2018 RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR

APPLY TODAY!

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE JANUARY 17, 2018
Since its inception in 1937, South Alabama Electric Cooperative has been dedicated to educating our community about the electric industry and the cooperative model. That mission is particularly important for our local students, as they will be the ones making important decisions in the future.

“They are the leaders of tomorrow. They will be making decisions 15, 20, 25 years from now that will impact how electricity is generated and how it gets to homes and businesses in an economical way,” says Andy Kimbro, manager of member services.

One of the most important tools in reaching that goal is the Youth Tour program, through which SAEC has sponsored hundreds of local students on trips to our state and national capitals.

Inspired by Senator Lyndon Johnson’s address to the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s 1957 Annual Meeting in Chicago, the Youth Tour has been an important part of educating our young members for more than 50 years.

Speaking to the NRECA, Johnson said, “If one thing goes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents.”

The Youth Tour began that summer, with some Texas cooperatives sending young members to work in Senator Johnson’s office in Washington, D.C. By 1958, cooperatives from Iowa and Illinois were sending busloads of students to the capital for weeklong study tours.

Today’s Youth Tour gives a group of students in SAEC’s service area the opportunity to visit Montgomery to learn how state government works and the important role cooperatives play.

“It allows our youth to go to Montgomery on a two-and-a-half day trip where they get to meet with their legislators, ask them questions and meet peers from around the state,” says Kimbro. “But it’s also to build the leaders of tomorrow, and it’s important to us to help them expand on their leadership skills.”

Two of those students are then selected for the D.C. Youth Tour, where they learn more about how rural electrification works across the country and how national laws are made, as well as meet their elected officials.

The state and national Youth Tours help our young members develop crucial leadership skills and a deep understanding of the cooperative mission. We’re proud to offer this unique opportunity that prepares our young people to be the future leaders of this community.
**MONTGOMERY YOUTH TOUR**

The 2018 Montgomery Youth Tour is March 6-8, with more than 100 high school students from 17 cooperatives across the state taking part. Students selected to represent SEAC will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the conference.

The tour provides opportunities for students to participate in leadership sessions on topics such as transcending negative peer pressure and the importance of teamwork. Attendees also tour the Alabama State House, the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, the Alabama Capitol and the Civil Rights Memorial.

When they aren’t busy learning, students can also enjoy a special dinner at the Capital City Club, work together on team-building activities, and get to know each other at a Youth Tour dance.

**WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR**

The 2018 Washington Youth Tour is June 8-14, and it will bring together more than 1,000 students from across the country. SAEC will select two top students from the group attending the Montgomery Youth Tour to receive an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington.

Attendees will have the chance to visit famous national monuments and museums, like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Newseum and many others.

Students also have the opportunity to meet Alabama’s representatives in Congress, take part in leadership seminars, and sit in on important meetings and events relevant to local, state and national cooperatives.
How to Apply

If you’re a junior attending a high school in Pike, Coffee or Crenshaw County, or your parents are members of SAEC, you’re eligible to apply for the Youth Tour. Here’s how:

- For applications, visit www.southaec.com, or your school guidance counselor.
- The application and all supporting documents must be completed and turned in to your school guidance counselor or mailed to:
  
  South Alabama Electric Cooperative  
  ATTN: Andy Kimbro  
  P.O. Box 449  
  Troy, AL 36081

- Applications must be submitted no later than Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2018, at 5 p.m. An independent panel of judges will select participants from the qualified applicants based on their application and essay. Students will be notified by email if they have been selected for the interview stage by Friday, Jan. 19.

- Interviews are Thursday, Jan. 25, after which participants for the Montgomery and Washington tours will be selected. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SAEC and the cooperative model to prepare for their interview.

- Based on the interview results, 10 students will be selected to attend the state conference in Montgomery, while two will be chosen to continue to represent SAEC at the Washington conference.

What Can You Experience on the Washington Youth Tour?

You will visit your national representatives and meet students from across the country. You will also see the sights, including:

- Arlington National Cemetery
- Mount Vernon
- The Lincoln, FDR and Jefferson Memorials
- Korean War Memorial
- World War II and Iwo Jima Memorials