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NEWS

Area high school students to visit Washington DC courtesy of LPEA *Juniors Jenna Engelken, Maizey Funk, Miranda Talbot and Adeline Thompson selected*

DURANGO, Colo. – Area high school students Jenna Engelken and Maizey Funk of Durango, Miranda Talbot of Bayfield, and Adeline Thompson of Pagosa Springs have been selected to represent La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) as part of the National Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington D.C. scheduled for June 9-16, 2016.

“This trip is a tremendous opportunity for our area juniors,” said Mike Dreyspring, LPEA CEO. “Our communities, as well as the country and the world are facing many challenges in the energy arena, and the industry is changing, so it’s important that our next generation gain an understanding about energy policy development at the federal level. We are pleased to be able to further that education.”

Students completed an application and penned a 500-word essay covering an aspect of the electric industry of their choosing. Excerpts of the winning students’ essays are included below.

LPEA’s student representatives will join juniors from the cooperative’s sister electric co-ops across Colorado for this once-in-a-lifetime experience. The schedule includes an intimate look at the nation’s capitol and the government from the inside, including discussion of current concerns with national and state Congressional representatives. Tours of Washington D.C.’s monuments and museums, plus social activities, are also part of the agenda.

In her essay, Durango High School junior Jenna Engelken, forecast the future for electricity production: “Active pursuit of future opportunities, including wind power, thermal, solar, algal biofuel and even electromagnetic force, has instilled a contagious fervor and enthusiasm within communities. Subsequently, people become more susceptible to change, and humanity initiates progress towards modernism at an exponential rate.”

Maizey Funk, a junior at Big Picture High School researched Nicola Tesla and the dawn of alternating current (AC): “By changing the direction the current flowed, AC proved

significantly more efficient, travelling easily over longer distances. It turned the formerly dark streets of the Chicago World Fair into a bright, vibrant, bustling environment, and quickly, the powers of Alternating Current were known across the world.”

Bayfield High School junior Miranda Talbot explained the electric power industry: “Thomas Edison’s invention of the light bulb was the world’s first major start to the vast growth of electricity. Since the idea of energy to generate electricity in 1650, our world has grown around the idea of power... The electric industry has truly revolutionized the average citizen’s life.”

The importance of marketing and public relations was discussed by junior Adeline Thompson of Pagosa Springs High School: “We live in a world where innovation is never lacking. This makes access to the public crucial. As technology evolves, companies must also be able to change. A company with a solid business plan will be able to apply it to any new innovation. Through good marketing, the electrical industry will be able to be successful and relevant for generations to come.”

The opportunity to participate in the D.C. Youth Tour is open to all current high school juniors, including home-schooled students, who receive their electric power from La Plata Electric Association. LPEA annually underwrites the cost of the trip for up to four students within its service territory – one from each school district. No applications for the 2016 trip were received from Ignacio.

Applications for the 2017 Washington D.C. Youth Tour will be available in November 2016 at LPEA’s offices in Durango and Pagosa Springs, through area high school counselors, or on the web, www.lpea.coop.

LPEA, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative established in 1939, provides to its more than 30,000 members, with nearly 42,000 meters, safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost, while being environmentally responsible.

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