



Media Release

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Pearl River Valley Electric sends local students to Youth Leadership Workshop

Goal is to help prepare Mississippi's brightest students for the future

The Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi held its 33rd Youth Leadership Workshop Feb. 27-March 1 in downtown Jackson. The annual event brought 87 students from across Mississippi to the state capital to participate in activities designed to enhance their already present leadership abilities.

Eli Johnson of Columbia High and Hannah Phipps of Oak Grove High were selected from among the schools in Pearl River Valley Electric's service area to represent the electric cooperative during the workshop, which is designed to help instill leadership qualities, inspire creative thinking, encourage community service and introduce students to many of today's state role models.

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

Gov. Bryant continued his long-time support of the program by speaking to the students during a luncheon at the Old Capitol Inn. During his remarks, he talked about the importance of being a servant in the community and the great opportunities for leadership roles in the state. "Learn all you can about leadership skills and do that by helping in your communities," he said. "Leaders must take a bold step, and then convince enough others to help in completing a vision."

Lt. Gov. Reeves encouraged the students to take charge when there is a need in their community as well as to find ways to reach common objectives. "Through the years as lieutenant governor, my goals have evolved and have significantly increased," Reeves said. "We have to work together in order to accomplish goals."

Training young leaders is fundamental to building strong communities and through this program, Pearl River Valley Electric hopes to prepare promising students for a bright future.

"We are proud to have these two outstanding young people represent Pearl River Valley Electric," said Randy Wallace, general manager. "Each year, the youth leadership program has encouraged students to expand their view of the world, and they take away lifelong lessons and develop lasting relationships. They are our future leaders, and we look forward to seeing them be successful in their schools and communities."

Eli is the son of Mike and Kristi Johnson of Columbia, and Hannah is the daughter of Jamie and Stephanie Phipps of Oak Grove. In June, the two 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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