

GHS grad attends Corn Congress in D.C.

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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McPheeters travels with other ag leaders

Kerry McPheeters, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln junior, recently traveled with other young agricultural leaders to Washington D.C.

There they attended Corn Congress to learn more about U.S. agricultural policy, met with policy leaders and participated in the congress with corn grower leaders from across the country.

The congress is a summer gathering of corn grower leaders and staff from state and national corn associations who meet in Washington D.C. for a series of action team and committee meetings, visits with their respective state's congressional delegation and attend the semi-annual Corn Congress.

The Nebraska Corn Board sponsored nine delegates to the second annual Leadership Mission after being selected through an application process to attend the Corn Congress.

Delegates consisted of young agricultural leaders from the LEAD program and FFA.

While in D.C., delegates engaged in meetings with federal agencies, national agricultural cooperators and associations, participated in international trade policy discussions and congressional visits and networked with industry leaders.

They also had a tour with leadership mission delegates from Iowa and Ohio and viewed the Delmarva region and observed agriculture at Wye Angus, the Arnold Vegetable Farms, the cucumber harvest at Nagel Farms and Kenny Bros. Produce grading operation.

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Morgan Zumpfe, a Nebraska Corn Board intern from friend and past leadership mission participant said Corn Congress Leadership was insightful.

Zumpfe helped coordinate the mission and attended the event with the delegation.

“Visiting a cucumber harvest, getting to question the people who determine our laws and experiencing corn industry leaders from all states working cooperatively helped us realize how complex agriculture is,” she said.

In addition to McPheeters, this year’s delegates were: Keith Borer, Elgin; Ryan Broderson, Randolph; Nicole D’Angelo, Auburn, CA; Jolene Messinger, McCook; Andy Method, Decatur; Joel Miller, Hampton; Glen Ready, Scribner; and Courtney Spilker, Beatrice.

Glen Ready, UNL student and leadership mission delegate from Scribner said the experience allowed him to network with some of the key policy makers and advocates in the ag industry.

Keith Borer, LEAD participant from Elgin, said Corn Congress broadened his understanding of the ground roots process that the national and state corn growers and Nebraska Corn Board has available for Nebraska producers to have a voice in Washington.

“We must be active voices to our representatives to ensure they represent Nebraska’s farm economy well,” Borer said.

Delegates will now submit a report of activities to the corn board and submit a blog post to be featured on the Nebraska Corn Kernels blog.

McPheeters studies mechanized systems management at UNL.

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