



# Plugged in to Altamaha EMC

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LYONS, GA

*Official Newsletter of Altamaha Electric Membership Corporation*

**Serving Toombs, Montgomery, Emanuel, Treutlen, Laurens, Johnson and Tattnall counties**

## WYT DELEGATES *Among Georgia's Best and Brightest*

*By Lindsay Penticuff*



*Georgia's 2024 Washington Youth Tour delegation poses in front of the White House in Washington, D.C.*

CHRISTY CHEWNING

**G**eorgia's 112 delegates representing 37 electric membership corporations (EMCs) were among nearly 1,800 high school students nationwide who visited Washington, D.C., in June for the Washington Youth Tour (WYT).

The event June 14-21 was the 59th year Georgia's EMCs sent students on the Youth Tour.

Once a year, high school students are selected by the state's EMCs to represent Georgia as delegates on the all-expenses-paid trip. This leadership experience includes meetings with state and national leaders, leadership

training and visits to many major sites.

"The Washington Youth Tour continues to bring the best and brightest students from across our state together for a fast-paced week in Washington, D.C.," says Andy Paul, WYT Director and Public Relations Representative with Tucker-based Georgia EMC. "Our goal is for Georgia's delegates to learn about history and leadership while on the trip and, most importantly, be excited about returning home afterward to share the cooperative difference within their communities."

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*Sumter EMC delegate Trey Stewart (left) poses with the United States Marine Band drum major during a visit to the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial in Washington, D.C.*



KATHRYN GREEN



# Georgia Students Experience Nation's Capital

**T**he Washington Youth Tour experience gives delegates an opportunity to visit as many as 25 of Washington, D.C.'s most historic sites, as well as participate in team-building activities and events during which they can learn more about one another and meet delegates from throughout the United States.

Slade Holland of Lyons, Brie Jackson-Buchanon of Swainsboro and Noah Varn of Vidalia were selected to represent Altamaha EMC in 2024.

## White House

One of the first stops on the weeklong Youth Tour was a photo opportunity at the White House. The location at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW in Washington, D.C., was selected by former President George Washington in 1791 as the future home of our nation's president. There are 132 rooms, 35 bathrooms and six levels in the White House, and, on average, 6,000 people visit it daily.

## Library of Congress

The Library of Congress was founded in 1800 and is the oldest federal cultural institution in the nation.



Altamaha EMC Youth Tour delegate Noah Varn (right) captures a memorable selfie with U.S. Sen. John Ossoff at the Capitol.



From left, Altamaha EMC Youth Tour delegates Slade Holland, Brie Jackson-Buchanon and Noah Varn pause for a memorable photo in front of the White House.

It is the largest library in the world, with millions of items in a variety of formats. It includes international collections, a law library, rare books and manuscripts, and audiovisual collections.

## Riverboat Cruise

Delegates had an amazing time on the Washington Youth Tour Riverboat Cruise, which allowed delegates to get a picturesque view of the landscape along the Potomac River. During the nearly three-hour cruise, Georgia students were joined by WYT delegates from North Dakota and Montana.

## George Washington's Mount Vernon

Located about 13 miles outside Washington, D.C., George Washington's Mount Vernon is the former home of the United States' first president and his wife, Martha. The estate features a mansion and dozens of historic outbuildings, a blacksmith shop, farm and wharf.

During their visit, WYT delegates toured the grounds, checked out the inside of Washington's mansion, visited the tombs of George and Martha Washington, listened to historic reenactors describe the former president's farming practices and enjoyed lunch at the famed Mount Vernon Inn Restaurant.





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*Satilla REMC delegate Christina Davis lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.*

## Presidential and War Memorials

There are seven presidential memorials and nearly 20 war memorials in Washington, D.C. These include the Jefferson Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial and the National World War II Memorial.

Georgia's delegation learned the history of many memorials from experienced tour guides, snapped photos along the Tidal Basin near the National Mall and at memorial parks, and read Father's Day messages left by family members at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.



LAURA GAYLE DAILEY

*Some of Georgia's 2024 delegation snap a selfie in front of the White House.*



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*Altamaha EMC delegates visit George Washington's historic home at Mount Vernon, stepping back in time to explore the legacy of America's first president.*

## Arlington National Cemetery

Established in 1864, Arlington National Cemetery encompasses 639 acres and contains the remains of service members from both world wars and the conflict in Korea.

Located within the cemetery is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where delegates attended a special wreath-laying ceremony honoring U.S. military members and veterans.



KAIDEN GIBBS

*Slade Holland (far left) and Noah Varn (far right) enjoy their time at the Washington Monument during the 2024 Youth Tour.*



# Meet the 2024 Altamaha EMC Washington Youth Tour Delegates



*Slade Holland*



*Brie Jackson-Buchanan*



*Noah Varn*

**A**ltamaha EMC's Washington Youth Tour delegates are selected through a comprehensive application process. Juniors and seniors from high schools in our seven-county service area are eligible to apply. School counselors from these counties nominate students to participate in the program. Nominated students first go through a preliminary interview with Altamaha EMC's Washington Youth Tour coordinator. Finalists are then invited to a second round of interviews, evaluated by a panel of judges from three different electric membership cooperatives in Georgia. Ultimately, our Washington Youth Tour director and judges select the top three students to represent Altamaha EMC on the Youth Tour.

## **Slade Holland**

Slade is a senior at Toombs County High School, where he is an active member of Beta Club and the FBLA. Recently, he attended the FBLA Leadership Conference and competed in Business Law. A first-degree black belt in karate, Slade now dedicates his time as a karate instructor. He also tutors students after school and participates in his church's men's ministry. After graduation, Slade plans to attend the United States Air Force Academy to pursue his dream of becoming a pilot.

## **Brie Jackson-Buchanan**

Brie is a senior at Swainsboro High School, where she serves as president of the 21 Club, participates in

basketball cheer and competes on the track team. A dedicated member of Beta Club and the FBLA, she recently placed fifth in Accounting at the FBLA Leadership Conference. Brie is deeply committed to her community, organizing various drives, including donating clothes to the women's shelter in Statesboro, providing dog food and toys to the local animal shelter and delivering Christmas baskets to the local nursing home. After graduation, Brie plans to enter the medical field to pursue her dream of becoming a surgeon.

## **Noah Varn**

Noah is a senior at Vidalia High School, where he is actively involved in numerous organizations. He serves as Social Media Officer and Treasurer for FCCLA, Social Media Officer and Fundraising Officer for Skills USA and Secretary for Writers Inc. Additionally, he is Vice President of the Student Government, and a member of the Beta Club, Political Science Club and National Honor Society, and he participates in One-Act Play and FBLA. Noah has also performed in community productions, including Tales of the Altamaha and Franklina Playhouse. His commitment to service shines through his volunteer work at Winshape Camps, organizing a fundraiser for the Special Olympics and helping with a special needs party. After graduation, Noah plans to attend the University of Georgia to pursue a career in law.



## **Apply for the 2025 Washington Youth Tour**

Altamaha EMC selects three local students each year to represent our cooperative on the Washington Youth Tour. The dates for the 2025 Youth Tour are June 13-20. All high school juniors and seniors interested in the opportunity may contact Altamaha EMC's Washington Youth Tour Coordinator Will NeSmith. He can be reached at (912) 526-2173 or [will.nesmith@altamahaemc.com](mailto:will.nesmith@altamahaemc.com).