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Students Represent the State at NEA-SP Conference

Summary: Corey Johnson '14, and Claire Goodrich '14, served as state representatives at the NEA-SP Fall Connections Conference.

(November 21, 2012)-Corey Johnson '14, Redwood Falls, and Claire Goodrich '14, Rochester, attended the National Education Association Student Program (NEA-SP) Fall Connections Conference in San Diego, California, November 9-11, 2012. Johnson and Goodrich were elected by their peers at the Education Minnesota Student Program (EMSP) fall conference earlier this year and were two of only four Minnesota representatives to attend the national conference.

Both Johnson and Goodrich were interested in learning more about bullying—the theme of this year's national gathering. The NEA recently launched a "Bully Free: It Starts With Me" campaign, which provides tools to assist educators in identifying, preventing, and advocating against adolescent bullying. The Fall Connections Conference extended these tools to education students by providing them opportunities to create their own lesson plans on bullying awareness and prevention.

"Bullying is prevalent in schools today," says Goodrich. "I wanted to learn new language for addressing it." During the conference, she composed a lesson plan focused on replacing negative labels with positive alternatives in an effort to make awareness fun and constructive.

While Johnson, too, was interested in the conference theme, she was also intent on utilizing the trip as an opportunity to network nationally. After attending the NEA-SP Summer Leadership Conference in Washington, DC, last June, Johnson looked forward to collaborating with friends and peers from California to Connecticut at the San Diego conference.

"I have friends all over the nation from my involvement with NEA," adds Johnson. "It gives me a chance to see what they're doing in their chapters and bring it back to our chapter so that we can be more active and relevant."

Both Johnson, co-president of the Morris EMSP chapter, and Goodrich, historian/publicist, note that their involvement in these conferences has enabled them to strengthen the Morris EMSP chapter. One of many chapters across the state, the group promotes interest in and enthusiasm for the field of education, provides information regarding educational issues, encourages professionalism in the field, and provides support for underclassmen pursuing careers in elementary and secondary education.

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