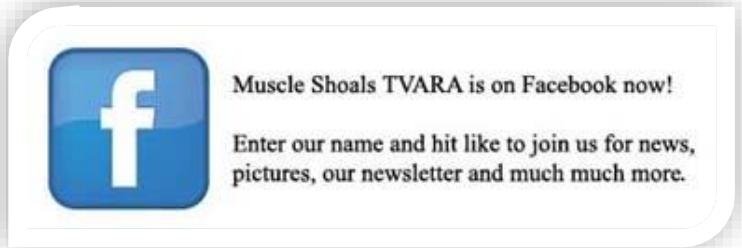


POWER Connect!

Muscle Shoals Chapter

Fall 2023 Issue



September Chapter Meeting Moved to September 19

I hope everyone has had a nice summer.

It was good to see everyone who was able to attend our annual picnic and health fair in June.

Our next opportunity to get together will be on Wednesday, September 19 at 10:00 a.m. This is the date of our fall chapter meeting. We will meet at the TVA Community Credit Union location on Wilson Dam Road. For those who are able, please use the Tri-Cities Church of Christ's parking lot in order to leave parking spaces available at the credit union for their members and for those who have difficulty walking.

Our guest speaker will be fellow retiree, Steve Cox. Steve will be speaking about the history of TVA working with the Department of Defense. We will also be welcoming this year's scholarship and essay winners.

Lunch will be served after the meeting. If you know a retiree who does not attend our meetings, please extend them an invitation. We **will** have door prizes!

See you September 19.

Tim.

A promotional advertisement for TVA Community Credit Union. The background is dark blue. At the top, in large yellow letters, it says "SUMMER CD SPECIAL". Below this, there are two yellow boxes. The left one says "9-MTH CD" and "EARN 5.25% APR*" with "\$500 MIN" below it. The right one says "18-MTH CD" and "EARN 4.25% APR*" with "\$500 MIN" below it. In the bottom left, it says "LIMITED TIME OFFER" in yellow. On the right side, the TVA Community Credit Union logo is shown, along with the website "www.tvaccu.com" and phone numbers "(256) 386-3000" and "(888) 274-2128". At the very bottom, there is small white text: "Funds must remain deposited for the term of the certificate. A penalty for early withdrawal may apply. See certificate for details. *APR is based on the current prime rate plus 2.25%. The actual rate may vary. © 2023 TVA Community Credit Union. All rights reserved."/>

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9-MTH CD
EARN **5.25% APR***
\$500 MIN

18-MTH CD
EARN **4.25% APR***
\$500 MIN

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Inside This Issue

- 1 Message from President
- 2 Upcoming Events/Advertisers
- 3 Board Members
- 3 Scholarship Winners
- 5 Walk of Honor Recognition
- 6 What is BEST Robotics
- 8 Valley Wide TVARA Picnic
- 8 Charity Golf Tournament
- 9 Meal Barrel Project Volunteers Needed
- 10 21st Annual Chapter Picnic
- 13 Endowed Scholarship Support
- 13 Where is the Punctuation?
- 14 2023 Winning Essay
- 15 Help! We Need Your Help!

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, September 19, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Steve Cox – “Working with DOD”

Free Lunch and Door Prizes

Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Wednesday, December 13, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Benefits Update and Christmas Medley by Alyssa

Free Lunch and Door Prizes

Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Wednesday, March 13, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Program to be announced

Free Lunch and Door Prizes

Wilson Dam Road TVA Community Credit Union

Tuesday, June 19, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Annual Picnic and Health Fair

Program: Health, Fitness, & More

Great Door Prizes (thousands of dollars)

Florence/Lauderdale Coliseum

Our Advertisers

Our advertisers are contributing to our Muscle Shoals Chapter TVARA Endowment by advertising in our newsletter and at the Annual Picnic. When considering any of the services offered, please think first of our advertisers!

