

With the money I was granted by the 4-H Dairy Endowment, I attended the 2006 Holstein Association Annual Convention. At the convention, I assisted my team and was always ready to fill in if I was needed. I went to a youth mixer and met Holstein youth from around the country. We made good friends with members from the Iowa team. For the first time ever, I got to watch a Dairy Jeopardy competition. Rulon Gardner's story was fascinating. He was the keynote speaker at the awards banquet, and we got a picture with him later when we met him at the airport.

By attending this year's Holstein Association Convention, I learned a lot more about the dairy industry and met lots of other youth involved in the same types of activities as me. I learned the most by watching the Dairy Jeopardy competition and listening to the dairy quiz bowl contest. I also took a trip a little ways into the countryside of South Dakota and Iowa. The most surprising thing to us was the way they didn't plant their crops in straight rows – they followed the contours of the land. In Iowa, I got to tour a dairy farm and see some really good-looking cows. While at the convention, my main job was to help my teammates practice last-minute questions and get ready for the coming competition. Scheduling didn't work out for driving to and from the convention, so I took a plane instead.

As I others asked me about my trip, I told them lots of the exciting things I got to see and shared with them a few of the experiences I had when I was in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Not only did I tell them about the fun I had, but I also took the chance to tell them everything I have learned and how the Washington 4-H Foundation helped to fund my trip. Our county fair was a great place for me to speak to other 4-H members and the public about my trip, and the knowledge I gained was very helpful in answering questions from the public. Lots of people were impressed by how much I knew about my animals and this allowed me to tell them about my involvement in quiz bowl, the convention I had attended, and how I had been funded. The Whatcom County 4-H Quiz Bowl Teams have just begun to practice for the coming year. At one of the next two scheduled practices, one of my team members and I are going to talk to those involved about the opportunities available to them for funding dairy trips, and how the 4-H Foundation Travel Grant helped us to learn so much.

The Washington 4-H Foundation's support enabled me to be involved in a fun experience where I gained a lot of dairy industry resources and education to use with my animal projects. Thank you for helping me to fund this event.

Sincerely,
Kelsie Weese