



Contact:
Josh Randt
Phone: (763) 477-3111
Email: jrandt@whe.org

News Release

AREA STUDENTS AWARDED \$27,000 IN WRIGHT-HENNEPIN SCHOLARSHIPS

Rockford, Minn. (June 16, 2015) — It's been 28 years since Wright-Hennepin (WH) started its scholarship program for youth in and around the electric service territory, and in the 28th year, WH awarded another \$27,700 to 20 local students. This brings the total amount WH has awarded to \$638,800 since the program's inception in 1988.

WH awarded the scholarships during a ceremony at its headquarters in Rockford, Minn. on May 28. The scholarships are funded through donations from WH's diversified businesses – WH Security, WH Services, WH Generation, HeatMyFloors.com, WH International Response Center, WH Solar and WH Holding Investments – under the umbrella of the WH Holding Company. In this way, WH continues to make significant investments in the area's youth without having to fund the scholarships from the electric rate that members pay – a very important consideration in helping ensure competitive electric rates.

WH Local Schools Scholarship

WH awards one scholarship per school district in its electric service area to outstanding students pursuing higher education. The following recipients received local school scholarships:

Erik Jacobson, Annandale HS
Jonathan Immel, Buffalo HS
Courtney Halonen, Dassel-Cokato HS
Devin Heider, Delano HS
Abbey Weninger, Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted HS
Sophie Samson, Maple Grove HS
Jackson Willard, Maple Lake HS
Samantha Smieja, Monticello HS
Rachel Heussner, Orono HS
Emily McCarthy, Osseo HS
Emily Eberspacher, Rockford HS
Mary Liberko, Rogers HS
Isaac Zipp, St. Michael-Albertville HS

Brent Unowsky, Watertown-Mayer HS
Andrew Quirk, Wayzata HS
Amy Gasperlin, Maple Grove HS (at-large)

Edward R. Slebiska Memorial Line Worker Scholarship

Line workers make up a large percentage of WH's workforce and require a critical skill that is in short supply in the electric utility industry. That is why WH offers two line worker scholarships. This scholarship is named in the memory of Ed R. Slebiska who co-founded WH in 1937 and became its first CEO, holding that position until his retirement in 1977. During that time, Slebiska helped lead the cooperative in bringing reliable and affordable electricity to rural Wright County and western Hennepin County. This year's recipients of the Edward R. Slebiska Memorial Line Worker Scholarship are **Blake Paumen**, Maple Lake, Minn., and **Noah Haaland**, Monticello, Minn.

Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker Memorial Line Worker Scholarship

Long-time WH members Doris and Ron Horswell of Annandale, Minn., created this scholarship in 2005 to honor the memory of Doris' parents, Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker, who played crucial roles in bringing electricity to rural homes and farms in Wright and Hennepin counties. Elwyn served on WH's board of directors, representing District 1 – near Annandale, Clearwater and Maple Lake – for 53 years. At that time, he was the longest serving electric cooperative director in the nation. Hazel was a tireless champion of rural electrification, offering a clear voice of support during efforts to organize and expand the cooperative. **Connor Blake**, Big Lake, Minn., received the Elwyn and Hazel Knickerbocker Memorial Line Worker Scholarship for 2015. WH has gone on to hire a number of the Slebiska and Knickerbocker scholarship winners after the recipients have completed line worker training.

Basin Electric Scholarships

Basin Electric Power Cooperative (Basin) – one of WH's wholesale power suppliers – headquartered in Bismarck, N.D., annually awards a scholarship to its distribution cooperative members. **Michael Guyse**, Maple Lake, Minn., received a 2015 scholarship from WH, courtesy of Basin.



This year's scholarship recipients posed for a photo with WH's board of directors. Scholarship recipients pictured from left to right are, front row: (far left) Linemen-Knickerbocker scholarship contributor, Doris Horswell, Emily Eberspacher, Amy Gasperlin and Courtney Halonen. Second row, left to right: Noah Haaland, Michael Gusyse, Connor Blake, Samantha Smieja, Mary Liberko, Jackson Willard, Abbey Weninger and Devin Heider. Third row, from left to right: Brent Unowsky, Erik Jacobson, Jonathan Immel, Andrew Quirk, Emily McCarthy, Rachel Heussner, Isaac Zipp and Blake Paumen. Board of Directors who attended the banquet were, back row from, from left to right: Don Lucas, Chris Lantto, Kenneth Hiebel, Burton Horsch, Dale Jans, Butch Lindenfesler, Erick Heinz and Timothy Young.

WH is a member-owned non-profit electric utility that provides electric power to Wright County and the western part of Hennepin County. The cooperative has been a corporate citizen in this area since 1937 and currently serves more than 46,000 electric accounts. The utility started its security division in 1989 that provides local home security solutions as well as monitors alarm systems for almost 60,000 customers in 32 states and three Canadian provinces.

-end-