TVA Community Credit Union

Alabama Health Guidance

Lauderdale Christian Nursing Home

Helen Keller Hospital

Columbia Cottage

Delta Dental

Welltower Pegasus Tenant

Cottage of the Shoals

Cigna Healthspring

Edward Jones (Drew Malone)

Special Thanks to non-advertising
Supporters

TVA Power Service Shops

Meet your Muscle Shoals TVARA Board Members

President, Tim Cornelius

Vice President, Debbie Norton

Treasurer, Joan Marsh

Secretary, Carol Sherer

TVARA Picnic Manager, Henry Long

Hospitality, MJ Ligon

Scholarship Program, John Ingwersen

Newsletter: John Ingwersen, Jim Harris

Board Members: John Blackwell, Cameron Kay, Jim Green, Bill Baggett,
Greg & Anita Vandiver

Problems with benefits, pharmacy? Contact TVA Service Center 888-275-8094.

Comments/Recommendations/Articles for Newsletter? Send to jl Ingwersen@gmail.com.

Meet our 2022-2023 Scholarship Winners

For the first time we have two sisters as our scholarship winners Abigail Smith; who was on our scholarship last year and her sister, Mollie Smith who is also our essay winner. Photo to right from our Scholar Luncheon.

Get to know our scholars below.

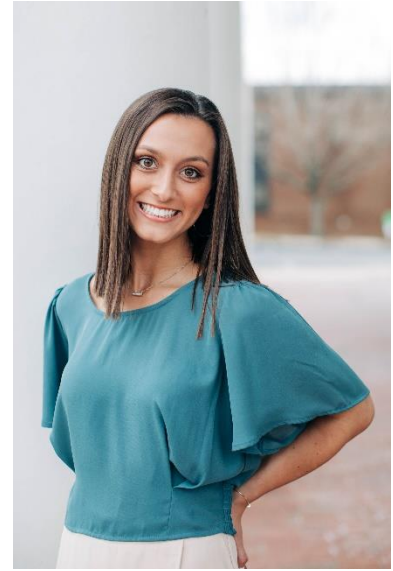


1 Left to Right, Cameron Kay, John Blackwell, Joan March, Abigail Smith, Mollie Smith

Abigail Smith

Muscle Shoals TVARA/UNA Endowed Scholarship Winner

Hello! My name is Abigail Smith, and I am a junior at The University of North Alabama. I am the granddaughter of TVA Retiree, Leon Smith. I am studying Elementary Education and will graduate in December 2024. I am a captain of ambassadors for the College of Education and Human Sciences, which gives me the opportunity to serve our college on campus and in the community. I serve on the executive council for Alpha Gamma Delta as VP Academic Excellence, which has given me the opportunity to promote academic success within our chapter. I am very passionate about making an impact on campus through these different student organizations but will always put my academics above all. I have maintained a 4.0 GPA throughout my time in college and have made the Dean's List each semester. In addition to campus involvement, I also have a part time job at Reclaimed Spirit in downtown Florence as a Retail Associate. I am so honored to receive this scholarship for the second year and am grateful for the opportunities this association has provided me.



Thanks again!
Abigail Smith

Mollie Smith

Muscle Shoals TVARA/UNA Endowed Scholarship & Essay Winner

Hi! My name is Mollie Smith and I am a freshman at The University of North Alabama. I am the daughter of Micah Smith, a current TVA employee, and the granddaughter of Leon Smith, a TVA retiree. I am currently an undecided major at UNA but leaning towards Secondary Education or Psychology as my course of study. I have held many leadership positions in the past, including but not limited to: 2023 Class Secretary for Florence High School, Nenon Community Service Club Secretary, and History Club Secretary. Along with those leadership positions I was a part of National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta Honor Society, Key Club, Future Business Leaders of American, Spanish Club, and Student Council. I take great pride in every leadership position I have held and club I was involved in. My greatest honor during my high school career was planning a community wide worship night that over 60 people attended. I maintained a 4.0 GPA all of high school and have a goal to do the same in college. I am a current employee at TNT Fireworks where I work in the call center. I am so grateful for the opportunity to receive this scholarship and so appreciative of all TVA has done for me and my family.



