

Cooperative Connections

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Help Fund
Education
Aspirations**

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**Tech School
and Go!**

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Programs are Part of Co-ops' 'Concern for Community' Kick Off 2020 With A Co-op Scholarship



Ben Dunsmoor

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Scholarship programs have been an integral part of the seventh cooperative principle of 'concern for community.'

There are always a lot of activities going on around the holidays for both kids and adults. For high school and college students, the long break to celebrate Christmas and New Year's can be a time for relaxing, catching up with friends, spending time with family, and even picking up a few shifts at a part-time job to make some extra money. A few extra bucks can go a long way for teens as education becomes more expensive. It is the reason your local co-ops continue to sponsor scholarship programs to ease that financial burden for the youth of our communities.

Scholarship programs have been an integral part of the seventh cooperative principle of 'concern for community.' High school seniors and college students of Northern Electric members can apply right now for a \$500 scholarship awarded by the co-op. The scholarship application is due on February 14, 2020, and the winner is selected in early March. This is an annual scholarship awarded by Northern Electric and more information on the application process can be found on page 10 of this issue.

Northern Electric also provides money directly to Northern State University and Presentation College every year so those two institutions in our community can award scholarships on behalf of the co-op. Northern Electric also gives \$250 to high school seniors who are selected as the Touchstone Energy Scholar of the Week throughout the school year. This program has been recognizing local high school seniors for their achievements since 2002.

Another co-op-sponsored scholarship Northern Electric students can apply for right now is the Basin Electric Power Cooperative scholarship. Basin Electric is the generation and transmission cooperative which owns the power plants and wind farms that supply power to Northern Electric and our members. Basin Electric awards a \$1,000 scholarship every year to one student from each of the more than 130 co-ops they serve. The application for this scholarship is also due to one of the Northern Electric offices on February 14. Students use the same application to apply for the Basin Electric scholarship and the Northern Electric \$500 scholarship mentioned above. Basin Electric has awarded 4,600 scholarships since the program began. Information on the Basin Electric and the Northern Electric scholarship programs can be found on page 10.

The long holiday break for high school and college students can be a fun time to celebrate the successes of the past year and look forward to the exciting opportunities of the new year. I would also encourage students to use their break to download the scholarship application for the Northern Electric and Basin Electric scholarships and fill it out. Taking time to complete the application when you have a little extra time can lead to a better and more complete application. It could also pay off in the new year and kickstart your goals for 2020.

Happy New Year!



(USPS 396-040)

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Northern Electric Cooperative's regular board meeting was held November 21 at the Dakota Event Center in Aberdeen with all directors present. National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Regional Vice President Darrin Lynch was a guest for the meeting. As the first order of business, the board approved the October 24, 2019, minutes and October expenditures. The board then reviewed and accepted monthly reports by management.

East River Director Mark Sumption reported on actions taken by the ER Board at the November 14, 2019, meeting. General Manager Char Hager reported on the East River MAC Meeting which she attended November 15, 2019, in Madison. The next SDREA Board Meeting will be December 5-6, 2019, in Pierre. Directors Donna Sharp, Ronald Kaaz and Manager of Member Services Russ Ulmer reported on the Basin Electric Annual Meeting which they attended November 6-7, 2019, in Bismarck, ND. The next South Dakota Wind Energy Association meeting will be November 26, 2019, in Pierre.

Manager's Report

General Manager Char Hager's report to the board included the following items:

- Update on development projects.
- Update on Rural Electric Economic Development (REED) revolving loan fund.
- Legal and Legislative Report
- Discussion on plans for the Mid-West Electric Consumers Annual Meeting, December 9-12, 2019, in Denver, CO.
- Reminded the board of the 2019 Winter School for Directors, December 13-18, Nashville, TN.
- Informed the board of the WEB Water Annual Meeting, December 6, 2019, at the

Dakota Event Center, in Aberdeen.

- National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) Regional Vice President Darrin Lynch reviewed the Key Ratio Trend Analysis (KRTA).

- Calendar Review

Board Report

The board considered and/or acted upon the following:

1. Seated Kirk Schaunaman, Aberdeen, on the NEC board for District 6 Director.
2. Approved the date and time of the next regular board meeting for 8:30 A.M. on Thursday, December 19, 2019.
3. Approved payment of legal fees for Harvey Oliver in the amount of \$2,222.34.
4. Approved Work Order Inventory #19-10 for \$630,941.69 to be submitted to the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) for reimbursement from loan funds for electric plant construction already completed.
5. Authorized board attendance to the SDREA Annual Meeting and Legislative Dinner, January 16-17, 2020, in Pierre.
6. Authorized board attendance to the 2020 Directors Conference, April 4-7, 2020, Kansas City, Missouri.
7. Authorized limited board attendance to the 2020 NRECA Annual Meeting, February 27-March 4, New Orleans, LA.
8. Authorized acceptance and execution of arrangement letter offered by Eide Bailly LLP to perform the audit for the Cooperative and its subsidiary for the year ending December 31, 2019.

