect and just let it go. We went to a 4D movie. I've never been to a 4D movie is I didn't know what to expect but when we were sprayed and had air blown at us, I was surprised. It made me jump a little. But besides that, I loved it. It was very interactive. Just like everything else, there was never a dull moment. – Asia





We then watched a movie in 4D. We had to help Kiss, Reece, and Hershey get the guy who was trying to steal the Hershey recipe....The theater had things that threw water at us, pushed air on us, rattled our seats and the floor. They did a very good job. – Maray



We spent the last day of May at Hershey World. I've never been to such a place before.

It was astonishing. There was Hershey candy everywhere in all sizes and flavors...The best part of being there wasn't making my own Hershey bar or shopping, surprisingly. In the museum was a theater that was showing a show. It was a detective with Hershey bar, kiss, and Reece's! I felt like the younger version of myself again. It was such a nice feeling to feel. As we grow up, we tend to

lose things that we had as a kid like imagination, creativity, and fearless attitudes. We tend to let society shape our minds and lives by "age appropriate" and embarrassment. I didn't mind letting loose. - Desy

Let me tell you [Hershey's Chocolate World] was so much fun. All the girls got to make their own chocolate. It was so satisfying to see how they were made....I wanted to go on all the rides but the lines were toooo longggg. Jazzy, Frankie, Elliana and I went on 5 rides. I think that was pretty good. But then there was this girl [not a Girls Inc. girl!], she fainted because she was so dehydrated. This made me think of a lesson to myself, "Take care of yourself even when having fun." But overall Hershey was a success! – Angel

Yesterday @ Hershey, I remember talking to Ms. Roberta about how I had no idea Hershey Park existed until we got here. How would I? It's not as known as Disney or local like World's of Fun so it was really shocking to see the park as well as see the incredible history behind it...I also read about Milton S. Hershey and how he built his company and eventually the park. It turns out he's always used the money from his company for good. He raised money to build housing for underprivileged children, housed people during the depression, and still Hershey gives money to these causes. I'm glad that just like Girls Inc., Hershey Company achieves great things for other people. The park was also really fun so love that for them and us- Famo

I wasn't scared of the ride but I was excited. It was thrilling... We rode about six rides, had lemonade, popcorn, and shopped. For lunch we...had pizza and garlic knots. I would eat those garlic knots in my dreams. – Asia



On the ...bus ride there I was so excited, like I legit had the jitters because I love riding roller coasters but the catch is when we're getting ready to take off, I'm screaming and we haven't even moved yet. - VicTajiah



The chaperones did the Grandma Ride Circuit – like the train. There may be vomit on this trip but it won't be mine! – Ms. Roberta

It's been a while since I've been to an amusement park but I'm excited to be going with friends. The park was full of all the huge roller coasters and arcade games. It was even better because you have the company of your friends. Friends always know how to make you laugh, lift you up, and just keep you in good spirits. Especially a BESTFRIEND, shout out to my bestie Jamia. We have been the best of friends for 10+ years. – Ra'Quel

The rollercoasters/rides at Hershey were fun yet scary at the same time. My favorite ride would be the Great Bear. It's where you sit with your feet hanging out and you do twists and turns and loop-dee-loops. I was screaming for a majority of it but I still loved it. – Jazzy

I really had fun at the amusement park even though I was scared half the time. I went on 3 rides in total and I was very nervous. The lines were very long but I was still determined to get on the lines. We were waiting in line for the Storm Chaser. Dee and I were very nervous because it was the fastest ride. We decided to sit in the front of the ride and I regretted it. If you saw our faces, we were very scared. We saw all the action first and the wind hit us very hard. Dee said her heart was in her butt after. That was the funniest thing of the day. – Taylor M.