Thank you for your support!
Mollie Smith

See Mollie's winning essay on page 14.

TVA Retiree Recognized at 2023 city of Florence Walk of Honor Dedication Ceremony.

By John P. Blackwell



Dr. Gerald Gordon Williams

On June 30, 2023, Dr. Gerald G. Williams, TVA retiree was one of our individuals recognized by the city of Florence on the Walk of Honor Dedication Ceremony.

Dr. Williams, earned his recognition by his contribution as an international leader in agronomy. He devoted his life to the alleviation of poverty and world hunger, Williams trained in agriculture, with degrees from Pepperdine College, UC Davis, and Purdue University. He believed in sound agricultural practices and community outreach locally, regionally nationally, and internationally. He worked in agriculture for Purdue, USDA, TVA, and Heifer Project International. Gerald Williams' success resulted from his skills as a teacher, scientist, practitioner, and leader in agriculture and his appreciation of the basic goodness of people worldwide.

While Dr. Williams was recognized for his international work it was his local work that many of us remember him most. Dr. Williams, in the 1970's was the brain child of what is known today as the Gerald Williams Cooperative Garden Program. TVA retirees and other throughout the Shoals area are well aware of the Program and how the program benefits low-income families in the Shoals area by providing an opportunity to grow vegetables in their homes. Through the programs history either free vegetable seeds, plants, and fertilizer or vouchers to purchase were provided annually to more than 1,000 families. It is aimed to help participants become self-sufficient and save hundreds of dollars.

More about the Walk of Honor. In 2006 Mayor Bobby Irons took the initial steps to appoint and commission the Walk of Honor Selection Committee. The purpose is to bring recognition to residents of Florence and Lauderdale County who have excelled at the national and international levels in various field. As of 2023, over 60 individuals have been recognized. To learn more about your community and the individuals that have contributed, enjoy a walk down the path of honor beside the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center.



What is BEST Robotics?

BEST (Boosting Engineering Science & Technology) Robotics is a wonderful project-based learning experience for students in 6-12th grades. Obviously, the experience is STEM-centric. Many students are intimidated by “robotics” or “STEM.” But, fear not! There are so many other skills that are learned throughout the 8-week competition (i.e., marketing, public speaking, engineering design process, problem-solving skills, artwork, branding, website development, CAD or engineering drawings, ...) EVERY student could benefit from participation in this program.

Many robotics competitions do NOT involve construction to the level that BEST does. Our students take a box of electronic components “returnables” and a box of “consumables” to create their own unique robot. Imagine getting a box of plywood, screws, PVC pipe, car door alarms, bungee cords, rubber bands, piano wire, etc. The possibilities are endless and every team has the same materials to use. This levels the playing field! No matter the socio-economic status of the school, the same materials are available for all teams. And best of all, **BEST is FREE!** No cost to compete and materials for the robot are free, as well.

At a minimum, each team must build, test, tweak their robot to achieve specified objectives each year. Every year the theme changes. This year the theme is “Incision Decision” which highlights the healthcare industry, specifically robotic surgery.

Along the way teams document EVERYTHING to compile an extensive Engineering Notebook showing their organization and design process skills. If it is not documented, it did NOT happen. Most of our teams do more than the minimum. Many teams compete for the BEST Award – most prestigious award. The BEST Award has the following components: robot performance, engineering notebook, marketing presentation, trade show exhibit & interview, and spirit & sportsmanship. There are also other optional components such as website design, teamwear design, engineering drawings, most photogenic robot, most robust robot, safety award, etc. One of the more important concepts that students learn is how to problem-solve and work as a team.



Please check out the videos at <https://nwalbest.com> and <https://bestrobotics.org> for more information. Many of the hubs are hosted at the Alabama Community Colleges. Every hub needs volunteers! Please consider helping the hub nearest you.

