

D.C. Bound

Co-op-sponsored trip offers high school students firsthand look at how their government works



Scholarships Available

Apply now for GCEC Scholarships. A \$500 scholarship will be provided to each local high school: Ft. Thomas, Mt. Graham, Pima, Safford, Thatcher and Wilcox. See your high school counselor office for information.

The selection process was difficult, but four lucky high school juniors were selected to travel to Washington, D.C., to represent Graham County Electric Cooperative with 40 other Arizona students at the 2018 Washington Youth Tour. This all-expense-paid trip in June is sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Students learn about cooperatives and how the government works. Attendees visit war memorials and museums, and meet with members of Congress.

Brock Jones of Thatcher High School was ecstatic when he received the call about being selected. Brock is the son of Russ and Dana Jones. A well-rounded student, he enjoys athletics, singing and playing instruments. Brock is interested in learning new things and learning to solve problems. He was student of the year for accounting, a member of National Honors Society, and is dually enrolled through Gila Institute for Technology at Eastern Arizona College.

In Brock's reference letter, he is described as an outstanding young man—an example to the youth and leads them by his example. Brock is always willing to do whatever is needed to bless the lives of those around him.

Each applicant wrote an essay titled, "If you had power or influence, what would you do with it?" Brock wrote he would better educate and encourage the next generation of young men to be loving and

committed fathers and husbands. He said, "Society seems to be fading away from that concept. Having committed, loving fathers and husbands in a family often makes a monumental difference to their children."

After graduation, Brock expects to earn a bachelor's degree in business and accounting.

Camilla Larson of Safford High School is the third child of Reed and MaryAnn Larson to be selected for the Washington Youth Tour. Camilla is the Future Business Leaders of America Arizona State Officer—vice president of public relations, placed third in Introduction of Parliamentary Procedures at state FBLA, is a SHS Choir Council officer, was junior varsity soccer team captain and has made Safford High School Honor Roll several years.

Camilla loves singing, dancing, public speaking, photography, soccer and piano. She is involved in community service and tries to plan and implement positive activities for her youth group.

In her essay, Camilla referenced the 1948 United Nations General Assembly issuing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, calling on every person around the globe to learn of the human rights listed in the declaration. If she had influence and power, she says she would use it to promote a nonprofit organization, Fight the New Drug, to raise awareness about how harmful pornography can be and how it is inseparably linked to human trafficking.



Brock Jones



Camilla Larson



Hayden Ashby



Trae Nelson

“I can think of no cause more important than ensuring each human being on our planet is free,” she wrote.

Her reference letter says, “Camilla is an excellent student. She diligently works on her assignments and participates in class discussion. She is creative and focused. She is a hard worker, always on time, and cheerful. I have been impressed with her ability to manage her schedule during hectic times, always remaining in control and staying positive.”

Camilla wants to complete the nursing program at Eastern Arizona College. She has a deep love for home and community.

“It is truly a unique and special place, and I hope to always be a credit to our community as I go throughout my life,” Camilla says.

The son of Anetta and Than Ashby, **Hayden Ashby** of Pima loves to spend time with his family. Having earned the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America, Hayden has helped with many service projects, in addition to helping in his church youth group. Projects include planting grass in the kindergarten playground, building the sand volleyball court at the Pima Elementary School, setting up flag pole stands on power poles along Main Street in Pima, and repainting the floor and outside walls of the main lodge for the Latter Day Saints girls camp in Alpine.

For his essay, Hayden wrote about making a difference with power and influence to help stop bullying. He says he would reach out to the youth through education, being an example to others and teaching self-confidence. “Being a friend to someone in need can make a difference in the person’s life,” he wrote.

Hayden plans to serve a two-year mission for his church and then join the military while

going to college and earning a Master of Business Administration and eventually owning his own business. He believes participating in FBLA has prepared him him to become an entrepreneur.

The final selection is **Trae Nelson**, son of Jace and Melinda Nelson. A Pima High School junior, Trae is involved in many school activities, including FBLA, National Honors Society, bass section leader in choir and woodworking.

Trae titled his essay “Let Music Never Die.” As a person who grew up in a musical family with music a fundamental part of his being, Trae is passionate about music and the impact it has on the world. Trae says if he had the power and influence, he would raise awareness about the importance of musical education in public schools and push for better funding for music programs.

Besides playing the piano and singing, Trae’s other hobbies and interests include hiking, snowboarding, swimming, reading and triathlons. Trae has earned his Eagle Scout rank in the Boys Scouts, and is a member of the Order of the Arrow. He is also the recipient of the Gila Valley Chorale’s music scholarship.

Trae’s reference letter states, “He is a highly motivated, hardworking, and very deserving individual. He leads people to work harder, to care more, and to be better. He has always maintained the highest degree of integrity, being honest and trustworthy in all his dealings. Also, Trae’s level of motivation is evidenced by his athletic ability and musical prowess.”

On behalf of Graham County Electric Cooperative, these four students will join more than 1,800 other students nationwide who attend the youth tour from June 7 to 14. ■