



## Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarship

Many people involved with rural water in North Dakota at one time or another had the privilege of knowing Patrick Denne. For 20 years, he served as a circuit rider for the North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association. His travels amounted to about 750,000 miles to every corner of the state on a mission was to provide technical assistance to drinking water systems in North Dakota.

Denne’s dedicated service was evident in his willingness to provide that assistance anywhere or anytime. This often took him away from home on weekends and for many days at a time, if necessary, but it also allowed him to witness the incredible growth of rural water systems as few others in North Dakota did. Denne died peacefully at his home in West Fargo surrounded by family on April 4, 2004, following a short, but courageous battle with cancer. He was 53 years old. The NDRWSA strives to keep his memory alive through the Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarship. Below are the 2022 recipients of the Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarships. Please visit our website at [https://www.ndrw.org/denne\\_memorial\\_scholarship](https://www.ndrw.org/denne_memorial_scholarship) to read their essays.

### Abby Klein

Abby Klein of Rugby is attending Bismarck Stage College to study agribusiness. Her goal is to become a farmer after completing school. During high school, she volunteered at the local hospital and helped in the concession stands during sporting events. She is the daughter of Dale Klein, water plant operator for the city of Rugby.



### Jackson Anderson

Jackson Anderson is from Hillsboro and attending the University of North Dakota where he is studying aviation and playing basketball on the UND men’s team. He is the son of Michael Anderson, vice president of the East Central Regional Water District.



### Callie Blessum

Callie Blessum of Aneta is attending Northland Community and Technical College. She plans to become a physical therapist assistant. She was active in yearbook, FCCLA, SADD and Spring Community Cleanup during her high school years. She is the daughter of Chad Blessum and granddaughter of Mike Blessum, both employees of Tri-County Water District.



### Jared Schommer

Jared Schommer is from Munich. He obtained his doctoral degree in Biomedical Sciences. Schommer recently graduated from the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences and is now pursuing a residency in the field of urology. He and his wife, Kirsten, have three sons. He is the son of Michele Schommer, vice president of the Northeast Regional Water District and serves as national representative for National Rural Water



## Jordie Praska

Jordie Praska is from Grafton and attending North Dakota State College of Science to complete courses to become a pharmacist technician. She then plans to attend North Dakota State University to become a pharmacist. While in high school, she participated in choir, Academic Olympics, yearbook, speech and math track meet, was a football statistician, worked in the concession stands, was the FCCLA chapter president and NHS chapter president. She is the daughter of Jeremy W. Praska, an employee of the city of Grafton.



## Megan Lingen

Megan Lingen of Colfax is attending North Dakota State College of Sciences for dental hygiene. She plans to become a pediatric dental hygienist. Lingen participated in FCCLA, FFA, Student Council, basketball and volleyball. She is the daughter of Chad Lingen, field operator of Southeast Water Users.



## Kylie Vining

Kylie Vining is from Walcott. She is pursuing a degree in nursing at the University of Jamestown. Vining would like to work in a pediatric unit at a hospital or in a clinic once she receives her Bachelor of Science in nursing. She participated in Just for Kix dance and was a member of Kindred's trap shooting team in high school. Vining also volunteered with hunter's education, feeding the homeless at Churches United, Vitalent blood drive and youth group at her church. She is the daughter of Walcott Mayor Lee Vining.



## Michael C. Anderson

Michael C. Anderson is from Hillsboro and attending the University of North Dakota. He is pursuing a degree in biology, and plans to attend medical school after completing his undergraduate degree. Anderson also is on the UND club baseball team. He is the son of Michael R. Anderson, board member of East Central Water District.



## Landrie Schmidt

Landrie Schmidt of Flasher is attending North Dakota State University where she is pursuing a degree in radiologic science. She was the salutatorian of her high school, a member of National Honor Society and an FFA officer. She was also named Miss Rodeo Prairie Rose 2019 and 2020. She is the daughter of Flasher city council member Sherry Schmidt.



## Morgan Johns

Morgan Johns of Surrey is attending Minot State University where she is pursuing degrees in English and history. Johns plans to become a teacher and coach after completing college. In high school, she participated in volleyball, Honor Society, graduation planning committee, yearbook committee, Math Counts, spelling bee, and the Physics Fair. Johns also volunteered at the local senior center and with a disabled child who survived a traumatic brain injury. She is the daughter of Velva City Auditor Jenny Johns.



## McKenzie Zuther

McKenzie Zuther is from Mapleton attending North Dakota State University this fall. Her goal is to become a lead veterinary technician. In high school, Zuther participated in wrestling, football, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, National Honor Society and Science Olympiad. She also volunteered with the Big Brother Big Sister program, the food pantry and Central Cass Treehouse. She is the daughter of Jon Zuther, director of Cass Rural Water Users District.



## Xander Sundsbak

Xander Sundsbak of Des Lacs is attending Presentation College where he is studying exercise science and plans to become a chiropractor. While in high school, he participated in football, track and field, National Honor Society, FFA, North Dakota Angus Association and 4-H. He is the grandson of Teresa Sundsbak, general manager of North Prairie Rural Water.

