



TENNESSEE  
WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES  
**BUILDING A  
BRIGHTER  
TENNESSEE**









## ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CREATIVE WRITING AND SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

Before you lies a unique opportunity. Winners of the Electric Cooperative Writing Contest not only earn spots on a once-in-a-lifetime tour of our nation's capital, but they also qualify for additional trips and thousands of dollars in scholarships and have a chance to network with other young leaders from across the nation.

More than 6,000 high school juniors from across Tennessee have participated in the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

Exciting stops on the Washington Youth Tour include Arlington National Cemetery, above, George Washington's Mount Vernon, right, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, opposite page. Seeing the sites they've studied in school is a highlight of the delegates' D.C. experience.

This booklet will tell you more about the trip, let you hear from previous delegates and outline the requirements and resources to help you write the best short story. It will also tell you a little bit more about electric cooperatives and the reasons they have provided this opportunity to students for more than 50 years.





## WHAT YOU GET

Your prize for showing the benefits of cooperative power: an unforgettable trip to Washington, D.C., in **June 2022** with nearly 2,000 other students your age from across the country.

Each day of the Washington Youth Tour brings more impressive sights, opportunities for photos and lots of memories. Among activities filling the agenda are tours of Washington, D.C., and all its landmarks, memorials and museums. Highlights include the Smithsonian Institution, White House, U.S. Capitol, Mount Vernon and Monticello.

Food, travel and lodging expenses are paid by Tennessee's electric cooperatives. But the benefits of the Youth Tour go far beyond an expense-paid trip.

Youth Tour winners can compete to represent Tennessee on the **Youth Leadership Council**. One student from each state is selected to return to Washington, D.C., for a leadership

workshop which focuses on the electric cooperative industry.

And don't forget about the chance to help pay for your college education with **scholarships of \$3,000, \$2,000 or \$1,000** awarded by the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association if your story is judged one of the top three in the state.

You can also choose to participate in our **Co-operative Youth Ambassador** program. Delegates who stay active and engaged with their co-ops in the 12 months following Youth Tour qualify for a drawing for a **\$10,000 scholarship** to the school of the winner's choice.

Other scholarships, including the **Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation Scholarship** and the **Engineers of the Future Scholarship**, are available through the Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation.



TRAVEL



RECOGNITION



SCHOLARSHIPS



CONNECTIONS





## HEALTH AND SAFETY WILL BE A PRIORITY

In addition to scholarships provided by the electric co-ops, **Union University** in Jackson and **Carson-Newman University** in Jefferson City have recognized the leadership potential of Youth Tour delegates. The universities have agreed to provide dozens of scholarships worth up to \$10,000 a year for four years.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our ability to take students to Washington, D.C., for the past two years. Tennessee's electric co-ops will follow the advice of medical experts and public health officials as we plan for the 2022 Tour. If we are unable to ensure the safety of our winners, the trip will not be possible, and other prizes may be awarded in place of the trip.



### THERE'S MUCH MORE ONLINE

Visit our website for more information about the trip, scholarships and other opportunities:

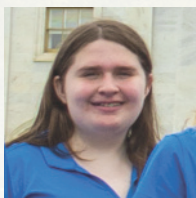
[youthtour.tnelectric.org](http://youthtour.tnelectric.org)







# HEAR FROM THE WINNERS



"Never in my life did I imagine that writing this short story would impact my life this much. I saw so many things, many of them once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Youth Tour has changed my life for the better, all because of a 900-word short story."

**Olivia Carpenter, Blackman High School  
Middle Tennessee Electric**



"I didn't think 900 words could change my life *that* much, but it did. I got to see my nation's capital, make friends, eat some great mac and cheese and learn so much more than what my textbooks at school have to offer."

**Anna Herrell, Cherokee High School  
Holston Electric Cooperative**



"The Youth Tour was definitely the opportunity of a lifetime! It's the best trip I've ever been on, and I can't wait to go back to D.C. It was almost all of the capital in one week, and I'm so thankful to have gone."

**Kendra Chaney, Stewart County High School  
Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation**



"They say pictures are worth 1,000 words, but who knew my 900-word short story could be worth thousands of laughs, memories and lifelong friendships?"

**Sawyer Pendergrass, Bledsoe County High School  
Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative**





Each day of the Washington Youth Tour brings more impressive sights, opportunities for photos and lots of memories. Among activities filling the agenda are tours of Washington, D.C., and all its landmarks and memorials.

## JOIN A NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

Politicians, authors, athletes and business leaders, including Apple CEO Tim Cook, are proud Youth Tour alumni.