We rode two rides. I can't remember the names but the first one was OK. I screamed like a big baby when it



started moving. But the second ride was purple and your legs were hanging and the part that moved on the tracks were at the top so our legs were dangling. Bu the wait for the ride was like an hour and 15 minutes but it was well worth the wait. I had so much fun on that ride. It was so, so fast. It was literally 1 min. and 20 seconds. That's how

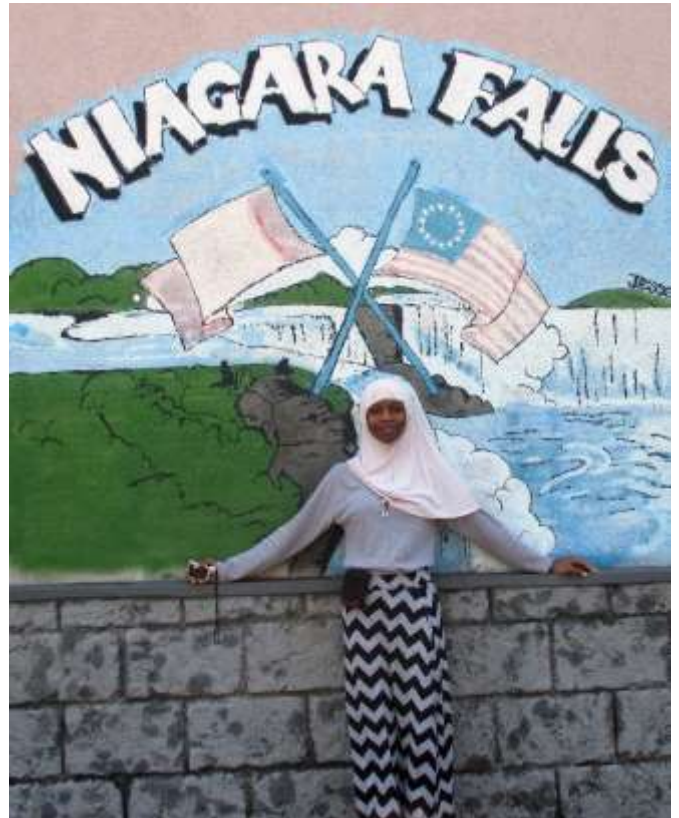
fast it was.... And we rode the carousel and that was fun. And then we walked around the park and then met up with the group. - VicTajjah

In [a] previous journal entry I said **Mean Girls** was my favorite thing we did but now I can't decide because of the Hershey Palace...so let's just call it a tie. - Elliana

Trip Experience

From the first time hearing that we were taking a trip to New York, my whole world changed and my face lit up like a light. For months before the trip, I kept annoying my friends saying, "I can't wait until New York." I repeated that like once every day. It finally came down to the month of May where the excitement really kicked it...The day of the trip, May 24th, was the most dreadful but incredible feeling. The feeling happens to all the trips that I've been on but New York hit a different spot. I've never been but I've always wanted to go. – Jamia

Overall, this trip was an amazing experience. This might not be the last time I got to NY or Philadelphia but I know I won't learn as much or do as much as I did...In this trip, not only did I have new experiences but I also met new friends which I thought was pretty nice since they were all around my age (most were) or we had common interests. – Elliana



New York City has done nothing but treated me well...My life is great!!! – Fatuma

I want to thank the tour guide, Mike. He gave us a lot of information and made my time in New York City very fun. - Taylor

We tried lots of new foods and they are definitely different than what I'm used to back home. - Kaionna



We stopped at a truck stop and we saw these crosses with worker hats and vests. As we read the plaque, it said it was for all the people who lost their lives while trying to slow drivers during construction. I was angry and disappointed with the people who would rather speed than obey the law and that all these workers had lost their lives trying to do their job. – Asia

Sleep. Sleep.
Is all I'm thinking of in my head as I try not to fall asleep, as I try not to get us all on lockdown. - Frankie

It is crazy how many different people are on this trip. So many different

personalities. Like at lunch, I really didn't want to sit with Frankie, Jazzy, Angel, and Elliana but it was actually really fun. They are super nice. - Dee

...I went to the rest stop and while Sam and I were leaving a woman with short curly hair came up and told us we're beautiful. That was very sweet and Sam and I were both touched. The lady herself was gorgeous, too. That experience was sweet. – Hana

While on this trip, I've made some new friends like Lawrencina and Famo, and have had some good laughs. – Jazzy

