



CATCHIN' UP WITH THE CLASS OF 2018:

PAST YOUTH AMBASSADOR SUCCESS STORIES



Many things can change in one year, let alone five. It's always fun to catch up with our graduating class of youth ambassadors from five years ago to see what they're up to and what leadership experiences they've encountered outside the program. We're always happy to hear their accomplishments and future goals, and the Class of 2018 has proven to be successful.

Cassidy Huber

After graduating from Lincoln High School, Cassidy continued her education at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where she graduated in December 2022 with a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology with a physical education (PE) teaching emphasis. "I gained leadership and communication skills through my time as a youth ambassador," shares Cassidy.



Cassidy was able to apply these leadership skills throughout her college career where she led the SHAPE club, a professional development club for students studying PE. She also volunteered with PRIDE events, one of which was a gym class designed for students with disabilities. She has also been involved with the

community by coaching middle school basketball and high school softball and volunteering at the annual Alma Center Strawberry Festival.

This past school year, Cassidy served as a long-term substitute teacher at Colby Middle School and recently accepted a full-time position as their middle school physical education and health teacher. She cites her involvement in the youth ambassador program as nothing but positive. "I would highly recommend it to high school students looking for unique opportunities," she concludes.

Andrea Peterson

"I believe that my experience as a youth ambassador helped me gain confidence in my ability to speak with various individuals and prepared me for college," shares Andrea, a Black River Falls High School graduate.

Andrea's speaking skills will be key in her future career as a board-certified behavior analyst. Behavior analysts use various interventions to change individuals' behavior. She plans to work in a clinical setting, providing intervention techniques for young children with autism. "It is proven to be a very effective therapy to help children with autism prepare for school and gain independence," Andrea explains.



Following high school, Andrea continued her education at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire where she graduated in 2022 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. She is currently enrolled in the master's program for Applied Behavior Analysis at St. Cloud University. "I am currently a graduate assistant and lead the research for a professor," says Andrea.

The youth ambassador program teaches leadership skills such as teamwork. Andrea applied this skill during her participation on an intramural soccer team in college and recalls her positive team experience volunteering during the program: "Having a group that you work with to make the community better was an amazing experience, and I met so many fun people while doing so."

Abe Severson

A Black River Falls High School graduate, Abe Severson completed his first semester of college as a business student at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls where he quickly learned that a business degree wasn't his passion. "I transferred to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire to pursue my degree in physical education," Abe shares.



Abe fulfilled his goal

and currently teaches physical education. Since the youth ambassador program, he has taken on additional leadership roles in his endeavors. He was an officer of the Society of Health and Physical Education Club at UWEC for two years. “I was a member of the wellness committee for the School District of New Richmond,” says Abe. “We planned several community outreach events, one being a walk for mental health.”

We hear from many past youth ambassadors that participation in the program helps build confidence. “My experience as a youth ambassador helped me build confidence and showed me the benefits of joining professional organizations that help my community,” Abe says. “I’m happy to announce that I am moving back to my hometown to teach physical education at the Black River Falls High School.”

Mary (Hinchcliff) Rogers

“I decided on my future career during my sophomore year of high school,” shares Mary Rogers, a graduate of Lincoln High School. “I was able to take courses for college credit that applied to the surgical tech program requirements.”

After graduation, Mary accepted a position at Black River Memorial Hospital (BRMH) as a patient care tech while completing the surgical technician program through Chippewa Valley Technical College. She graduated from the program in 2020 and was interested in staying at BRMH. “I accepted a surgical technician position at BRMH just a few months after graduation,” she says.

After getting settled into her new career, Mary bought a house in 2021 and married her high school sweetheart. In 2022, she became a mother of twin boys. Looking back, she says that the youth ambassador program made her confident in her life decisions and ability to take on leadership roles. “I may have switched positions/departments at work, but I am always willing to take initiative and help anywhere I’m needed within BRMH,” she concludes. “I am always willing to serve others outside of work, as well.”



Photo by Schock Photography



Madison “Maddy” Shramek

Maddy Shramek began her college career at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse studying biology with a pre-dental track after graduating from Lincoln High School. “I changed my major to Public Health and Community Health Education during my sophomore year,” Maddy says. “I decided to pursue nursing following completion of my undergraduate degree in 2022.”

After graduating from UW-L, Maddy enrolled in Viterbo University’s nursing program to obtain a Master of Science in Nursing. She is set to graduate from the program in May 2024. “Following graduation, I plan to work in a rural hospital to gain experience as a nurse and give back to the surrounding rural communities,” Maddy says.

Part of the youth ambassador program is cooperative education and community involvement. During college, Maddy was on the board of the public health honor society; she also volunteered with food co-ops in the La Crosse area, Livestrong Cancer Survivorship Program, and Habitat for Humanity. Locally, she also served as a Black River Memorial Hospital Volunteer. “Currently, I am on the Jackson County Fair Board of Directors,” she states.