## 2021 ROBERT MCCARTY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



**Corbin Williams,**  
Sequoyah High School,  
Fort Loudoun  
Electric Cooperative,  
\$3,000 Scholarship



**Logan Hickerson,**  
Perry County  
High School,  
Meriwether Lewis  
Electric Cooperative,  
\$2,000 Scholarship



**Hailey Rider,**  
Johnson County  
High School,  
Mountain Electric  
Cooperative,  
\$1,000 Scholarship

## 2021 CO-OP YOUTH AMBASSADOR



**Julia Cox,**  
Fayetteville High School,  
Fayetteville Public  
Utilities,  
\$10,000 Scholarship

Delegates who stay engaged and active with their local co-ops in the year following the Youth Tour have a chance to win a \$10,000 scholarship to the college or trade school of their choice.





# RULES AND RESOURCES

The energy provided by electric co-ops has far-reaching impacts on Tennessee. Write a short story explaining how electric co-ops are “Building a Brighter Tennessee” through investments in energy, education, broadband, economic development and more.

There are a few rules you need to follow:

1. Only juniors in high school are eligible to participate.
2. Every short story must be titled “Electric Cooperatives — Building a Brighter Tennessee.”
3. Submissions must not exceed 900 words, including articles (“a,” “an” and “the”). The exact word count must be included on your cover page. Entries must be typewritten and double-spaced.

Remember, you’re writing a short story, which gives you more creative freedom than the rigid guidelines of an essay. Your story should be an entertaining, informative description of electric cooperatives.

Visit [youthtour.tnelectric.org](https://youthtour.tnelectric.org) to learn more about electric co-ops. Resources there will provide you with lots of information and material to write your story.

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CO-OP CONTACT PERSON

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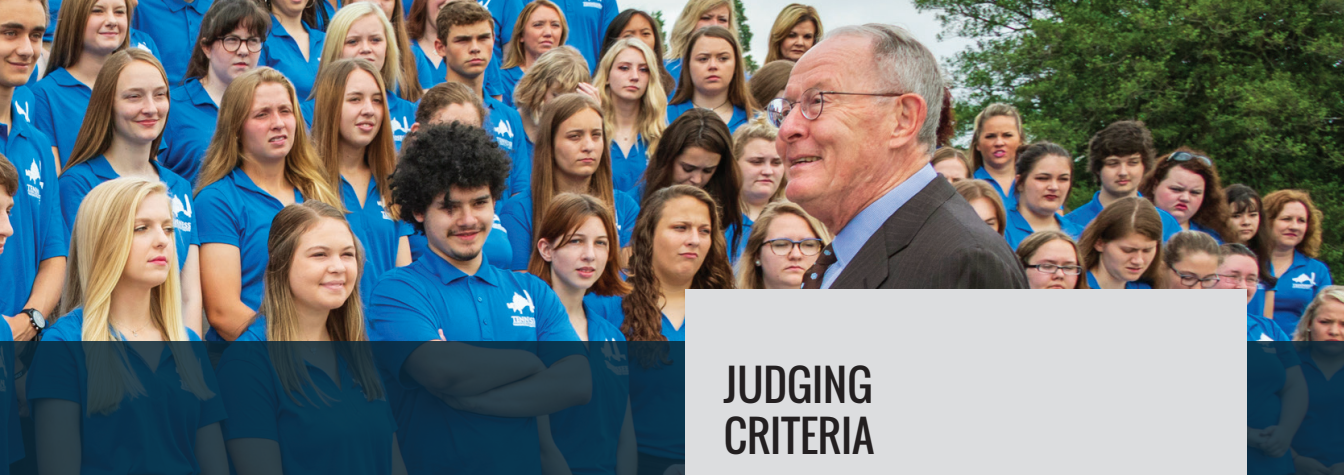
EMAIL ADDRESS

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DUE DATE







## CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESS:

The tips below can help you get one step closer to D.C. Use these suggestions to make your story stand out.

### Characters, time and place

Spend some time to develop the characters, location and time frame of your story.

### Get specific

Include at least three specific examples of the many ways electric co-ops strengthen their communities. The expansion of broadband, availability of reliable energy, efforts to recruit new businesses and jobs, and leadership development for young people are just a few examples.

### Include one (or more) co-op principles

The seven principles of electric co-ops are listed on pages 14 and 15. Include these in your story to demonstrate your understanding of the many things that make electric co-ops unique.

