



Youth Leadership Congress Highlights Cooperative Difference

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative to Sponsor High School Students

Understanding the cooperative difference and identifying traits of leaders are just two of the topics to highlight the 45th WECA Youth Leadership Congress (YLC).

Eau Claire Energy Cooperative and the WECA Division of the Wisconsin Federation of Cooperatives offer the opportunity to participate in the YLC to high school students throughout the state. The conference, co-sponsored by Wisconsin's electric cooperatives and the University of Wisconsin–River Falls, is scheduled for July 16–18, 2008. The YLC will be held on the UW–River Falls campus.

Through a mix of workshop sessions, hands-on activities, and team-building experiences, participants will be exposed to a variety of real-life issues and will be given the opportunity to identify and explore their leadership potential. Top-notch professional speakers, teen peers, and exceptional cooperative employees will provide participants with information and tools to deal with the weighty issues high school students face every day.

Dr. David Trechter, UW–River Falls, will open the YLC with an interactive session on “The Cooperative Difference.” Also featured at this year’s YLC will be nationally acclaimed speaker Craig Hillier. As a part of his dynamic presentation, Hillier will enlighten students about being leaders, stretching their creativity, and discovering the value of cooperation.

Other sessions will focus on how and why co-ops

operate and the benefits they provide members. Students will also form and operate a working cooperative.

The YLC is a fun, educational, and unique event that is planned by and for teens. Six students are elected by their peers to serve on the Youth Board. The Youth Board then plans and conducts the next YLC. Youth Board members are eligible to attend the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association National Youth Tour held in Washington, D.C., in June.

Students are sponsored by the electric cooperative serving their area. Eau Claire Energy Cooperative is offering sponsorships for high school students who live in households that receive their electricity from ECEC. More information and registration materials are available on the cooperative’s web site at www.ecec.com. Click on Youth Programs.

For 45 years, Wisconsin electric cooperatives, including Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, and UW–River Falls have co-sponsored this event to demonstrate to high school students the basics of cooperatives and how they can apply the ideals and philosophies of cooperation directly to their lives.■

