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Yankton Students Witness State Legislature First-hand As Legislative Pages



**BY
JACLYN
ARENS**

Local students have the exciting opportunity to witness the legislative process first hand in Pierre. Three Yankton High School seniors have been selected as legislative pages for the 2015 State Congress sessions. The students are Johanna Lippert, Tristan Roy, and Adam Walter.

Lippert attended a two week session from February 8th to February 20th. Roy and Walter will be in Pierre March 9th through March 13th. Lippert and Roy have the opportunity to shadow Jean Hunhoff, and Walter will be shadowing Mike Stevens.

Johanna Lippert has a great story for why she applied to be a page. She says, “When I was in 5th grade, I went to the capital with my grandma and my mom. When I was there I saw the high schoolers running around, and I knew that I wanted to do that. I also met Jean when I was there and at Girl’s State this past summer.” Lippert also says that she has been interested in government her entire life.

Adam Walter applied for this experience in order to gain a better understanding of how our state government works. He also wants to learn how the local and state governments intertwine. Walter is looking forward to this experience because he will be at the last session. He says, “I heard that the legislators usually debate state funding and teacher pay at the last session.”

Tristan Roy wanted to be a page because she is also very interested in the government. She says, “It will be a great opportunity to see first hand how the government runs.”

According to Lippert, the duties of a page are numerous. In the mornings she attended to committee members or did clerical work in the capital post office. In the afternoons, she attended committees and acted as a messenger for the



COURTESY PHOTOS

ABOVE (L to R): Johanna Lippert, Adam Walter, and Tristan Roy were chosen as Legislative Pages for the 2015 South Dakota Legislative session.

RIGHT (L to R): Johanna Lippert is shown with representative Jean Hunhoff during Lippert’s recent trip to Pierre as a Legislative Page.



legislators. In general she says, “We had a pretty similar schedule each day, but different committees met on different days.”

Johanna says her favorite events were the afternoon sessions because they featured lively debate. She explains, “At the afternoon sessions I would run and get vote sheets. It was interesting, because sometimes I would know stuff before the legislators.”

This unique experience is something that will help the pages with

their futures. Lippert comments that, “I was able to observe people who are so eloquent and stand up for what they believe in, and I plan to try and incorporate what I observed in my life.”

The legislators proved to be great role models for the students, Lippert says, “I admired seeing how legislators with very different backgrounds and opinions could work together so respectfully. Even if they disagreed, they would still eat lunch together.”

In particular, Lippert admired Jean Hunhoff, who was her sponsor and Lynne Disanto from Rapid City. According to Lippert, Disanto raised many women’s and human’s rights issues.

Three YHS seniors have a phenomenal opportunity to witness first-hand the legislative branch of our state government. Lippert was grateful for the opportunity to serve as a page, and Walter and Roy are looking forward to their experiences.

Y’s Words On Net Neutrality



**BY
ZACH
LATTEA**

Put on your learning pants, kiddos—it’s time to discuss the Internet. Yes, the Internet, that wondrous and vast collection of infinite information. Isn’t it nice to be able to access anything you’ve ever had a question about?

Commonly searched bits of quizzical information include whether or not it’s legal for a man in Scotland to marry his widow’s sister, the reason that the sky is blue, and why daylight savings time exists. Truly, the Internet is an amazing resource, and one that should be kept as accessible as possible.

Censorship, though sometimes a necessary evil, should be avoided. If necessary information is blocked by governmental or corporate entities, everyone is harmed. Censorship destroys progress and free will, and, in many cases, advances the agenda of the few in exchange for serious harms to most of society.

Up until Thursday, February 26, 2015, the flow of knowledge wasn’t as free as would be expected.

Service providers in the United States acted as gatekeepers of information transmission, able to change the speed of a person’s connection at will; in other words, the Internet was controlled by a few large corporations with profit-based interests.

A company controlling communication like this has many harms—those who appealed to the interest of the company, through business connections, money or ideology, could receive higher quality Internet service.

The people who could not afford this treatment or were held with distaste by the company could have their connection slowed severely. The same goes for webpages.

Across the nation, many have been outraged at this disparity of treatment, bringing the issue into the spotlight.

A change had to be made, a change to put corporations in their place and ensure the fair treatment of American citizens.