Students compete at the hub and the top few teams advance to the South's BEST Regional Championship. There you literally have the best of the BEST! The South's BEST Regional was hosted for the past 20 years at Auburn University. This year the competition will move to the University of North Alabama! South's BEST Regional covers all teams from Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida. It is a huge event and the University of North Alabama is going all out to make it a celebration to remember!

The dates for the South's BEST Regional Championship are December 1-3, 2023 in Florence, Alabama. We expect about 40 teams to compete there with a crowd size of about 3,000. Mary Lou Ewald, Auburn COSAM Outreach Director, has inspired many hub directors in our area and students! She has always made our students feel like rock stars. That tradition will be continued at the University of North Alabama this year.

“Being named the new home to the annual South's BEST Robotics competition is a win for the University as well as our region,” said Julie Taylor, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management. “UNA is excited to host students interested in multiple disciplines like STEM, Nursing, Education and Business. We hope to be able to offer varied scholarships to the winner. And, as *Alabama's Workforce Development University*, South's BEST is the perfect fit.”

Please register at <https://registry.bestrobotics.org> to become a volunteer at your local hub and/or South's BEST. For further information email Kim Sheppard at kim.sheppard@nwscc.edu .

Come join a community filled with fun activities, and outings while making new friends.

Bernard "Bernie" Community Dog

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ASSISTED LIVING
USNews
WORLDWIDE REPORT
2023-2024

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Call 256-408-4211 to schedule your tour today.

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VALLEYWIDE TVARA PICNIC – Sign up for bus trip today

The TVARA annual Chattanooga picnic will be September 13th, 2023. Muscle Shoals chapter will again have two buses available for a cost-free trip there and back. Loading ([6:00AM](#), departure [6:20](#)) will be in the PET SMART parking lot next to Academy Sports, Florence AL. We will make one additional pickup stop, Foodland parking lot, Rogersville, AL.

We are still taking sign-ups by telephone.

Billy Baggett 256-394-1435
Cameron Kay 256-810-6569

Florence Civitan Charity Golf Tournament

The Florence Civitan Club's largest fundraiser of the year is coming up on Friday, September 22, 2023, at the Robert Trent Golf Trail at the Shoals. Funds raised from this, and other fundraisers helps our community through direct support to organizations like UCP, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Meals on Wheels and many others.

The local TVARA Chapter and BVI donated \$5,000 to the tournament and as an Eagle Sponsor we have a very limited number of complimentary slots available on our teams on a first-come first-serve basis.

To give everyone a fair shot I ask that you respond to me via email at jeharris1953@gmail.com as soon as you read this article and I will use the time and date I received the email to choose participants for the very limited spots. If you include a phone number, I can get in touch with you directly.

Thanks, and good luck!

Jim Harris
jeharris1953@gmail.com

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Need Volunteers!

The Muscle Shoals Chapter of the TVARA is working with employees of TVA to volunteer at the Meal Barrel Project in Sheffield, Alabama. The Meal Barrel Project works to end hunger by offering hunger relief programs which immediately feed people in need. The Meal Barrel Project provides fresh fruit, vegetables, canned goods, bread and hygiene kits for people in need. The Meal Barrel Project currently serves anywhere from 329 to 500 families on a weekly basis and additional qualifying members of Colbert County. This project is the largest food project in the state of Alabama.



Cars wrapped around the Food Barrel Project in Sheffield AL

If you ever in the area around Helen Keller Hospital in Sheffield on a Wednesday afternoon, you may have noticed the long lines of cars around the old National Guard Armory. These are folks that are in need of food who have lined up at the drive through food pantry to receive a box of food provided by the Meal Barrel Project Food Pantry. Elderly or disabled people stop at the open bay door where a volunteer places a box of food into their vehicle.



Boxes of food to be distributed.

Perhaps you have read in the Times Daily some of the testimonies from recipients. As you know these are folks who work, but minimum wage is not enough to make ends meet. The Food Barrel Projects provides a week's amount of food to these folks who often have no other source to help them.

