



Media Release

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Mississippi's brightest students learn leadership skills

The Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi held its 31st annual Youth Leadership Workshop Feb. 22-24 in Jackson. Electric cooperatives from all across the state sponsored 83 of the state's brightest high school juniors to learn leadership and team building skills that will help them in achieving their future goals.

Kori Miles of Columbia High School and Ally Ratliff of Forrest County Agricultural High School were sponsored for the program by PRVEPA. The two winners were selected through an essay writing and interview process.

The students participated in team-building activities, met with their state legislators and visited the state's Capitol. They also heard from a variety of motivational speakers, as well as Mississippi's top leaders, Gov. Phil Bryant and Lt. Gov. Tate Reeves.

Gov. Bryant, a strong supporter of the electric cooperatives' program during his time in office, encouraged the students to stay in Mississippi after college and use their talents to help improve the quality of life in our state.

Lt. Gov. Reeves reminded the group that anyone can reach their goals with hard work and determination, despite inevitable obstacles. He encouraged the students to "dream big, make a plan to achieve that dream and then work hard to achieve it."

Throughout the workshop, students participated in group activities, where they realized the importance of listening to others and working together to achieve common goals. They were also encouraged to exercise critical thinking skills and to develop solutions to issues that they can directly apply back home.

"These students are very enthusiastic about the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others," said General Manager Randy Wallace. "Each year, the youth leadership program has encouraged students to expand their view of the world, and the students take away lifelong lessons and develop lasting relationships. We are proud to have Kori and Ally represent PRVEPA, We believe in the investment we are making with these outstanding young people and we look forward to seeing all that they accomplish."

Kori is the daughter of Derrick and Latashia Owens of Columbia. Ally is the daughter of John Ratliff and Thelma Keith. In June, they will travel with the group to Washington, D.C. for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Tour. The seven-day trip will include visits to all of the popular monuments and memorials, as well as meetings with Mississippi's congressional delegation during a visit to Capitol Hill.

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