

# YOUTH TOUR A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

## Youth Board member reflects on eventful year

**As a member of Oakdale Electric Cooperative, I received the opportunity to expand my leadership skills by attending Youth Leadership Congress (YLC) at UW—River Falls last year.**

This three-day conference flew by fast with motivational speakers, team-building activities, a lecture on cooperatives, and fun entertainment, including a dance. While in attendance, my peers elected me to serve on the 2014–2015 Youth Board. This was a huge honor to receive, and with that came a lot of responsibility. I worked this past year, with the other youth board members, planning this year's YLC. It was very

important to me the kids attending had as great of an experience as I did last year.

Additionally, we all received a trip to our nation's capital, where I met other kids from all over the country. There were nine youth from Wisconsin that flew to Washington, D.C., and for many of us, this was the first time flying on an airplane, including myself. The seven days we spent together included sight-seeing, tours of monuments and museums, and learning about our nation's history, as well as the past, present, and future of electric cooperatives.

We took hundreds of photos documenting our trip! One of my favorite experiences was seeing the huge monu-

ments up close and being able to reflect on their true meaning. I will never forget the feelings I felt as I stood across the Potomac River gazing at the Jefferson and Washington monuments. It was quite the sight to see as the sun was sinking down to the west. This trip has changed my life forever, and not to mention, I made lifelong friendships with the other eight kids!

I highly encourage all students to consider attending YLC after your junior year in high school. You won't regret it! Finally, to all of the members of Oakdale Electric Cooperative, THANK YOU for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. — Adam Kramer, Mauston High School



While on the Youth Tour, Adam Kramer (pictured at left in the above photo) had an opportunity to visit with Senator Tammy Baldwin (at right in the photo above); see the sights of Washington, D.C., including the White House (right) and the Roosevelt Memorial (below right); and meet up with other young leaders from across the country on Youth Day (below).





## Oakdale Electric Cooperative sponsors 25 students to annual event

**Oakdale Electric Cooperative sponsored 25 local high school students to attend the 52nd Annual Youth Leadership Congress (YLC) at the University of Wisconsin–River Falls July 15–17, 2015.**

At this point in their high school careers, students are deciding upon their future education and work plans. YLC provides students the opportunity to experience life as a college student by living, dining, and learning on campus. Their sessions include professional motivational speakers (most notably Craig Hillier), team and leadership skill-building activities, and a lecture on the cooperative basics.

Melissa Wilson, director of career services at UW–River Falls, oversaw the five-course etiquette dinner, educating diners on manners and proper protocol when out to eat, and explaining the necessity of mastering these skills. Who would have guessed there is a correct

way to butter and eat a dinner roll?

Additionally, students were treated to fun sessions, including AJ “The Animated Illusionist” and a dance party where some epic dance moves were on display!

The Youth Leadership Congress program is unique because it is always planned with the assistance of the previous year’s youth board members. A youth board term is one year, and attendees had the opportunity to apply and earn one of the open six positions. Becoming a youth board member is not an easy feat, as students must first complete a panel interview, followed by a speech presentation to their fellow youth attendees, who vote on their top six candidates.

Craig Dallman (Mauston High School) and Jack Zdun (Pittsville High School) will be proudly representing Oakdale Electric Cooperative this coming year. Gabrielle Smith (Nekoosa High School) received the alternate position. Not only will Craig and Jack be a part

of the 2016 YLC planning sessions, they will also be traveling to Washington, D.C., on next year’s Youth Tour. Congratulations, Craig and Jack!

Upon returning from YLC, students have the opportunity to submit essays vying for an Oakdale Electric Cooperative and Wisconsin Electrical Cooperative Association scholarship to use for

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post-secondary education. Up to three \$1,000 scholarships are awarded annually to students at each of the 12 high schools in the co-op's service territory. At Oakdale Electric Cooperative, we care about our youth and believe strongly in supporting students as they embark on their educational paths.

The 25 delegates representing Oakdale Electric Cooperative included: Nate

Buss, Peter Cauley, Craig Dallman, Kyle Voss, Abigail Williams, Alyssa Wohrab (Mauston), Jennifer Moore, Stephanie Rattunde, Cheyenne Sterbenz, Emily Williams (Necedah), Sedona Arendt, Drew Henriksen, Gabrielle Smith (Neekoosa), Stephan Burbach, Savanna Morris, Kassie Woggon (New Lisbon), Jack Zdun (Pittsville), Mariah Burdick, Amber Grundahl (Reedsburg), Austin Nauman

(Sparta), Emma Granger, Katelyn Pearson, Ben Venner (Tomah), Tristan Miller, and Lane Wohrab (Wonewoc).

Are you currently a junior in high school and interested in attending the 2016 YLC? Check with your high school guidance counselor this coming spring for registration information, and watch for notices in the local pages of the *WECN* magazine!



Elected to the 2015-16 Youth Board were, left to right: Hannah Sedgwick (Vernon), Jocelyn Parker (Richland), Allison Stader (Scenic Rivers), Justin Hurajt (Pierce Pepin), Jack Zdun (Oakdale), and Craig Dallman (Oakdale).

MY CO-OP



# MEMBER APPRECIATION DAY

## Saturday, October 10

7:30 to 11:00 a.m.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative  
*Hwy. PP just north of Interstate 90/94*

### For everyone:

- Pancake breakfast
- Cooperative booths and displays
- Bucket truck rides
- Flu shots
- Donuts and popcorn
- Chance to win \$100 credit on electric bill
- Giveaways



### For the kids:

- Bounce house
- Face painting
- Balloon animals
- Kids' prizes

### Bruce Ardel, General Manager

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### Deana Protz, Editor



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Cooperative**

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