Please ask your co-op manager, staff member or director if you have questions.

Financial Report	October 2019	October 2018
kWh Sales	22,923,865 kWh	25,078,147 kWh
Electric Revenues	\$2,198,987	\$2,333,736
Total Cost of Service	\$2,170,341	\$2,251,482
Operating Margins	\$28,646	\$82,254
Year To Date Margins	\$384,969	\$395,344

Residential Average Monthly Usage and Bill

	Usage (kWh)	Cost (\$)	Rate (per kWh)
October 2019	1,897 kWh	\$205.71	.1084 per kWh
October 2018	2,136 kWh	\$215.22	.1008 per kWh

Wholesale power cost, taxes, interest, and depreciation accounted for 82.5% of NEC's total cost of service.

Winter Electrical Safety Tips

In South Dakota and western Minnesota, December through March is a particularly hazardous time of year for storms and electrical power outages. Heavy snow, ice and wind can ravage power lines, both on the main power grid and at home. Add to that the increased use of home heating equipment such as space heaters and electric blankets and the potential for dangerous electrical hazards and home fires only intensifies.

Keep your home and loved ones safe this season by following these important winter electrical safety tips:

- **Use space heaters safely.** Keep them a minimum of three feet from furniture, bedsprings, drapes or clothes and never leave them unattended when they're on. Don't use extension cords with your space heaters and always unplug the heaters when they're not in use. Keep space heaters away from wet or damp areas and never touch a heater when your body is wet.
- **Use caution with electric blankets.** Never use an electric blanket while you're sleeping. Make sure the plug and cord are in good shape; otherwise it can pose a fire hazard. Be sure to dispose of electric blankets that have worn or damaged areas.
- **Be careful with your kitchen appliances.** While crockpots and other slow-cooking devices get a lot of use in the winter, you should never leave them turned on when no one is home. Leaving them unattended is a major fire risk. And be sure to check electrical kitchen appliances for frayed or damaged cords and plugs before use.
- **Make sure your home is equipped with functioning carbon monoxide detectors.** Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless gas that kills at high concentrations and causes serious and irreversible injuries at lower levels. Deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning increase during the winter months due to the use of common fuels like natural gas, wood and coal. Installing an inexpensive carbon monoxide detector can save your family's life.
- **Are your smoke alarms in working order?** It's important to make sure that you have an adequate number of smoke alarms throughout your home and that they are functioning properly. Simply push the test button to make sure it beeps and replace the batteries if needed.
- **Don't overload circuits or wattage.** Despite the shorter, darker days of winter, don't go above the recommended wattage for your light fixtures. Don't overload wall outlets either and only plug three-prong cords into three-prong outlets. Use extension cords sparingly and only for temporary purposes.
- **Have your home's electrical panel inspected by a licensed electrician.** Because electric usage goes up significantly in winter, you may need an upgrade in order to meet this increased demand.
- **Keep outdoor outlets closed.** Check your outdoor outlets regularly to ensure that they don't have an accumulation of ice and snow on them. Keep them cleared off and closed to avoid moisture from invading the receptacle box and causing an outage.

Source: www.mrelectricians.us/best-winter-electrical-safety-tips

✓ STOP AT THE BANK

✓ GRAB THE GROCERIES

✓ FIND MY POLLING PLACE

✓ REMEMBER TO VOTE

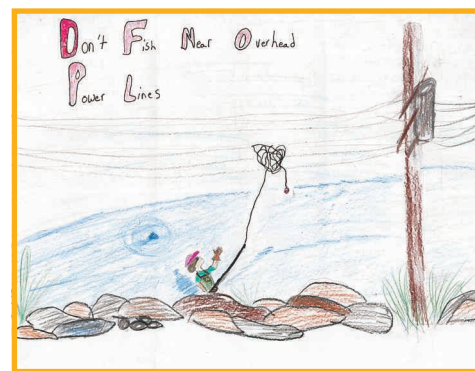


CO-OPS VOTE

A PROGRAM OF AMERICA'S ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES
WWW.VOTE.COOP

**ELECTION DAY
NOVEMBER 3, 2020**

KIDS CORNER SAFETY POSTER



"Don't fish near overhead power lines"

Lily Gums, 14 years old

Lily is the daughter of Dave and Kathy Gums, Clear Lake, S.D. They are members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Clear Lake.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents. Colored drawings are encouraged.

