

# 2019 OEC YOUTH TOUR CONTEST INSTRUCTIONS



Perhaps OEC's best-known and most anticipated youth program, Youth Tour is a week-long, all-expenses-paid educational trip to Washington, D.C. in June of each year. OEC annually sponsors four delegates—all juniors—from high schools within its service territory to go on Youth Tour. Students travel with the Oklahoma delegation (70+ students) to our nation's capital where they tour historic sites and national landmarks, meet Oklahoma's congressional delegation, and more. Youth Tour has earned its reputation as "a trip of a lifetime."

**THE CONTEST** ➔ Applicants will submit an essay or written speech on the topic outlined below. Eight applicants will be selected as finalists to progress in the contest. At the OEC Youth Tour Banquet (Thurs., Mar. 28), four of the eight finalists will be chosen as "Youth Tourians." The other four finalists will attend RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Award) Leadership Camp at Goddard Youth Camp.



**CONTEST TOPIC.** A cooperative is a self-help organization founded to satisfy the unmet needs and aspirations of the members it serves. Apply the cooperative business model to a need, problem, or aspiration—local, national, or international. Convince the audience to join your co-op.

Resources on the cooperative way of doing business and examples of many different co-ops are listed on the Youth Tour page: [www.okcoop.org/YOUTHTOUR](http://www.okcoop.org/YOUTHTOUR).

**NOT JUST AN ESSAY CONTEST** ➔ In this contest, you are being judged on your power of persuasion—first in writing and then in oration. You need to convince us (the audience) that your co-op will satisfy an unmet need or solve a problem that no other group or company will solve. You may need to convince us that the "unmet need or problem" is something we should care about. Making a connection with your audience is vital for the success of your co-op. [Think Shark Tank for co-ops.]

The first step in making a connection with your audience occurs well before you meet them. Choose your co-op carefully and pick a topic you care about.

Eight finalists will be chosen to move forward in the competition. Finalists are required to attend a half-day speech workshop, Sat., Mar. 9, where they will learn techniques to hone their speech-craft and visual presentation skills. Finalists are also required to compete at the OEC Youth Tour Banquet, Thurs., Mar. 28. The Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. is June 14-20, 2019. Before apply, make sure you are available on these dates.

## HOW TO ENTER ➔

- ▶ Choose a topic. Choose your co-op carefully. Your co-op should be about something you care about. OEC was formed by people who couldn't get the for-profit utility to provide them service at a fair rate. OEC Fiber is taking quality high-speed internet where no one else will. From grocery and farm co-ops to housing co-ops to education co-ops, the choice is yours and the options are infinite.
- ▶ Write your essay or speech. 750-1,000 words and double spaced.
- ▶ Complete the online entry form. You will upload all required documents using the form located at [www.okcoop.org/YouthTour](http://www.okcoop.org/YouthTour). Be prepared to include information about your activities, honors and awards, positions/offices held, community involvement, and special interests.
- ▶ Address questions to Tory Tedder-Loffland at 217-6726 or [tory@okcoop.org](mailto:tory@okcoop.org).

## REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST ➔

- I am currently a high school junior.
- I am available to attend the Workshop, Banquet, and Youth Tour.
- I have confirmed my availability with my parents, coaches, church group, club sponsors, and anyone else who makes decisions about my life.
- I am super excited and can't wait to win this thing. I LOVE CO-OPS!

**ENTRY DEADLINE: SUN., FEB. 3** ➔

*No submissions will be accepted after midnight.*

**[WWW.OKCOOP.ORG/YOUTHTOUR](http://WWW.OKCOOP.ORG/YOUTHTOUR)**