Jackson Electric’s youth ambassador program expanded Maddy’s community involvement and volunteer experiences, while also allowing her to gain a greater understanding of the cooperative business model. “Being part of the program allowed me to interact with like-minded individuals my age, aiding in the development of my communication and teamwork skills,” she concludes.—*Brandi Shramek, Member Relations Advisor*

High school juniors or seniors who are interested in participating in Jackson Electric’s youth ambassador program should complete and submit the online application at www.jackelec.com/youth-ambassador-program.

Deadline is August 18.

“SUNDAE” FUN-DAY AT LINCOLN ROAD DAIRY

Don't miss out on a moo-velous time at Jackson County's third annual Sundae on the Farm to be held on Sunday, July 9, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Nathan and Karen Kling's Lincoln Road Dairy. "We've hosted the dairy breakfast in the past," says Nate. "We believe it's important to showcase dairy farming and promote our products."

Nate has been farming on his own since 1999 and purchased this farm in 2018. His home farm is farmed organically, and the Lincoln Road Dairy is farmed conventionally. The Klings milk about 255 cows and farm approximately 1,700 acres of corn, alfalfa, and hay mix. All of the work is done by Nate, Karen, their three children, and eight employees. "A unique feature on this farm is the robotic milking system," says Nate. "Guests will be able to see this operation during the event."

Sundae on the Farm is a free, family-fun event featuring grilled cheese sandwiches, ice cream sundaes, milk, and cheese curds. Nate hopes for nice weather, a good turnout,



Nate and Karen Kling's Lincoln Road Dairy is the host farm for the 3rd annual Sundae on the Farm event organized by the Jackson County Dairy Promotion Committee.

and to counter the negative publicity surrounding farming and the dairy industry. "We combat with real-life experience," Nate says. "We're showing that we do things right." —*Brandi Shramek, Member Relations Advisor*



Since 1998, Jackson Electric has used a portion of its Federated Youth Foundation funds to provide post-secondary education scholarships to area high school seniors. This account is funded annually from Jackson Electric's unclaimed capital credits.

This annual youth scholarship program offers up to ten \$1,000 scholarships to students whose parents/guardians are active members of Jackson Electric. In addition, Jackson Electric offers a \$1,500 youth ambassador scholarship to a qualified student who participated in Jackson Electric's youth ambassador program.

Jackson Electric provided \$11,500 in scholarship awards to students in the class of 2023.



Alyson Sprague
Sparta High School



Corryn Konkel
Osseo-Fairchild High School



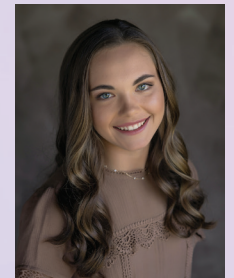
Frances Everson
Black River Falls High School



Jacob Ward
Black River Falls High School



Lilly Radcliffe
Melrose-Mindoro High School



Lindsay Steien
Blair-Taylor High School



Luke Dux
Neillsville High School



MaKayla Lopez
Black River Falls High School



Ruby Paul
Alma Center-Humbird-Merrillan High School



Taylor Gunderson
Osseo-Fairchild High School



Joslyn Polenz
Youth Ambassador Scholarship

"Whatever you choose for a career path, remember the struggles along the way are only meant to shape you for your purpose!"

—*Chadwick Boseman*

ZOOMING IN ON ADAM WIEDL



Two and one-half years ago, Adam Wiedl joined Jackson Electric's line crew. What started out as a job shadow with a neighbor turned into a career. "My neighbor was a union line worker," says Adam. "I did a job shadow and knew this was the career path I wanted to pursue."

Like many of Jackson Electric's line crew, Adam began his career by completing the Electrical Power Distribution program offered at Chippewa Valley Technical College. "I spent the next 7.5 years working on high-voltage lines before coming to Jackson Electric."

Adam enjoys the ability to work outside each day. When he's not at Jackson Electric, you'll find him hunting, fishing, and hanging out with his family. Asked if he's a morning person or night owl, Adam says, "Morning person. I like to get my to-do list done earlier in the day."

JACKSON ELECTRIC WELCOMES FOUR INTERNS

The Jackson Electric team recently added three line crew interns to its roster. Jordan Zillmer, Brayden Schneider, and Kyle Steien each graduated from Chippewa Valley Technical College's Electrical Power Distribution program. With this training, these interns are qualified to work on de-energized lines. They also assist the crew with solar and generator installations and other various maintenance projects as needed.

Faith Leisgang joined our front office team earlier this year as a marketing communications intern. She is currently studying business management at Chippewa Valley Technical College and plans to transfer to UW-Stout in spring 2024 to complete her business administration degree. Faith's days are full of variety, from creating graphics for our communications, processing payments, answering members' calls, to training on our member programs.

We are happy to have these interns on our team!



Brayden Schneider



Kyle Steien




Jordan Zillmer



Faith Leisgang



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