Super Soups

Leftover Turkey Chowder

4 slices bacon, chopped	1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup chopped onion	2 cups half-and-half
2 cups water	2 cups cubed cooked turkey
4 medium red potatoes, cut in 1/2-inch cubes (about 2 cups)	1 (8 3/4 oz.) can whole kernel corn, undrained
1 pkg. McCormick® Turkey Gravy Mix	1 tsp. McCormick® Sage, Rubbed

Cook bacon in large saucepan on medium heat until crisp. Add onion; cook and stir 3 minutes. Add water and potatoes. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 5 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Stir gravy mix and flour in medium bowl. Stir in half-and-half with wire whisk until smooth. Stir mixture into saucepan. Add turkey, corn and sage. Bring to boil on medium heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes 8 (1 cup) servings.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: Calories 258, Fiber 1g, Protein 16g, Cholesterol 68mg, Total Fat 14g, Sodium 427mg, Carbohydrates 17g

Pictured, Cooperative Connections

Crockpot Potato Soup

1 (30 oz.) bag hash browns	1/2 cup chopped onion
3 (14 oz.) cans chicken broth	1/4 tsp. pepper
1 can cream of chicken soup	1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese

Combine first 5 ingredients in crockpot. Cook on LOW 6 to 8 hours. Add cream cheese 1 hour before serving.

Bonnie Weber, Aberdeen, SD

Taco Soup

1 lb. ground beef, browned and drained	1 (10.75 oz.) can tomato soup
1 can chili beans, undrained	1 soup can water
1 pkg. taco seasoning	Tomato juice

Combine all ingredients; heat through. Serve with shredded cheese, corn chips or crackers if desired.

Velma Schmitz, Bonesteel, SD

Curried Pumpkin Soup

8 oz. sliced fresh or canned mushrooms	1 (15 oz.) can pumpkin
1/2 cup chopped onion	1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
2 T. butter	2 T. honey
2 T. flour	1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1 tsp. curry powder	Salt and pepper
3 cups vegetable broth	

In a large saucepan, saute mushrooms and onions in butter until tender. Stir in flour and curry powder until blended. Gradually add broth. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 2 minutes or until thickened. Add pumpkin, milk, honey, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Heat through.

White Tail Ridge Bed & Breakfast, Hermosa, SD

Cheddar-Ham Chowder

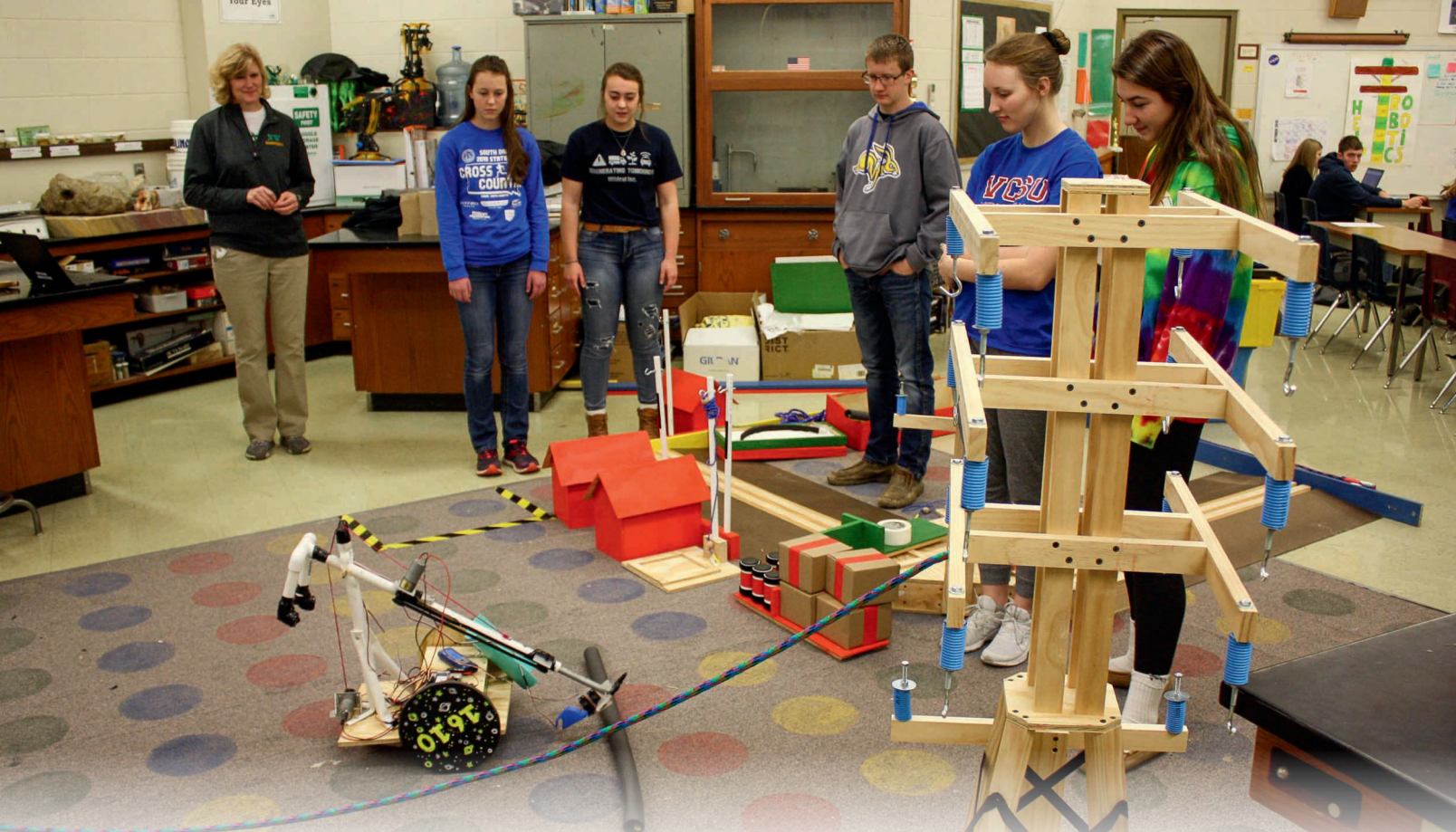
2 cups water	1/4 cup butter
2 cups cubed potatoes	1/4 cup flour
1/2 cup sliced carrots	2 cups milk
1/2 cup sliced celery	2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
1/4 cup chopped onion	1 (16 oz.) can corn, drained
1 tsp. salt	1-1/2 cups cubed, cooked ham
1/4 tsp. pepper	

