



THE BLUE PAGES

TENNESSEE SECRETARY OF STATE

Tre Hargett

Our mission is to exceed the expectations of our customers, the taxpayers, by operating at the highest levels of accuracy, cost-effectiveness, and accountability in a customer-centered environment.

From the Secretary's Desk

HISTORY DAY PARTICIPANT BRITTANY WILHARM

I am often asked why I chose a career in public service. It's a fair question. Being a good public servant requires a lot of long days and hard work. It requires listening to people's problems and concerns – and then doing whatever can possibly be done to help them.

But being a public servant also provides opportunities to meet people like Brittany Wilharm, a homeschooled student from Robertson County. I met Brittany for the first time last year when she was competing in a History Day competition in Murfreesboro.

History Day is an event in which middle and high school students prepare history-themed projects that

are judged in competition with their peers. The students with the best projects advance to different levels of competition, with the best of the best participating in the National History Day event at the University of Maryland.

I met Brittany at the regional level of competition, where students were competing for the right to go to Tennessee History Day, the statewide finals that my office helps sponsor.

To say I caught Brittany on a bad day would be an understatement. After working very hard on her project, she failed to qualify for the statewide competition. As I stood on stage presenting the awards, I could see her

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battling her disappointment as tears streamed down her face. After the ceremony, I made it a point to talk with her and assure her that God would make something great out of the disappointment she was feeling at that moment. That weekend, her mother sent me an e-mail thanking me for my support. As a result, our office arranged for Brittany and her boyfriend to work in my office as interns for a week so she could get a sense for how state government works.

Well, what has happened in Brittany's life since then makes her low moment on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University seem like ancient history. Her weeklong stint as an intern at the Capitol sparked an interest in political science. In the last year, she has taken a debate class and an online class on constitutional law. She won the American Legion



BRITTANY POSING NEXT TO A STATUE OF EPHRAIM MCDOWELL, THE SUBJECT OF HER RESEARCH.

Oratorical Contest on the Constitution. Last month, she began work as a paid campaign intern for state Rep. Joshua Evans, who represents her hometown of Springfield.

And yes, she decided to compete in History Day again this year – albeit with much different results. Not only did Brittany qualify for the statewide competition this year, she won there and advanced to participate in National History Day. The judges in Maryland awarded her the Legacy Prize, which is presented each year to a young, gifted individual



SECRETARY HARGETT WITH HISTORY DAY PARTICIPANT BRITTANY WILHARM.

in recognition of creative talent and dedication to public service. Next spring, she will travel to Washington, D.C. to represent National History Day at a reception at the Smithsonian, an awards luncheon at the Cosmos Club and a roundtable discussion with Nobel Prize winners, Pulitzer Prize winners, Supreme Court justices and other notable scholars.

Brittany's History Day story is chronicled here: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/47970054/ns/local_news-nashville_tn/

“Not winning last year turned out to be the best thing that could have happened to her,” Brittany's mom, Sharon, wrote to me in a recent e-mail. “Thank you so much for being sensitive to her emotion and for helping turn a negative experience into a positive one.”

So why do I love being a public servant? Because it gives me an opportunity to have a positive impact on people's lives in ways large and small.

As always, I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Secretary of State. Please feel free to contact my office if you have questions or comments about the work we do.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. Hargett'.

TENNESSEE STUDENTS WIN NATIONAL HONORS AT HISTORY DAY

Three Tennessee students received national honors at the annual [National History Day \(NHD\)](#) competition held at the University of Maryland in College Park last month.

Rebecca Derby and Rachel Emond of Sevierville were awarded first place in the Senior Group Exhibit category for their project “Ignition of a Revolution,” which detailed the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire and the subsequent reforms. Rebecca and Rachel attend Sevier County High School and Jeffrey Williams is their teacher.

The Legacy Prize, sponsored by the Creativity Foundation, is awarded each year to young, gifted individuals in recognition of their unique creative talents and dedication to public service. NHD selected Brittany Wilharm of Springfield for this honor. Next year, Brittany will represent Tennessee and NHD at a roundtable in Washington, D.C. Brittany attends Wilharm Homeschool and her teacher is Sharon Wilharm. Her web site, “The Revolutionary Decision Which Sparked a Skeptical Reaction and the Landmark Surgery Which Made Ephraim McDowell the Father of Ovariectomy,” presented the pioneering work of Dr. McDowell.