To serve this many folks takes a lot of labor. This is where you can help by volunteering to assemble boxes of food. The boxes contained a variety of food – frozen hamburger and hamburger patties, canned fruits and vegetables, bags of rice, pasta, fresh fruit, snack foods and numerous other items.

The Food Barrel Project depends on donations and grant funds, including money from the Colbert County Community Development Committee, which disburses Tennessee Valley Authority in-lieu-of-tax funds

Please mark your calendar for September 14, 2023. We need you there at 8:00 and would like for you to stay until 11:00. If you can help, please text John Blackwell, 256-710-9022 or jpblackwell841@comcast.net.



Boxes of food prepared by volunteers to be distributed

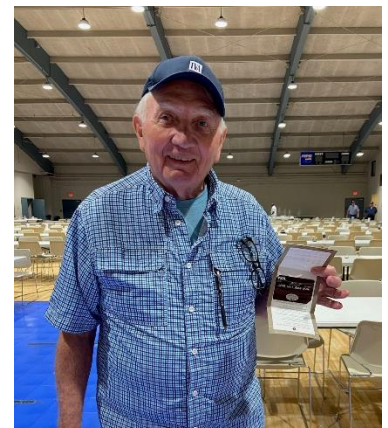


The 21st Muscle Shoals TVARA Picnic

By John Blackwell

Well, the picnic for this year is history. The picnic has come a long way since the first picnic in 2001. The first picnic was held a Veterans Park in Florence. In our part of the world our summer days in mid-June go it was hot and of course an afternoon thunder storm. As a result, a retiree or two were overcome with heat and not enough shelters for all to get out of the weather. It was decided by Bill Sutherland, Chapter President at the time, and other officers that future picnic would be held inside to avoid the issues and stress with an outside event.

The picnic was moved to the gym at Northwest Shoals Community college until we needed more room at which time we moved the picnic to the Florence Lauderdale Coliseum. The City of Florence has done a great job in providing not only an adequate number of tables and chairs but in the



Billy Baggett winner of the 2023 \$1,000.00 door prize.

maintenance of the facility. One of the biggest concerns from retirees is that the walk from the parking lot to the coliseum is too great. Next year we hope to be able to provide a shuttle service. Liability insurance has been the issue in keeping us from providing the service in the past.



Drew Malone of Edward Jones is a sponsor

In the past we have notified retirees by mail of the picnic. Because of cost we have limited the mailing to only members. This year we made a major change. We mailed invitations to all 2400 retirees in the Muscle Shoals chapter. In addition, we mailed invitations to about 800 retirees in the Browns Ferry Chapter for a total of over 3200 invitations. Our generous sponsors helped cover these costs. We have attempted to keep the cost of the picnic to a minimum for retirees. The cost of other expenses to include door prizes and rental of the coliseum is covered by supporters and the chapter.

The Muscle Shoals Chapter has always had a strong financial standing and unlike other chapters even maintained a significant certificate of deposit. Several years ago, the Chapter decided that the certificate of deposit was not benefiting the average chapter member as much as it could. A decision was made to establish a scholarship in the name of the chapter at the University of North Alabama that would give preference

to paid members of our local Chapter.

For several years we attempted to increase the amount of the scholarship by asking for donations. However, history showed us we could not offer a significant scholarship because we could not obtain the growth of the fund by seeking only donations. We realized we could use the funds from sponsors for the scholarship. Sponsors pay various amounts to exhibit at the picnic. As a result, the fund has seen the growth needed to establish a substantial scholarship. This year we offered two scholarships. In order to improve retiree participation in the picnic we began offering not only a significant door prize but also numerous smaller door prizes. We have for the past couple of years offered a grand prize of \$1,000.00 with about 30 door prizes with a value of \$50.00 or more. Door prizes are funded by supporters and by sponsors. We also raffle off take-out meals from the leftover food.