In a large saucepan, bring first 7 ingredients to a boil; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 8 to 10 minutes or until vegetables are just tender; remove from heat but do not drain. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, melt butter and blend in flour. Add milk all at once, cooking and stirring until thickened and bubbly. Add cheese, stirring until melted. Stir into undrained vegetable mixture. Return large saucepan to heat; add corn and ham. Heat through, stirring occasionally.

Diane Fode, Rapid City, SD

Please send your favorite brunch, seafood or appetizer/ beverage recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3).

Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in June 2020. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.



REIMAGINING RESTORATION

Northwestern High School Students Design Robot To Aid In Grid Recovery

Ben Dunsmoor

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A devastating storm just moved through the area.

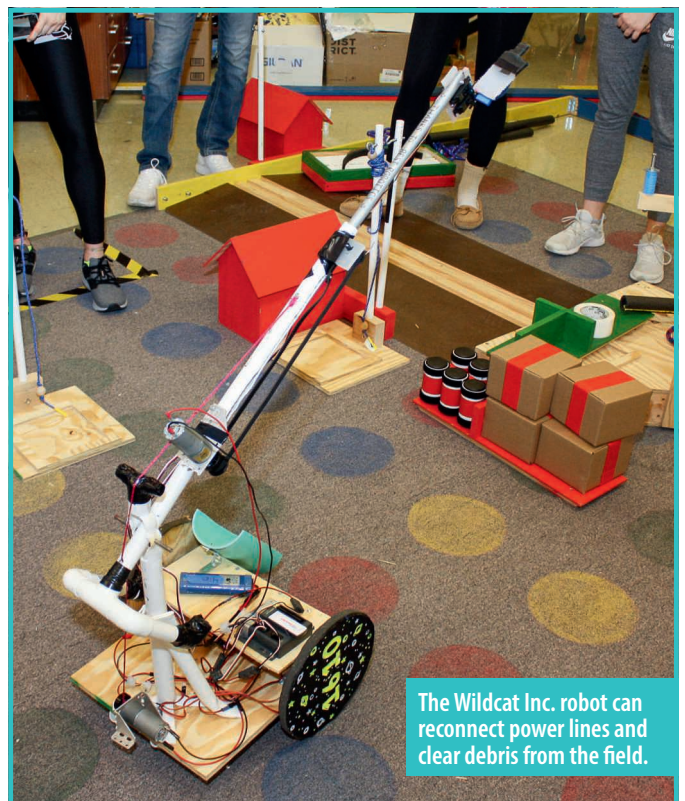
Power lines are down.

The grid needs to be restored.

That is the scenario students at Northwestern High School in Mellette were given more than two months ago by the Boosting Engineering Science and Technology (BEST) Robotics organization. The challenge was to build a robot that could restore power and clear debris.

“The whole point of the robot is to send it where linemen cannot go,” Wildcat Inc. team president and head of marketing Hailey Boekelheide said.

