

# NEWS



Youth Tour is Back!

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Always Call Before You Dig!

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## Local Students Win Annual Meeting Bag Contest

*Tri-County EMC selected four students' artwork for this year's annual meeting bag contest.*

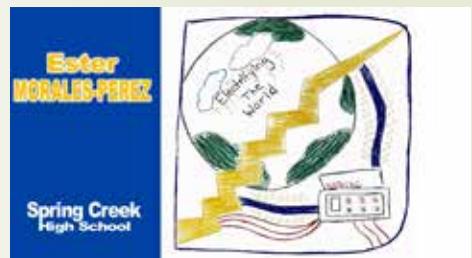
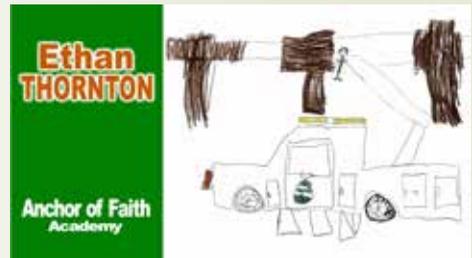
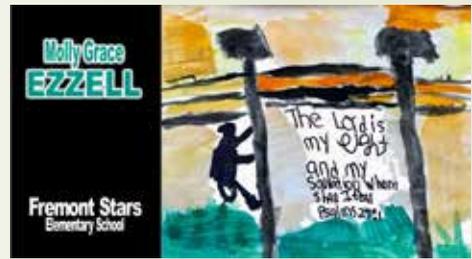
**F**aith Futrell of Kenansville Elementary, Molly Grace Ezzell of Fremont Stars Elementary, Ethan Thornton of Anchor of Faith Academy and Ester Morales-Perez of Spring Creek High School will have their artwork showcased at the 2022 annual meeting. Each artist received \$100 for their winning entry.

Non-finalist winners Kyairra Anderson, Madelyn Hinnant, Elizabeth Bryant, Andrew Hinnant and Kelsey Hinnant each received \$25.

The contest was open to students from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Students were asked to draw a one-of-a-kind electricity related design of "what Tri-County means to you." The winners were chosen via online voting on the Tri-County EMC Facebook page during the week of May 9-13, 2022.

"This contest is a fun, creative way to get our youth involved and educate them about their electric cooperative," said Deidra Grantham, manager of Marketing and Communications. "We look forward to the drawings we receive for this annual event."

Thank you to all participants and congratulations to the winners!



### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

**Seal Those Air Leaks:** Save energy by sealing air leaks and holes where plumbing pipes run through walls. Also check wall-mounted cabinets for plumbing holes or air gaps in the back. Fill any holes or gaps with spray foam. Wear protective gloves and use a damp rag for cleanup.

Source: [www.energy.gov](http://www.energy.gov)

# Local Students Visit Nation's Capital on Electric Cooperative Youth Tour

**A**fter two years, approximately 1,800 high school students gathered in Washington, D.C., June 18-24 as delegates to the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour. Thirty North Carolina students joined other students from 45 states, including two local delegates sponsored by Tri-County EMC, took part in the weeklong opportunity.

Tri-County EMC selected Jake Coates and Allison Taylor as delegates to the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.

“We are thrilled our delegates were able to be part of the youth tour after the COVID-19 pandemic canceled the event in 2020 and 2021,” said Deidra Grantham, manager of Marketing and Communications. “The Youth Tour is a life-changing trip and emphasizes the importance of civic engagement and gives them an opportunity to learn about the impact the cooperative has on their community. We hope the experiences the delegates gained during the trip will benefit them on their journey ahead.”

On the seven-day tour, students learned about United States history at the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial and many of the Smithsonian museums. The delegates paid their respects to soldiers who lost their lives in service to the nation at Arlington National Cemetery and visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall as well as the Korean War Veterans Memorial. Delegates also had the opportunity to tour Capitol Hill and meet with many NC Legislators.

For over 50 years, America's electric cooperatives have brought students together from communities across America to build connections and practice leadership on the “trip of a lifetime.”



Jake Coates and Allison Taylor represented Tri-County EMC as delegates of the 2022 Electric Cooperative Youth Tour.



## A Reminder to Call 811 Before You Dig

**O**n Aug. 11 (8/11), Tri-County EMC is reminding members to dial 8-1-1 at least three working days before beginning a digging project. This free and simple step can save lives and reduce risk of injury, repair costs fines and inconvenient outages.