This trip has been an adventure...but it's the good kind of adventure. I'm pretty sure some of the girls were tired from all of the walking we have done. I didn't mind all the walking because we were eating so much a little walk won't hurt. One thing I learned from being on this trip is never whine when you're having fun because many kids would die for a trip like this...when trips like this come around, take advantage of it and go explore other states. This may be my last trip with Girls Inc., but I have met many people and gotten to see many new things that other girls couldn't. Hopefully these Girls Inc. trips keep going because I would love to send a girl on a trip and [have her] get to experience what I got to with Girls Inc. on other girls. I can speak on behalf of the staff, too, that this has been the best group. – Habiba

This trip has been my favorite trip so far...I've never learned so much as I did here in those 7 days. I'm beyond grateful. Who knew New York had so much history? ...Mr. Mike taught me more stuff than I learned in his school year alone. - Desy

Sisters are usually mean people that you can't stand but I always appreciate the good moments we have together. There were so many moments today that it was shining (my smile!). I LOVE MY SISTERS! ❤️ - Famo



The girls thought the lines were long for the rides in Hershey but the restroom lines were the real wait. They need some of those switch-back stanchions like they have at airports. When you have 32 girls/women hit a restroom, you better have some serious bladder control. – Ms. Roberta

We had lots of fun. On the bus we played cards and danced around in our hotel room. - Peija

For some reason, I wasn't that tired today. I'm getting used to walking a lot and waking up extremely early. Maybe I can start working morning shifts at my job. - Kaionna

We got to our new hotel today. We were writing in our journals and then **Moana** comes on the TV. We all stopped writing and were singing along and watching. - Asnina

Overall, this trip was fun and it was a really great way to experience things I wouldn't have otherwise, like switching buses 4 times in ten days, poor sleep, and playing hot potato with

luggages. Y'now important developmental tasks. When Essex (my Eureka facilitator) called my mom to tell her I was going to New York, she was absolutely ecstatic. She couldn't stop talking about how "her baby was going to New York." Meanwhile, I sat there unfazed, interested but completely apathetic. It's hard to imagine yourself 2 months from now. One month is a millennium, so two is borderline fictional. If I could go back and scream about Tina Fey and frankfurters to myself, I would. And I can only hope I would reciprocate my enthusiasm. Apart from all the things I learned, this trip was beautiful. Times Square was just a bunch of advertisement wrapped up in an intersection featuring Billie Eilish and Shawn Mendes wearing Calvin Klein. Still, if I could go back and stand there speechless like the little corn-born Nebraska rat I am, I would in a heartbeat. Niagara Falls is beautiful. The idea of water cascading down a plate has a tranquil and naturally beautiful implication, yeah? ...I learned that a group of educated women all decided they were being oppressed (more agreed than decided) and held a meeting to show and discuss a declaration of independence-type document featuring the main issues they had. - Semhar

≈Life on the Bus≈ I'm sitting with Habeep-beep and we had a singing session like 3 times. LOL! We looked at dresses and argued about being grown (I'm a rising senior and she graduated).- Desy

I've met a lot of new people. At first, I wasn't really open to meeting new people but Famo said that every day is an opportunity to meet new people. – Asia



This morning my room and I work up and time. We got dressed and we cleaned. I felt accomplished this morning because we did everything in perfect timing. – Ra’Quel

A lot of stuff we did was once in a lifetime...so I tried to engage myself in every activity as much as possible. I hope our future teens decide to come on the trips...Not only are they education, but they are fun at the same time. - Kaionna

There was a drag queen convention at our hotel the first night. They were raising money for a local non-profit. – Ms. Roberta

I also enjoyed how all the museums we visited were interactive and did things that caught my eye, like the presentation at the Constitution Center. – Taylor B.

We went to get hot dogs and I’m like really mad that the [tour guide] Mr. Mike really was hyping up that hot dog place like that, talking about even President Obama had been. He

probably came once and never returned. I don’t know, they just were not good and he didn’t need to overhype it like that. - Asnina

Happy to journal that there has been much less vomit on this trip than last year. Not zero vomit (too much to ask?), but much less. It was funny to watch girls scatter away from vomit in a fast food restaurant at warp speed. Like dropping oil in water. They would not have made it on last year’s trip. #LightWeights - Ms. Roberta

Things to also to talk about when I get home:

- Buffalo hotel
- Drag queens
- Breakfast
- Niagara Falls details
- Show you my photos after I upload them
- Good things & bad things
- National Women’s Museum
- 9/11 Museum
- One World Observatory
- Dee