The Northwestern team, known as Wildcat Inc., made a robot that not only accomplished the mission but was one of the best in the region. The Northwestern robot had the second-highest cumulative score at the BEST Robotics competition at South Dakota State University in October. Wildcat Inc. then took the robot to compete on a national



The Wildcat Inc. robot can reconnect power lines and clear debris from the field.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Members of the Wildcat Inc. robotics team watch their robot clear debris from the field. From L to R: Denise Clemens (team advisor), Jessica Boekelheide, Hailey Boekelheide, Jacob Olson, Bailey Heim, and Hannah Schentzel.

level at the BEST Robotics competition in Denver in December. The Northwestern robot took second place in the exhibit and interview category and team member Hailey Boekelheide was the recipient of the Kendrick Castillo Memorial Award for her leadership, mentorship, and community involvement with the robotics program.

Northern Electric Cooperative was one of the team's sponsors for the trip to Colorado.

"We built this robot from the ground up," Wildcat Inc. co-engineer Mitchell VanderWal said.

BEST Robotics gives middle and high school students at more than 850 schools across the country different scenarios every fall. Those students have six weeks to create a robot that can accomplish all the goals of the scenario within three minutes. Schools compete to see which robot is the best at local, regional, and national competitions.

"Literally anyone can find anything they are good at in here (robotics)."

"Students are given a bunch of different tasks and then you tailor your robot to that," Jessica Boekelheide, a member of the Wildcat Inc. marketing team said.

This year, power restoration was the scenario. Wildcat Inc. designed a robot that reconnected transmission lines, and distribution power lines, and cleared debris from the field. Safety was the goal of their project because their research showed that being a power line worker is one of the top 15 most dangerous jobs in the country.

"Can I make a robot that works and can do

what linemen can't do in dire situations?" VanderWal said about the team's challenge. "If we have automated robots, they can help prevent linemen injuries."

Wildcat Inc. isn't just made up of students interested in science and technology. Nearly 40 percent of the Northwestern High School student body has been involved in the project. The team had to develop a marketing presentation for the robot, keep an engineering notebook, and students even created custom team T-shirts in the school's print shop. The students focused on the main theme of the challenge throughout all aspects of the project.

"We were able to talk about the dangers of linemen's work," Hailey Boekelheide said.

Members of the team say the opportu-

nity to take the Wildcat Inc. robot to the Denver BEST Regional Championship in December motivated students to elevate the project to the next level.

"It goes from I want to win to how much further can I get past just winning," Wildcat Inc. lead programmer Eric Nelson said.

Members of the team hope their success this year will promote robotics to underclassmen and show them that the team needs students with several different skills to achieve the goals of the project.

"Literally anyone can find anything they are good at in here (robotics)," VanderWal said.

And, bringing out the talents of each student is the ultimate goal of the program.



Jacob Olson (left), Mitchell VanderWal (middle), and Jackson Mielke (right) discuss adjustments to the robot.



Electric cooperatives are offering more than \$100,000 in scholarships for area students.

COLLEGE AHEAD?

Electric Cooperatives Offer Scholarships to Fuel College, Technical School Aspirations

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

For more than 30 years, South Dakota's electric cooperatives have been helping fund the continuing education dreams of students planning to attend four-year colleges or technical schools.

Over the decades, the scholarships have funded students on their way to careers in education, medicine, government, energy and everything in between.

Through the Basin Electric Power Cooperative Scholarship Program, each cooperative that is a Basin Electric member cooperative awards a \$1,000 scholarship to the dependent of a co-op member. Additional scholarships through the program are available to the dependents of co-op employees

Several cooperatives offer scholarships to individuals to become electric line workers or electricians. These scholarships, in addition to those awarded by the South Dakota Rural Electric Line Superintendents Association, amount to more than \$10,000.



Future Engineer?

Nationwide Scholarship Available

Since its inception three years ago, the Glenn English National Cooperative Leadership Foundation Scholarship Committee has awarded almost \$10,000 in scholarships to individuals pursuing a career in engineering.

This annual opportunity would not be possible without the foresight and generous contributions of the IEEE: Rural Electric Power Committee (REPC). Together, we hope to support future engineers with an interest and passion for defining and solving the electric utility challenges of the future, specifically in the rural parts of America.

Dates & Deadlines:

- Applications will be accepted starting on Dec. 14, 2019.
- The deadline for application submission is 11:59 p.m. EST on May 15, 2020.
- Winners are selected by a scholarship committee and announced after the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association summer board meeting in Mid-July, 2020.
- Awards are distributed in August/September, 2020.

Eligibility Requirements

- Must be a US Citizen
- Applicant must be enrolled in an ABET, four-year program of electrical engineering or electrical engineering technology, and have at least a 'B' average in major subjects.
- Applicant must be enrolled as a full-time student.
- Applicant must have already received academic credits equal to at least one year of college.

