



Sumter EMC is proud to have sponsored Senal McCain and Richard Sims from Chattahoochee County High School for the 2018 Washington Youth Tour. The Youth Tour is a weeklong leadership trip to D.C. for exemplary students made possible by local electric cooperatives across the state.

The Washington Youth Tour kicked off with a banquet in Atlanta on June 7 before 113 delegates and 16 adults traveled to Washington D.C. There the EMC delegates from Georgia joined 1,800 other ambitious students from around the nation as they all experienced America's history, met with our elected officials, toured historical sites, and built friendships.

This trip offers high school students a unique opportunity to gain leadership skills while learning about some of the most talented leaders in American history. The learning experience on the Youth Tour differs from the classroom as students not only grow in academic understanding, but they also develop people and "soft" skills.

According to Greg Crowder, Vice President of Marketing and Administration with Sumter EMC, this trip challenges students and gives them a greater appreciation for how our nation began and the ability to evaluate the role that they play in improving it.

The Washington Youth Tour has been remembered as "the trip of a lifetime" by many alumni and is not to be missed by any student seeking leadership opportunities and what makes our country function. During this eventful week the delegates visited Mount Vernon, the National Archives, the Smithsonian Museums, the Washington National Cathedral, the U.S. Capitol, the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial and U.S. Air Force Memorial, the Library of Congress and Arlington National Cemetery. The group also took a guided tour of the MLK, FDR, Jefferson and WWII memorials. In addition, the students enjoyed a performance of "Newsies" at Toby's Dinner Theatre and a riverboat cruise with delegates from other states.

Not only did the students see our nation's capital, but they also heard from U.S. representatives and met Georgia Senator Johnny Isakson. Finally, at All-States Youth Day, a program sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, students were brought together from all over the nation to hear from public figures and other featured speakers. This day allowed students to see



Senal McCain (L) and Richard Sims (R) from Chattahoochee County High School, represented Sumter EMC on the 2018 Washington Youth Tour. Senal is the daughter of Sumter EMC members, Dana and Michele McCain; Richard is the son of Sumter EMC members, Jim and Angela Sims.

the impact of electric cooperatives on their communities back home.

The Washington Youth Tour has made a way for more than 50,000 students from rural areas across the country to experience our nation's capital. This trip has had lasting effects on students as many have gone on to serve in local and state government and at the national level as well.

The Washington Youth Tour through my eyes

BY: SENAL MCCAIN

My name is Senal McCain. I am 17 years old and a senior at Chattahoochee County High School in Cusseta, Georgia. I was selected to participate in the 2018 Washington Youth tour and had the time of my life! In addition to meeting some amazing people, I learned so much. Every stop was impressive, and I'm happy to share pictures of the places that interested me the most.



This is the Newseum museum's "Inside Today's FBI" section in Washington, DC. These are pieces from the American Airlines flight 175, the World Trade Center, and police cruisers from the tragic day of 9/11. The door is from a police cruiser. The objects hanging from the ceiling are engine parts from flight 175, which hit the Trade Center's south tower. The sheet of metal in the picture is an exit door push plate from the building before it was hit. The rusty metal on the floor is fuselage pipes that were also part of the building. I was only a baby when this tragedy occurred on September 11, 2001; however, I think of the many lives that were lost and how it affected so many people. The incident provoked love and appreciation for my family and friends much more.



This is a picture of Christ from inside the National Cathedral. There are six angels around him, which symbolize the Works of Mercy from the Gospel of Matthew: "For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked and you gave me clothing; I was sick and you took care of me; I was in prison and you visited me." Christ is a savior for all. As a believer in Christ, this picture reminds me of the faith that I have, the sacrifices Christ made, and the love He has for everyone.



The photo to the left is the view from the Lincoln Memorial steps, overlooking the Washington Monument grounds, where Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech to thousands of people during The Great March on Washington in 1963. This picture made me feel as if I were experiencing the March on Washington myself. It amazes me to know that so many people came together in support of equality for everyone.



This is Franklin Delano Roosevelt's memorial in Washington DC, featuring Fala, one of the most famous presidential pets. The quote on the wall next to him states his position of containment on communist countries and their leaders.