Cerdric and Mary McCloud



Linda Roden, TVA Retiree, Debbie Norton, TVA Retiree, Jennifer Johnson, BVI staff, Bonnie Frost, TVA Retiree, Judy Allen, BVI staff and TVA retiree

We want retirees to have a good chance at winning a door prize. We also realize that retirees want to attend to renew old friendships. In order to give plenty of time to talk we have avoided the distraction of a band or loud music. Offering a good relatively inexpensive meal is also a priority. Basically, the retirees pay only the cost of the food. We have been averaging for some time about 400 to attend the picnic. We hope to increase that number. The higher the number of retirees attending the more attractive the picnic is to our sponsors. We will continue to look for ways to increase participation and would appreciate your thoughts and ideas to improve the picnic.

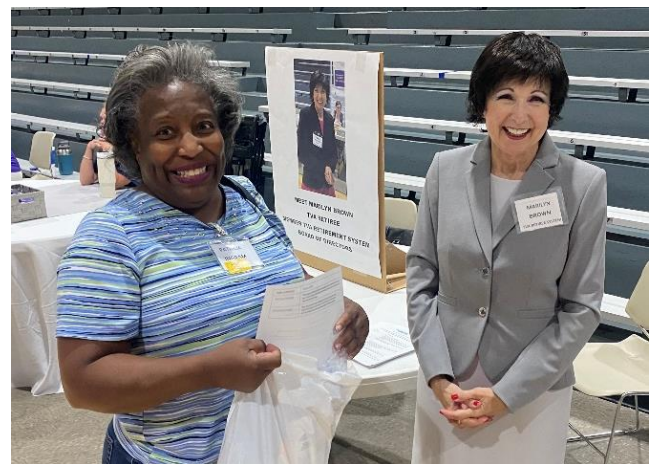


Karen Dinwindle with Delta Dental, Ricky Ogletree, retiree and Bonnie Frost, retiree

Email your thoughts to: John Blackwell at jblackwell841@comcast.net or text at 256 710 9022.



Alyssa Asley, TVA Community Credit Union with winner of the contents of the money jar.



Patrica Ingram and Marily Brown, Director, TVA Retirement System Board

Endowed Scholarship - Your Support Needed!

We have several businesses and charities who have been supporting our endowed scholarship by providing financial support through the purchase of ads for our newsletter and booths at our Annual Health Fair/Picnic. We thank them for their generous support, and hope that each of our members will look at their advertisements in this, and future newsletters, and support them as they support us.

As of July 31, 2023, our scholarship endowment totaled \$88,971. We need your support to push on toward a \$100,000 endowment.

The endowment for 2023-2024 will support two scholarships. These awards exceed \$1,500 each. The scholarship award gives preference to relatives of active (paid) Muscle Shoals TVARA members. In addition, your TVARA Board has approved an award of \$200 for the winning essay.

Please make our endowed scholarship a priority for your charitable giving. Donations are tax-deductible. If you would like to donate, go to: <https://www.una.edu/give/tva-scholarship.html>. You may also donate by check. Make your check payable to Muscle Shoals Chapter, TVARA/UNA Endowed Scholarship and mail it to:

UNA Foundation Office (Attn: Endowed Scholarships)
Box 5113
Florence, AL 35632-0001

WHERE IS THE PUNCTUATION?

1873.. Emmons wrote the following article in 1873. Note that each paragraph is exactly the same word for word. Only the punctuation is changed. **Much of life depends on where we put the emphasis or punctuation.**

THE GOOD MAN

He is an old and experienced man. In vice and wickedness he is never found. Opposing the work of iniquity, he takes delight. In the downfall of his neighbor he never rejoices. In the prosperity of any of his fellow creatures he is ready to assist. In destroying the peace of society he takes no pleasure. In serving the Lord he is uncommonly diligent. In sowing discord among his friends and acquaintances he takes no pride. In laboring to promote the cause of Christianity he has not been negligent. In endeavoring to stigmatize all public teachers he makes no exertions. To subdue his passions he strives hard. To build up Satan's Kingdom he lends no aid. To support the gospel among the heathen he contributes largely. To the evil adversary he pays no attention. To good advice he gives great heed. To the devil he will never go. To heaven he must go where he'll receive the just recompense of his reward.