Essay Requirement Information

- To be considered for the Engineers of the Future Scholarship, you must submit an essay using the following requirements as your guide:
 - Essays need to be between 1,000 and 1,500 words.
 - Essays must describe, in detail, plans to pursue a career as an electrical engineer, with an emphasis in electric power, in an electrical utility serving a rural area.
 - Essays must demonstrate knowledge of the unique challenges facing the electric industry in Rural America and describe how you might address these issues as an engineer.

But, the majority of scholarship money available from the region's electric cooperatives are not tied to a specific program of study.

A study released this summer by WalletHub.com found that South Dakota has the highest rate of student loan debt of any state in the country while Minnesota finished sixth on the list.

The study, performed by consumer finance website WalletHub.com, had researchers analyze 12 different measures of indebtedness, including average student debt, number of students with debt, and unemployment rate.

South Dakota had the highest proportion of students with debt, and was fourth highest when it

came to percentage of student loan borrowers over age 50.

Some of the scholarships offered by electric cooperatives require that students be in high school, while other scholarships are designed for students that may be returning to school.

Additionally,

students selected to represent their local electric cooperative on the Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C., are eligible for a \$10,000 Glenn English Foundation Scholarship. Students can apply for the undergraduate scholarship once they have completed one semester of college or technical school.

Deadlines for local scholarships vary, so check with your local electric cooperative for details.

South Dakota led the nation in student loan debt, according to a national study.

Of the scholarships being offered by electric cooperatives, more than \$10,000 is dedicated to students seeking energy-related careers.



Students Can Apply Now For \$1,000 and \$500 Co-op Scholarships

2020 Scholarship Applications Being Accepted

Students of Northern Electric Cooperative members who are currently enrolled in a post-secondary school - or plan to enroll in the fall of 2020 - can now apply for two co-op-sponsored scholarships.

Bismarck-based Basin Electric Power Cooperative, which generates electricity for Northern Electric Cooperative, is awarding a \$1,000 scholarship to a student within the Northern Electric service territory. Northern Electric is also awarding a \$500 scholarship to a student of a co-op consumer. Students can apply for both scholarships by filling out one Basin Electric 2020 scholarship application which can be found on the Northern

Electric website at www.northernelectric.coop/scholarships. Applications can also be picked up at a Northern Electric office.

In 2019, Alexis Schock of Aberdeen was awarded the \$1,000 Basin Electric scholarship and Taylor Dinger of Hecla was the recipient of the \$500 Northern Electric scholarship. Schock is attending North Dakota State University this fall and Dinger is a student at North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton, North Dakota.

The scholarship application includes information about the student's academic record, ACT/SAT test scores, work experience, an applicant appraisal from an advisor or supervisor, and a one-page essay on the topic: 'Describe how cooperatives can be economic engines for their local communities.' The entire application must be completed and turned into one of the Northern Electric Cooperative offices by the February 14, 2020, deadline.

A committee of cooperative employees will critically evaluate the applications and award both the \$1,000 and \$500 scholarship from the pool of applicants. Scholarships will be directly paid to the institution where the recipient is enrolled in the fall of 2020.

How to Apply

- **Scholarship Eligibility**

Applicants must be U.S. citizens, under the age of 25, and natural or adopted children of Northern Electric Cooperative members. Any applicant must be a student who is enrolled, or planning to enroll, in a full-time graduate or undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or vocational/technical school.

- **How the Selection Process Works**

All applications are critically evaluated using a combination of several criteria including: SAT/ACT scores, grade-point average, work experience, participation in school and community activities, a statement by the student explaining his/her educational and career goals, financial need, and a written recommendation by a third party.

A committee of cooperative employees will evaluate the applications and submit the entry to Basin Electric for scholarship distribution and select the winning entry for the Northern Electric scholarship.

- **Application**

Applications are available from local high school guidance counselors, on the Northern Electric Cooperative website at www.northernelectric.coop/scholarships, or directly from the Northern Electric offices in Bath or Redfield.

Completed applications MUST BE RETURNED BY FEBRUARY 14, 2020 to:

Northern Electric Cooperative
ATTN: Kay Albrecht
PO Box 457
Bath, SD 57427

For more information contact Kay Albrecht at: **605-225-0310**



Collin Gades was hired as a full-time apprentice lineman at the end of October.

Collin Gades Hired As Apprentice Lineman

Collin Gades has been hired as an apprentice lineman by Northern Electric Cooperative. He will work out of the Redfield shop. He fills the vacancy that was created on the crew by the retirement of David Appel this past summer.

Gades was born and raised in Appleton, Minnesota. He attended South Dakota State University before he transferred to Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Wadena, Minnesota to enroll in the electrical lineworker program.

"I always enjoyed watching the local linemen outside working and fixing and being the 'heroes' when the power went out," Gades said.

Gades said his connection with a local lineman in his hometown reinforced his decision to pursue a career in line work.

