

MICHAEL NELSON, *Leadership Youth Representative*



My Leadership Youth Experience

There I was, standing in the middle of the Chamber of Commerce meeting room. My junior year was still in its infancy and I had no idea what to expect from this new experience called Leadership. The room was filled with a colorful array of other students from different schools in the Salem Keizer School District—along with their parents. Although there were many new faces I'd never seen, there were two people I did recognize from my school, which was comforting. As the orientation finished I realized that the Salem Youth Leadership organization was going to get even better here on out.

All the places and organizations we went to were a blast. I learned so much about Salem that I had never even thought about. As we stopped by places like the Mission Mill and the Capitol Building we had so much fun. The companies we visited taught all of us different strategies about business and work ethics that can make an enterprise famous

and successful. Everywhere we went we would learn something new and helpful for our lives.

To me Salem Youth Leadership is like being in an elite group, a group of close friends. In the end that's what we became, like a band of brothers, and sisters if you want to get technical. I was sad when Leadership was coming to a close, because I had so many happy memories with everyone and it was where I met one of my best and most amazing friends. Now that Leadership is over and I'm moving on to a board full of important representatives, I find myself filled with anticipation about the future. I think working with a board and experiencing what the corporate system is all about will give me a deep explanation of what life is about.

When I first found out that I was assigned to Salem Electric, I honestly didn't know what to think. Although I never really thought a lot about the member-owned co-op that is Salem Electric, I knew that

what the people did there was extremely important to the citizens of Salem. When I went to my first meeting everyone was so kind and delightful to be around; I felt so very welcomed. I had an interesting and insightful tour of Salem Electric. Every member of the Salem Electric staff was kind and cheerful—not to mention pretty funny.

I would like to deeply thank the Salem Electric co-op for accepting me as a board member. I want to also thank the Chamber of Commerce for setting up this program and giving me such fun memories of last year. In conclusion I would like to deeply thank Terry Kelly and Alicia Bonesteele for showing me around Salem Electric and for making me feel welcome.

I'm more than ready to see what Salem Electric has in store for the future, and I'm greatly honored to be a part of the action that keeps our lights working and our electronics powered. ■

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