

TENNESSEE AMERICAN LEGION

BOYS STATE

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GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES SPEAK TO DELEGATES

With elections scheduled Wednesday afternoon, the Jacksonian party chairman nominated of Jacob Blackstock of Roberts City for governor, while the Johnsonian party chairman nominated Trevor Parsons of Krieder City for the office. Independent candidates Nathan Alexander Jones and Trenton Shores also were placed into nomination. Each candidate gave a speech to the assembly.

Parsons, who attends Cumberland County High School in Crossville, says he always fights for good. A volunteer for Special Olympics, he participates in football, basketball and track. He told delegates he was interested in passing legislation to improve Boys State. "Each of you have value. You are not just another camper. Let me help you. Let me hear from you. Let me fight for you."

Blackstock is a drum major, FFA officer, and student government leader. He asked delegates how many of them are tired of hearing politicians say they are going to listen. "I am a man of the people, I will listen to every single one of you."

Alexander thanked the 300 delegates who signed his petition and advocated for one single strong united state. "This world that we live in is slowly trying to tear itself apart. Like working your muscles, we have gone through the tearing down and now it is time to come back together to become stronger. If you stand by me, I will make this happen."

Shores, who delegates say resembles Jack Black, said parties on a 1-2 system chosen at random don't work. "This isn't what a lot of us expected of this experience. I want to make this Boys State better for all."

Candidates also were announced for three other state government races:

Supreme Court: (Jacksonians) Don Kim, Chow Paueksakon, Bryce Rapson, Jacob Sylman, Stanley Zhao (Johnsonians) Brent Burdick, Eli Callender, Duncan Dillman, Rohan Gupta, Austin Music

Court of Appeals: (Jacksonians) Ivan Deigadillo, Charlie Edmonson, LJ Hale, Jacob Hudspeth, Tucker King, Matthew Mack, Mason Rochelle, Jeremiah Taylor (Johnsonians) Walter Harper, Philip Herrin, Mckinley Lough, Christian Mahan, Nathan Pasumbal

Court of Criminal Appeals: (Jacksonians) Ashwin Balaje, Hayden Downs, Raley Hendrix, Luke Schroeder, Brody Woodson (Johnsonian) Sehrab Bagha, Jacob Coble, Caden Heupel, Matthew Jones, Shaan Patel, Landry Wells

Gov. Bill Lee addresses delegates, conducts Q&A

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee addressed Boys Staters on Tuesday afternoon. Lee shared how he came to see that seasons of life help people to clarify what matters and how to face the future.

“I lost my first wife when I was 40 years old; it turned my life upside down. I had four little kids, and I was devastated in many ways. God used the tragic experience to be transformative. I began to understand the few things in life that matter.”

Those passions that matter to Lee include prison ministry and reform, mentoring inner city kids, and influencing public policy through public service.

“Government is intended to serve the people. I encourage you to never stop being engaged in government. When people don’t engage, that’s when government loses touch.”

Lee said his advice to his 17-year-old self would be to understand that the fruit of faith is service.

“On mission trips to third world countries, working in prisons, and working in the inner cities, I’ve learned more about me than I learned about those I was helping. Choose to live a life of service.”

The governor said his goals to improve education in Tennessee are lofty and attainable. “Reality is in outcomes we rank 38 out of 50. We will have to be innovative and creative, but we should move to the top half of the states, or even better.”

Criminal justice reform and reducing recidivism are at the top of Lee’s major initiatives. Lee said education is the key. “We must improve our prison reentry programs. Ninety-five percent of people in prison will get out. Through educational attainment like certificate programs, we can make a difference and have measurable results. There’s a 40 percent improvement in recidivism if prisoners have an education.”

“You and I are really fortunate. We live in one of the best states in the country.”

POINTS OF TECH PRIDE

- Tech is the **#1 public university** in Tennessee in Money magazine’s “Best Colleges for Your Money” listing
- Almost 50 percent of Tech students graduate **debt free**
- 10,000+ students enrolled
- \$53,800 starting average graduate salary (Payscale.com)
- Voted **Top Public** University in Tennessee for Best Value (SmartAsset)
- Highest return on investment for a public university in Tennessee

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Tug of War Results

Levi took the 2019 Tug of War championship. Roberts finished second, and Young came in third.