

## Local Youth Take Energy, Environmental Questions to Capitol Hill

Energy and environmental policies topped the list of issues on which participants in the 2009 Iowa Electric Cooperatives' Youth Tour of Washington, D.C., questioned Iowa's congressional delegation last month.

Lindsay Kelty of Vinton and Cally Bengston of Jesup represented East-Central Iowa Rural Electric Cooperative as 2 of 39 Iowa high school juniors- or seniors-to-be, or 2009 high school graduates who participated in the event June 13-18. The Iowa students were joined by nearly 1,500 students from around the country for the annual tour organized by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

All 39 Iowa students met as a group with Iowa Senators Grassley and Harkin, in addition to breaking into groups to meet with the representative for each of their specific districts in the U.S. House of Representatives. Students asked the senators and representatives questions about taxes, Social Security, the economy, the environment, energy, legalization of controlled substances to raise revenue for the government, and internships in Washington, D.C.

Answers and solutions for the issues varied among the congressional delegation, but there was a common thread on energy and environmental policies of doing what's best for the environment without harming the economy.

In addition to meeting with the members of Congress that serve them, students also had time to explore the memorials, monuments, and other attractions of the nation's capital during their visit, which was paid for by the electric co-ops that participate in the program. During the tour, the students saw and visited the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Arlington National

Cemetery, the World War II Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the Iwo Jima Monument, the National Archives, the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Museum of Art, the Museum of American History, the Museum of Natural History, Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum, the Washington National Cathedral, Mount Vernon, the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court, Capitol Hill, and the White House.

Chaperones for the group included Pat Boyle, manager of business development and member services, Hawkeye REC; Beth Snitker, manager of communications and area development, Allamakee-Clayton Electric Cooperative; Allan Urlis, director of communications, Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives; and, Tami Weillbrenner, office manager, Southern Iowa Electric Cooperative.



2009 Iowa High School Students in Washington,



Lindsay Kelty



Cally Bengston

## CHARACTER COUNTS! Makes an Impact With Educators



On July 9 and 10, 23 educators participated in a CHARACTER COUNTS! Making an Impact training session at the AEA 267 building in Cedar Falls.

The session featured fun exercises in leadership, like the one shown to the left in which a small-group leader improvised dance moves to a randomly chosen song.

"The 2009 Character Counts! training sessions seemed to do just that—make an impact," said Greg Pavelka, ECI REC marketing director and economic development director, "As in 2008, the training session received overwhelmingly positive reviews from the attendees, who continue to express their appreciation of ECI's sponsorship in such a good program."

East-Central Iowa REC and its power supplier CIPCO sponsored the character-building program for the sixth year in a row.