

## North Carolina, Massachusetts Ambassadors Selected as National Grange Mentors

In a close competition, Caroline Tart of North Carolina and Christopher Szkutak of Massachusetts were selected as the 2009 National Grange Mentors.

The announcement was made during the Evening of Excellence during the National Grange's 143<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting at the Amway Grand Plaza, here.

Caroline Tart is a freshman at North Carolina State University majoring in agriculture education and communication. Her activities include both state Grange and FFA where she has served in multiple leadership positions for both. In her spare time, she enjoys attending concerts, playing volleyball, attending North Carolina State football games and hanging out with friends. Her parents are Sandra and Denny Tart of Goldsboro. She is a member of Grantham Grange #968. In the state Grange youth program, she is a member of the youth executive committee, leadership team, and planning committee for the winter youth conference and youth grange camp.

Christopher Szkutak has been noted as saying he was "born in a Grange Hall and never left." Because of his family's activities in the Grange, he has been Grange member since 2002. He is the grandson of Massachusetts State Master Floyd Murphy and Shirley Murphy. His parents are Robert and Diane Szkutak of Northbridge, Mass. Szkutak is a senior at Holly Cross with a double major of political science and mathematics. After graduation he hopes to get his doctorate in political science focusing on campaigns and elections. In his spare time, he tutors elementary school children. As ambassador, he has attended state youth department events.

As mentors, Tart and Szkutak will represent the National Grange Youth Department for the next year. Their duties will include assist in planning youth activities for the 2010 National Session, participate in the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration for the National Grange Building, and promote the programs of the National Grange Youth Department.

The selection process included earning a minimum of an 80 percent on the National Grange Trivia Challenge and completing an interview process.

The announcement of the 2009 mentor appointment was made by the outgoing National Mentors Gail Switzer of Pennsylvania and Cody Stevens of North Carolina.

The National Grange Youth program is sponsored by the National Grange, Order of the Patrons of Husbandry. The program is for youth and young adults between the ages of 14 and 35. The National Grange is the nation's oldest general farm and rural public interest organization. Originally founded in 1867, today the

Grange represents nearly 200,000 grassroots Grange members affiliated with 2,700 local, county and state Grange chapters located in 40 states. Grange members provide service to agriculture and rural communities on a wide variety of issues, including economic development, education, family endeavors, and legislation designed to assure a strong and viable rural America.