Now my mom told me it was going to be a lot of walking so take comfy walking shoes. I knew there was going to be a lot of walking but not as much as I experienced. At the end of the day I would be very tired and sore. In Omaha we are blessed to have our own car and we take advantage of walking. It was a little different but we just had to hop in the flow of things. – Jamia



This morning we woke up and went downstairs. We made sure to wake up at 6:00 am because we wanted to make sure we didn't make Ms. CT late anywhere. – Asia

It feels so different now that we are the big girls and sitting at the back of the bus like how Aariona and Sakira and them used to. - Habiba

For lunch today, we had Chinese food from Lin's Kitchen. I would like to thank them because we knew that we were kind of a bug group but they got our food out to us quickly. – Ra'Quel

I already know I'm going to be doing a lot of walking. I'm kinda mad but it's cool. It's going to be a good day so I'm going to have to suck it up... I'm glad I'm not doing what I usually do "speaking everything I think" because I would just het myself in trouble. - Dee

As our trip comes to an end, I must say I enjoyed myself. It's a bittersweet moment since I graduated from school, I have graduated from Girls Inc. I used to think I couldn't wait until I turned 18 so I don't have to go to Girls Inc. any more but now I don't feel the same. Because as much complaining as I did, and how so-called annoyed I was, Girls Inc. has always been a home away from home ever since I started back when I was 8. – Taylor B.

I tried to have a positive attitude but that went North... I have a goal tomorrow to have a better attitude because I actually took what Ms. CT said to heart. - Dee

Ms. Sheebie isn't allowed to cross the street anymore. – Asia

Famo tried to end me last night by turning the air to 60! Who does that? Who can sleep like that? - Desy

All throughout this trip, I've made new friends. Pretty soon I'll be in college and I may not be able to travel as much so I am enjoying all the trips I can partake in. – Jazzy



I'm so grateful to have this opportunity to see New York & Pennsylvania with this amazing group of people. I never imagined I would make this amount of friends in such a short time span. The first couple of days were all about getting to know each other. I was a little nervous coming on this trip only knowing two girls, Ms. CT, & Ms. Roberta. I've been sick since October with all the diseases in the book so that was a huge concern for me as well. I only had a few medical run ins, but other than that I truly had a great time. I really enjoyed the historical portion of the trip. I know its summer and all but the stories of our country have always fascinated me.

CT gives me mad benevolent strict type vibes. - Semhar

On this trip I saw a large number of monuments and important sites but I don't think I had a certain favorite place because I loved all of them. Visiting all the national parks and big cities was incredible. Each second was amazing and all the new memories I made were great. I have been to Philadelphia once before and had seen some of those places but I learned more information on this trip. The chance to get to travel to new places and see more places that some of us might have never seen if it wasn't for Girls Inc. and its donors providing this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to all the girls. With every step there was new knowledge and experience to find. All the fun things we did will stay with me for a long time. I have been on several of these trips before and I think this one was my favorite. This time was when I think I had the most fun, along with learning a lot of background information about the sites. – Caroline

Today we are on our way home and it's bittersweet. I've gotten to know a lot of new girls...and seen a lot of new things...This trip meant a lot to me because I'm a senior and I have been going to Girls Inc. since I was tiny, tiny. This trip is my last trip. I'm not only going to be a Burke alumni, I'm going to be a Girls Inc. alumni. I can honestly say I enjoyed myself. I'm so excited to start a new chapter of my life but also kind of sad that this one is ending. – Kaionna

I personally thought this trip was amazing and I would probably never be able to do those things. – Frankie

Gratitude

I first want to thank my mom and dad for making this trip happen. Especially my mom. She did things she shouldn't have to but filled in where she wanted to. My dad did his best that he could do, so for that I thank the both of them. I want to thank my aunt for helping me expand my spending money. She just chipped in every opportunity she could, and for that I got her a surprise when I return. I also thank the Richard Brooke Foundation for paying more than half of the trip. That's what made it possible for there to even be a trip. My last thank you goes to the4 staff that took the time out of their busy lives to make us happy. So far, Ms. CT thinks we are the best group that she has taken out of town. So I hope we continue these trips even long after my graduation date so younger youth can experience something other than Omaha. – Jamia



