

2019 GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION YOUTH TOUR

# First-hand glimpse into government

## Two high school students selected for tour of D.C., \$1,000 scholarship

By Lisa Ogle

The two young women selected to represent Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative during the 2019 Government-in-Action Youth Tour have fine arts in common, and both most want to see veteran memorials in Washington, D.C., this summer.

Hailey Sherrill, a senior at Smithville High School, and Carolina Barboza, a junior at Manor New Tech High School, were selected for the honor in February. Jacob Neidig, a senior at Elgin High School, is the alternate to join the tour if Sherrill or Barboza is unable to attend.

The two participants will tour the Texas Capitol and the Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, then travel to Washington to visit historical sites, tour our nation's Capitol and meet a U.S. representative from Texas from June 12-21. They also each receive a \$1,000 scholarship after graduating from high school.

The two recipients and alternate were among 10 finalists who were interviewed at Bluebonnet's Headquarters on Feb. 11. Recipients were selected based on the interviews and essays in the application about their congressional representatives, public service, what they would like to see in Washington and what makes them special as a Texan.

Sherrill, 18, of Smithville is a varsity cheer-leading co-captain and head captain of the color guard. She plays French horn and made 4A Texas All-State Band all four years. She hopes to attend Louisiana State University in the fall, majoring in education. After college, she would like to return home and teach music.

"Smithville teachers have molded and shaped me into the individual I am today, no matter the extra hours away from their families," she said in her application. "I am truly grateful for their impact on me today and hope to reciprocate the favor as an educator in the future."

In Washington, Sherrill looks forward to



Carolina Barboza, far left, a junior at Manor New Tech High School, and Hailey Sherrill, a senior at Smithville High School, were chosen to represent Bluebonnet at the 2019 Government-in-Action Youth Tour, which includes a trip to Washington, D.C., and a \$1,000 scholarship. Jacob Neidig, a senior at Elgin High School, center, is the alternate.

Sarah Beal photo

visiting the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

"Not only is it a sincere reminder of the great sacrifice made for our country, but it brings even more personal meaning to me as the granddaughter of a Vietnam War veteran," she said in her application. "I value the time given to me with my grandfather and am reminded every day that we are so blessed to be given life in a country free of retribution and fear of suppression."

Barboza, 16, of Austin serves as president of her school's Key Club, a student-led service program; takes an after-school class on computer coding; and is a member of Interact, a volunteering organization, through which she plans to go abroad for an academic year.

She plans to become a chemical engineer "because of the freedom it gives me," she said. "I love the creativity and creation aspect of engineering and that engineers improve on what already exists to further humanity. I want to be a part of the achievements they pursue."

Barboza said in her application that after researching our nation's capital, she is most looking forward to seeing the Korean War Veterans Memorial.

"The Korean War is not something thoroughly taught in public schools curriculum, and I think that is what makes it significant," she said. "History is about not forgetting the

past and the events that unfolded to lead to these catastrophic events that shaped our futures."

Neidig, who turns 19 this month, lives in Elgin and has played football, baseball and several other sports, and is president of his school's National Honor Society and Key Club. He serves as a volunteer trainer at the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Texas in Austin and teaches First Communion classes and serves as a lector at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Elgin. He plans to study economics or political science at Stanford University in California.

Sherrill and Barboza will join 156 other young people representing other Texas electric co-ops and 1,888 teens from around the country in the nation's capital, where they will see lawmakers in action; tour monuments, museums and other historical sites; and attend events hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, an organization that represents more than 900 electric cooperatives.

The youth program began in 1964 and has more than 50,000 alumni, including CEOs and U.S. senators. For more information, visit [bluebonnet.coop](http://bluebonnet.coop). Click on Community, then Scholarships. Look for 2020 Government-in-Action applications this fall. □

## April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Bluebonnet is helping area organizations such as the Children's Advocacy Center and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Bastrop, Lee and Fayette Counties raise awareness during Child Abuse Prevention Month.

The cooperative's member service centers in Bastrop, Brenham, Giddings, Lockhart and Manor will be illuminated with blue light at night, our service vehicles will display blue ribbons in support of this cause, and key community events and resources will be promoted on our social media channels throughout April.

Learn more about this topic at [childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing](http://childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing).

## Vote and have a chance to win great prizes!

Voting for candidates for Bluebonnet's Board of Directors is one of the advantages of being a member of an electric cooperative. At the Bluebonnet Annual Meeting on May 14, members will hear a "state of the co-op" report, learn about milestones Bluebonnet has reached and plans for the co-op's future.

If you cannot attend the Annual Meeting, you can vote by proxy and still have a chance to win prizes. Any Bluebonnet member who votes by proxy or in person at Bluebonnet's Annual Meeting will be entered in a drawing to win a 2010 Ford F-150 4x4 SuperCab XLT half-ton pickup

that is being retired from Bluebonnet's fleet. It has a 6½-foot cargo bed and about 158,000 miles.

Any member who submits a completed proxy form by mail postmarked no later than May 7 or in person at a member service center by 5:30 p.m. May 7 will be entered in a drawing for a Yeti Tundra 65 cooler, or one of five \$100 Bluebonnet bill credits. Members do not need to be present at the Annual Meeting to be entered in the drawings.\*

\* Bluebonnet employees, members of the Board of Directors and their spouses are ineligible to win.

# Power out?

## HELP IS JUST A TEXT AWAY.

### Save time and help us quickly restore power using Outage Alerts texts.

Text **BBOUTAGE** to **85700** to sign up!

Then, save that number in your phone, perhaps as Bluebonnet Outages.

From there you can:

- ▶ Text **OUT** to that number when your power is out.
- ▶ Text **STATUS** for an update.
- ▶ Text **HELP** for more information.
- ▶ Text **STOP** to opt out of Outage Alerts.

Message and data rates may apply.



1234 Smith Street: We are aware of outages in your area. Estimated restore time: Thursday, April 28, 4 PM