

My article, published in the Preston Leader, on Tuesday the 17th of July 2018, page 6.

PRESTON

A chance to learn

Preston journalism student **Gabriella Payne** recounts her time covering the Youth Parliament of Victoria

IN TODAY'S digital world, journalism is a precarious industry.

When I tell people that I am studying journalism, I'm always faced with the same response; "why bother?"

Yes, newspapers are downsizing and moving online, but with the rise of social media and 'Monday's experts', I believe factual and informed reporting is more important now than ever.

Versatility is a key skill for a modern journalist, so when I heard of the YMCA Youth Press Gallery program, I jumped at the chance.

In early July, I was lucky enough to be one of 22 budding young journalists reporting on the bills, debates, personal stories and issues important to the young Victorians involved in Youth Parliament for 2018.

This program put my jour-



Gabriella Payne.

nalism skills to practice in a way I haven't yet experienced at university.

It was definitely a steep learning curve.

After multiple training sessions and workshops with insightful professionals, we hit the ground running on our first day at the majestic Victorian Parliament House.

With 120 young people taking part in the Youth Parliament program, there was plenty for us to report on.

Bill topics up for debate

ranged from plastic bottle impact to family violence rehabilitation programs, lowering the breast screening age and implementing compulsory drug education for secondary students.

I was inspired and motivated to see Victoria's young people actively engaged and passionately voicing issues that they want to see addressed in society.

Overall, 19 bills were passed through this year's Victorian Youth Parliament and were handed over to the Families, Children and Youth Affairs Minister Jenny Mikakos to be considered by State Government.

Over the three-day event, I met so many like-minded and driven young people. I believe journalism and Victorian politics have bright futures ahead, one which I hope to be a part of.

Link to Leader website:

<http://leader.smedia.com.au/preston/>