Instead of giving this journal all the bad things, I want to start off saying thank you for this amazing trip that we are about to go on. - Asia

Thank you, [Friends of Foster Care] and Richard Brooke Foundation for paying for some of us girls to go on this trip. Thank you, Megan for letting me go on this trip and for giving me money to spend...I really liked it – learning new things that I didn't know. So, thank you! - Lawrencia

I want to thank my mom for giving me a chance to go on this trip. Also, my dad for helping to pay. I'm glad that I got the chance to do this. I am very thankful. Thank you to [the others] who donated to this trip. – Mariah

This trip is one for the books! Thank you to everyone who played a part; high five yourself! You invested thousands of years' worth of history into the lives of 28 girls. Special thank you to my mother, a single mother of 2 that's raising 4 children. Every year you make a trip happened for me and for that you deserve the world. Hopefully, one day I can give it to you. Big thanks to my Grandma Cheryl. If you don't know her you should definitely get around to meeting her! She got me involved in Girls Inc. when I was 4 and when she started working there. We've grown with the building for about 13 years. Thanks to Ms. Roberta and Ms. CT, who always sees potential in me and shaped me to be the lady I am today. They've presented me with countless opportunities from public speaking at events for Girls Inc, meeting donors, guest speakers, trips, and numerous programs. To all the donors, you guys played the biggest part. Without you, these trips wouldn't happen. No certain donation is better than another. For example, we usually have rain ponchos donated and those are extremely helpful because somehow, we always get caught in the rain. The tickets that were donated to visit museums, historical parks, and more are just gifts from the education gods. The museums were incredible. I usually learn more at museums than any other source of information. Shout to UBT Bank for the goodies they provide every year. Everyone should have a coin purse and pen from there! To the donors who wrote a check, gave cash, or spare change – thank you. Your donation was very useful and went to all the right spots Most likely to our meals, transportation, snacks on the bus, ice for the coolers, pads for surprise menstruation, hotels and more. Thank you, Ms. Sheebie and Ms. Angie, for joining us. Thank you, Ms. Donna, for the chicken that makes me happy every year! Can't forget my favorite driver and other drivers for safely taking and returning us all. In conclusion everyone did a great job playing their role. NYC 2019 was a success! Thank you and great job everyone! Anyone up for another trip in the most epic year since I don't know?! But 202 is a golden year. I think a golden trip is much needed and it will be my last year on a trip and as a Girls Inc. member. Anyway, thanks guys and love you all! - Desy



I want to say thank you to myself for pushing myself to get extra hours from both my jobs to get a chance to go on this trip. I want to say thank you to all the staff of this trip for putting up with us and not giving up on us. Dealing with 28 girls is hard, mostly if none of them are your kids...This is the first trip we had more than two bus drivers and moving from one bus to another but we got through it with helping hands from one another. One of my favorite quotes is, "we travel not to escape life, but for life to escape us." - Habiba

I would like to thank the Richard Brooke Foundation for donating to this trip. But also Dr. Donna from the program SOMS, my parents, and Nikki Tomayo from SOMA...Out of all the things we did, learned, went to, it wouldn't have been organized if it weren't for Ms. CT, Ms. Angie, Ms. Roberta, And Ms. Sheebie. Also, all the bus drivers and tour guides. I just want to say that I'm grateful for all you've done for all the girls here. - Elliana



I would like to thank Ms. Essex [Coordinator of Eureka! at Girls Inc. of Lincoln] for nominating me to go with...Omaha on this trip. I appreciate every single donor who have their money to help fund this trip so I and others could go for free/a discounted price. But without Ms. Essex, I wouldn't have been able to go or even know that this trip was happening. Because of her nominating me, I got to see Niagara Falls, Women's History Museums, 9/11 Memorial, [Schomburg] Center for Research in Black Culture and plenty more. Places that taught me things I'll treasure forever. I came on this trip with girls I've never know before and I'm coming back to Nebraska with friends. This type of thing is once in a lifetime and I'm endlessly thankful that I got the opportunity to come. So, thank you so much to everyone who made this trip possible. – Hana

