

The Citizen Builder

May 31, 2025 | VOL.88 Issue.5 | albscitizenbuilder@gmail.com | alboysstate.org

More than Marble: A Capitol Visit

Landon Grove



All week at Alabama Boys’ State, delegates are busy campaigning, voting, and learning about how government works on several levels. The week culminates in a trip to Montgomery on Friday, where delegates will be able to learn about careers in their interest groups and meet their counterparts in the state government.

In Montgomery, before delegates broke up into their interest groups, they took a tour of both Bicentennial Park and The State Capitol Building.

Bicentennial Park displayed the story of Alabama’s history, beginning all the way back in ancient times when Alabama was underwater, up to present times and looking beyond. The park displayed the state at both its best and worst moments, from being the center of the slave trade and the confederacy, to becoming a technological powerhouse on the fronts of steel, automobile manufacturing, and the space race. The park featured granite blocks with intricate sculptures and plaques that told the story of the state’s history.

At The State Capitol Building, known as Goat Hill, Boys Staters were met with grand halls and beautiful ornamentation that showed the rich history of the state. After walking up the stairs, which were furnished with lavish brass handrails, delegates learned about the original Supreme Court room and the Supreme

Court Library. After going up yet another set of spiral stairs, built by master engineer, builder, and former slave Horace King, they got to see the original chambers of the Alabama House of Representatives and Senate. That Senate chamber was the room where seven states met together and chose to secede from the union and elected Jefferson Davis as their president. In addition to housing the offices of the highest ranking governmental officials in the State of Alabama, the Capitol also houses a variety of historical artifacts and pieces of art. These include a statue of Lurleen Burns Wallace and an intricate painting under the Capitol Rotunda (see photo).

Attending the highly anticipated Montgomery trip was a great way to wrap up a wonderful and eventful week at Alabama Boys’ State.



Who Is Governor 88, Luke Lawson

Demetrius Coleman

It’s a well-known fact that Luke Lawson is now the Governor of the 88th Annual Alabama Boys State. Citizens got a chance to learn about his policies and how great of a leader he is all week, but what isn’t so well-known is who is Luke Lawson outside of Boys State. Although a federalist of City 4, Copeland, within the program, Luke really hails from Headland High School (HHS) in Henry County. At this school home to the Rams, Luke serves as the first-ever class president and a four term president of HHS’s Future Business Leaders of America chapter. He is also greatly involved in his community outside of school, as he is the Chairman of Headland County’s Youth Leadership Board.

When interviewed, Luke was asked about how he got into politics. He recounted on the 2020 Presidential Election in which he threw support to local candidates, more specifically Jeff Sessions for U.S. Senate. Majorly, Luke would also aid Tim James’ campaign for Governor during the 2022 Gubernatorial Election. During this time, he would become the county’s co-chair for the campaign at just 15 years old, the youngest to ever do so in the country. To further his interest in policy, he plans to attend Auburn University after high school for a degree in political science to then attend law school for a Juris Doctorate.

Outside of academics and the demands

of politics, Luke loves working on cars and hanging out with his friends, who he wouldn’t have been able to achieve this without. He’s humbled to be chosen from an array of boys across the state as Governor and is proud he can represent his county to bring this accomplishment back to them.



House of Representatives

Sullivan Cole

First a speaker of the house taught us on the electric voting system. We then prayed and called role. The house chamber was beautiful with two huge marble pillars in the middle. Each representative from each district had a seat and 5 buttons on their desk, on to vote yea, one to vote nay, one if you’re not on either side, one to speak, and one to page. The desks also had little draw to fit your pens in and other things for your convenience.

A couple of bills we discussed were: A bill about raising minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$11.25 an hour. There were a couple of votes for yea but ultimately the bill did not pass. Another was about companies building new facilities close to any major Alabama rivers to offer them more economic mean to bring jobs to Alabama. This bill was sent back to committee because of environmental concerns. Another was about the legalization of marijuana. With

this bill being extremely controversial, it was a huge debate, but in the end it did not pass to legalize the substance. Another bill was talking about lowering income tax. This was extremely controversial with the concerns of money back to the state, but eventually passed. Overall, the House had a great time today, and having that experience in Montgomery was amazing!

