

January 26, 2005

Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas to sponsor 16th annual Youth Tour to the nation's capital

This spring, the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas will select about 40 high school juniors to attend an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., on June 15-23, 2005. The trip is part of the national Rural Electric Youth Tour, which takes place each summer and is hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

The winners will be selected by the state's 17 electric distribution through essay contests, speech contests and interviews. Three student representatives from FFA, FCCLA and 4-H are also selected for the tour. Students must be high school juniors this year school year (2004-2005) to be eligible for the tour.

It is the 16th year that the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas have sponsored the trip. Youth Tour winners will report to Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC) headquarters in Little Rock on June 15 for orientation and dinner. The Arkansas group, which will include six chaperones, will travel to Washington, D.C., by bus on June 15 and will return to Little Rock by air on June 23.

In Washington, the Arkansas group will join about 1,400 youth from across the nation who are attending the Rural Electric Youth Tour. Activities will include visits to Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson; Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington; numerous national monuments, the Smithsonian Institution, the new World War II Memorial, the U.S. Capitol, Ford's Theater, the U.S. Holocaust Museum and Arlington National Cemetery. In addition, the students will attend special programs developed by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the national organization of electric cooperatives that coordinates the Youth Tour.

The tour began as a suggestion in 1947 from then Sen. Lyndon Johnson of Texas. He urged the electric cooperatives to take their young leaders to Washington, D.C., for a close-up look at the nation's capital and its leaders. Arkansas' electric cooperatives began sponsoring the tour in 1990.

To apply for the tour, contact your local electric cooperative. For a listing of the state's electric distribution cooperatives, visit www.aecc.com/distribution-cooperatives/

For additional information on the Youth Tour, visit www.aecc.com and youthtour.nreca.org

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas comprise 17 electric distribution cooperatives; AECE, a Little Rock-based cooperative that provides various services to the distribution

cooperatives; and AECC, a generation and transmission cooperative. The distribution cooperatives provide electricity to about 440,000 members in Arkansas and surrounding states.

For additional information, contact:

Rob Roedel, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, 501.570.2296 or roedel@aeci.com