

July 5, 2005

Forty-one Arkansas students attend 2005 Washington Youth Tour

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – July 5, 2005 -- Forty-one high school students from across the state attended the 2005 Youth Tour to Washington on June 15-23.

“Interest in the tour continues to grow each year,” said Sheila Yount, Youth Tour coordinator for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas. “This is one of the largest groups we’ve had and some cooperatives have had a record number of applications.”

Students and chaperones participating in the tour arrived in Little Rock on June 15 for orientation and dinner and then headed to Washington on June 16. During the tour, the group visited historic sites such as Monticello, Mount Vernon, the Smithsonian Institution, the United States Holocaust Museum, the U.S. Capitol and the new World War II Memorial. In addition, the group met with Sens. Blanche Lincoln and Mark Pryor. The group returned to Little Rock via air on June 23.

The students who attended the 2005 Youth Tour and their sponsoring cooperatives are:

- Kaedon Berry and Crissy Haberer, both of Ozark; Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative.
- Shannon Meeks and Rachel Smith, both of Hamburg; Ashley-Chicot Electric Cooperative.
- Anna Keahey of Star City and Dwight Wilson of Sheridan; C & L Electric Cooperative.
- Kelsey Davis and Lyndsey Ingram, both of Jonesboro; Craighead Electric Cooperative.
- Jonathan Hubbard and Brittany Wilson, both of Newport; Farmers Electric Cooperative.
- Katie Culpepper of Lonsdale, Maggie Strain of Quitman, Cara Coker of Austin and Samantha Cook of Wabaseka; First Electric Cooperative.
- Joy Abbott of Blytheville, Morgan Bevill of Gosnell and Bethany Wildy of Manila; Mississippi County Electric Cooperative.
- Neda Bowren of Cave City, Zachary Branscum of Salem, Ashley Sharp of Cherokee Village and Trevor Stafford of Ash Flat; North Arkansas Electric Cooperative.
- Chance Blessing of Hampton and Kerin Smith of Camden; Ouachita Electric Cooperative.
- Sarah Allen of Winslow and Courtney Erickson of Springdale; Ozarks Electric Cooperative).
- Justine Evans of Clinton and Aaron Horton of Marshall; Petit Jean Electric Cooperative.
- Chris Brinlee Jr. of Mena and Crystal Whisenhunt of New Hope; Rich Mountain Electric Cooperative.
- Jana Braswell of Arkadelphia; South Central Arkansas Electric Cooperative.
- Ashley Hayden and Haley Lawrence, both of Nashville; Southwest Arkansas Electric Cooperative.
- Molly Pruett of Marianna and Thomas Scott of Forrest City; Woodruff Electric Cooperative.
- Harry Wilmoth of Gentry, sponsored by the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, representing Arkansas 4-H.

- J.R. Pollard of Gillham sponsored by the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, representing Arkansas FFA.
- Keri Sims of Nashville, sponsored by the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, representing Arkansas FCCLA.

Arkansas' electric cooperatives have sponsored the tour for Arkansas high school juniors annually since 1990. Tour participants are selected by the state's 17 electric distribution cooperatives through such methods as essay and speech contests, as well as interviews.

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas comprise 17 electric distribution cooperatives; Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Inc. (AECI), a Little Rock-based cooperative that provides various services to the distribution cooperatives; and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC), a generation and transmission cooperative.

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