



2026

YOUTH TOUR



TOMBIGBEE
Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Audrey Collier and Lane Harper represented Tombigbee on a previous Washington Youth Tour.

About Youth Tour...

The Rural Electric Youth Tour is a group of more than 1,800 high school students who visit Washington, D.C., every June, year after year, from towns and small cities all over rural America. They come because their rural electric cooperatives think education is important — education about electric cooperatives and education about America.

Senator Lyndon Johnson inspired the Youth Tour when he addressed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Annual Meeting in Chicago in 1957. The senator declared, "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."

Then, beginning in 1957, some of the Texas electric cooperatives sent groups of young people to Washington to work during the summer in Senator Johnson's office and learn more about government in action.

In 1958, rural electric cooperatives in Iowa sponsored the first group of 34 young people on a week-long study tour of the nation's capital. Later that same year, another busload of students went to Washington, D.C., from Illinois. The idea grew, and other states sent busloads of young people



throughout the summer. By 1959, the Youth Tour had grown to 130 students.

In 1964, NRECA began to coordinate the program and suggested that cooperative representatives from each state arrange to be in Washington, D.C., during Youth Tour week. The first year of the coordinated tour included approximately 400 young people from 12 states.





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TOMBIGBEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 2026 YOUTH TOUR COMPETITION

Please print.

Full Name (as it appears on driver's license)	Age	GPA				
Home Address						
City	State	Zip				
Home Phone Number (Required)	Tombigbee Electric Cooperative Account Number (if applicable)					
School Student Attends	School Contact Name, E-mail Address and Telephone Number					
Student's Cell Phone Number	Student's E-mail Address					
Shirt Size:	S	M	L	XL	XXL	XXXL
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:						
Father's Name	Father's E-mail Address					
Employer	Work Phone Number			Cell Phone Number		
Mother's Name	Mother's E-mail Address					
Employer	Work Phone Number			Cell Phone Number		

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Please print.

Name

Honors and Achievements:

School Activities/Clubs/Organizations:

Leadership Roles:

Volunteer Work:

Hobbies/Favorite Music/Favorite Movie:

STUDENT GOALS AND STATEMENTS

Please print.

Name

Please describe your current educational and career objectives:

Write a brief statement about why you should be selected to represent Tombigbee Electric Cooperative during the 2026 Montgomery and Washington Youth Tours:

TOMBIGBEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

YOUTH TOUR CONSENT FORM

STUDENT CONSENT

By signing below, said student acknowledges that all information provided is accurate and honest. Student also agrees to attend ALL aspects of the 2026 Montgomery Youth Tour, March 11-13, 2026, and the 2026 Washington Youth Tour, June 14-20, 2026 if selected to represent Tombigbee Electric Cooperative.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENT CONSENT

By signing below, the parent or guardian of said student is allowing the student to participate in all activities related to the 2026 Montgomery and Washington Youth Tours. This document also provides for said student to receive any needed medical treatment while he/she is in the care of a Tombigbee Electric Cooperative representative or a staff member of the Alabama Rural Electric Association.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

SCHOOL CONSENT

By signing this portion of the application, the said school agrees to allow the student to participate in all activities related to the 2026 Youth Tour. This also certifies that honors, GPA and other information are accurate to the best of the school's knowledge. This is also an endorsement from the school that implies said student is of high moral standards and a suitable candidate for the 2026 Youth Tour.

School Representative Signature and Title: _____ Date: _____

**Applications are due in the Tombigbee Electric Cooperative office
by 4:30pm, January 23, 2026.**

Mail or email applications to the addresses listed below:

Brittany Taylor
Tombigbee Electric Cooperative
3196 County Highway 55
Hamilton, AL 35570
btaylor@tombigbee.org

RULES:

In order to be eligible, students must be a junior in high school and enrolled in the Marion County, Lamar County or Winfield City School Systems.

Students interested in participating should complete an application and submit it to Tombigbee Electric Cooperative via mail or email. All applications will be reviewed for eligibility by an independent panel of judges. The panel of judges will determine from the applications which students will participate.

The idea has continued to grow, and today more than 1,800 young people and chaperones participate in the Youth Tour each year.

Goals of the tour are to provide the opportunity for outstanding young people to:

- increase their understanding of the value of rural electrification;
- become more familiar with the historical and political environment of the nation's capital through visits to monuments, government buildings and cooperative organizations; and
- visit elected officials to increase their knowledge of how the federal government works.

Montgomery Youth Tour

The 2025 Montgomery Youth Tour was held March 11-13. It boasted participation of approximately 145 high school students representing 19 cooperatives from around the state.

Students in the 2026 tour:

Participated in leadership sessions on being themselves, overcoming peer pressure and the importance of teamwork.

Toured the Alabama State House and the Alabama Capitol and the State Archives.

Were able to understand the importance of keeping in touch with elected officials.

Washington Youth Tour

Alabama's cooperatives participated in the annual Washington Your Tour on June 16-22, 2025, with 61 student participants.



Alabama's student delegation joined about 1,800 other high-school students from around the country for the activity-filled week.

Highlights of the trip included:

Visits to Capitol Hill.

Students heard from Hill staffers and interns to learn about living and working in D.C., and about how they can make a difference as young voters. U.S. Sen. Tommy Tuberville talked to the Alabama group about the future of energy generation and the importance of our rural electric cooperatives.

Sightseeing.

Students get the opportunity to tour some of the following attractions in the Washington, D.C., area: Arlington Cemetery; Mount Vernon; the FDR Memorial; Jefferson Memorial; the Vietnam, Korean, World War II and Iwo Jima memorials; the Lincoln Memorial; the Holocaust Museum and other Smithsonian museums.

Students loved attractions such as a Washington Nationals baseball game and a dinner/dance boat cruise on the Potomic River.



Important dates to remember...

March 11-13, 2026

Montgomery Youth Tour

June 14-20, 2026

Washington Youth Tour

Rural Electric Youth Day.

In addition to taking in the sights and sounds of the nation's capital, all the state groups convened for Rural Electric Youth Day to learn from public figures and other inspirational speakers.

During Youth Day, a highlight of the week-long Youth Tour, students listened to an inspirational speaker, who challenged individuals of all ages that despite difficult circumstances, you can take responsibility and be empowered.



Youth Leadership Council

Caroline Short, representing PowerSouth Energy Cooperative, won the honor of representing the state of Alabama at NRECA's annual Youth Leadership Council (YLC) conference.

The council is composed of one student representative from each state that participates in NRECA's youth program. The students help direct the focus of the youth program and learn more extensive leadership skills.

As Alabama's youth representative, Short will attend the NRECA Annual Meeting and will address students at the 2026 Montgomery Youth Tour.

