Why do global citizens need to be civically engaged? How can youth participate in Hawaii’s democratic process?

Students spent a day at the Hawaii State Capitol learning the bill-to-law process, exploring the capitol grounds, discussing important issues, and communicating with legislators. Meeting their representatives helped students to view politics—and politicians—in a more complex and nuanced light. It was a thought-provoking day that emphasized the importance of local and global awareness, as well as the need to take action by participating in democracy.

Workshop Highlights:

- **Presentation on how a bill becomes law** and tour of the Public Access Room (PAR).
- **Exploring the capitol website.** Students researched their legislators and read bills from past sessions.
- **Capitol Scavenger Hunt.** Students visited their legislators’ office and explored the capitol grounds.
- **Public Advocacy.** Mr. Victor Geminiani of Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice shared his experience advocating at the Legislature.
- **Legislative Panel Discussion.** Representatives Laura Thilen and Andria Tupola fielded questions and discussed their experience in the Legislature.
- **Letter to a Legislator.** Students hand-wrote and delivered a letter to one of their legislators about an issue they care about.

“The most valuable part of the day was having the legislator panel. We got to ask questions and talk with two **women** who were really **passionate** about what they did. Prior to today, I looked at politicians as people who were fake, but **today proved me wrong.**”

“It is important that the public knows that they have a place at the capitol to [testify] on issues they feel strongly about.”

Above: Students visited their legislator’s office and the Damien statue during a capitol scavenger hunt.

“I can’t wait to get involved.”