



2026 Washington Youth Tour

A TRIP OF A LIFETIME!

June 12-19, 2026

Middle Georgia EMC (MGEMC) will select four teenagers to join dozens of other students, representing electric cooperatives across Georgia, on the Washington Youth Tour. The competition is open to all high school students who live in or attend a school in Dooly, Pulaski, or Wilcox County.

Students not living in or attending a school in the above counties are eligible to apply if their parents are MGEMC members, live within MGEMC's service area, and whose primary residence receives electrical service from MGEMC. The cooperative's service area is Dooly, Ben Hill, Houston, Macon, Pulaski, Turner, and Wilcox counties. The tour begins with a banquet for participants and their parents. Then the students enjoy a day of activities in their home state before flying to Washington, D.C. for an incredible week in our nation's capital. Once they are in Washington, they will have the opportunity to meet Youth Tour students from all across the nation.

ELIGIBILITY:

1. Be a sophomore, junior, or senior in good standing with your school
2. The applicant must be 16 years of age by June 12, 2026
3. Must have parent's consent

HOW TO APPLY:

All that is required to enter is for the student to **complete the attached application form, provide two letters of recommendation, and submit the essay by February 2, 2026.** (*See Essay Topic and Information Section*). Be sure to provide all of the information requested.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Please have two faculty members or administrators from your present school (counselor, teacher, principal, or assistant principal) comment as to why you should be considered as a Youth Tour delegate.

THE SELECTION OF DELEGATES

The deadline to apply for the Washington Youth Tour is **Monday, February 2, 2026**. The application and essay will be judged by Youth Tour Coordinators from other EMCs across Georgia. Once judging is completed, students who are chosen as finalists will be invited for an interview. ***The interviews will be held beginning at 10:00 am on Thursday, February 26, 2026.*** A panel of judges comprised of Youth Tour Coordinators from other EMCs will conduct the interviews. Interview questions will be general questions about the student. The students will also be tested on their knowledge of Rural Electrification and the history of Middle Georgia EMC at this time. ***Students will be provided study materials for the test.*** The final selection of our delegates is determined by the combined scores of the application and essay, test and interview process.

2026 Washington Youth Tour Application

Remember: Deadline is February 2, 2026

Name _____

Age _____ Date of Birth _____ E-Mail _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Current School: _____ Current Grade: _____

Mother's Name or Legal Guardian: _____

Mother's Address: _____

Mother's Phone: (home) _____ (work) _____

Father's Name or Legal Guardian: _____

Father's Address: _____

Father's Phone: (home) _____ (work) _____

Shirt Size (*Polo Style*): _____

If selected, applicants must follow WYT Guidelines and set aside the week of **June 12 – 19, 2026** to fly to Washington, D.C.

PARENT (LEGAL GUARDIAN) & STUDENT AFFIRMATION

We affirm that (1) all information provided on this application is correct, (2) the parent has given permission for the student to enter this contest and to participate in the Youth Tour should he/she win, and (3) the student agrees to participate in the Youth Tour on the scheduled dates should he/she win.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

This section should be typed or neatly handwritten. If necessary, use additional sheets of paper and attach to the application.

ACADEMICS

Current cumulative grade point average: weighted GPA _____ non-weighted GPA _____

Please list any academic awards or honors that you have received in the past two years of school and tell which grade you were in.

ACTIVITIES

List your memberships in any school clubs, organizations, or athletic activities during the past two years. Tell which grade you were in and any leadership positions you held:

List your community service activities or involvement in community groups from the past two years (church groups, volunteer work, etc) Indicate which years and any leadership roles that you had.

List any work experience you have had. Be sure to include the name of the business, your job and the time period you held this job. (Example: Cashier @ Belks of Cordele/June-Oct.2024)



MIDDLE GEORGIA EMC Washington Youth Tour

ESSAY TOPIC and INFORMATION

In order to enter the contest you are required to write an essay on the following topic:

TELL US WHY!

Is there one place in Washington, D.C. that you have always wanted to visit? Please explain “The one place you would like to visit most in Washington, D.C and why you chose it. Also we would like for you to explain why we should choose you for this trip”.

Here is what you need to do:

1. Type an essay 300 to 600 words in length, double-spaced on 8.5 x 11 bonded paper.
2. A Middle Georgia EMC representative will pick up the application and essay at the counselor's office or the main office of your school on **February 2nd** or you can return them to the offices of **Middle Georgia EMC** located in Hawkinsville, Vienna and Rochelle by **Monday, February 2, 2026 no later than 9 a.m.** **Please do not mail the application and essay!**

Please remember to include the completed application and two letters of recommendation with your essay. The finalists will be contacted once judging of the applications and essays has been completed. Good luck on your essay!

