

Valley students will get chance to attend presidential inauguration

By EDWIN DELGADO, Staff Writer | Posted: Saturday, January 14, 2017 1:10 am

Two local students who are part of the Imperial County 4-H program will travel early next week to Washington, D.C., to represent California at the 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus and have the opportunity to attend the presidential inauguration.

Seth Hilfiker and Dillon Sanchez will be two of the 19 4-H members selected to represent the state of California at the event. Imperial County 4-H Program Representative Shanna Abatti said both members have been very active in the local community and had a leadership role in which both have excelled at.

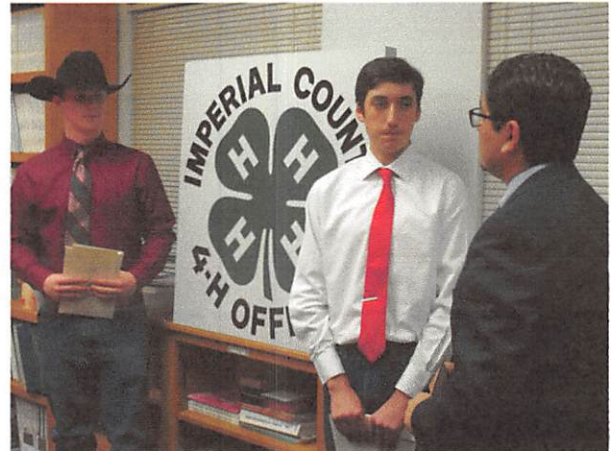
This is a major opportunity for them to be able to explore, learn and become more engaged," she said. "I'm very excited and grateful to be able to send youth from our county to D.C."

Senior Field Representative for the office of Congressman Juan Vargas, Tomas Oliva met with the two students to make delivery of their tickets for the inauguration ceremony which are part of the tickets that were distributed by the Vargas' congressional office.

"It's wonderful, I'm super excited. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity especially when you take into account how far away we are from Washington DC," Sanchez said. "It will be very nice to get to see the inauguration ceremony."

In addition to getting to see President-elect Donald Trump being sworn into office, Sanchez said he is also very excited for the opportunity he'll have to make new connections as part of the conference.

Hilfiker said he was overwhelmed of having the opportunity to witness such a special event and noted he is eager to get the chance to do some sightseeing around the capital due to his interest in U.S. history.



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Seth Hilfiker and Dillon Sanchez listen to Tomas Oliva's advice ahead of their trip to the Citizenship Washing Focus Conference and Presidential Inauguration next week.

EDWIN DELGADO PHOTO

“Honestly, I’m looking forward to seeing all the statues and monuments. I’ve always wanted to go to the D.C./NYC area,” Hilfiker said. “Getting to be in D.C. is even better because all of these monuments are there. It will be a once in a lifetime opportunity.”

Abatti said she hopes both learn take away a lot from their experience and share their experience with the local community.

“This is a major opportunity, No. 1 by having two youth leaders participating it helps us bring awareness to what different programs are doing,” she said. “No. 2, It gives us an opportunity to showcase Imperial County 4-H to others and the local community. This opportunity brings a great awareness to the program within the county as well.”

Although he is not set on what his career path will be Sanchez said that his previous experience at Cal Focus last year sparked some interest in possibly pursuing a career in politics and the new opportunity will teach him a lot more about the political world.

“It got me thinking about being a politician and how that could be good,” he said. “If I really ever decide to be a politician this is the right track to be on, that’d be a nice career if it ever did happen.”

Although at the moment Hilfiker has no intention of getting into politics, he’s looking forward to continue learning about what it takes to be a politician. He said that his experience in Cal Focus opened his eyes to the amount of work and preparation politicians have to undergo to be successful.

As Oliva handed out the inauguration tickets for Hilfiker and Sanchez, he told them that despite the distance the country’s capital is available for them and to feel comfortable once they arrived but also have respect and appreciation for the monuments and landmarks.

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