FDR contracted a paralytic illness believed to be polio, and his legs became permanently paralyzed in 1921; however, he died from intracerebral hemorrhage. He served as the 32nd President of the U.S from 1933 until his death in 1945. This affected me because his illness did not change his ability to function as a President; therefore, with his strong confidence he became one of the most influential presidents of all time. He did not allow his condition to interfere with his performance as a president. He wanted to portray himself as a competent leader for the United States.

The photo to the left is a painting of George Washington in the dome of the Nation's Capital. It was created in 1865 by Constantino Brumini, a Greek Italian artist. The painting features George Washington depicted as a god sitting on a throne with angels surrounding him. There are two angels across from him holding up a sign that reads "E Pluribus Unum", which means "Out of many, one". The painting is 180 feet above the floor and covers an area of about 4,664 square feet.

George Washington was the first President of the United States. He helped develop the guidelines by which our fledgling nation would be governed, many of which have endured the test of time. This painting reminds me of what this country has lost, gained, and most importantly, has accomplished.

I had a wonderful time and am honored to have been part of the 2018 Washington Youth Tour. I would like to thank the Board of Directors and employees of Sumter EMC, my school counselor, and the Washington Youth Tour coordinators and chaperones for allowing me to participate in an extraordinary trip with such amazing people.



My inspiring Washington Youth Tour experience

BY: RICHARD SIMS

The place that made the greatest impression on me was the Capitol. Capitol Hill is probably the most powerful place in the world today. In the media, our legislative branch is portrayed as having cutthroat partisanship. However, in my experience on the Hill this could not be further from the truth. Every congressman who spoke told us the divide between the aisles is much closer than most believe. I am a huge fan of politics and watch both C-SPAN and CNN. However, seeing the legislative process in person was absolutely enthralling.



Senator Johnny Isakson answering my question on regulations.

I witnessed the Majority Whip Senator John Cornyn elaborate on the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019. He spoke about the bill's storied history having been passed for 57 consecutive years. Moreover, he enlightened the floor of the main proponents of the bill such as the 2.6% pay raise to all troops in our Armed Forces while also creating provisions to increase the size of every branch. The Majority Whip also discussed the process of dealing with juvenile crimes on military installations. Senator Cornyn gave four examples of juvenile rapists not being taken to trial because the federal court system is too overloaded to put a minor on trial on just one base in

Texas. Instead, under the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019, jurisdiction of juvenile crimes could be released to the appropriate courts at the local and state levels. This bill struck a chord close to home since I live next to one of the largest military posts in the world, and over 60% of the students at my school are military dependents. As a result of observing the Senate and talking with many congressmen from the state of Georgia, my dream is to one day be a part of a legislative branch of government.

My favorite stop on the tour was Arlington Cemetery. I had been to Washington D.C. two times before the tour, and both times my scheduled trip to Arlington had to be cancelled. We learned on the second day of the Youth tour that once again my trip to Arlington would be cancelled. However, Ms. Gale Cutler was able to get Arlington back on the agenda. Thank goodness she did, because Arlington was everything I had always dreamed of and more! The changing of the guard is the most precise drill routine ever performed. The honor and pride displayed with every movement is awe inspiring. It is absolutely astonishing how the Tomb Guards can take 21 steps and wait 21 seconds every time.



Wreath Laying Ceremony at WW2 Memorial (L to R) Micah Mesecher, Abbigail Adams, Richard Sims and Hudson Sherrod



Dusk at the Tidal Basin - Eli Weatherby, Richard Sims, and Cody Byess

However, Arlington was not just the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I also enjoyed the solitude and beauty of all that surrounded me. I was able to really feel the sacrifice of everyone who has fought for our freedom. Moreover, the Eternal Flame at the gravesite of John F. Kennedy is located in Arlington. The simplicity and beauty of these sites are unforgettable and are why Arlington Cemetery was my favorite tour stop.



Morning by the Reflecting Pool - Richard Sims and Haley Jones

I want to thank everyone who made this spectacular trip possible for me: Mr. and Mrs. Hearn, Beth McMillan, Caleb Frady, Gale Cutler and all the other great chaperones. Thanks to everyone at Chattahoochee County Middle/High School who helped get me selected, like Melissa Wilkinson, and the great people at Sumter EMC who sponsored me and helped coordinate the trip: Sumter EMC's Board of Directors and staff, Whitney Johnson, Andrea Walker and Jan Morris. Chief among these, I thank my amazing parents, Jim and Angela Sims, for supporting me throughout all my endeavors, but especially this one.



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