



CENTRAL ELECTRIC POWER ASSOCIATION

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ARE YOU A LEADER? IN YOUR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Our Cooperative Youth Leaders program

offers the tools and knowledge that will enable you to sharpen your leadership skills in your classroom, community, church, and family. Since 1986, students in Mississippi have competed for the opportunity to participate in this unique leadership program. This program is an educational and fun experience that makes a lasting impact on young people.

Our program is for high school juniors interested in enhancing their leadership skills. *If interested, fill out the application on page 18.*



Once you are selected as a Central Electric representative, you will attend:

Cooperative Leaders Workshop

The three-day workshop features a true cooperative learning atmosphere. More than 80 students from across the state will experience cooperative team-building exercises, a breakfast with their legislators, a visit to the Capitol, a town hall meeting, and motivational speakers. We will also have time for games and interaction between the students.

You will have the opportunity to earn a \$500 or \$1,000 scholarship.

Youth Tour of Washington, D.C.

Each year, Mississippi's student delegation joins more than 1,659 high school juniors from 44 states across the nation at the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., where they learn about cooperatives and rural electrification from a national perspective.

The youth tour is a wonderful sightseeing experience that also offers an opportunity for making new friends.

The youth tour is organized by the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi (ECM) and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA).

It is an honor to be selected

The group of young Mississippians participating in the program represent electric cooperatives across the state. Students are selected through various forms of competition conducted by the local cooperatives.

Annually, more than 1,000 young people are involved in the program selection process statewide.

Cost

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

How to get involved

Central Electric's Cooperative Youth Leaders program director will contact an official at each of our local schools and provide program details. If you are interested in being a representative, contact your school guidance counselor or fill out and return the application on the following page.



Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi's 39th YOUTH TOUR



LEARN. GROW. EXPERIENCE.

A group of 84 rising high school seniors from across Mississippi traveled to Washington, D.C. in June to attend the 2025 NRECA Youth Tour.

The trip was the culmination of the student's participation in the Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi's youth leadership program.

The program instills leadership skills in the students, informs them about the electric cooperative form of business, and teaches them about the democratic form of government at both the state and federal levels.

During a March workshop in Jackson, the students had the opportunity to meet and hear from state legislators.

While in Washington, D.C., the students and adult chaperones visited historic sites, monuments, museums, and had an opportunity to learn about the impact electric cooperatives have on their communities.

The students also had an opportunity to tour Capitol Hill with former U.S. Congressman Gregg Harper of Mississippi.

Harper shared with the students about his experience as a congressional leader and complimented the electric cooperative program, saying that he "is proud of this program because his daughter participated in it, and it was one of the best programs that she participated in while in high school."

The students attended a Washington Nationals pro baseball game, experienced the play "Les Miserables" at The Kennedy Center, and had dinner during an evening cruise on the Potomac River.

The students were chosen by their local electric cooperative.

The Cooperatives Youth Leaders program is fully funded — including the trip to D.C. — by the local electric co-ops as a commitment to molding future leaders for Mississippi, so they can impact the state and local communities.



EINSTEIN
MEMORIAL



HOLOCAUST
MUSEUM



LINCOLN
MEMORIAL

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Being able to experience Washington with so many young leaders was amazing!! I got to see how each of us have characteristics of leadership in our history. This was once in a lifetime opportunity, so thank you to all that made it happen. – An Le

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NORTHWEST RANKIN HIGH SCHOOL

EMILY INGRAM
NORTHWEST RANKIN HIGH SCHOOL

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NESHOBA CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL



COOPERATIVE YOUTH LEADERS APPLICATION

(Please limit your information to this sheet)

Are you currently a high school junior and your parent(s) or legal guardian receives electric service from Central Electric Power Association? If so, you are eligible to apply to represent Central Electric Power Association in the Cooperative Leaders Workshop February 25-27, 2026 and the NRECA Washington, D.C., Youth Tour June 13-19, 2026.

Cooperative Youth Leaders program guidelines

1. Applicant must be a high school junior (11th grade) whose parent(s) or legal guardian(s) receives electric service from Central Electric Power Association.
2. The top applicants will be selected by an independent panel of judges to participate in an interview process for the selection of two (2) winners who will represent Central Electric Power Association in the Youth Leadership Workshop in Jackson, MS and the NRECA Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. **INTERVIEWS WILL BE HELD WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025** at the Central Electric Power Association office in Carthage, MS.
3. If selected, **student must commit to attend** both the Cooperative Leaders Workshop February 25-27, 2026 at the Westin Hotel in Jackson, MS and the NRECA Youth Tour June 13-19, 2026 in Washington, D.C.
4. Application must be filled out by the student and postmarked by **Wednesday, September 1, 2025**. Please email your application to jcpatterson@centralepa.com or mail to:

Cooperative Youth Leaders

Attn: Jessica Patterson
Central Electric Power Association
Post Office Box 477
Carthage, MS 39051

Student's full name _____

Name student goes by _____

Student's mailing address _____

Student's 911 address _____

Parent(s) or legal guardian _____

Name Central EPA bill is listed in _____

Account number _____

Daytime phone number _____

Alternate number _____

Email address _____

School _____

Student's t-shirt size _____

Student signature _____

Parent/legal guardian signature _____

Please list any school and community activities/memberships and leadership positions:

Please list any awards or special recognition:

What are your college and career goals?

What are two characteristics of a good leader and why?

What is an interesting fact about yourself?



This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Please contact Central Electric's youth leadership program coordinator if you have any questions.

Jessica Patterson, program director
601-267-5671 • jcpatterson@centralepa.com

Like our Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi Cooperative Youth Leaders page www.facebook.com/ECMCYL and follow us on Instagram @msyouthleaders.

