

## Briar Bergner wins trip to D.C.

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

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Briar Bergner, a 2009 Holyoke High School junior and daughter of Ohlee and Gloria Bergner, will attend the 2009 Washington, D.C. Youth Tour June 11-18. She was selected and sponsored by Highline Electric Association.

As Highline's representative, all of Bergner's expenses including airfare, lodging, meals and fees will be paid. Prior to flying to Washington, D.C., Colorado students will also tour Tri-State Generation and Transmission and the state capitol in Denver.

In addition to sight-seeing, once at Washington, D.C., the students will visit Colorado's congressional delegation and learn about government, United States history and rural electrification. They will attend many leadership classes designed to strengthen their abilities as leaders in their schools and community.

As part of the competition for the Washington, D.C. Youth Tour, students were required to answer the following essay question: In your opinion, how can the United States reduce its dependency on foreign oil? Following is Bergner's answer:

Reducing foreign oil dependency? The answer is easy, but accomplishing it may take some work! The wisest solution seems to be electricity! Because electricity can be generated from sun, wind, water, coal and nuclear sources, it could be put to far better use.

Since the biggest share of oil in America is used for transportation purposes, I believe that if we did nothing more than produce effective hybrid vehicles and convince people to drive them, we could cut our dependency for foreign oil drastically. Furthermore, with all of the alternative ways to generate electricity it seems likely that electricity could adapt as needed.

Americans might need more education to understand the benefits of using electricity to reduce dependency on foreign oil, as well as forward-thinking leaders to steer us in the right direction. We might also need some incentives to make it possible to purchase hybrid vehicles, as well as put up rows and rows of giant wind farms; walk, bike or carpool to school or work; use energy saving light bulbs; switch to ethanol at the gas pump; install solar panels; turn down the thermostat; reduce-reuse-recycle; and/or develop technology that uses natural, renewable energy resources.

I believe Americans want to decrease our nation's reliance on foreign oil and I believe Americans will do what they are financially and physically capable of doing to accomplish this task. At least I will, for a stronger economy, a cleaner environment, energy preservation and a safer homeland—for our future.