

Nadia Elgendy

National Federation of Republican Women Scholarship Essay

When I started working for the Republican Party in 2012, I was just a high school kid who had no idea what was coming. Little did I know that in four short years I would witness the GOP reigning in a unified government during the most strenuous year in modern American politics. With this, I am incredibly grateful for the hard work that millennials in Virginia put into the Republican Party, especially with 2016. While this victory should be celebrated, my work in the Republican Party is anything but finished. I have been blessed with a college education that has not only led to an increased knowledge of the political system, but has given me the experience to witness it firsthand.

The first lesson I learned working in politics is that there are plenty of hoops to jump through to make progress. Despite several obstacles that many political operatives face through the polarizing viewpoints among our party and in the greater American political system, I have faced all opposition with grace and understanding and have continued to do so the CRFV Chairman. As a member of the Virginia State Central Committee, I am constantly sitting in the middle of conflict. I believe that compromise and reasonability are the ways to communicate with those that disagree with me. Through this, I have led efforts to elect Republican candidates all across Virginia.

While many states brought in a surprising victory for President Donald Trump, Virginia's tides are very different. Virginia is increasingly becoming a blue state, but 2017 is the year for redemption. As college students, it is becoming increasingly difficult to be a Republican on campus. Many of us are seen as obscure with our conservative ideologies. 2016 has labeled the GOP as xenophobic. However, through my work in the College Republican Federation of Virginia, we has defied these stereotypes with an inclusive coalition of young conservatives who are dedicated to the cause. Throughout all of this, I reminded myself that I am not involved in politics because of the boxes that I check off as a young, Muslim woman, but because of the ideals that have resonated with so many people across the Commonwealth. Despite the rhetoric that we here from activists and politicians alike, I am happy to say that the work I have contributed to the Republican Party in my college career has led to tangible results. I am proud to have worked for Congresswoman Barbara Comstock, who claimed victory over the most competitive congressional race in the Commonwealth. In addition, I have felt incredibly empowered through all the work that I see my fellow College Republicans dedicate themselves

to, especially this past year's effort toward Congresswoman Barbara Comstock's reelection, where we knocked 9,000 doors in one day.

After graduation, my dream job would consist of continuing to elect our Republican candidates and supplement their efforts while in office. I hope to be a legislative aide in the Virginia General Assembly, which is the oldest state legislature in the country and continues to operate efficiently and in the best interest of Virginia's citizens. I firmly believe that true change is done at the local and state levels, and I would be honored to contribute to improvements being made in our Commonwealth.

In the age of social media today, people are constantly yearning for change and think that they can do it with the click of their keyboards. In the midst of all of this, many of us are guilty of forgetting that those before us brought on change by being in the trenches, fighting for our candidates. These tactics still ring true today, and I am proud to say that through my leadership, the CRFV has always been on the front lines of supporting the Republican Party all across the Commonwealth. With this, I can confidently say that I would be absolutely humbled to receive the National Pathfinder Scholarship.