

GCEC Provides Opportunities for Local Students with Youth Tour and Scholarships

Every year, Graham County Electric Co-op offers four local high school juniors the opportunity to attend the Washington Youth Tour and provides scholarships to graduating seniors to further their education.

Washington Youth Tour

High school juniors compete for the opportunity to participate in this event sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association and Touchstone Energy Cooperatives.

This year's Graham County WYT delegation consisted of Safford High School students Jacy Larson and Shawn Clonts, and Thatcher High School students Kalee Broadhead and Luke McRae. They joined the Arizona Delegation and 1,600 student

representatives from across the United States to tour Washington, D.C.

In June, the students toured historical sites including Arlington National Cemetery, Ft. McHenry, Ford's Theater, the WWII and Vietnam memorials and the Holocaust and Smithsonian Institution museums.

Students also experience Congress in action. On a tour of Capitol Hill, each group visited with congressional representatives from their own districts.

After the trip, students addressed the co-op's board of directors to express their gratitude for the experience and their pride to be an American.

During the address, Shawn, son of Cord and Emily Clonts, expressed his respect for the nation's fallen soldiers. Shawn said that while visiting the large estate of George Washington, was more impressed with the nation's forefathers.

"Freedom isn't free," he said.

Luke, son of Jill Cluff, said all of the sites were marvelous. He said he had seen firsthand the beauty that inspired fellow Americans to fight for the country time and again.

"It was a wonderfully beautiful trip that I wouldn't trade for anything," said Luke.

"People of all faiths still have faith in our country," said Kalee, daughter of Lyle and Dayna Broadhead.

Kalee said she was particularly impressed with the National Cathedral, and Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Jacy, daughter of Reed and Mary Ann Larson, said she never expected to meet so many awesome people. Jacy is the third in her family to be chosen to attend youth tour. Sisters Whitney and Katie Ann were youth tour participants.

"I have a greater appreciation for our country's government," said Jacy. "I never realized before how lucky we are to live in this amazing country."

Chaperones Anetta and Than Ashby gave a summary presentation with pictures from the trip and accompanying music. The couple each expressed particular fondness for the U.S. Marines Corps memorial. Than said he had an uncle that died serving in the Marine Corps. Both said they appreciated the men and women in uniform who fought and continue to fight for the nation's freedoms, as many families and peoples' lives have been affected.

Each year, students return home and tell about their experiences to families and friends. In September, the students will also visit local high schools to encourage juniors to submit applications for the 2014 trip.



The 2013 Graham County Washington Youth Tour delegation with chaperones.



Michelle Pike

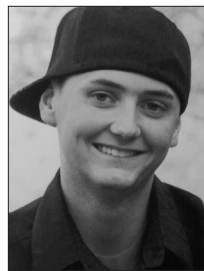


Tayler Hancock-Adams

Photo courtesy of Impact Photography Group



Yissel Rodriguez



Jace Kouts



Shelby Pooler

Not pictured: Denitra Nosie and Mariah Cain.

High School Scholarships

In May, GCEC board members presented scholarships to deserving seniors to continue their education.

Director Chris Claridge presented Ft. Thomas High School scholarships to Michelle Pike and Denitra Nosie. Michelle, daughter of Phylliss and Udall Pike Sr., plans to work toward a degree in nursing at Eastern Arizona College. Valedictorian of her senior class, she was an active member of Future Business Leaders of America, yearbook and student council. She participated in basketball and softball and was part of the Johnson O'Malley Committee and National Honors Society.

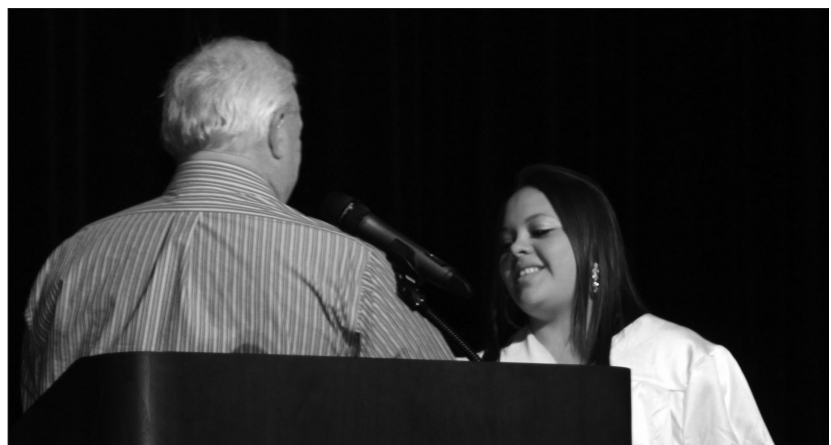
Office manager Than Ashby presented a scholarship to Tayler Hancock-Adams of Pima High School. Daughter of Brian Hancock and Cari Adams, Tayler has a certificate of completion from Eastern Arizona Academy of Cosmetology GIFT Program. Tayler plans to attend community college in Hawaii to further her general studies.

Yissel Rodriguez of Safford High School was presented with a scholarship by director Jerry Kempton. Yissel is the daughter of Erika Yissel Moreno and Joaquin Ernesto Rodriguez. With a GPA of 3.5, Yissel ranked 40 out of 141 in her class. Graduating on the Honor Roll, she held offices in Spanish Club, Ambassadors Club and Yearbook Club. Yissel plans to attend Arizona Western Community College in Yuma and then transfer to Northern Arizona University to major in business management.

