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Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications
Phone: 320-589-6414, weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: 320-589-6068, jrray@morris.umn.edu

Naomi Wentz named 2012 Udall Scholar

Summary: Environmental studies and political science major Naomi Wentz '13, Dodge Center, will travel to Tucson, Arizona in August to receive a 2012 Udall Scholarship.

(April 6, 2012)-Environmental studies and political science major Naomi Wentz '13, Dodge Center, will travel to Tucson, Arizona in August to receive a 2012 Udall Scholarship. The Udall Foundation, an independent federal agency established by Congress in 1992, provides federally funded scholarships to college students pursuing careers related to the environment, and American Indian students pursuing careers in tribal public policy or health care.

Of 585 candidates for the competitive scholarship, 80 students were chosen to receive a scholarship of up to \$5,000 and participate in Udall Foundation activities, including a four-day Scholars Orientation. Recipients were selected on the basis of commitment to careers in one of three areas—environment, tribal health care, or tribal public policy. Leadership potential and academic achievement were also considered.

Wentz first learned of the scholarship through her mentor, professor of political science Paula O'Loughlin and learned more about the award from her peers. "The questions are complex and really stretched me to attempt to effectively communicate what it is I have done for the environment and what it is I want to do in the future," she said. In the future, she wants to work with food systems. "I have a passion for food justice, local foods, and food production. I am also interested in non-profit work. Overall, I want to focus on public service."

While in Tucson to receive her award, Wentz will have an opportunity to meet the other 2012 Udall scholars, policy makers, and community leaders in environmental fields, tribal health care, and governance. "I am super excited to network and make friends with awesome people who are also doing great things for the environment!"

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