This year's Girls Inc. Trip to New York is my 3rd trip with the group and I am so happy and glad to have been able to go. Being with the Girls Inc. group and programming has changed my life for the better since I was 4 and I'm still able to have these experiences for 10 YEARS now! Can you believe it? This whole trip experience was a please & I hope to go on many more from now on. Thank you all so much and I love you all! Thank you to my donors: Vic Gutman and Richard Brooke Foundation. Thank you so much for donating money and making it possible for me to have gone to New York and many other destinations for the start of this summer. On these trips, I make some of the memories that mold my life and I'm glad to have made more for another year! Being here is a privilege that I am aware of and will take this pleasure and hold it dear. This is actually my 3rd year of going on this trip because of donations and I hope my sincerity is delivered when I say I am too happy, too thankful, and too blessed because of it. Thank you again for everything. – Famo

Dear Dr. Donna,

I want to say Thank You for helping pay the funds and with our spending money. It means a lot. Just know you are very much appreciated for what you do. – Frankie

Dear Nicole Tomayo,

I wanted to say a personal thank you for informing me about this trip. Otherwise, I wouldn't have been able to go. I also wanted to say thank you for helping me be my best person and for your support. You may not know it but you always make me feel better about myself and put a smile on my face. - Frankie

I would like to thank the Richard Brooke Foundation for providing the money to make this trip possible. It has always been a dream of mine to visit New York City. I'm glad I got to see the Broadway show **Mean Girls**, the Statue of Liberty, and the 9/11 Museum. The **Mean Girls** performance was outstanding and hilarious. I haven't



really paid attention to Broadway shows but now I really want to see more. I would like to thank NUIHC and Dr. Donna for allowing me to go on this trip. They paid for the fee, gave us spending money, and bought all the hygiene stuff we needed. Also thank you to Nicole Tamayo for providing transportation and breakfast the day of the trip... Overall this trip went beyond what I expected. They made sure we got the full experience everywhere we went. So, I am forever grateful to Girls Inc. for this trip. - Jazzy

Thanks to the Richard Brooke Foundation... Also, thanks to Essex for nominating me. Wouldn't be here without you, literally. – Semhar

I just feel like these trips are a part of who I am and who I am inspired to be. I am thankful for this opportunity.
- Kami

Dear Mom and Dad,

I just want to thank both of you for making it possible for me to come on this trip. I can honestly say that I am homesick but it was all so worth it. Thank you also for trusting Girls Inc. to take me miles away from home. I know both of you are over-protective but I'm coming back in one piece. The trip was extremely fun and I'm glad I got this opportunity. I can't wait to share with you all the cool things we learned. We did a lot of once-in-a-lifetime things and I'm very grateful to you guys.... Sincerely, Kaionna

First, I want to thank Ms. Angie, Ms. CT, Ms. Sheebie, & Ms. Roberta for being super great people and taking all of us on this trip. Especially me being a Lincoln girl. They didn't have to bring me. I also want to thank our tour guides Mike and the other Mike. They gave us a lot of information about Niagara and New York City. Thanks to our HUGE donor! I really loved this trip. I learned so much. I never in my life had a chance to do this if it wasn't for you. This experience was extraordinary. Niagara Falls was incredible! I didn't know before this trip that Niagara Falls had history behind it. I thought it was just a waterfall. I didn't know any of the Liberty Bell's history. I never knew it was cracked. Or what happened when a bell cracks & how they still use it. I always knew about Malcom X but it was really cool to see where he was assassinated. We did so much in these past ten days. We went to this crazy museum, American Museum of Natural History. It was soooo big! Even the map was big! At that museum, I saw a lot of animals and fish I didn't even know existed... I feel like a better person going back home. I became more social. I faced some fears. & I just overall enjoyed the atmosphere. I could literally write everything we did but that's a lot and the pages would be





full. I liked the simple outdoor things a lot, like the 911 memorial and Central Park. Just the nature was so peaceful. And just walking and looking at buildings. So, thank you again for giving this amazing experience. – Dee

