

YOUTH TOUR 2011

Visit Washington, D.C., on Us!

Wood County Electric Cooperative, Inc. (WCEC) is calling all eligible teens, High School students enrolled as a sophomore, junior or senior, to apply for the 45th Annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour. One lucky teen will win an all-expense-paid trip to our nation's capitol to experience a guided tour of Washington, D. C., June 9-17, 2011. The trip will include air fare, transportation while in Washington, hotel rooms, food costs, and tours of many exciting, educational, and inspiring sites. Parents or guardians will be responsible for transporting the teen to and from Irving, TX.

It's simple to enter. Candidates must submit a 450 to 500 (about 1 typed page) word essay, which will be judged by an independent panel. This year's topic is devoted to the cooperative principles. Essayists should pick one of the seven cooperative principles and write about what it means to them and how it makes non-profit member-owned electric cooperatives different from investor owned utilities. The essays will be judged on composition, neatness, originality, and knowledge of the subject.

The winner will travel with students from across Texas. This group, upon arriving in Washington, will join approximately 1,500 Youth Tour participants from across the country. This tremendous learning opportunity will include tours of Mount Vernon, the Smithsonian Museums, a boat cruise on the Potomac River, and other historical sites and memorials. Additionally, one day will be dedicated to touring the House and Senate Chambers, the Library of Congress, and meeting with Texas representatives.

Those wishing more information about the tour should visit <http://youthtour.org> to see pictures and videos from past annual tours.

2011	ELIGIBILITY AND RULES
<p>Submit an essay not to exceed 500 words, which describes what one of the seven cooperative principles means to the essayist.</p> <p>Essay entries should be mailed to: Wood County Electric Cooperative, Inc. Attention: Youth Tour 2011 P.O. Box 1827 Quitman, TX 75783</p> <p>Must have arrived at WCEC on or before Feb. 25, 2011. Entries received after that date will be disqualified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School students enrolled as a sophomore, junior or senior. • Dependant of a Wood County Electric Cooperative member with permanent resident status in WCEC service area. • No name should appear on the essay. On a separate cover sheet, the contestant should include: Student essayist name, name and address of parent/guardian who is a member of WCEC, contact telephone number and WCEC account number. • Reference materials from various sources including libraries and the internet may be used; but the essay should be in the student's own words.

The Seven Cooperative Principles

Wood County Electric Cooperative was founded on seven principles which guide us in making decisions that reflect the best interests of the consumers we serve.

Voluntary and Open Membership - Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

Democratic Member Control - Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions. The elected representatives are accountable to the membership. In primary cooperatives, members have equal voting rights (one member, one vote) and cooperatives at other levels are organized in a democratic manner.

Members' Economic Participation - Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the cooperative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Autonomy and Independence - Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their cooperative autonomy.

Education, Training, and Information - Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public, particularly young people and opinion leaders, about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives - Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

Concern for Community - While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by their members.