Representing Tennessee at this year’s national competition were 50 middle and high school students who developed entries based on this year’s theme: *Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History*. The 33 entries included documentaries, exhibits, papers, performances, and web sites. The Tennessee delegation began the week with a pizza party, followed by the opening ceremony. The students had the opportunity to tour the U.S. Capitol, meet with Senator Lamar Alexander and Senator Bob Corker and attend a private reception at the National Museum of American History.

“I am proud of all our students,” said Tennessee History Day coordinator Jennifer C. Core. “I’m impressed by how they turn themselves into experts on their selected topics and how they incorporate constructive feedback into each revision of their projects. They are learning how to examine sources critically and how to present their findings to a sophisticated audience.”

“Congratulations to an outstanding group of young Tennesseans who represented our state with distinction in this year’s National History Day competition,” said Secretary Hargett. “We were fortunate to have three national award winners



TENNESSEE'S HISTORY DAY DELEGATION, WITH U.S. SENATORS BOB CORKER AND LAMAR ALEXANDER.

this year – Rebecca Derby and Rachel Emond of Sevier County and Brittany Wilharm of Robertson County. I commend them, as well as the ‘best in state’ award winners and all of the students who made the trip to Maryland for the competition. Research has shown that students who participate in History Day generally do better in school than their peers and become more active and engaged citizens when they reach adulthood. That is perhaps the best prize of all.”

Six students received affiliate (state) honors.

The Salute to Freedom Award, sponsored by the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, went to Lane Crouse-Helford of Siegel Middle School in Murfreesboro. Heather Warmuth and Sonya Cox are his teachers. Lane entered an additional essay contest to qualify for this prize, which will allow him to attend the opening of the U.S. Freedom Pavilion in January. Lane will interact with other young military scholars and will present his findings on Tennessee's role during World War II.

Marisa Rozzi, Rishika Singh, and Rebecca Zielinski were selected to exhibit their project, "The Beautiful and the Damned: The Flapper Cultural Revolution," at the National Museum of American History. Marisa, Rishika, and Rebecca attend Lausanne Collegiate School in Memphis. Dr. Scott Johnson is their teacher.

Hadley Peters of Knoxville was recognized as the Best Affiliate Entry, Junior Division, for her web site, "The Reform of the Tennessee Walking Horse." Hadley attends Concord Christian School. Tammy Lightholder is her teacher. While at NHD, Hadley was invited to meet with former U.S. Sen. Joe Tydings (D-MD) to discuss her research.

Olivia Brown's paper, "The Country Needed Men: The Story of Female Soldiers during the Civil War," received the Best Affiliate Entry, Senior Division award. Olivia attends University School of Nashville. Patricia Miletich is her teacher.

The best affiliate entry prizes are awarded to the top ranking projects from each state.

Two teachers were recognized as Tennessee's Patricia Behring Teachers of the Year: Rachel Eckleson of Pine View School in Rockwood and Barbara Marks of Watertown High School in Watertown.

NHD is a year round academic organization for middle and high school students focused on the teaching and learning of history. A recent study by *Rockman, et al* found students who participate



HISTORY DAY AWARDS CEREMONY.

in NHD develop a range of college and career-ready skills and outperform their peers on state standardized tests in multiple subjects, including reading, science, math and social studies. The program engages 5,000 students across the state of Tennessee. Tennessee History Day is coordinated by the Tennessee Historical Society, with support from Secretary Hargett's office and Humanities Tennessee. 

TENNESSEE BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT PROMOTES INDEPENDENCE DAY

This time of year, people commemorate our independence with fireworks, barbeque and the red, white and blue. Therefore, in celebration of our Independence Day holiday, this month's Business Spotlight theme is "Patriotism Month."

Tennessee Business Spotlight is a feature on the Secretary of State's web site that showcases some of the state's businesses that create jobs, produce quality products and give back to their local communities. People visiting the Tennessee Business Spotlight web page can learn about the selected companies' goods and services, operations, employment figures, photos and links to web and social media sites that provide more information.