There are so many ways a person can show their gratitude to someone. I just wish that mine could come from more than just a journal. But I have always been told by GREAT people that it's the thought that counts. I have always been told that something is better than nothing at all. I want to thank everyone who made it possible for me to be on the Girls Inc. goes to New York trip of 2019! I want to

start with Ms. CT because this woman works very hard for what she wants. She is a woman of action! Every year Ms. CT says she is "Done" with Girls Inc trips but she always finds it in her to plan an amazing trip for us. I know we may not show it but we love you for all you do for us on the trips and at Girls Inc. Thank you Ms. Ct for allowing us to have these opportunities and for just being you so THANK YOU! Next, I would like to thank my mother. This woman creates miracles. My mother is my inspiration; she is the true definition of a Black Queen! If it wasn't for my mom, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to see New York. Mom, you are truly amazing. We have our ups and downs but I love you. My mom paid for my trip herself in full all by herself and she STILL managed to throw me a sweet SIXTEEN. Can I hear a SUPER WOMAN! You may not hear it enough mom but THANK YOU for all you do! Lastly, I want to thank the Richard Brooke Foundation. This Foundation helped make it all possible. It costs way more than what we pay to go in these trips. The Richard Brooke Foundation donated money to help us with some of these trip expenses. I really appreciate how the Foundation has played a part in me being successful in the future because these trips teach me a lot of life lessons. Thank you, Richard Brooke Foundation!! – Ra'Quel

Thank you, Mom for letting me come on this trip and also appreciate all the things you do for me. I couldn't have done this without you...I also want to thank the Richard Brooke Foundation for being so kind to us and showing us history. - Kami

Dear Mom, I really mostly appreciate you. You made this happen. You have saved up for me to go on the trip. You have been there for me when no one else has since I was born May 19, 2003. I miss and love you. see you tomorrow. ❤️ Sincerely, - Peija

I am super grateful to whoever gave me the chance to fulfill this experience. I like how we get to mix business with pleasure meaning having fun while having the chance to learn and strengthen our minds with activities like the different museums we go to. I would like to thank all the donors, especially the Richard Brooke Foundation for allowing us to do all these great things this year for our trip. I also want to thank all the staff on this trip for putting up with some of our rude behavior and keeping their calm when we probably almost made



their heads explode some times. I also want to thank you guys for being educated and filling us in on some of the questions we had or informing us on things our tour guides forgot to mention. And lastly, thanks to our drivers for getting us from point A to point B safely and in a timely manner. For this to be my last Girls Inc. trip as a Girls Inc. member, it was a great one. And just thanks again. There is literally not a number amount of thanks I could give but thank you! – Taylor B.

I want to thank Nicole Tomayo for being able to get us on this trip so we can go and get these amazing opportunities to travel, and getting us our accessories for this trip. A special thank you to the Richard Brooke Foundation for the helpful donation. Thanks to Girls Inc. for inviting us on this journey. I hope I can continue being on these trips. Overall, I am thankful that I am able to travel because not everyone can. – Angel

I would like to thank my Grandpa. He helped me go on this trip and gave me spending money. I can't even begin to express my gratitude toward him. I enjoyed every second of the trip and what fun things I got to do and experience. All the

things we have done are unique and I many never have experienced them if I wasn't able to come. Everything from Niagara Falls to Hershey World and parks...I would also like to give big thanks to the Richard Brooks Foundation for funding so many parts of this trip... Experiences like these shape our future dreams and aspirations so, again, thank you to all that helped me go on this trip. – Caroline

First, I would like to start by saying thank you to my parents and all the people and foundations for helping us be able to come on this awesome trip. I learned so much and had the best time. Without your help, I would not be here. The Richard Brooke Foundation was extremely helpful in getting us here. I would also like to thank Ms. CT, Ms. Roberta, Ms. Angie and Ms. Sheebie for giving up so much time to help inspire our futures. – Asia



I would like to thank my mom and dad to start off. Without them not only would I not have been here but I would have no money to spend. While being on this trip, I've learned so much from the other 27 girls, the 4

adults, and the tour guides I had. I would also like to thank Myeisha Essex for picking me to go on this trip...The Richard Brooke Foundation helped a lot of people so huge thank you to them. I would also like to thank Ms. Ellie, Ms. Christian's sister. She helped us get tickets to the Museum of Natural History. I would also like to thank all of our bus drivers who put up with all of us girls and who listened to us sing. We can be a handful at times. Lastly, I would like to thank Ms. Sheebie, Ms. Roberts, Ms. Angie, and Ms. CT. They all are giving up time that can never be given back to take us to do things we have never done before. "You gave me time, the most thoughtful gift of all. - Dan Zadra" – Maray

