

TENNESSEE AMERICAN LEGION

BOYS STATE

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TREVOR PARSONS ELECTED GOVERNOR

Trevor Parsons, a Johnsonian from Kreider City, won the governor's seat in the general election held Wednesday at Boys State.

STATE ELECTION RESULTS

Supreme Court

Brent Burdick, Eli Callender, Don Kim, Chow Paueksakon, Stanley Zhao

Court of Appeals

Ivan Delgadillo, Charlie Edmonson, LJ Hale, Walter Harper, Philip Herrin, Jacob Hudspeth, Tucker King, Mckinley Lough, Matthew Mack, Christian Mahan, Nathan Pasumbal, Mason Rochelle

Court of Criminal Appeals

Sehrab Bagha, Ashwin Balaje, Jacob Coble, Hayden Downs, Raley Hendrix, Caden Heupel, Matthew Jones, Shaan Patel, Luke Schroeder, Landry Wells, Brody Woodson

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR GOVERNOR

Trevor Parsons of Kreider City came to Boys State with expectations and encouragement a bit beyond the level of most delegates. However, that didn't make his journey to winning the election for governor easier. He worked for it, he says, with tremendous support from his Boys State city and his classmates from Crossville.

"At the beginning, I told everyone in my city I was running for governor," Parsons said. "All the people in my party in Kreider City got behind me. Then people in other Boys State cities from my high school, Cumberland County High School, agreed to vote for me."

Parsons plays basketball and football, and recently began participating in track. He also volunteers with the Interact Club, a community service club.

His favorite part of Boys State has been the SCALES program. He wants other delegates to know the lessons learned at Tech don't have to stop on Saturday.

"Remember the friendships and the camaraderie. Use it to build relationships when you get back home."

Boys Staters made this election about Trevor, and it's his time to lead the hundreds of other young men here this week. But he did have someone to help encourage him on his path. His brother, Logan, was elected Boys State governor six years ago.

"He encouraged me. He said the goal is to get to know people, don't make it about yourself."

TBI Director Deputy Brad Nealon Speaks to Delegates

Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Deputy Director Brad Nealon shared information, stories and advice with Boys State delegates on Wednesday evening. After a talk about the history of the organization, he took questions from dozens of delegates who wanted to know more about the TBI.

Nealon explained the beginnings of the TBI after a 1949 murder of J.T. Lutz in Greene County. There, John Jones Sr, known as the father of the TBI, realized that officers working the scene weren't trained and thus were destroying evidence and trampling the scene. The Tennessee Bureau of Criminal Investigations was created in 1951 and answered to the governor until a scandal rocked the state and changed the TBI forever.

"Gov. Blanton was selling pardons in the '70s, and an investigation began. The governor learned of it, and he asked for the file. It was delivered to him."

Shortly thereafter the state legislature created the TBI in 1980 as a response to the outcry for an independent investigative body not under any person or the legislature.

Nealon highlighted two areas of high activity and investigation: crime and threats through gaming systems and meth trafficking.

"Cartels in Mexico have seen the desire and have flooded the streets with cheap meth. Now you can buy it cheaper than you can make it, and a lot of crime is linked with its trade and use."

Who investigates TBI?

A district attorney can request the THP to investigate. A DA can have investigators, and other departments can investigate. Everyone, including the TBI, still falls under federal statutes.

How does TBI cooperate with other agencies inside and outside the United States? We do a lot with gaming systems, where a lot of threats come from INTERPOL through countries like Sweden and Finland. We have a great network of partners. The FBI, Secret Service and Department of State are also partners, as they were at the recent NFL Draft in Nashville, on investigating human trafficking.

What are the minimum requirements to work as a TBI agent? You have to be 21 years old, have a valid driver's license, pass a physical, and be able to carry and proficiently fire a handgun. You also have to have a four-year degree. Right now, we are interviewing for 32 positions, and we have 940-plus applicants who qualify. We put them through testing of their situational judgement and put them under pressure to think on their feet.

How is the TBI addressing the opioid crisis?

We address the opioid epidemic by investigating doctors. We recently indicted several doctors for over prescribing and over billing. We are looking for provider fraud. For every \$1 we spend investigating, we recover \$11. We have been successful, and the government has given us 24 more positions in the Medicaid fraud division to continue the fight.

Jacksonians won the Wednesday night All-Star Basketball game.