GCEC president Gene Robert Larson presented Mt. Graham High School student Jace Kouts with his scholarship. Jace, son of Michael and Shara Kouts, was born and raised in Safford and graduated with the highest GPA in his class of 14. Jace has an interest in machine shop and welding, and plans to continue his studies in automotive and welding at EAC.

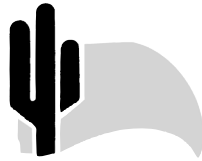
Thatcher High School seniors Shelby Rae Pooler and Mariah Cain were presented scholarships from Director Dennis Jacob. Shelby, daughter of Amy and Derek Pooler, was on the academic honor roll all four years of high school. She placed first during the EAC skills day for medical terminology. While still in high school, she earned her Certified Nursing Assistant license and has completed requirements to apply for her phlebotomy license. Shelby plans to attend Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas, to major in nursing.

GCEC continues to support leadership, learning and continued education for youth in our community. ■



Top, Graham County Electric Cooperative office manager Than Ashby presents a scholarship to Tayler Hancock-Adams, Pima High School.

Above, Graham County Electric Cooperative director Jerry Kempton presents a scholarship to Yissel Rodriguez, Safford High School.



Grand Canyon State Electric Cooperative Association, Inc.

Co-op Electric Restructuring Petition

Summary:

The Arizona Corporation Commission is under intense pressure from out-of-state interests and big corporations to completely “deregulate” or “restructure” Arizona’s electricity market.

The current system of electric utility regulation in Arizona treats electricity as an essential service with the goal of making electric service universally accessible and affordable. Utility companies are held accountable for reliable delivery at regulated rates designed to protect the consumer. Electricity rates are currently set based on the cost of production and watched closely to ensure fairness to consumers. Deregulated/restructured markets treat electricity more like a commodity to be sold at prices set by the profit motives of power brokers and speculators.

Some other states have turned traditional energy markets upside down to accommodate these power brokers and speculators with disastrous results. Deregulation/restructuring has resulted in consumer price increases, decreased reliability, increased customer frustration and market manipulation by companies such as Enron.

The ACC has the option to tell these outside groups that Arizona values an electricity system that provides accessible, reliable service to consumers based on the actual cost of production. Please tell the ACC that Arizonans have too much at stake to participate in an experiment that does not benefit consumers.

Ask the ACC to Stand Up for Consumers in Arizona

Petition Language:

Deregulated/restructured electric markets have historically resulted in higher prices for consumers, decreased reliability and increased customer frustration. We believe restructuring Arizona’s electric system puts the affordability and reliability of Arizona power at risk and is not in the best interest of the public. We urge the Arizona Corporation Commission to reject proposals to deregulate/restructure Arizona’s electric markets.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Co-op/Utility: _____

Please fill out and return to your local co-op or send to:

GCSECA
2210. S. Priest Drive
Tempe, AZ 85282



P.O. Drawer B
Pima, AZ 85543

(928) 485-2451
Toll free: (800) 577-9266

Fax: (928) 485-9491

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Touchstone Energy®
The power of human connections

AZ-145 **Postmaster:** Send address changes to Currents, 2210 S. Priest Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282-1109

Manager's Message

Arizona Electric Restructuring: Still a Bad Idea

The Arizona Corporation Commission is under intense pressure from out-of-state interests and big corporations to completely deregulate or restructure Arizona's electricity market. Back in the late 1990s and early 2000s deregulation was tried in California. It was a complete disaster that led to power shortages, blackouts and out of control pricing. It was so bad back then, the Arizona Corporation Commission halted the program and it should halt again now.

The current system of electric utility regulation in Arizona treats electricity as an essential service with the goal of making electric service universally accessible and affordable. Utility companies are held accountable for reliable delivery at regulated rates designed to protect the consumer. Electricity rates are currently set based on the cost of production and watched closely to ensure fairness to consumers. Deregulated/restructured markets treat electricity more like a commodity to be sold at prices set by the profit motives of power brokers and speculators.

Some other states have turned traditional energy markets upside down to accommodate these power brokers and speculators with disastrous results. Deregulation/restructuring has resulted in consumer price increases, decreased reliability, increased customer frustration and market manipulation by companies such as Enron. It is not fair for providers to cherry-pick the biggest purchasers of electricity and leave everyone else to pay higher prices.

The ACC has the option to tell these outside groups that Arizona values an electricity system that provides accessible, reliable service to consumers based on the actual cost of production. Please tell the ACC that Arizonans have too much at stake to participate in an experiment that does not benefit consumers. Please join the grassroots efforts of GCEC—along with all of the other electric co-ops in the state and Arizona Power Consumers Coalition—and make your voice be heard by the ACC.

Ask the ACC to stand up for consumers in Arizona and not allow deregulation. You can do this by signing the petition form we have available at the GCEC office or on page 25 of Currents, then send it in or we will send it in for you. We need your help just like we did with the cap-and-trade issue. The ACC needs to hear from you so it can tell these special out-of-state groups this was a bad idea back in the late 1990s and is a bad idea now. Thank You!



Steve Lines

Steve Lines
General Manager
GCEC/GCU