The companies highlighted in July are:

- *Tennessee Flag Company in Johnson City*
- *Pyro Shows in LaFollette*
- *Tucker Cooker Co. in Memphis*
- *Hobby Lobby International in Brentwood*
- *Liberty Party Rental in Hendersonville*

"Each of these companies is a symbol of what Independence Day means and what Americans are capable of doing," Secretary Hargett said. "We can never forget the men and women who won our freedom, nor the men and women who defend that freedom every day. It is because of their sacrifice that we can celebrate Independence Day."

To visit Tennessee Business Spotlight, go to www.spotlight.tnsos.net.

To nominate a company to be recognized in Tennessee Business Spotlight, please visit the web page and click the "Submit a Business" link or call (615) 532-5605. 



REGISTERED AGENT CHANGES CAN NOW BE MADE ONLINE

As part of Secretary Hargett's continued efforts to make it easier to handle business filings online, the Division of Business Services is proud to add registered agent changes to its list of available online services.

Tennessee law requires corporations, limited liability companies and limited liability partnerships to maintain registered agents. A registered agent is a company's official point of contact for service of process in the event that someone wants to bring legal action against the company in a Tennessee court.

State law requires that a company's registered agent provide a valid physical address. However, if the address or other information about a registered agent needs to be changed, it's no longer necessary to mail a paper form to our office. Updating information is a few simple mouse clicks away when using the online registered agent change tool, which is available by visiting <http://tnbear.tn.gov> and then clicking the link titled "File a Registered Agent Change."

If you have additional questions, please contact the Division of Business Services at (615) 741-2286. 

MEET KINSEY SMELTZER

Adopting a child from China can be difficult due to recent laws and adoption policies, but adopting during the outbreak of a deadly disease adds a new level of complexity.

Brentwood residents Chris and Rebecca Smeltzer already had three children before making the decision to add another member of the family through adoption.

“I felt like I was done having children, but felt like my family wasn’t complete,” Rebecca said. “That didn’t make any sense to me at first until my husband Chris and I started thinking about adoption. We knew after meeting with a few people adoption was where we were being led.”

The Smeltzers waited 14 months between filling out the paperwork and receiving a picture of their little girl.

“Thankfully, we had a neighbor who was born in China and fluent and she translated all our paperwork and everything we received from China,” Rebecca said.

The Smeltzers quickly said yes, they wanted this little girl and five weeks later they were on a plane to China. Their travel plans were complicated by an outbreak in China of severe acute respiratory syndrome, commonly called SARS. SARS causes severe illness marked by muscle pains, headaches and fevers, followed by the onset of respiratory symptoms, including coughing and pneumonia.

“We thought they were going to close the country on us,” Rebecca said. “And they did about two weeks after we left – but people told us not to go, saying we were going to die.”

Rebecca and Chris never second-guessed going.

“I felt like, one of our kids is in a dangerous spot,” Rebecca said. “When your child is in a dangerous spot, you don’t just stay home until it’s done. You go and you get them out of the dangerous spot. That’s exactly what we did.”



THE SMELTZERS’ FIRST FAMILY PHOTO AFTER ADOPTING KINSEY. LEFT TO RIGHT: GRIFFIN, REBECCA, KINSEY, JESSE, RYAN, AND CHRIS.

Rebecca and Chris, along with their oldest child Jesse, landed in Beijing and headed to the city of Wuhan, in Hubei Province. They received exciting news once they arrived: they would meet their daughter Kinsey immediately.

“We were standing around the lobby wondering what was going on and suddenly a man and seven

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

Some people may have the impression that the only thing state employees do is push paper around. This story is an example of how state employees positively impact Tennessean’s lives and the lives of children worldwide. International adoptions require an apostille or authentication, depending on the nation of origin, by the secretary of state in the state where the documents were signed. This certification of the signatures’ validity on the documents is much like the notary publics would be on the local level. Apostilles/authentications are processed in the Secretary of State Division of Business Services. About 20,000 apostilles and authentications were processed last year.

Documents may be submitted by mail or in person.

For more information, contact: Division of Business Services, 312 Rosa L. Parks Avenue, Snodgrass Tower, 6th Floor, Nashville, TN 37243, 615.741.0536, business.services@tn.gov, or visit http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus_svc/apostilles.htm

women came in, each carrying a child,” Rebecca said. “At the time, Kinsey had a distinct haircut and we very clearly recognized her immediately.”

One of the Chinese helpers, Mindy, had great advice for all the families adopting children that day.