#### THERE'S MUCH MORE ONLINE

Find additional resources on our website to help you write your story:

[youthtour.tnelectric.org](http://youthtour.tnelectric.org)

## JUDGING CRITERIA

Be creative in your writing, utilizing the information in this booklet and your own distinctive voice. Your writing will be judged on three factors:

50%

### Appropriate treatment of theme and knowledge of subject

To gain full credit in this category, you'll have to effectively weave the information relating to the theme throughout the short story. Judges will see indications of additional research, a grasp of what information is vital to making your story believable and credible and creative ways of presenting that information.

35%

### Originality and Creativity

Use a different, entertaining, effective way of presenting information that will educate a reader and get your points across.

15%

### Grammar and Composition

If you need an explanation here, check your English textbook.





# LAST YEAR'S WINNING STORY

High above the prosperous Tennessee town of Whoville on the summit of Mount Crumpit lived a foul green creature whose heart was nothing to trumpet. For years he had pouted and grumbled and shouted, "These electric cooperatives need to be outed!" This creature, this Grinch, would ramble like so, but in his mind, he did not yet know: These cooperatives enabled Whoville's success; its liveliness would suggest no less!

Take, for example, young Cindy-Lou Who, stuck in the house, with a case of the flu; through investments in broadband, electric cooperatives enable this Cindy-Lou Who to work from the table — not just the young Who, but also several others, helping protect their fathers and mothers!

Yet still the Grinch stood, unaware and unmoved. Of electric cooperatives he still disapproved. He said to himself, "I'll end those cooperatives; I know what to do," and in his heart, a foul plan then did brew. "I'll hike up their price, raise up their rates! Destroying their meters will see them in straits!" So he snatched up his coat and big grinchy hammer, and strolled on to Whoville to cause a great clamor.

For miles and miles on foot he did trot, until he arrived at just the right spot. "This will do nicely," he said with a grin; it was time for his dastardly scheme to begin. He readied his swing, then heard a great racket: It was Cindy-Lou Who, in fur hat and jacket! This sudden appearance did not frighten the Grinch. From his evil composure he

did not flinch. "Fret not," said the creature to the young Who, "your meter is damaged, and I know what to do."

Young Cindy-Lou Who, now wide awake, asked, "What might have caused our meter to break? These devices are 99.9 percent reliable. Surely you will find its durability undeniable." There the Grinch stood, in a voiceless state, when suddenly, he was saved by fate. "Perhaps you're a member of the board on inspection, set to your task by way of election? I have heard each contributor is given a voice, allowing their insight on every choice."

"Yes," said the Grinch, as he breathed a big sigh; as to how the Who knew, he would like to clarify. Then he inquired, "How do you know such information?" beginning to grow tired of the whole vexation.

Cindy-Lou Who quickly replied, as if her last statement the answer implied, "Electric cooperatives ensure members are learned, making certain each contributor's position is earned. I learned all of this and much, much more from my Tennessee cooperative's Youth Tour." With this the Grinch began to understand and decided to return to the matter at hand. He said to the child, "Go, rest your head," and with this command, the Who went to bed.

All through the night he executed his plan, then to his home on Mount Crumpit he ran. There he waited until six o' the clock, hoping to hear





## ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES: CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

the townspeople's shock. Yet, as they woke, to the Grinch's surprise, he did not find any tears in their eyes. The gathering of many he did observe, hoping Whoville's power grid to preserve. They did not unravel the plan he had hatched, but instead local communities were dispatched. The Grinch was amazed to see this commune. As the Whos worked, they sang a soft tune:

Citizens, citizens, come this way,  
For there is work to be done on this day!  
Come, lend a hand, all who may.  
Citizens, citizens, hooray, hooray!

Perhaps from this view, though none live who know, did the heart of Mount Crumpits's Grinch then grow.

To Whoville he traveled with hopes to atone, wishing to undo the damage he had sown. What he saw next nearly brought him to tears: 7,000 Whos gathered, all member volunteers! They worked and worked and yet none received pay. On the Grinch's mind this did heavily weigh. "Why do you not wish to work alone? Have you no problems of your own?" A Who of the board was quick to reply, "I'll tell you the how, and I'll tell you the why. Whos of cooperatives from every nation work together in mass cooperation. We contribute each just a small sum. This is to ensure the greatest outcome!"

The benefits of electric cooperatives made clear, the Grinch now smiled from ear to ear. "I think I will stay, if just for a while. I believe I enjoy

**Corbin Williams, a student at Sequoyah High School in the Fort Loudoun Electric Cooperative service area, was the state winner of the 2021 Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest, earning him a \$3,000 scholarship.**



**This year's theme is "Building a Brighter Tennessee." Write your story about the many ways co-ops power and empower their local communities.**

this cheery lifestyle." So onward through Whoville the Grinch now went, hoping of his past crimes to repent. He worked with all the cooperative leaders, installing new meters with lots of great features. Together they labored all through the night, until all of Tennessee's Whoville was finally alight!

