



More Power to You

Graduates Have Bright Future Ahead

Shane L. Larson,
Chief Executive Officer

Look at the faces of the Rock Energy Cooperative scholarship winners in this issue, and you'll see a future pediatric doctor, businessman or teacher, electric lineman, manager of a camp for underprivileged children, occupational therapist, crop scientist, pharmacist, civil engineer, marine biologist, and social worker.

Their career aspirations might change during their college years, but I'm certain these young people will succeed in whatever endeavor they pursue. They possess the characteristics associated with success. They see the glass as half full, rather than half empty, and are ready to tackle the challenges ahead through the eyes of optimistic, confident, and capable young people.

Each year, a committee of co-op members selects 10 graduating high school seniors to receive Rock Energy scholarships. Committee members will tell you that the selection process was difficult because all 44 applicants were outstanding in their own way.

When students apply for Rock Energy scholarships, we ask them questions about activities, jobs, grades, and goals. The 10 scholarship recipients have impressive backgrounds and lofty aspirations. I'd like to share some comments from their applications to give you a glimpse into their world.

Jessica Alf has set pediatric medicine as her career goal. The Milton High School student grew up on a small farm in rural Edgerton, where she and her family manage a flock of sheep. "Being born and raised on a farm, and being responsible for the health of our animals has always been something I have enjoyed," she wrote. "Most people who know me and my agricultural background have expected that I'd pursue a degree in veterinary medicine, but I would like to switch to the other side of the spectrum and become a doctor who can more socially interact with my patients and their families."

Micah Ayres of Davis, Ill., hasn't made a final career decision, but he's leaning toward business or education. If he chooses education, he would like to pursue a physical education degree and eventually teach in an elementary

school, where he also could serve as a coach. He has played numerous sports while attending Dakota schools and even coached basketball and flag football youth teams for his church.

Logan Carroll of Janesville got a taste of the co-op world as a young boy when he rode along with his uncle and grandparents as they read electric meters for the co-op. His uncle is now a lineman for another utility, and Logan wants to follow in his footsteps. He intends to apply for a job at Rock Energy after completing the electric power distribution course at Blackhawk Technical School. "The co-op reminds me of my family, that we are hardworking and are always willing to help out and volunteer our time to help others in need," the Craig High School senior wrote. "We have learned that working together in greater numbers, like a co-op, has strengthened our family."

Rebecca DalSanto, who lives in South Beloit and attends Hononegah High School in Rockton, plans to major in parks, recreation, and leisure studies so she can learn how people can enjoy natural resources for their entertainment without damaging the wildlife. "I would like to study this field because my career goal is to manage my own camp for underprivileged children and give them a chance to experience camp with other children," she wrote.

Occupational therapy is the career goal for Hononegah student Brianna Jensen of Rockton. This path will provide her with "the ability to help people and feel that I am making a difference in one's life for the better," she wrote. "I made commitments to myself in eighth grade, a plan of sorts, foreseeing myself where I am now. ... I am again at a point in my life looking forward to the unknown, visualizing the next chapter. The future is bright, and failure is not an option."

Rachel McDonald, a senior at Clinton High School, plans to study agricultural business and crop science because she's interested in factors that affect the bottom line for farmers and the steps they must take to ensure a profit. That interest, no doubt, was inspired by her father, Timothy McDonald, who operates a farm in rural Janesville.

Amanda Pickel of Orfordville plans to impact the

(Continued on page 16d ▶)





*Jessica Alf
Milton High School*



*Micah Ayres
Dakota High School*



*Logan Carroll
Craig High School*



*Rebecca DalSanto
Hononegah High School*



*Stephanie Varilek
Parkview High School*



Congratulations to Scholarship Winners

Rock Energy Cooperative is pleased to announce the 2013 scholarship winners. Each student will receive \$500 to assist with educational expenses at an accredited college or technical school. The co-op awards 10 scholarships each year to graduating seniors living in REC's service territory. Funds for the scholarships come from unclaimed capital credits. ■



*Brianna Jensen
Hononegah High School*



*Benjamin Treinen
Parker High School*



*Micah Topel
Evansville High School*



*Amanda Pickel
Brodhead High School*



*Rachel McDonald
Clinton High School*

Call 811 Before Every Digging Project

This April marks the sixth annual National Safe Digging Month, reminding residents to always call 811 before any digging project.

The Common Ground Alliance and its 1,400 members, including Rock Energy Cooperative, recognize April as National Safe Digging Month. It is formally recognized by the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate and has traditionally earned the support from nearly every state governor across the country.

When calling 811, homeowners and contractors are connected to their local one-call center, which notifies the appropriate utility companies of their intent to dig. Professional locators are then sent to the requested digging site to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags, paint, or both. Every eight minutes an underground utility line is damaged because someone decided to dig without first calling 811.

