

International Internships Awarded to Wapsie Valley FFA Members

By: Natalie Risse, Chapter Reporter

Wapsie Valley FFA members Alana Platte and Dylan Lampe received international internships through the World Food Prize symposium. The World Food Prize was started by Dr. Norman Borlaug, known as the “Father of the Green Revolution,” as a way for students to meet and brainstorm various issues surrounding food insecurity in the world. Dr. Borlaug was born and raised in Cresco, Iowa, and went on to be a research scientist on wheat improvement in Mexico. Through his work there, he created and put into effect the idea of genetic modification to get plants to produce more food in various growing environments. He is credited with saving over a billion lives- more than anyone else that has ever lived. Because of this, he is one of only five people to have received the Nobel Peace Prize, the Congressional Gold Medal, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He founded the World Food Prize to encourage the generations to come to meet the challenge of feeding the world.

To participate in the World Food Prize, Platte and Lampe started at the state level by writing a five page research paper over a topic of their choice in a developing country. They attended the conference in Ames, and were then selected to advance onto the Global World Food Prize in Des Moines. Because they qualified for the Global Institute, they were able to apply for internships, both national and international. Amazingly, both Platte and Lampe were selected as 2 of 24 students that attended the Global Conference to receive an international internship. Wapsie Valley is the first school to have two candidates receive this honor. They will be traveling to a foreign country for eight weeks over the summer to conduct research.

Platte will be traveling to Guatemala to work with Hormel Foods, a multinational manufacturer and marketer of food and meat products. There, she has been assigned to work on “Project Spammy,” where she will be researching malnutrition in children. Likely, she will be collecting data by measuring children’s head circumference, but she will learn more upon arrival.

Lampe will be traveling to Ethiopia to research a milk hygiene product in Yabelo, (located in southeastern Ethiopia). This will involve taking samples of milk and dairy products that have been treated with traditional preservative practices to make an assessment of environmental bacteria. There may also be an opportunity to be involved in the training programs for workers in processing the milk. While in the field, Lampe will be in the company of the International Livestock Research Institute's researcher, Dr. Kebede Aminu. On campus, he will work with Dr. Barbara Wieland on data related to the project.

The Wapsie Valley FFA Chapter is honored to have these two recipients of the Borlaug International Internships, and wish them the best of luck as they travel and research over the summer.