



*Jaz stands with the color guard at the USAF Memorial.*

### **A Washington Youth Tour Experience:**

## **Never Seen Anything Like This Before**

By Jasmine McGrath

A plane is flying in over Baltimore Maryland. Thirty high school juniors from all across rural Arizona and southern California are craning their necks, trying to see the ground out of the tiny airplane windows. You know they're from the West when they open their mouths, because the first thing that everybody says is, "Look at all the trees!"

The next day they drive into Washington D.C. You can almost feel the excitement, but all you can hear is fevered gasps and the click of cameras as fifty pictures are taken of the Capitol building. They have never seen anything like this before.

We felt something in Washington D.C. and we learned something. We stood in front of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier during the changing of the guard and we felt it. We gazed up at the different colored stone in the Washington Monument and we felt it. We saw the signatures on the Declaration of Independence and we felt it. Sometimes it was hard not to, and no one wanted it to stop.

We had always known that people had given their lives for this country. At least we thought we knew it. Here we were, staring out over the white gravestones in Arlington National Cemetery and we thought that maybe we didn't know so much after all. Could anyone doubt that they had given 'the full measure of devotion' to God and country? Could anyone doubt? If they could, they weren't sitting in my seat on the bus that night.