THE BAD MAN

He is an old and experienced man in vice and wickedness. He is never found opposing the work of iniquity. He takes delight in the downfall of his neighbor. He never rejoices in the prosperity of any of

his fellow creatures. He is ready to assist in destroying the peace of society. He takes no pleasure in serving the Lord. He is uncommonly diligent in sowing discord among his friends and acquaintances. He takes no pride in laboring to promote the cause of Christianity. He has not been negligent in endeavoring to stigmatize all public teachers. He makes no exertions to subdue his passions. He strives hard to build up Satan's Kingdom. He lends no aid to support the gospel among the heathen. He contributes largely to the evil adversary. He pays no attention to good advice. He gives great heed to the devil. He will never go to heaven. He must go where he'll receive the just recompense of his reward.

Contributed by Joan Marsh

2023 MSC TVARA ESSAY CONTEST WINNER

Mollie Smith

As a high school student, you do not often sit in history class and think about how historical events impact your life. But in my 10th grade American history class I did. We were learning about life after the Great Depression and President Roosevelt's idea for relief and recovery. The New Deal programs had the goal of providing relief, recovery, or reform for the nation or a specific area. The Tennessee Valley Authority was introduced by President Roosevelt with the goal of providing recovery for the Tennessee Valley. TVA is one out of seven New Deal programs still in effect today under its original name. According to historians, there was such a feeling of excitement in the Tennessee Valley when FDR traveled through towns explaining the prosperity that was to come from this program. When learning about this in 10th grade I immediately knew and understood the lifelong impact it had on society as a whole. TVA was created with the goal of providing recovery and jobs to the Tennessee Valley. It achieved the goal of allowing for better navigation and flood protection to the surrounding areas.

With TVA being around and active for almost 90 years it has impacted my family in very positive ways. It provided job security and increased stability for both my grandfather, Raybron Leon Smith Jr., and my father, Micah Leon Smith. This allowed for my family to live comfortably and give my father a way to provide for us. Both of these men in my life have demonstrated what it means to 'never work a day in your life'. My grandfather took and my father takes great pride in what they do and never considered it a chore to go to work. They were passionate about what they do and that is a trait I know they both instilled in me.

On a wider scale TVA still provides electricity and jobs for so many. Even as technology has advanced in the last 90 years, TVA continues to evolve with the times to continue to fulfill all of the world's needs. TVA awarded a grant this past year for the STEM programs in high schools. Florence High School was one of the schools in Alabama that received this funding. This allows for students, like myself, to learn and be educated in a way that students at other schools cannot. The STEM program at my school allows for students to have hands-on experiences with real world situations. The students in schools that do not have funding may have to just sit in a classroom all day and be lectured and never set foot in a science lab. With the funding from TVA, students at Florence High School are able to experience time in the lab at least every 2 weeks! This gives students at FHS a tremendous advantage above other schools in our nation.

It may not be clear to many but for me it is easy to see how TVA has impacted my life and our nation. I appreciate the opportunity to be able to apply for this scholarship. I assure you that I would be a good representative of both TVA and UNA, if chosen.

Help! We Need Your Help!

Do you enjoy writing or photography? We're working to make this newsletter the best; and your talents are needed. If you would like to occasionally write an article on your experiences, or on a TVA person who deserves recognition, please let me know; and I will schedule your article for a future newsletter. Do you enjoy photography? We could use a designated photographer to get pictures at our various events. We have been somewhat haphazard at this, and would like to get better. Call John Ingwersen at 256-757-5325; or email him at jlingwersen@gmail.com.



Suggestions?

We want your feedback, comments, and suggestions. Let us know what you would like for TVARA programs, for our newsletter, and/or ways we can improve, in any way, our service to you.