"Greg Nelson was the lineman in Appleton who worked for Ottertail Power. I job shadowed him one time doing various jobs that day and touring the Big Stone power plant," Gades said. "I was always in contact with him about jobs he was doing and the job in general, and I still am to this day. That is what inspired me to be a

lineman."

Gades graduated in May of 2019 and was hired by Northern Electric as a temporary lineworker at the Redfield outpost for the summer. That experience led him to apply for the full-time job at the co-op when there was an opening.

"The experience this summer was busy, and I learned the area and the system," Gades said. "The co-op is a very good place to work because they focus on safety as the number one priority and having a good group of guys to work with is a bonus."

Gades enjoys hunting waterfowl, deer, and pheasants. In the summer, he likes to fish and play baseball. His girlfriend, Kierra, is still in college. She is majoring in early childhood education and hopes to move to Redfield following graduation and open a daycare.

Redfield lineman Kenny Swanson, who has worked for the co-op for 32 years, was promoted to line foreman following Appel's retirement. Gades fills the open position on the crew created by Swanson's promotion.

RECIPES NEEDED FOR

THE COUNTRY COOKIN'

cookbook

Your recipe could be featured in the 36th volume of East River Electric's Country Cookin' cookbook!

Help us create another great cookbook by submitting your favorite recipes as well as recipes for the cookbook's "Light Side" section.

Submit recipes via email to

kstone@eastriver.coop,
fax to 605-256-8057,
or contact your local cooperative for more information.

Submission deadline is
January 27, 2020.

Technical Schools, Colleges Ready the Workforce

Variety of programs offered for in-demand careers

Brenda Kleinjan

editor@sdrea.coop

Each year, more than 10,000 people head to area technical schools and technical colleges to develop the skills employers in the region are seeking.

South Dakota's four technical schools – Lake Area Technical Institute in Watertown, Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell, Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls and Western Dakota Technical Institute in Rapid City – have been serving students in the region for the last century, with three of the schools starting in 1968 and the fourth starting in 1969. Neighboring states have similar offerings at schools within easy driving distance of South Dakota.

This fall, Lake Area's campus at Watertown, S.D., was at capacity with 2,228 students. The school notes that students have a 99 percent placement rate after graduation.

Nearly 1,200 students attend Mitchell Tech which notes that 99 percent of its graduates find employment or continue their education. The school also notes that 82 percent of its grads stay in the Rushmore State.

For Southeast Tech's 2017-2018 graduates, the school said that 95 percent are employed or continuing their education, with 95 percent of those employed were employed in a field related to their Southeast Tech program.

Western Dakota Tech is the only technical college serving the western half of the state. It notes that 96 percent of its most recent graduates are working, continuing their education or enlisting in the military.



Among the programs offered at Mitchell Technical Institute in Mitchell, S.D., is South Dakota's only power line program for training future line workers.

National Leaders

Technical colleges across the region have been recognized for excellence in their field.

The \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges. With a singular focus on student success, the Prize highlights institutions with outstanding achievements in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and high-levels of access and success for students of color and low-income students.

In November, the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program named the nation's top 150 community colleges eligible to compete for the \$1 million Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges.

Eleven schools based in Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota made the list:

Minnesota West Community & Technical College

Technical education needs in southwestern Minnesota have been served by the campuses of Minnesota West Community and Technical College for more than 75 years.

The college has five campuses: Canby, Granite Falls, Jackson, Pipestone and Worthington in addition to centers in Luverne and Marshall.

The college offers a wide array of ever-changing programs and services, including career and transfer preparation, industry and customized training, community education, athletics, performing arts, student organizations, clubs, and personal enrichment. The school provides students opportunities to earn an associate degree, diploma or certificate in more than 60 disciplines, plus convenient campus locations throughout southwest Minnesota as well as online learning opportunities.

The school boasts of its small class sizes, personalized attention and focused, hands-on learning. Its technical programs provide students with the practical skills to begin successful careers in a variety of industries immediately upon graduation. Liberal arts programs at Minnesota West are a great starting point for careers or further study in numerous fields. Credits earned in our associate of arts and associate of science programs are designed for seamless transfer to other Minnesota State institutions.



Lake Area Tech in Watertown was nationally recognized as a top community college.

■ MINNESOTA

- Alexandria Technical and Community College
- Minnesota State Community and Technical College
- Northland Community and Technical College
- Ridgewater College
- Saint Paul College

■ NEBRASKA

- Central Community College
- Northeast Community College

■ NORTH DAKOTA

- Bismarck State College
- North Dakota State College of Science

■ SOUTH DAKOTA

- Mitchell Technical Institute
- Southeast Technical Institute

Based on strong and improving student outcomes – including in learning, completion rates, employment rates and earnings, and equity – 15 percent of community colleges nationwide have been invited to apply for the Aspen Prize. Data show that over the last two years, student retention, graduation rates, and degree completion have improved at the top tier of 150 Aspen Prize-eligible colleges.

