

# “To Celebrate Youth in Action - Making a Difference”

## WASHINGTON D.C.

By Marko Mijic, Region I Vice President

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families held the fourth annual National Youth Summit from July 27-30 in Washington, D.C. This year, I was honored to attend and was able to share HOSA, the pipeline of future health care professionals, with other organizations. I also met youth from all over the country who are focused on and dedicated to serving their local communities. During my time at the summit, I shared ideas with others and had a chance to better understand how other organizations operate.

It was truly an adventure. Youth from all over the country met in the nation's capital to learn from each other and share their ideas and dreams for the future. During the three days we listened to motivational speakers and attended a variety of workshops such as, “Youth and the Economy,” “Youth and Public Policy,” “Youth and Community Service,” and “Youth and Creativity.” We were also given the opportunity to participate in a service project and meet new friends.

At the summit, First Lady Laura Bush served as the Honorary Chairperson and the keynote speaker. In her speech, she addressed the importance of the youth in our communities and stressed that we are the leaders of today,

not tomorrow. Mrs. Bush's message to the attendees was inspiring and motivational. She praised our nation's youth for their continued support in our communities and encouraged us to continue our efforts.

Although Mrs. Bush was one of the highlights of the summit, other inspiring speakers shared powerful messages with our nation's youth. It was an unbelievable experience to hear such speakers as, Mrs. Alma Powell, Chairperson of America's Promise; Dr. Wade F. Horn, Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Harry Wilson, Associate Commissioner, Family and Youth Services Bureau. These inspiring individuals gave motivational key addresses to our youth.

During the conference, we were given the opportunity to participate in the “Gift of Art” Service Project. We worked together to create gift packages of art supplies to be sent to youth in Iraq. The Youth and Recreation Ministry from Iraq also attended the summit and thanked us for our strong commitment to service and our willingness to help the children of Iraq.

I believe that each participant left the National Youth Summit motivated to continue serving their communities and with a better understanding of how to organize service projects. But more importantly, I believe we left with the dedication and knowledge to encourage others to do the same.

