

Washington Youth Tour— the experience of a lifetime

A big smile, a soft voice and a beautiful girl. This describes Shayla Walker as she begins to talk about her experience on Blue Grass Energy's Washington Youth Tour (WYT) last summer.

Shayla, now a senior at Western Hills High School in Franklin County, was one of eight high school juniors selected to represent Blue Grass Energy on the WYT last June. The WYT takes place each summer when nearly 1,700 young cooperative members from across America visit the nation's capital. It is an all-expenses-paid trip that sharpens leadership skills for future leaders.

She admits she had no idea what the WYT was until her mom came home one day with mail advertising the trip. She grins as she admits, "My mom made me apply. She told me, 'You never know. Just give it a chance.'" And Shayla is certainly glad she did.

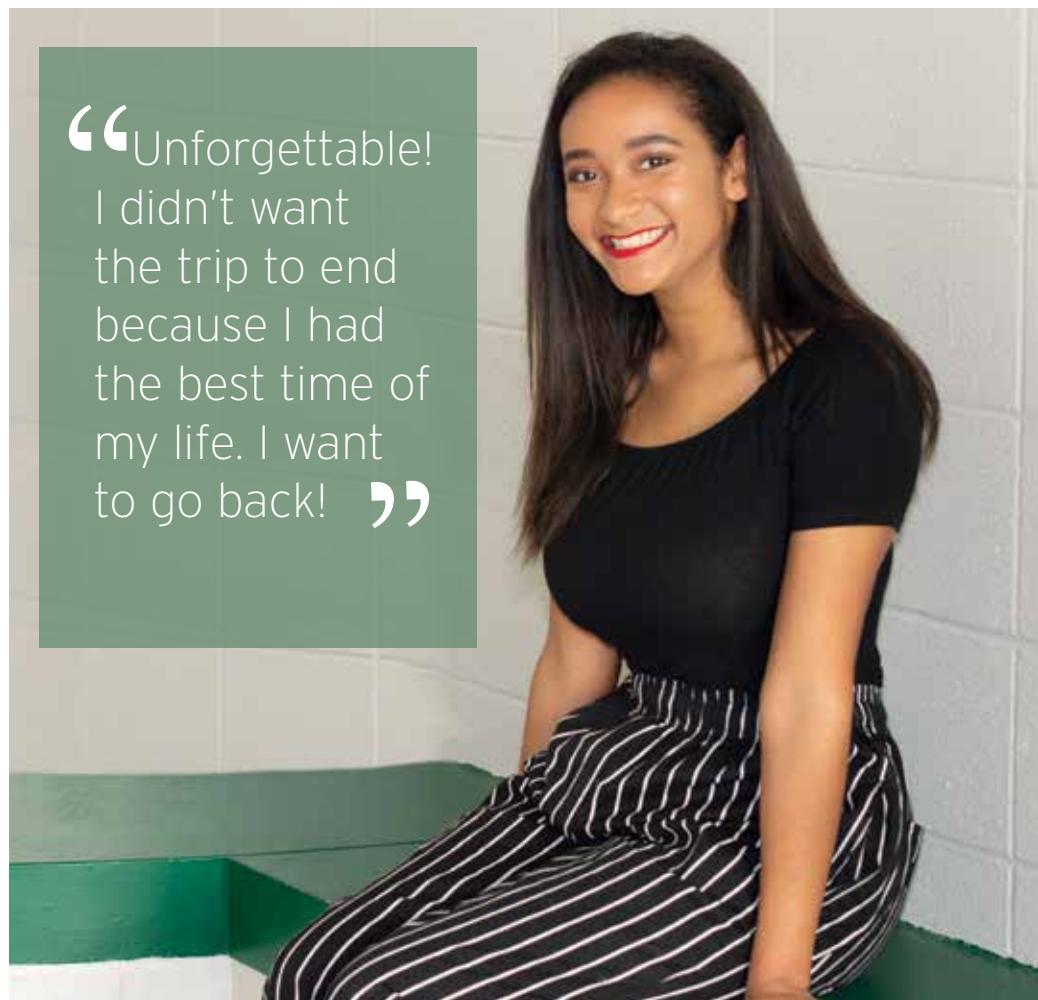
"I have several favorite memories. One was when we visited the Lincoln Memorial. The acoustics there are so cool. Another girl on the trip and I decided we were going to sing *Amazing Grace*. We started, and everyone began to join in. It was amazing."

