



Contact:
Lauren Dublin
Phone: (763) 477- 3111
E-mail: ldublin@whe.org

News Release

WRIGHT-HENNEPIN SPONSORS LOCAL STUDENT’S TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C. FOR YOUTH TOUR

Rockford, Minn. (July 25, 2022) — Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association (WH) is proud to sponsor a high school junior each year for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. The trip resumed this year after a two-year break due to the pandemic, and WH sponsored Bethany Yu, a junior from Wayzata High School.

The Youth Tour offers an all-expenses-paid, six-day trip for a high school junior or senior, sponsored by their local cooperative. Yu was one of 36 Minnesotan students, joining 1,900 others from across the country. On the journey, students met with federal legislators representing Minnesota to learn about different issues affecting cooperatives around the U.S. Yu said she “could not think of a better way to experience Washington D.C.”

“My favorite part of the trip was all the reflection after sightseeing or new learning. After we visited historic sites and monuments, we had some down time on the bus or at the hotel to talk with others about how the day went, [and] what we learned,” Yu said. “Hearing the perspective on what we did from a variety of different types of people was cool.”

Students stayed busy throughout the week, meeting in the hotel lobby early every morning and heading out for a non-stop day of museums, monuments, and learning about the U.S. government and American history. They would typically be on the bus by 8 a.m., starting their packed itinerary with trips to iconic places like the Lincoln Memorial, Smithsonian Zoo, National Archives, Washington Monument, Arlington National Cemetery, a photo at the White House, and a Washington Nationals baseball game, on top of a day spent at the NRECA Youth Rally and a day on Capitol Hill.

“The most surprising part of the trip was how much we were able to put in a single day. Our itinerary was jam packed and I wasn't sure how we could possibly get through everything, but we always did,” Yu said.

Yu enjoyed learning about the history of co-ops and how they allowed rural areas to grow, since it's not something typically covered in-depth in school curriculums.

“The D.C. Youth Tour is an amazing opportunity to learn new things, [and] grow as a person.... There is so much opportunity for learning on the Youth Tour. On this trip one will meet many unique people who will open your eyes to a world much bigger than your own. With the many activities provided there is never a dull moment and there is something for everyone to enjoy,” Yu said. “Another opportunity on this trip is one to enact change. There is time to speak to and connect with representatives from your state which is really cool.”

“I've made priceless memories and met amazing people.... I took a lot of time for reflection on this trip and I am incredibly thankful for it,” she continued. “This trip has created future opportunities and opened doors for me. I know for sure that the Youth Tour trip and all the people I met along the way will have a lasting impact on me for years to come.”

Applications for next year's Youth Tour will open in mid-October. The student's parent or guardian must be a WH member to be eligible.

Wright-Hennepin Cooperative Electric Association is a member-owned, not-for-profit electric utility that provides power to rural Wright County and western Hennepin County. The cooperative has been a corporate citizen to the area since 1937 and currently serves more than 57,500 electric accounts. It is headquartered in Rockford, Minn.

-end-



Bethany Yu (second from left) and other Youth Tour students enjoying a Washington Nationals baseball game