



FOUNDATION FOR RURAL
EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

2002 Leadership Through Learning Youth Program Sponsored by NECA

On Sunday, April 21, 2002, the students arrived in Washington, D.C. and began their week with an orientation session informing them of what to expect over the next six days. Throughout the week, the students visited the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court, Capitol Hill, the Holocaust museum, Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the FDR Memorial and nearly all of the national landmarks in the city. On Wednesday, the students visited different neighborhoods throughout DC and learned about the culture that exists in the city.

2002 Leadership Through Learning Program Participants and Nominating Telephone Companies

Jarod Cole, Nebraska

Nominated by *Great Plains Communications Inc.*

Tovah Lewis, Oklahoma

Nominated by *Canadian Valley Telephone Company*

Carly Eymard, Louisiana

Nominated by *Lafourche Telephone Company Inc.*

Laura McDowell, Massachusetts

Nominated by *Granby Telephone Company*

Bradley Holland, Oklahoma

Nominated by *Canadian Valley Telephone Company*

Kayla Nash, Minnesota

Nominated by *Arvig Enterprises, Inc.*

Scot Johnson, Wisconsin

Nominated by *Wood County Telephone Company*

Jennifer Quistorff, Minnesota

Nominated by *Osakis Telephone Company*

Theresa Kasper, Iowa

Nominated by *Wilson Telephone Company, Inc.*

Rebecca Smith, Oklahoma

Nominated by *Canadian Valley Telephone Company*

Educational Experiences

While visiting Washington's landmarks and neighborhoods provided hands-on learning experiences, the students also took part in daily workshops, debates and lectures that included topics on international relations, preventing terrorism, protests, the media, the judiciary system, and lobbying. During a "workshop without walls," the students visited the Newseum in Arlington, Virginia to take part in the television program "Close Up on C-SPAN." Bradley Holland and Laura McDowell made their TV debuts on the program, which aired Friday, April 26 on C-SPAN.



Capitol Hill Day

One of the highlights of the week included a visit to Capitol Hill. Students met with Sen. Mark Dayton (D-Minn.), Sen. Ben Nelson (D-Neb.), and Rep. Tom Osborne (R-Neb.-3) and posed for photos with Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) and Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-L.A.). During a meeting with Sen. Dayton, the students were invited to the Senate Gallery to witness a vote on an energy bill. The group was whisked from the Senate building to the vote via the Capitol subway system, which is closed to the public unless accompanied by a member of Congress. Sen. Dayton voted on the energy bill and then joined the students in the Gallery, pointing out Sens. Kennedy, Clinton, Thurman, and McCain, who were on the Senate floor.



How About a Little Fun?

While the week was packed with educational activities, the students did have some time to experience the fun side of Washington. They had lunch at the Hard Rock Café, did a little shopping at the Shops at National Place, and went for pizza at a local pizzeria. On Wednesday night, everyone dressed up and went to see *Mamma Mia!* at the National Theatre. The play, featuring the hits from the 70s group ABBA, was a smashing hit and one of the highlights of the week.



Telecommunications Workshop

A week of activities concluded with a special telecommunications workshop held at the OPASTCO offices. NECA's Dave Lauerman and Joe Douglas as well as John Rose from OPASTCO and Ellen Iversen from RTFC, spoke at the workshop, which gave the students a better understanding about OPASTCO and the telecommunications industry. The students were encouraged to visit their local telephone companies to learn about the important services they provide for their rural communities. Everyone at the workshop received a special Leadership Through Learning T-shirt as a souvenir to take home and wear to remember the week.



The Final Banquet and a Final Farewell

At the final banquet, the FRED students and well as other Close Up participants were asked to take part in a talent show. Laura McDowell and Jarod Cole volunteered their talents and entertained the group. Laura dedicated her heart-wrenching rendition of *Amazing Grace* to the other nine FRED students. After the banquet and dance, the students made promises to keep in touch and said their final go