At 1:00 ET, on February 26, the FCC ruled in favor of a policy called “net neutrality.” This policy would open the floodgates of knowledge, removing corporate control of Internet access in accordance with the Communications Act of 1934, and other important statutes dealing with information transfer.

With net neutrality, the Internet will be preserved as an important provision of modern life, affording to everyone fast and easy access to information. Business-based bias thwarted, people across America will benefit from the FCC’s decision, a vote split 3-2.

As FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler stated, “no one – whether government or corporate – should control free open access to the Internet.”

National Honor Society Holds Annual Induction Ceremony



**BY
LESLIE
ALARCON**

On February 2, 2015 Yankton High School inducted 77 new students to their National Honor Society Program. National Honor Society is a nationwide organization that recognizes outstanding students for their scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Students maintaining the proper GPA of a 3.5 at the end of their junior year are invited to join the program. Other criteria the students have to meet are service, signatures of teachers, and a brief essay.

The organization allows for students to excel and participate in service opportunities in the community. National Honor Society holds tutoring sessions for high school students in the ALC, serving at food banquets, hosting food drives, playing bingo with the residents at Majestic Bluffs, a new program offering computer lessons, and additional volunteering where it is needed.

The program’s advisor, Mrs. Amy Reyes, is about to serve her second year as advisor. Mrs. Reyes shares, “Some of the goals for the new members include to have a student in the ALC every period for tutoring. A new approach next year will include more accountability for the students involved.”

The new members voted Joseph Kelly as their president of National Honor Society accompanied by his vice president Amanda Gravholt. The young students hold an important leadership position for the following year. Talitha Griever will also be helping as she was voted secretary and Cody Perakslis is assisting as treasurer.

Mrs. Reyes is excited to work with her second group of students. She states, “I am looking forward to building upon new programs such as the library tech assistance, reaching out to our community’s senior citizens, and a men’s bowling league.”

These new programs have had an excellent outcome in our community and hopefully the new students will be able to continue these activities. Mrs. Reyes concluded, “I had a great first year of students and I am looking forward to the next group.”

National Honor Society is a program that was created in 1921 and was introduced to Yankton High School in 1960. The tradition continues where students are honored for their academic accomplishments, service, leadership, and strong character.

Lattea and Bergeson Chosen As Presidential Scholars



COURTESY PHOTO

ABOVE (L to R): Zach Lattea and Kyle Bergeson are 2015 Presidential Scholars.



**BY
JACOB
SELGESTAD**

Every year in the United States thirty-nine hundred high school seniors are nominated as finalists for the United States Presidential scholarship. The average senior has one tenth of a percent chance of being selected. This year Yankton High School has defied the odds as two members of the class of 2015, Zach Lattea and Kyle Bergeson, have earned this distinct honor.

The United States Presidential Scholars program was established by executive order in 1964. Of the thirty-nine hundred students nominated, up to one hundred and forty-one students actually earn the honor. The odds of two students from the same school earning this finalist distinction are one-one hundredth of a percent.

The seniors earning this distinction are obviously the cream of the crop at Yankton High School. Each of them displays dedication and success inside and outside of the classroom. Teacher Leo Kallis believes that, “Zach and Kyle epitomize what it means to be a student. They are intellectually curious, hard-working, and dedicated.”

Senior Zach Lattea is involved with the High School Debate, the school newspaper, National Honor Society, Math Team, Pioneer Club and attended the National History Day National Tournament last summer for his paper on the Cuban Missile Crisis. Zach is a straight A student and earned a score of 35 on his ACT. For reference, a perfect score is a 36. Zach has yet to decide where he will attend college, but one can be certain he will find success no matter where he decides to further his studies. Zach says that, “All the hard-work has paid off.”

Kyle is involved in National Honor Society, Cross Country, Track, and Y-Club. Kyle is a straight A student and also earned a 35 ACT. He plans on attending the University of South Dakota and majoring in Kinesiology. Kyle says that, “He is excited to go through the Presidential Scholarship process.”

It is a credit to the teachers and administration of Yankton School District as a whole that they were capable of producing not one, but two students who are considered academically elite on the national level. The Yankton Community should support Kyle and Zach as they continue their pursuit of academic excellence.