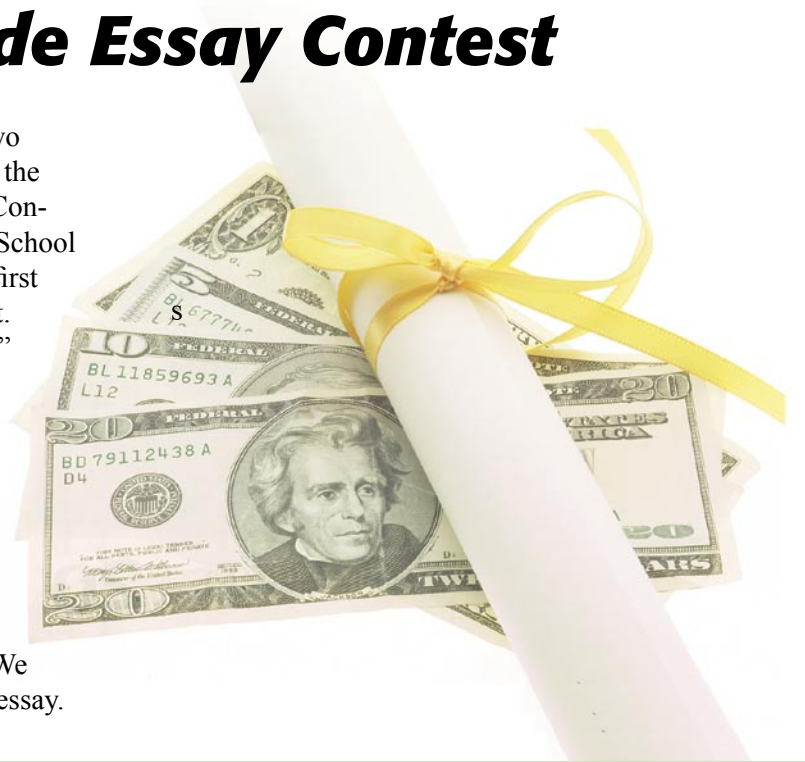


Oakdale Electric Teens Win Scholarships in Statewide Essay Contest

Oakdale Electric is proud to announce that two of our young members won scholarships in the WECA Youth Leadership Congress Essay Contest this past year. Shaylea Walsh of Mauston High School and Amelia Lutz of New Lisbon High School took first and second place, respectively, in the annual contest. This year's topic was "The Cooperative Difference." Shaylea won a \$1,000 scholarship and Amelia won a \$500 scholarship.

Both girls represented Oakdale Electric at the 2009 Youth Leadership Congress (YLC) on the University of Wisconsin–River Falls campus. All YLC participants, representing students from electric cooperatives throughout the state, are eligible to enter the essay contest.

Congratulations to both Shaylea and Amelia. We are proud to present to you here Shaylea's winning essay.



The Cooperative Difference

By Shaylea Walsh

I turned my head just as the volleyball was hit and into my face it flew. The resulting nosebleed was not typical and resulted in an ambulance ride, three hours in the emergency room, blood work, cocaine being used to constrict the blood vessels, packing of the nostril, and finally an appointment with a hematologist. This was also on the same night as my first high school homecoming dance. What an event! It was eventually discovered that I have a strange and unexplainable immune disorder called Immune Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP). My life was drastically changed that day!

I saw that day what teamwork really is all about. Skilled professionals worked together using their expertise and knowledge to help get me through a challenge. Just like a co-op, this medical team was serving a need, was well managed, and had a clear and compelling long-running vision to succeed. Just like a co-op, I was the member that was the focus. I was one member of my

community with a special need, being helped through a group effort.

The 2009 Youth Leadership Congress has made me aware of how many services, medical being only one of them, are provided to me on a daily basis. I can look out of the window of my house and see the power station at the end of the road. (I was also taught by the Dunn Energy Cooperative Demo Team just how dangerous those lines can be. I will leave it up to the professionals if ever I see a broken power line.) I did not understand what is really being generated off those power lines. I now know that I am just one of 37 million cooperative members being provided electricity in 47 states, but I still have the same vote as everyone else. I begin my day with the alarm going off, the light goes on, and there is hot water in the shower. My orange juice is cold, and the toaster works to warm the bagels, all before I even start my day at school. All these services and countless more are provided with the help of my local electrical cooperative, and all are helping me to get the best education possible.

Cooperatives provide education, training, and information to others on countless subjects; luckily this summer I was one of the recipients. I am excited to be able to utilize the concepts presented by Craig Hillier. Mr. Hillier showed me just how T.E.A.M. Dynamics can be used for many of my student organizations. In Student Council, where a democratic form of government is used just like in cooperative businesses, I can see how the T.E.A.M. concepts will be used for everything from ordering donuts for the meeting to improving policies for the student body. Participants in Link Crew, a student-run organization welcoming new ninth-graders into high school, will benefit because the T.E.A.M. profile builds self-confidence and pride in knowing everyone has strengths and contributions to make. After completing the T.E.A.M. profile, I discovered that my leading role is as a motivator and my support role is togetherness. The profile showed me that I am good at getting others involved, and I am energetic and enthusiastic. It told me that I am an achiever and that I like to talk. (That is true!) A cooperative is a business that is part of the “self-help tradition of America,” and so are volunteer organizations. The T.E.A.M. profile made me aware of my strengths and gave me confidence to use them, and by sharing these ideas, I will do the same for others. I can help myself by helping others through such organizations. I think it is important to know your strengths and then work cooperatively with others using everyone’s strengths to achieve goals. This is the same concept as the business of cooperatives—who knew?