The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association initiated the

WYT in the late 1950s after then-Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson suggested to electric co-op leaders that they "send youngsters to the nation's capital where they can see what the flag stands for and represents."

When on the trip, participants learn about the cooperative business model and meet with elected officials with the opportunity to discuss issues that are important back home.

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“Unforgettable! I didn't want the trip to end because I had the best time of my life. I want to go back!”

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Rachel Settles, Editor



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Introducing Pennies for Purpose

Purpose. These seven letters are what “drives the bus,” so to speak, at Blue Grass Energy. Regular readers of this column know we talk a lot about purpose. But we do more than talk. You can see us putting our purpose of making life better, the cooperative way into action every day. Whether it is volunteering with the American Cancer Society or planting trees at local schools, we give back so our communities thrive.

This month, I’m excited to announce a new program that allows you to be a purpose partner with us.

We are launching Pennies for Purpose, a program to help our neighbors and communities for just pennies each month. It is funded by members who choose to round up their monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar.

Every cent donated to this program will be given back to charities and organizations in our communities. Donations will be administered through an advisory group made up of your fellow cooperative members.

Participating is easy. To enroll, visit bgenergy.com and look for the logo on the left, call our office at (888) 546-4243, or look for an insert in your next bill. Once the program has funds, organizations throughout our 23-county service area will have the opportunity to apply for a donation through this program.

So, I invite each of you to be a purpose partner with us and enroll in Pennies for Purpose. Your small change can make a big difference. Together, we can have an impact in making life better, the cooperative way for our communities.



Pennies
for purpose



By President/CEO
Michael I. Williams



2019 WYT: JUNE 14-21

HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS CAN
APPLY AT BGENERGY.COM

DEADLINE FEB. 8

CONTINUED FROM 26A

In addition to the Capital Hill visit, students sightsee, participate in group activities with students from other states and experience events like the Sunset Parade at the Marine Corps (Iwo Jima) War Memorial.

“Another favorite experience was meeting our senators and congressmen. It helped me find where I fit in the political world. That was the day I realized I wanted to branch out and figure out where I stand.”

We asked Shayla her advice for students considering applying for the WYT. “If you are scared to apply, let go of your fear and do it anyway. My anxiety was really up there because I had no idea what to expect. Who would be there? What would I be doing? But I realized everyone going would be the same way.”

She admits she quickly made new friends and was so glad she was chosen to participate. “Unforgettable!

I didn’t want the trip to end because I had the best time of my life. I want to go back!”

Blue Grass Energy is looking for seven high school juniors who would like to represent the co-op on the 2019 WYT. Applying is easy at bgenergy.com. Look for Washington Youth Tour under the *Our Community* tab. The deadline to apply is February 8. If selected to go, the trip is June 14-21.



Clockwise from top, Blue Grass Energy’s 2018 WYT participants: Breanna Creekmore, Shayla Walker, Abby Eipert, Sarah Ortiz, James Sams, Julia Bame, Davis Tursany and Jenna Mullen. Our nation’s Capitol. WYT participant Shayla Walker next to the statue of Thomas Jefferson. Shayla Walker joins with other Kentucky Youth Tour participants to sing *Amazing Grace* at the Lincoln Memorial. Photos: Tim Webb

INTRODUCING OUR 2019 CHARITY PARTNER: **KENTUCKY WOUNDED HEROES**

Kentucky Wounded Heroes exists to serve Kentucky's current or former members of the United States Armed Forces, sworn law enforcement, sworn firefighters and sworn or affirmed EMS, all of whom have been injured during combat operations or

line-of-duty service. They provide opportunities to hunt, fish, travel and reconnect to nature's healing properties.

Their mission is to honor and empower the emotional wellness of military service members, police, fire

and emergency medical responders through outdoor activities, programs and services. We look forward to supporting this charity throughout 2019.

If you would like to know more about this organization, visit their website at kentuckywoundedheroes.net.



Each year, Blue Grass Energy chooses a charity to work with for the year. We partner with a local nonprofit organization that benefits the communities in which we live and serve. Our fundraising efforts for the entire year go to that cause. This year, we are partnering with Kentucky Wounded Heroes.

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