“Mindy said, ‘you have to understand – when you meet the babies you are going to make them cry,’” Rebecca said. “‘You’re very big and white, these children have not been around Americans.’”

When Rebecca and Chris’ names were called, they traded cameras and camcorders with other families adopting children that day and stepped up to claim their little girl.

“She wasn’t happy to be handed over, but we had bubbles, which helped,” Rebecca said. “We also brought a little blue racquetball, which she started playing with. She calmed down very quickly. Plus, we think Jesse’s size, since she was 10 at the time, was very helpful and less threatening to Kinsey.”

The Smeltzers had 24 hours to decide whether or not they wanted to keep Kinsey.

After saying yes at the Chinese embassy and filling out the last round of paperwork, they were on their way back to the United States with the new addition to the family.

“The plane ride to China was great because no one was going to China due to the SARS breakout so we had room to stretch out,” Rebecca said. “Of course, lots of people were leaving the country on our return trip so we tried our best to keep Kinsey happy and asleep.”

Kinsey’s transition to American life was fairly easy, minus a few unexpected eating habits.

“She’s a fantastic eater, but everything in China was warmed, including milk,” Rebecca said. “So when we gave her ice cream, you would have thought it was raw sewage, she spit it out so quickly. She didn’t like cold things.”



KINSEY AND HER DOG ZOE.

Kinsey fit into the family in no time.

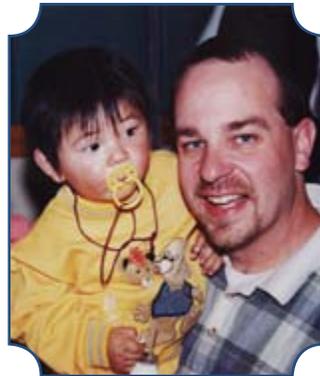
“The first month, she was like a new toy or puppy – the kids wanted to show her off and were so proud of her,” Rebecca said. “And they still are proud of her, but after the first month she started fighting with her older sister and siblings. We knew then that things would be just fine.”

Adopting internationally has opened up other opportunities for the family as well, spearheading adoptive families from their church, Grace Community Church, to get together and help one another.

“Adopting Kinsey opened up a whole community of families who have the same calling we do,” Rebecca said. “We try to collect all the adoptive families once or twice a year for a get together. That way we know where everyone is in the process and so our kids can get together. Being adopted is great and being adopted isn’t great – we want our kids to know that when they’re in church, they can look around and see lots of other faces in there who have similar backgrounds and not be in there thinking, ‘I’m the only one that’s like this.’”

International adoptions in Tennessee require an apostille or authentication by the Tennessee Secretary of State’s office. For more information on document authentication, call (615) 741-0536 or go to http://www.tn.gov/sos/bus_svc/apostilles.htm.

“Providing authentication for international adoptions are a small, but important part of what



*AT THE WHITE ROSE HOTEL,
MOMENTS AFTER MEETING THEIR
NEW DAUGHTER.*

our office does,” Secretary Hargett said. “To know that Tennesseans are welcoming international children into their lives and families and changing

the structure of their communities for the better is very encouraging and I commend those who do so.” 

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE STOVALL ADDRESSES NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Chief Administrative Law Judge Tom Stovall spoke at a training conference for unemployment insurance professionals last month.

Stovall, director of the Secretary of State’s Administrative Procedures Division, conducted two workshops at the National Association of

Unemployment Insurance Appeals Professionals training conference, which was held in Nashville June 17-21.

Both workshops addressed issues unique to disciplinary actions against hearing officers and administrative law judges. 

RULE-MAKING HEARINGS AND LISTS OF ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

Rule-making hearings are open to the public. The web link below will provide information about the location and times of the hearings. Information about the rules going into effect includes changes or additions to rules.

To view the rule-making meeting notices online, go to: <http://tnsos.org/rules/RulemakingHearings.php?>

To view the rules scheduled to go into effect, go to: <http://tnsos.org/rules/PendingRules.php?>

If you have suggestions on how the online posting of the state’s rules could be more “user-friendly,” please contact Cody York at 615-741-2650 or email him at: Cody.Ryan.York@tn.gov. 

Secretary of State

Tre Hargett
Tawnie Mathieu, Executive Secretary
615-741-2819

Administrative Procedures

615-741-7008

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Charitable Solicitations & Gaming

615-741-2555

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