

## 2019 Youth Leadership Summit

Forty-six high school juniors from across the state attended the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's annual Youth Leadership Summit in Nashville.

Local students Taylor Tinsley from Trinity Christian Academy and Benjamin Naylor from Haywood County High School were chosen from a field of leaders from high schools located in the Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation service area. This territory covers parts of 11 counties spanning from Madison and Chester Counties to the western end of Tipton County. Students were recommended by school guidance counselors and chosen for their leadership potential and concern for their community.

Delegates to the annual event get a hands-on look at state government, build networking and leadership skills and develop a better understanding of energy generation and their local electric cooperative.

Delegates visited the State Capitol Building to meet members of the Tennessee General Assembly. A house staff member explained the process required to pass legislation, and students debated and voted on a mock bill. Delegates also had an opportunity to sit in on committee hearings.

Both Tinsley & Naylor met with their representatives, Rep. Chris Todd - District 73 & Rep. Chris Hunt – District 82. Both representatives took time out of their hectic schedules to speak with students and listen to their concerns.

In addition to lawmakers, students also heard from Tennessee leaders like Christine Williamson, Ms. Tennessee 2018; Adam Hammond, anchor for Nashville's NewsChannel5; and Trooper Jeffrey Buchanan with the Tennessee Executive Protection Detail.

These young leaders also toured the largest electric cooperative in Tennessee, Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation in Murfreesboro and the TVA Gallatin Steam Plant in Gallatin, TN.

Delegates to the Youth Leadership Summit are encouraged to become leaders and use their talents to improve rural Tennessee. "Electric co-ops want to see the places we serve grow and prosper, and these young people are important to their communities," says Todd Blocker, vice president of member relations for the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association and director of the Youth Leadership Summit. "Small towns and rural communities need talented and engaged young people who are invested, and that is what we are doing with our Youth Leadership Summit delegates. We want them to leave this experience with a new appreciation for where they live, prepared to be the leaders of their generation."

Each of Tennessee's 23 electric co-ops sponsored two delegates to participate in this year's Youth Leadership Summit. Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation is proud to have sponsored these two fine young leaders. Just another way STEMC helps to provide power and opportunity for rural West-Tennessee.