



Missouri's CYCLE Program Means Education and Fun!

Ozark Electric Cooperative delegates, Colby Snider (left), Nixa High School Senior, son of Scott & Jodie Snider; and Aubrey Gardner (right), Crane High School Senior, daughter of Tim & Debbie Gardner; were among the 76 high school students from across Missouri who participated in the Electric Cooperative CYCLE program. CYCLE stands for Cooperative Youth Conference and Leadership Experience. The conference was held this past July 13-15, 2011, in Jefferson City.

Each year in July, an action-filled three days provides high school students opportunities to learn first-hand what it is like to be involved in politics, the cooperative form of business and being a leader. The program included nationally-known speakers and a day at the Missouri State Capitol learning how a bill goes through the process to become a law. To learn more about electric cooperatives, the group was divided up into small teams that competed in various events like the “build a cooperative” game. Another highlight was hearing from the Rachel’s Challenge Organization. Rachel Scott was the first student killed in the Columbine High School tragedy on April 20, 1999. Today, her family and friends speak to youth around the world about Rachel’s legacy of being a positive role model to everyone she met in life.

The CYCLE program is in its 8th year and is a recipient of the National Community Youth Service award for the top youth program among all electric

cooperatives in the country. Colby and Aubrey entered Ozark Electric Cooperative's 2011 Rural Electric Youth Tour essay contest earlier this year and won the trip to the conference. Through that annual contest, Ozark Electric sponsors two students to Washington D.C. and two students to Jefferson City each year. For more information, please go to www.ozarkelectric.com, click on "Community and Education", click on "Youth Tour" or go to <http://www.amec.org/youth.html#cycle>.

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