If you have any questions, please contact:

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Washington Youth Tour Information

The Washington Youth Tour, the state's oldest youth leadership program, was created from extemporaneous comments made by then-Senator Lyndon Johnson as he addressed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Annual Meeting in Chicago in 1957. "If one thing goes out of this meeting," the Senator declared, "I hope it will be sending youngsters to the national capitol where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents." Beginning that year, some of the Texas Electric Cooperatives sent groups of young people to Washington, D.C. to work during the summer in Senator Johnson's office to learn about government in action.

Middle Georgia EMC will be sending four high school students from our service area on this exciting, all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. These four teenagers will join dozens of students from other electric cooperatives in Georgia to represent our state in the Washington Youth Tour, an annual event that brings more than 1,500 young people from across the country to our nation's capital.

Youth Tour events for Georgia's participants will begin with a kickoff banquet for the students and their parents in Atlanta. That will be followed by a day full of activities for the Georgia students before they fly to Washington. Youth Tour highlights typically include visiting the U.S. Capitol, Holocaust Museum, Smithsonian Institution, U.S. Supreme Court, and whenever possible, the White House. Other stops could include the National Cathedral and Arlington Cemetery as well as the World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam War memorials and the Lincoln, Jefferson and FDR memorials. The students are also treated to a riverboat cruise on the Potomac, always a popular event.

In addition, students will have the opportunity to meet state and national leaders and gain a better understanding of how our government works. Participants will also be involved in leadership-building activities and will have the opportunity to interact with students from across Georgia and across the United States.

The Youth Tour is fun, fast-paced, well-organized and packed full of activities. The tour director is an employee of our statewide organization, Georgia EMC. They do a terrific job of planning and organizing the entire trip. Several EMC employees and their spouses from across the state volunteer to serve as chaperones. Two teacher chaperones are chosen each year as well.



2026 Washington Youth Tour

What we expect of you!

If you are selected by your sponsoring EMC to join the Youth Tour it is because you have measured up to the highest standards of leadership and behavior. You will be representing your local EMC, all the EMCs of Georgia, your local community and the State of Georgia from the kick-off banquet to the return flight home. You will have a responsibility to yourself and others to meet the following expectations.

1. **Have a positive attitude. Remain flexible.** The nature of travel by bus and plane, combined with the size of our group, will mean constant adjustments. How you react to challenges such as possible luggage delays, long lines or rainy weather will have a lot to do with what this experience will mean to you in the end. Remember, no matter what happens, you choose the quality of your days.
2. **Wear a watch, keep your itinerary with you and be punctual.** The schedule is super-tight as we want to experience as much as we can. Know when and where you are supposed to be and show up on time! Cell phones are not permitted during touring so you cannot rely on your phone for the time. ***Bring a watch and wear it.***
3. **Participate in all planned activities.** No one may leave the group at any time unless authorized by the Tour Director. Participants will always travel/sightsee in groups of three or more. No participant may travel/sightsee by him/herself.
4. **Adhere to the dress code and wear your name badge** at all times during the Youth Tour. Your name badge is your ticket to meals and events. Participants without a name badge will be asked to retrieve it, participants in inappropriate clothing will be asked to change.
5. **Be in your hotel room by curfew each night.** Do not leave your room after this hour except with permission of your chaperone. Room checks are made each night.
6. **Respect the rights of others.** You will share a room with two other Youth Tour delegates, and will be expected to be tolerant of differences. After curfew, you will be expected to stay in your room, be ready for bed and reasonably quiet so others may sleep.
7. **Delegates may not enter the hotel rooms of delegates of the opposite sex.** Public displays of affection and physical relationships are not acceptable behavior.
8. **Remain at the hotel at all times** except when you are participating in planned activities. You may not leave the hotel to shop or visit relatives or friends in the area.
9. **Treat hotel property with care.** Any damage will result in complete payment of damage on your part, and an immediate trip home.
10. **Tobacco products, drugs, and alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited.**
11. **The cost of long distance telephone calls is each delegate's personal responsibility.** Students must call collector use a calling card or credit card. Delegates may also bring cell phones, but cell phone use is not permitted during the touring day. You are on this trip to meet and interact with new people and see new places, so plan on talking with friends and family about your experiences before or after each day's tours.

Infraction of these rules governing the conduct of Youth Tour delegates will be considered cause for terminating your participation. You will be sent home at your family's expense.