

Winners Headed to D.C. for Youth Tour



Jacy Larson.

Four local high school juniors were selected for Graham County Electric Cooperative's Washington Youth Tour 2013: Jacy Larson, Safford High School; Kalee Broadhead, Thatcher High School; Luke McRae, Thatcher High School; and Shawn Clonts, Safford High School.

The competition requires students to take a written test and write a 350-word essay on an assigned topic. Finalists are interviewed by a panel of judges. The topic for this year's essay was "Getting America back on track: How to increase economic opportunity for youth in rural America."

The four winners will experience Congress in action. In addition, they will meet with representatives from the U.S. House and Senate. Their experiences are intended to help them understand the importance of democracy and of knowing where our country has been and where it is headed.



Kalee Broadhead.

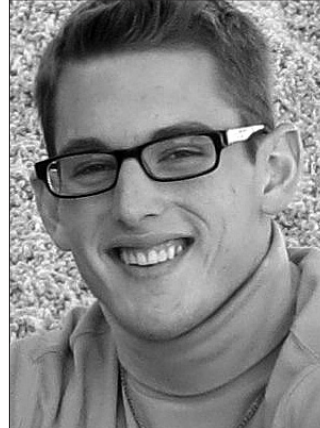
Jacy Larson

Jacy Larson, daughter of Reed and Mary Ann Larson, says she believes no one is more concerned with the future of our country than young people.

"We constantly hear about the crumbling economy and are encouraged to find a solution," she says. "I believe that repairing America's outdated infrastructure is the surest way to provide guaranteed economic growth for decades to come."

Partnering summer youth programs with transportation entities would empower students to join in the efforts of remodeling old systems—updating bridges and technology—and would benefit in rebuilding America, Jacy says.

She has a strong foundation in finding solutions to issues. As the work director for the Safford High School Interact Service Club, Jacy organizes fundraisers and service projects. The funds raised go to the school's Scholarship



Luke McRae.

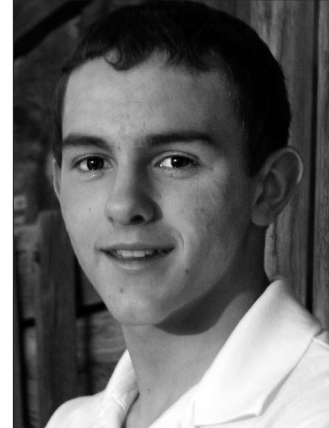
Foundation. She is involved in other community and church youth groups, and has helped at "Service Saturdays" with her family.

Jacy's letter of recommendation says she performs responsibilities well, is punctual, takes her job seriously and has strong values. She is a member of the Taste of Sound Show Choir at Safford High School and enjoys reading, cooking and traveling.

She received the "Ideal Student" award in eighth-grade from Triumphant Learning Center and as a sophomore, she scored in the 99th percentile in the Stanford Nine test in all three areas of reading, writing and math. She is on the SHS Gold Honor Roll for maintaining a 3.8 GPA or higher for three years.

Kalee Broadhead

Kalee Broadhead stresses the importance of creating opportunities to increase the strength of a nation. In her essay, Kalee writes,



Shawn Clonts.

"Opportunity isn't a gift, but is earned through the wise investment of time, money and skill. There is a strong correlation between family and sound economic decisions. It is essential that we are wise in our economic decisions. Creating opportunities, relying on the natural laws of the economy and strengthening family is the path to getting America back on track."

Kalee's parents are Lyle and Dayna Broadhead. She babysits and is a nanny for local families. She volunteers at Sun Rise Nursing Home and has performed at the Stephanie Udall Benefit Show to raise money for a local music scholarship. Singing with Safford High School show choir, quartets and participating in Handel's Messiah production are among her many activities. She enjoys running, reading, human relations, fitness and traveling.

She is Spanish Club president and a member of Future

Business Leaders of America. She is interested in cultural education, government, business and American history.

Kalee's reference letter says she is an excellent student with a strong work ethic and that her attitude and demeanor are contagious. Her enthusiasm will make Kalee a strong ambassador for the Washington Youth Tour.

Luke McRae

Luke McRae, son of Jill Cluff, says education needs to be updated to increase America's economic circumstances.

Luke quoted John F. Kennedy, who said "All of us do not have equal talent, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talents."

Luke says he believes schools should offer diverse vocational opportunities to allow young people to use their talents in productive and meaningful ways to benefit themselves, their families and our country.