With joy and compassion in malice's stead, the Grinch was now ready to go rest his head. "I thank you all, and this time has been swell, but I'm afraid it is time that I bid you farewell." With Whoville and company now far behind, the newly converted was left to his mind. "Perhaps electric cooperatives aren't so bad as I've led. What was it that those little Whos said? They work with each other, and put community first. Surely such a plan is far from the worst!"





# TENNESSEE'S ELECTRIC CO-OPS

Tennessee's electric cooperatives provide power to more than 1.1 million homes, farms and businesses across rural and suburban Tennessee. Unlike other businesses, electric cooperatives are owned by the consumers they serve and operate as not-for-profit businesses. This may not sound important, but it means that consumers are the priority. Rates are kept low because there are no stockholders to pay, and the co-op is responsive to members because they vote on co-op leadership.

In the 1930s, there was no power in rural Tennessee. Homeowners and farmers came together to create co-ops that would bring power to their homes.

Today, co-ops are modern businesses that use technology to efficiently operate a large, advanced grid. Despite these changes, the primary goal of co-ops have not changed: provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to our neighbors, the very people who own the co-op.



## MEMBER-OWNED AND -REGULATED

Electric co-ops are owned by the people they serve, not by government. Members elect board members to represent their interests and set policy and procedures for the co-op.



## NOT-FOR-PROFIT


Co-ops exist to serve their communities instead of shareholders. They distribute and sell energy at cost and invest any excess revenue back into the electric system.



## COMMITTED TO IMPROVING COMMUNITIES

Keeping the lights on. Recruiting new industry. Educating the leaders of tomorrow. Electric co-ops take seriously their responsibility to improve lives in their communities.





Because of their local ties, co-ops are committed to improving lives in their communities. Going beyond simply keeping the lights on, co-ops recruit businesses and investment, help members operate their homes and businesses more efficiently and prepare students to be tomorrow's leaders.

## ELECTRIC CO-OPS SERVE

**2.5 MILLION**  
★ TENNESSEANS ★



1 IN 3 TENNESSEE HOMES

**\$2.8 BILLION**

IN POLES, WIRES, SUBSTATIONS AND EQUIPMENT

**99.96% RELIABILITY**

CO-OPS INVEST \$10 MILLION A MONTH  
IN MAINTENANCE AND UPGRADES.

CO-OPS MAINTAIN

**86,000**  
MILES OF LINE







# CO-OP HISTORY AND PRINCIPLES

## CO-OP HISTORY IN TENNESSEE



### MID-1880S

Electricity was available in many of America's larger cities, but electrification of rural areas was deemed unfeasible.



### EARLY 1930S

For-profit power companies considered it unprofitable to build lines in sparsely populated rural areas. Without electricity, the economies of rural areas were tied exclusively to agriculture.



### MAY 18, 1933

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Tennessee Valley Authority Act, which created a federal agency to provide river navigation, flood control, electric generation and economic development in the Tennessee Valley.

## THE SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

### VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP

Co-ops are voluntary organizations open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.

### DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL

Co-ops are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

### MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

Members contribute equitably to the capital of their co-op. Members allocate surpluses to further develop the cooperative or support other activities approved by members.





## MAY 11, 1935

President Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration, which made federal funds available to provide rural electric service. The leaders of farm organizations proposed the formation of nonprofit electric cooperatives.



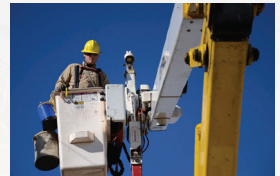
## 1935-1948

Tennesseans formed 23 electric cooperatives to bring electricity to rural areas.



## 1949

Postwar enthusiasm and adaptations of military technology, materials and equipment propelled rapid growth of rural electrification. By the 1950s, the Tennessee Valley Authority had become the nation's largest energy supplier.



## TODAY

Tennessee's 23 electric cooperatives provide energy for 2.5 million Tennesseans across 71 percent of Tennessee's land-mass. Co-ops rely on the latest technology to efficiently and reliably serve one in three Tennessee homes.

### AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Co-ops are autonomous organizations controlled by their members.

### EDUCATION, TRAINING AND INFORMATION

Co-ops provide education and training for their members, representatives and employees on the nature and benefits of cooperation.

### COOPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES

Co-ops serve their members most effectively by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

### CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.





**PRESENTED BY YOUR LOCAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE AND**



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