5-DAY WEATHER OUTLOOK

Sat



81° 62°

Sun



80° 63°

Mon



86° 67°

Tue



88° 70°

Wed



88° 72°



@alboysstate

Continued on Page 2

Whitewater Rafting and Engineering Combined: A Field Trip Recap

Oz Harbin

Yesterday, during our trip to the Capitol, the engineering and computer science interest group went out on a field trip. The group went to the Montgomery Whitewater Park to check out the facilities. Upon arrival, the group were given a speech by multiple engineers, mostly civil engineers. The talks were about what their jobs were and more importantly, advice to upcoming engineers. Once it was done, the group was told about the park itself. Only three man-made whitewater parks exist in the U.S., and this is one of them. The park contains thirteen million

gallons in its entirety. It also has five pumps, and if they were all turned on at one hundred percent, half of all Montgomery would lose its power. The park includes white water rafting, rock climbing, and eating amenities. The park uses chlorine to clean the water, just like you would do to your pool. The group ended their trip by going to the pump station. The station was encased in a concrete cube, and contained massive circular water pumps. The tour guide suggested that it all isn't too complicated, it's just on a large scale.



Inside News Media

Evan Heartsill

Today, the news media interest group had the chance to travel with Alabama Boys State for a visit to Montgomery. We started our day at WSFA 12 News, the local news station in Montgomery, where we had the opportunity to tour the building. While touring we got to see the control room and the studio where they record each broadcast, we truly saw how much work goes into making a single broadcast

in such a short time. One of the things that surprised me was how important marketing is in the news business. Not only do they make commercials, they also sell them and sell them for airtime. News media is not just about reporting facts, but also about making sure people see and trust your coverage everyday. After touring the WSFA, we visited the Alabama State Capitol and Bicentennial Park which truly

inspired us as we walked the halls as some of the governments most prominent members. This trip was not just educational it also inspired us to reach our dreams. As I head into my senior year of high school, experiences like this motivate me to think about how I can use what I learned at Boys State in not only my community, but in my further education.



Fire Trucks to Circle K: A Rainy-Day Adventure for Fire College Delegates

Jayden Jones

Delegates that chose Fire College as their interest group got the treat to go to the Montgomery Fire Rescue Station. Delegates got to meet the Fire Chief, Milford Jordan and got a tour around the station and see the fire truck,

some even got on top of the truck. They also got meet some trainees who are working on to becoming Fire Fighters. While walking back to the state house, a Fire college delegates was swept into a Circle K, due to the rain, where

they struck up conversations with locals and grabbed some snacks.

Dinner with a View: A Bryant-Denny Tour

Briggs Brown

Boys Stater's had the experience to see the stadium lights and eat some southern bites at Bryant-Denny Stadium. The delegates started by going through the Walk of Champions into the Alabama Football Locker Room to view the space and get a behind the scenes look at the player's lockers. This featured a "spirit wall" filled with Bama spirit items, and footballs to represent their high-energy team. Boys Stater's got a chance to see many historical signs and

photos of very important players and coaches located in the recruiting room. There were also many illuminated displays featuring 30 SEC championships, 18 national championships, and pictures of numerous championship rings throughout the space and stairwell. The Boys Stater's then went up to grab a BBQ style dinner inside the stadium, and went to eat in The Zone on the stadiums seats with the amazing view of the

entire football field. Being the only group in the stadium is a feeling like no other, and seeing the stadium with empty seats made us appreciate the beauty of Bryant-Denny Stadium. The Citizen Builder staff would like to personally thank the staff of The University of Alabama, the staff of Boys State, and everyone who made this experience possible for the delegates. Roll Tide!