I am grateful for such a great group of girls (and chaperones!!). The girls were attentive, respectful, and worked as a team. We thought we would have to take phones away when girls were in museums or on tours, but we didn't have to because they took care of it themselves. While we had some moments (28 teen girls on a bus for 9 days. Do the math...), but they paled in comparison to the good times, the learning, and the camaraderie. I was proud of them and think of them as seasoned travelers now. – Ms. Roberta

I want to say thank you to everyone who made this trip possible. It was very fun and a great experience. I've had this amazing opportunity for 4 years of this trip and I loved every part of it. Every trip I have learned life lessons, facts, and my history. I want to first thank my mom for always being alert and working hard so I can be able [to go on] this trip. She is my 1 Supporter and she never lets me down. I want to thank Girls Inc. for the opportunity. I am glad I got to go to New York, the place where I always dreamed to go. I had a great time at all the historic places. Lastly, I want to thank the Richard Brooke Foundation for giving us girls a chance to see the Big Apple. You took your time and money and gave it to girls you believe in and you didn't have to. They say it takes a village to raise a child and I am happy to have these amazing people in my village. – Taylor M.

I want to thank Richard Brooke Foundation for donating. I really appreciate it. We wouldn't be able to do some of the things we've done on this trip. I also want to thank Ms. Christians' sister for helping us get tickets for us to go to Night at the Museum, which I loved. I want to thank my mom for helping me out with the trip. I also want to thank Ms. CT for letting me be able to come last minute. I loved being at Times Square and seeing all of those lit up buildings and billboards even though it's very dirty. I really enjoyed this trip. I love the new people I met and I loved the old faces also. It's nice teaching someone new the things we do, the rules, but also making sure we have fun with it. Learned wherever life plants you, bloom with grace. Life doesn't require that we be the best, only that we TRY OUR BEST! The most important thing is to enjoy your life – to be happy and achieve your goals. – Asnina

Dear Richard Brooke Foundation, I really appreciate how you made this trip happen. We had lots of food, fun, and I met lots of new people. We learned about things - saw different things – that I thought I would never be able to visit up close. – Sincerely, Peija



I would like to thank all the donors that helped to make not only this trip possible, but all past and future trips possible. I'd like to thank the Richard Brooke Foundation for their very generous donations. I'm so grateful for the experiences that you all made possible. This is my third and final trip and I'm so appreciative for everything. I'm so happy that I've been able to experience these things – from Wyoming to Florida to New York. So, thank you for everything you've donated. I'd like to thank my mom and Ms. Ellie for her connection with getting us the fossil museum tickets. - VicTaijah



"The end." They always say the end is never really the end because there's always more. My favorite quote of all times "don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened." ...When you're on a bus with all girls, expect lots of things. It's even more challenging if you're one of the girls who doesn't know everyone. Everyone has their cliques and buddies and sets of friends. So, you ask yourself, "What do I do now? Do I fit in?" And it's not always about fitting it but the more people you can talk to the greater the fun. But on this trip, you really didn't have to worry about it. Neither at Girls Inc. rarely. We learn to make sure every girl feels welcome. We check up on one another; we sleep with each other; we eat with each other, and so therefore we build a family foundation. A set of ways to do things

and enjoy our trip. I take all the knowledge I gain from them; the museums, the historical sites, the state in general, and I share that knowledge with my siblings at home, my classmates at school...Not only that, I acknowledge I was there. I saw the history. But without Girls Inc., myself, and the donors I wouldn't have ever been able to do that in my teenage years. These trips are like college tours. You know how when you go to a college and see if it interests you, if you like it, you're going to consider it. We the trips are just like that. They open up many doors for me. I want to say thank you many times. Thank you for providing me with such golden opportunities. Thank you for the challenges, the hardships, and many more. These trips show me that this isn't the end and there's more to life than just being in one place. The world is an important place...Thanks to everyone because this built me into the person I am today. – Fatuma



Trip donors:

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**one or more of the girls asked us not to publish their excerpts and we respect their privacy*