

Abigail Reich wins trip to Washington, D.C.

For more than 50 years, teenagers from across America have descended on Washington, D.C., for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. The all-expense paid tour is sponsored by electric cooperative from across the nation.

By submitting a winning essay, Abigail Reich has earned the opportunity to represent Dakota Valley Electric Cooperative on the week-long tour.

Abigail Reich is a home-schooled high school sophomore from the Medina area. She is the daughter of Dakota Valley member Rebecca Reich, and the late Alvin Reich. The family farms and ranches about 12 miles from Medina.

Youth Tour applicants were required to write an essay answering the question: What moment in American history do you wish you had been a part of and what would you have contributed?

In her thoughtful and well-written winning essay, Abigail expressed her interest in World War II and the dramatic changes it brought to rural North Dakota and our nation. Changes that came about, first when so many young men left to serve their nation, and later, when they returned to their families, farms, and communities to begin life anew.

In her essay, she wrote, "I would have liked being able to be there when farmers were beginning to come together to form co-ops. That is part of the spirit of rural America, working together to provide better opportunities for all of us."

She closed her essay saying: "I don't think it would be wise to change any part of history, because that would change how my ancestors lived their lives and in turn would

change who I am and how I live today. As well, I am deeply thankful and indebted to our ancestors, whether they were politicians, servicemen and women, or just regular farmers or laborers. They have shaped our country and the freedoms and privileges we enjoy.”

Each year, the Youth Tour educates about 1,500 students about electric cooperatives, the cooperative business model, leadership, and the legislative process. While in D.C., students will also meet with their state’s congressional delegation and tour memorials and museums.

The tour, normally held in June each year, has been rescheduled to June 19-25, 2021, due safety concerns prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic.