

Youth Leadership Award

One student is selected each year to represent Mississippi on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Leadership Council. The selection is made at the Youth Leadership Workshop through a comprehensive process that includes personal interviews.

At the 2019 Youth Leadership Workshop, Payne Sleeper was selected by judges to represent Mississippi on NRECA's National Youth Leadership Council. Later, he attended NRECA's Youth Leadership Conference and spoke at the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi statewide annual meeting in Biloxi. He will also attend the NRECA annual meeting, which will be held Feb. 29-Mar. 4, 2020, in New Orleans, La. Payne, a senior at Corinth High School, was sponsored by Alcorn County Electric Power Association, based in Corinth.



Payne Sleeper

men; others have worked for NRECA in Washington as a part-time summer employee. The student chosen will also receive a \$1,000 cash scholarship. There will also be two additional \$500 cash scholarships awarded in this program. This honor is well worth the effort to participate.

The student chosen will serve a one-year term and participate in the 2020 annual meeting of the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi, to be held Sept. 8, in Biloxi, and the annual meeting of NRECA, to be held Feb. 18-24, 2021, in San Diego, Calif. This distinguished honor provides many other opportunities. Some past winners have served as summer staff members for Mississippi congressmen;

Cost

Students' expenses are funded entirely by Singing River Electric. There are no hidden costs; Singing River Electric pays for all travel, lodging, meals, educational materials and admission fees. Our support of the program demonstrates a commitment to our young members and a desire to provide an effective, high-quality leadership program to help prepare them for life's challenges.

How to Get Involved

Program details, selection criteria and applications are given to the junior class guidance counselor at each school serving Singing River Electric's service territory. If you want to apply for the youth leadership program or have questions, please see your guidance counselor.



P.O. Box 767 • 11187 Old 63 South
Lucedale, MS 39452
601-947-4211
www.singingriver.com

"My experience visiting our nation's capital was absolutely amazing. I met some of the greatest friends that I hope to have for a lifetime while making memories that I will forever cherish. I am so thankful to be able to participate in such an astounding organization. Thank you so much Singing River Electric and ECM."

Madysyn Peterson, St. Martin High School



ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES OF MISSISSIPPI

Youth Leadership PROGRAM



The 2019 participants with Rep. Michael Guest.



- Youth Leadership Workshop
- Washington, D.C., Youth Tour



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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11187 Old 63 South, Lucedale, MS 39452
601-947-4211



"Youth Tour has inspired me and many others, to take an active role in my community. The most special part of Youth Tour is not the tour, but the youth."

Sarah Hults, Resurrection High School

SEE PHOTOS

FROM THE 2019 TOUR AT www.ecm.coop,
Like our Facebook page at facebook.com/ECMYLP or
follow our Instagram page @[msyouthleadershipprogram](https://instagram.com/msyouthleadershipprogram)

Singing River Electric Cooperative, in an effort to better acquaint the future leaders of our communities with the cooperative philosophy, participates with other electric cooperatives in Mississippi in an annual Youth Leadership Program designed for high school juniors.

Program Goals

Now in its 34th year, the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi Youth Leadership Program is an enjoyable educational experience that makes a lasting impact on participants.

The program seeks to:

- help students develop the confidence and ability to become better leaders in their schools and communities;
- stimulate their interest in governmental affairs and encourage their participation in the democratic process;
- inform them about their electric cooperative, the cooperative form of business and the distribution of electricity;
- foster interaction among students from communities throughout Mississippi and the nation.

"This has been the trip of a lifetime. The people that I have met while on this trip are truly Mississippi's future leaders. Going forth from this trip, I feel that I have a firmer grasp on how our nation's capital works. I am so grateful to have been given this amazing opportunity. Mississippi's cooperatives are awesome!"

Carly Jones, East Central High School



High school juniors selected to participate in the program attend the three-day Youth Leadership Workshop in Jackson. The workshop focuses on developing the leadership skills of students who have demonstrated a desire to be a leader among their peers. Participants possess talents that make them natural leaders; our program enhances these talents and helps students develop advanced skills to prepare for leadership roles.

Students are selected for participation through various forms of intense competition conducted by their local electric cooperative. More than 1,000 young people were involved in the 2018-2019 program selection process.



Students work together to solve problems during a team-building exercise at the 2019 Youth Leadership Workshop.

network that serves more than 1.8 million Mississippians.

The workshop also features a breakfast with students' respective state senator and representative, a visit to the Capitol and a Leadership Luncheon.

At the 2019 workshop, students heard presentations from Gov. Phil Bryant and Lt. Gov. Tate Reeves, as well as motivational speakers, and discussed issues in a mock town hall meeting. By participating in a fun team-building exercise conducted by a team of professional instructors, students gained unique insight into the value of working with others to achieve common goals.



"Fun Time" at the workshop includes an ice cream social and photobooth time.

2020 Washington, D.C. Youth Tour

Each year Mississippi's student delegation joins more than 1,800 high school juniors from 43 states across the nation at the Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., where they learn about cooperatives and rural electrification from a national perspective.



Sightseeing in Washington, D.C., included a stop at the Jefferson Memorial for these 2019 Youth Tour participants.

During the week-long trip, students visit significant monuments and memorials, the National Cathedral, the White House, the Smithsonian Institution and much more. They meet Mississippi's two senators and their respective representative at the U.S. Capitol. Students also witness the changing of the guard at Arlington National Cemetery's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The busy schedule also includes time for shopping and relaxation. An evening highlight is a

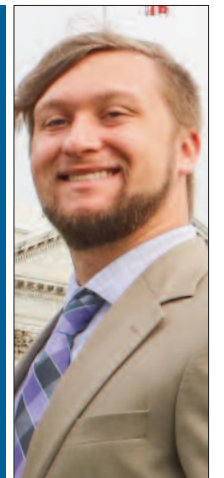
farewell event, enjoyed with students from other states.

The Youth Tour is a wonderful sightseeing experience that also offers an opportunity for making new friends. Students meet others their age from across the country, often forming friendships that last long after the tour is over.

Mississippi's 2020 Youth Tour student delegation will depart from airports in Memphis, Jackson and Gulfport on Saturday, June 20, 2020, and return on Friday, June 26, 2020.

"Youth Tour has been the most amazing experience of my life. It is a once in a lifetime trip, and I am so honored to have been given this great opportunity."

Jeb Wells, Vandave High School



Youth Leadership Workshop

Students will attend the Youth Leadership Workshop in Jackson, Feb. 26-28, 2020, where they will study the finer aspects of leadership, watch state government in action and hear presentations from government leaders, business leaders and electric cooperative professionals.

Educational workshop sessions provide information about the electric utility industry and the electric cooperative