“Every time you break ground, even for something simple like planting a shrub or installing a mailbox, you should call 811 first,” said Tony Grantham, manager of Engineering and Operations of Tri-County EMC “No matter your level of expertise, it’s important to know what’s below the ground to prevent the potentially serious consequences of hitting a utility line.”

The national 811 “Call Before You Dig” phone number links residents to a local call center, which then dispatches local utility companies to mark line locations with paint or flags. These marked lines show you where it is—and isn’t—safe to break ground. Once your lines have been marked, make sure to dig carefully around the marks, not on top of them. Because utility line locations can shift, it’s important to call each time you are planning to dig.

For more information about safe digging and the “Call Before You Dig” process, [visit nc811.org](http://visit nc811.org).

## 5 STEPS FOR SAFE DIGGING

Working on an outdoor project? Careless digging poses a threat to people, pipelines and underground facilities. Always call 8-1-1 first. Here are five easy steps for safe digging:



### 1. NOTIFY

Call 8-1-1 or make a request online two to three days before your work begins. The operator will notify the utilities affected by your project.

### 2. WAIT

Wait two to three days for affected utilities to respond to your request. They will send a locator to mark any underground utility lines.

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### 3. CONFIRM

Confirm that all affected utilities have responded to your request by comparing the marks to the list of utilities the 8-1-1 call center notified.



### 4. RESPECT

Respect the markers provided by the affected utilities. The markers are your guide for the duration of your project.



### 5. DIG CAREFULLY

If you can't avoid digging near the markers (within 18-24 inches on all sides, depending on state laws), consider moving your project location.



## What's Your Bright Idea? Apply Early for the Chance to Win Extra Cash

Bright Ideas Early Bird Deadline is August 15

Attention, teachers! Do you have an idea for a creative learning project geared toward giving your students a new way to learn? Apply for a Bright Ideas grant!

Educators who submit a grant application by the early bird deadline of Aug. 15 are entered to win one of five \$100 gift cards. Tri-County EMC is awarding up to \$1,000 this year to educators with creative ideas to bring hands-on learning to students in K-12 classrooms. The final deadline to apply is Sept. 19, but it could pay to apply early. For more information or to start your application, go to [NCBrightIdeas.com](http://NCBrightIdeas.com).

## Scholarship Winner Trains with Top-Ranked Basketball Program

One local student practiced alongside athletes and coaches from top-ranked college basketball program this summer, thanks to Tri-County EMC's Touchstone Energy Sports Camp scholarship.

Benjamin Creech from Wayne County participated in the Carolina Basketball School from June 18-22, led by head coach Hubert Davis, at the University of N.C. in Chapel Hill.

"Benjamin Creech is an outstanding student, athlete and actively involved in his community," said Deidra Grantham, manager of Marketing and Communications at Tri-County EMC. "We are proud to partner with the UNC-Chapel Hill basketball program to provide such a unique leadership and learning

experience for our local students and future leaders."

The camper joined more than 50 electric co-op scholarship winners statewide at the camp, where they stayed overnight in dorms and experienced life as a college student. At camp, coaches and student-athletes worked directly with campers to develop basketball fundamentals and practice skills such as teamwork that will help them excel on and off the court.

Touchstone Energy Sports Camp scholarships are available each year as part of Tri-County EMC's commitment to supporting youth and education in our community. Congratulations to Benjamin



**Benjamin Creech**

Creech for earning this scholarship and representing Tri-County EMC at basketball camp this summer!



### Statement Of NonDiscrimination

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Tri-County EMC Membership Corporation in Dudley, N.C., was chartered May 8, 1940.

#### Mission Statement:

Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation is a member-driven cooperative committed to providing reliable electric power at a reasonable cost, to offering superior service, and to taking an active role in supporting the communities it serves.

**We are here to serve you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year.**

**For Outages or Emergencies:**  
919-735-2611 or 1-800-548-4869

[tcemc.com](http://tcemc.com)

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### Employees Ready to Serve You



**Landon Stroud**

Landon Stroud is one of 49 employees ready to serve you. Landon has worked with Tri-County since Jan. 18, 2021, as an apprentice lineman for the cooperative. Landon resides in Kinston.