Cooperatives were founded in the 1800s and are still thriving today. Cooperatives, even though they have billions in sales each year, never forget the bottom line: the member. If the members are happy and taken care of, the business will be happy and taken care of too. Members of a cooperative each get a vote on who their leaders will be or who will sit on their board of directors. Leaders should lead by example. Dr. James Tangen-Foster helped me understand that even if you are elected as a leader in an organization, you must listen to your members and work together cooperatively to succeed. In one of his activities, his rope activity, he helped me to visualize that all members of a group will be pulling their way with their ideas. You must listen to them, express your ideas, and cooperatively work together. My junior prom came to mind in his activity with every girl in the class wanting her vision of the evening to be selected. I was part of many meetings

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Meet Shaylea Walsh



Shaylea Walsh is a senior at Mauston High School, where she’s had a busy career filled with activities and honors. She is the Student Council treasurer and for the past two years has served as treasurer of her class. She is a three-year state medalist in forensics as well as a state medalist in choir. Her musical accomplishments include participating in the Conference Honors Band and the Conference Honors Choir. She was a crew leader for Link Crew, an organization that helps incoming freshmen assimilate in high school. She also participated in volleyball, club swim team, and track and field.

Shaylea was a Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership Representative, and she’s a three-time All-Conference Writing Award winner.

Shaylea’s also very involved in her community, having served as a volunteer speaker for Veterans Day programs. Her extensive list of volunteer activities includes working at the food pantry, helping out with Special Olympics, spending time with hospice/nursing home residents, working as a Mauston Summer School assistant, and knitting hats for newborns.

Shaylea plans to attend UW–Eau Claire next year to earn a degree in communicative sciences and disorders. She hopes to eventually work as a speech therapist and/or audiologist.

“I believe that communication is a huge contributor in how we treat, understand, and appreciate each other’s needs,” she says. “Whether I am helping a Special Olympian communicate their shoe size to compete for the bowling tournament or a stroke victim in a hospice care facility asking for cream for their coffee, communication is essential in making life better.”

The Cooperative Difference

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which did culminate in a wonderful night of fun and memories, basically because young and old, adults and students worked together until the ideas of each individual were used.

This will be my senior year in high school, and I plan on attending the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire next year to major in Communicative Sciences and Disorders. This is a major that connects with both education and health care. It is helping members of the community to reach their optimum level of functioning through both individual and group efforts, just like a cooperative. My attendance at the 2009 Youth Leadership Congress made me realize just how many people work diligently everyday to make my life better. It is my hope to do the same for others starting now, and continuing in my future career. This experience has made me more appreciative of the opportunities that I am given on a daily basis and I thank you sincerely. We all have our challenges, but working cooperatively, we also have abundant resources to get them resolved. I am still overwhelmed with the abundance of information the Youth Leadership Congress provided and how meaningful and relevant it is to my life—all aspects of my life. I look at those electrical lines with new eyes and am very thankful of the first cooperative on Toad Lane. What a difference it has made! ■

Meet Amelia Lutz



Amelia Lutz, daughter of Mary and Brian Edgerton, is a senior at New Lisbon High School. She's very involved in extracurricular activities at her high school, such as FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America), Student Council, G.I.V.E (Getting Involved Through Volunteer Experiences), and Spanish Club. She is also a member of the band and the yearbook staff

Amelia likes to read and listen to music in her free time. She plans to attend Carroll University in the fall, majoring in human biology.

Any area students interested in attending the 2010 Youth Leadership Congress and entering the essay contest can watch our website, www.oakdalerec.com, over the coming months for more information.

**Lend us
a hand...**



Participate in our food drive and get a FREE CFL

Bring in a nonperishable food donation during the month of February and receive a free compact fluorescent light (CFL).

Drop-off location: Oakdale Electric Cooperative

Dates: February 1–February 28

Time: 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday

Benefitting: Local food pantries

Together, we can do both the "right thing" by lending a hand to our neighbors AND the "bright thing" by installing efficient CFLS.



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 - Off-peak control must be allowed
- | | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| 50 to 79 gallon | \$150 |
| 80 gallon and larger | \$300 |
| Heat pump water heater | \$300 |
| (no off peak control) | |

ELECTRIC THERMAL STORAGE (ETS)

- Incentive amounts range from \$340 (2102 model) up to \$590 (2106 model)
- Incentive shall not exceed \$1,000 per home
- All ETS central units qualify for an incentive of \$1,000 per home
- Off-peak control must be allowed

ENERGY STAR

- Member must submit sales slip and Energy Star label, or documentation for recycling
 - Rebate amounts will be applied as a credit to member's electric bill
- | | |
|--|------|
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| Refrigerator | \$25 |
| Freezer | \$25 |
| Dishwasher | \$25 |
| Window air conditioner | \$25 |
| Dehumidifier..... | \$25 |
| Refrigerator/freezer recycling | \$50 |
| Window air conditioner recycling | \$25 |

HIGH-EFFICIENT LIGHTING, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND AGRICULTURAL INCENTIVES

These incentives are available upon request by calling Oakdale Electric Cooperative at 800-241-2468 or email Jerry Bloom at jbloom@oakdalerec.com.

Additional incentives may be available through Focus On Energy at 1-800-762-7077, or visit their website at www.focusonenergy.com

CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONERS

SEER 14	\$40 per ton
SEER 15	\$60 per ton
SEER 16 or greater	\$80 per ton

AIR-SOURCE HEAT PUMP

14 seer or greater	\$120 per ton
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GROUND SOURCE / GEOTHERMAL

\$200 per ton



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