

Students Explore Principle-Centered Leadership in Washington, D.C.

09/01/2026



The Stephen R. Covey Leadership Center at Utah State University took 25 student leaders from the Huntsman School of Business to Washington, D.C., for a three-day experience focused on principle-centered leadership in action.

The trip blended history with real-world leadership lessons. Students visited the U.S. Capitol, White House and Lincoln Memorial while exploring the lives and decisions of leaders like George Washington, Abigail Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Along the way, they engaged in conversations about moral courage, civil discourse and what it means to lead with purpose today.

One of the group's first stops was the Museum of the Bible, where they presented U.S. Senate Chaplain Barry Black with the Stephen R. Covey Principle-Centered Leader Award. They later met with Sen. John Curtis and former U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Thomas B. Griffith, who challenged students to think differently about disagreement.

"He taught us how we can better talk and better disagree with one another," said Tyler Roberts, Program Coordinator for the Covey Center. "The polarization of this country is heading in a very bad direction, but we can do our part to help fix that."

For student leader Tavo Estrada, the experience left a lasting impression.

"The principle that stood out most to me was 'tireless no matter what,'" he said. "You can't help but want to just get up on your feet and do something about it."

Moments of reflection—including time at the Holocaust Museum and a devotional at the Lincoln Memorial—added depth to the experience.

"We get to be inspired by the future," said Lianne Wappett, Professor of Data Analytics. "And this group left ready to lead."