Luke's reference letter says he is not afraid to work hard and he has prepared himself in many ways to serve his fellow man. He provides service to many members of the Gila Valley through his involvement in church service projects, Spirit Club, Athletics Club, Leadership Class, National Honor Society and Boy Scouts of America. He has earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He loves reading, running, music, cooking, history, hiking and riding all-terrain vehicles.



Shawn Clonts

The son of Cord and Emily Clonts, Shawn Clonts, says he believes education and hard work are vital to the economic success of today's youth. In his essay, he writes "The elusive American dream does not just occur; it is earned through hard work and perseverance. Opportunities for education and willingness to work hard are vital."

Shawn has participated in Boy Scouts of America and has earned the rank of Eagle Scout. He also participated in National Youth Leadership Training. He achieved the 99th percentile score on the SAT10 math testing, and placed first in the eighth-grade spelling bee and the geography bee. Shawn participates in the Interact

Service Club, Safford High School show choir and is in the National Honor Society. He loves soccer, tennis, cooking, chemistry, camping and reading.

In his recommendation letter it says, "Shawn always puts team before self, always accepts personal responsibility, and is an example to others". These key qualities will help Shawn represent the co-op in Washington.

These students, along with chaperones, will represent Graham County Electric Co-op and join 1500 other high school students in touring our nation's capitol in June. ■



Top, guest speaker Tom Jones, CEO of Grand Canyon State Electric Cooperative, addresses the membership.



Bottom right, Clark Ashby and Joe Palmer enjoy the refreshments.



Bottom left, former employee Joanna Weech, middle, sits with members Mary Helen Bryce, left, and May Louise Taylor.

Annual Meeting Boasts Record Attendance

Nearly 170 Graham County Electric Cooperative members—a record number—attended the annual membership meeting at the Pima School Cafeteria on February 9. Pima Boy Scout Troop 5229 led the flag ceremony, culminating with a patriotic video and posting of the colors.

Committee Chairwoman Lynn Daley provided the results of membership voting. Seats were retained by Reuben McBride in District 1, Robert Reed in District 2 and Tommy Clonts in District 3.

General Manager Steve Lines recognized 2012 Washington Youth Tour delegates Whitney Larson, Chantel Udall, Michelle Weatherhead and Jessica Wright. Lines also introduced 2013 delegates Kalee Broadhead, Shawn Clonts, Jacy Larson and Luke McRae. Michelle Weatherhead was selected to represent Arizona co-ops at the National Rural Electric Association meeting in New Orleans.

Lines showed pictures of crews building the Talley Substation on the north side of the river. GCEC has experienced the lowest line loss in history due to capital improvements.

Lines also recognized recent retiree Susan Romney for her hard work and dedication providing service to membership and staff for more than 26 years.

Guest speakers included Patrick Ledger representing Arizona Generation and Transmission Cooperatives and Tom Jones from Grand Canyon State Electric Cooperative Association. They updated the membership on legislative issues affecting generating plants and cooperatives.

The members didn't go home empty handed. Bags with outdoor thermometers and goodies were given to registered members. Door prizes were also drawn. ■



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Manager's Message

GCEC Crews Make Progress With New Talley Substation Construction

Graham County Electric Cooperative line crews are making great progress with the construction of the new Talley Substation north of the Gila River.

This substation is being built by GCEC's employees rather than contractors, providing a savings in construction costs.

The Talley Substation will be the co-op's ninth in Graham County and will add value to the electrical system and service to our members.

Being the first and only substation on the north side of the Gila River, it will provide better reliability to those members during floods and storms. The new Talley Substation also provides a way to divide electrical loads in the area, with two active circuits being energized and one spare circuit for future loads.

Completion and energize date is expected next month.

For the past 15 years, your co-op has been aggressively upgrading the power grid, which includes new lines, pole change-outs, new equipment, and upgrading or adding additional substations. The crews have worked tirelessly and have completed many of the improvements needed for electric loads and



A Graham County Electric Cooperative line crew works on the Talley Substation.

growth in the county. As a result of system improvements, the co-op has seen the lowest level of line loss in its history, 5.8 percent.

The result of lower line loss is a savings for the co-op through lower power supply purchases from our provider, Arizona Electric Power Cooperative. This helps the co-op keep rates as stable as possible for our members.

I am very proud of all our employees, and I am sure the electrical crews take great pride in a substation that will serve the members now and well into the future.

Steve Lines
General Manager
GCEC/GCU