Striking an underground utility line while digging can cause harm to you or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

A call must be placed to 811

before *every* digging project, from simple landscaping projects like planting trees or shrubs to building a deck or installing a rural mailbox. A total of 165,000 underground utilities are damaged annually across the nation, and one out of every three incidents is the result of not calling 811.

“As April marks the traditional start of digging season, we are using this month to strongly encourage individuals and companies to call 811 before they begin digging,” said Denny Schultz, operations manager at Rock Energy Cooperative. “By calling 811 to have the underground utility lines in their area marked, homeowners and professionals are making an important decision that can help keep them and their communities safe and connected.”

Here’s what happens when you call 811:

- Your call will be routed to your local One Call Center. That’s Diggers Hotline in Wisconsin and

For More Information:

- Nationwide, visit www.call811.com or call 811.
- In Wisconsin, visit www.diggershotline.com or call (800) 242-8511.
- In Illinois, visit www.illinois1call.com or call (800) 892-0123.

JULIE (Joint Utility Locating Information for Excavators) in Illinois. Wisconsin requires the call to be made three business days before the start of the project, while Illinois law specifies two business days.

- A representative will ask for the location and description of your digging project.
- Utility companies servicing the area then will send a professional locator to the proposed area to mark any buried lines with flags: red for electric; yellow, gas or petroleum; orange, communications; blue or purple, water; and green, sewer or drainage.
- Wait until your official project start date before beginning to dig to make sure all the underground utilities have been marked. If your planned work area is marked with underground utilities, do not dig in that area.
- In Wisconsin, your project must begin within 10 days of your official start date. In Illinois, work must begin within 14 days of your locate request and is valid for 28 days. ■

Know what's below
Call **811** before you dig.



We support April
as Safe Digging Month!



More Power to You

(Continued from page 16a)

lives of many individuals as a pharmacist. "I have grown up with triplet siblings who are three years younger than me," the Brodhead High School student wrote. "Early on, I immediately learned how to be dependable and nurturing as I was the role model that helped shape and inspire the triplets as they developed into the individuals they are today. My leadership qualities began as a child and still are evident today as a high school student. ... They are the same qualities that will help me as I venture into the next phase of my life of becoming a pharmacist, where I can continue making an impact in the lives of, not just three people, but the lives of many individuals."

Micah Topel of Janesville is interested in pursuing an engineering degree and a master's degree in business administration. "I both appreciate and enjoy the intricate details of planning and the logistics of problem solving," he wrote. "Finance and business operations intrigue me. With my ability to excel in math, an engineering degree with an MBA would afford a great opportunity to me." The Evansville High School student has been involved in Boy Scouts since 2001 and earned Eagle Scout status in 2010. For his project, Micah's Drive for Life, he organized a combination blood donation event, bone marrow registry, and organ and tissue donor awareness drive.

Benjamin Treinen, a senior at Parker High School in Janesville, said his desire to study marine biology stems from his lifelong interest in ocean creatures, such as octopus, manta rays, and especially sharks. "These magnificent animals are both some of the oldest animals in the world, and yet they are among nature's apex predators," he wrote. On a student excursion to Australia, he had experiences that transformed his mere fascination with sharks into a career opportunity. "This taught me how great these creatures can be and how crucial they are to their ecosystem."

Stephanie Varilek of Brodhead is the future social worker, and her career goal was inspired by volunteer work she did at a Rockford hospital. "One day when I was volunteering I heard the nurses discussing a 10-day-old baby who came in covered in bruises and how the social worker would have to be called in," the Parkview High School student wrote. "I thought that I wanted to be one of the people who would help make sure that it never happened to that child again or any other that I could help." Her roots with the co-op run deep. She is the great-granddaughter of George Ballmer, one of the co-op's founders who served on the board of directors from 1936 to 1963.

This year's group of scholarship recipients instills a belief that the future is in good hands. They possess the characteristics that will allow them to succeed in whatever endeavor they pursue. Congratulations to each one!

It is our privilege to serve your energy needs. Please let us know if we can do anything to improve our service. ■

Get Connected

Check out these great deals offered with your Co-op Connections Card.



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E & D Waterworks, 915 N. Parker Drive, Janesville – (608) 752-4718 – www.edwaterworks.com

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10% Off Labor on Any Service Call
(Rock County residents only)



For a complete listing of current deals, visit www.rock.coop and click on the Co-op Connections Card. Terms and conditions are subject to change as desired by participating businesses. Printable coupons also are available online.

Introducing New Healthy Savings Discounts!

The same program that offers discounts at local merchants and has saved Rock Energy members \$52,000 on prescriptions now offers significant savings on dental, vision, hearing, lab and imaging services, and chiropractic work. To locate providers that participate in the program, call (800) 800-7616 or visit HealthySavings.coop. Be sure to have your Co-op Connections Card handy.



Add Up Your Savings!

Tell us how much you have saved by using your Co-op Connections Card. If you have a story you'd like to share, e-mail Barbara Uebelacker at BarbU@rock.coop or call her at (866) 752-4550.



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