The 150 community colleges named in November 2019 as eligible to compete for the 2021 Prize were selected from a pool of nearly 1,000 public two-year colleges nationwide using publicly available data on student outcomes. Located in 39 states in urban, rural, and suburban areas,

servicing as few as 500 students and as many as 75,000 students, these colleges represent the diversity and depth of the community college sector.

The top 10 finalists for the 2021 Aspen Prize will be named in May 2020. The Aspen Institute will then conduct site visits to each of the finalists and collect additional quantitative data, including employment and earnings data. A distinguished jury will make award decisions in

Lake Area Technical School in Watertown, S.D., was the 2017 Aspen Prize winner, the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges.

spring 2021.

Lake Area Technical School in Watertown, South Dakota, was the 2017 Aspen Prize winner. In the 2017-2018 school year, Minnesota West was one of 150 top community colleges nationwide competing for the Aspen Prize while MTI was a 2019 Top 10 finalist.



When the South Dakota Legislature convenes in January, it will transform several ideas into legislative bills, some of which will become state law.

WHERE DOES A BILL COME FROM

Legislative Research Council

<http://sdlegislature.gov>

When state legislators are in Pierre every year for the annual legislative session, the majority of their time is spent discussing ideas for changes in state law. Ideas vary from changing only a word or two of a current law, an entire section of law, getting rid of a current state law, or creating a new law.

All of the ideas, regardless of their size or scope, must be presented to the Legislature in the form of bills. Bills are simply the ideas recorded on paper in a prescribed format.

Only legislators and legislative committees may present or introduce bills to the Legislature. However, ideas for bills come from a multitude of sources. First, legislators have their own ideas for bills stemming from their expertise in certain fields, experiences they have had, or observations they have made. Special interest groups are another source of ideas. Members of these groups often ask legislators to sponsor bills promoting their interests.

Many ideas for bills come from government agencies. Each year several bills are introduced at the request of the Governor or on behalf of a department in state government. Those who work closely with state law are often able to

recommend ways to improve it.

Finally, ideas for bills come from those individuals represented by the legislators, the constituents who live in their districts. The next step is to put an idea into the form of a bill. Anyone can draft a bill, but the rules of the Legislature require that all bills be in the proper form and style.

A legislator wishing to introduce a bill generally brings the idea or a draft of the proposed bill to the Legislative Research Council, where staff members will either draft the bill or make final preparations on the bill drafted by others.

The legislator who begins to move the bill through the legislative process is known as the prime sponsor. The prime sponsor may introduce the bill independently or seek other legislators to act as co-sponsors of the bill. Senate bills have senators as prime sponsors, and House bills have house members as prime sponsors. However, members of either house may co-sponsor any bill.

Bills may not be introduced until the first day of a legislative session. However, those elected to serve in the upcoming Legislature may pre-file bills with the Legislative Research Council, up to 30 days in advance of the first legislative day. Interim committees may pre-file legislation under the names of individual legislators who served on the committee.

The rules require executive agencies to pre-file any legislation they wish to have considered. A bill in proper form consists of three main parts: the title, the enacting clause, and the body.

- The title gives the reader a brief summary of the subject of the bill. The SD Constitution dictates that bills embrace only one subject, and that subject must be expressed in the title.
- The enacting clause, “BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA,” is also required by the SD Constitution and indicates that everything listed below it is to become the law of the state.
- The body is the remainder of the bill, the part that will actually become law, if passed. It is divided into sections to make it easier to read and to reference.

In addition to the three main parts, a bill also includes a list of sponsors and a number. The name of the prime sponsor always appears first on the bill and then the co-sponsors are alphabetically listed. If a committee is sponsoring a bill, then only the name of the committee is listed. A number is assigned to the bill upon introduction and is used to identify the bill as it works its way through the process.

During session, legislators spend a majority of their time discussing bills, but bills are not the only proposals that come before the Legislature. Legislators may introduce commemorations and resolutions. Commemorations express legislative recognition and listed below are four types of resolutions that may be introduced:

- A simple resolution is unique in that it pertains to and is acted on by only one house. It is used primarily to express an opinion, gratitude, or condolences, or to make a request of the other house.
- A concurrent resolution expresses an opinion of the Legislature, but it has no force of law. Often it is used to persuade Congress to act in a certain way or to make a request of the Governor or a government agency.
- A joint resolution is, by law, used to propose changes to the SD Constitution and submit them to the voters at the next election. It is also used to ratify or propose amendments to the United States Constitution. Unlike the previous two types of resolutions, a joint resolution only contains matters of legislation.
- A resolution of disapproval allows the Legislature to disapprove of any reorganization of the executive branch done by the Governor during the preceding year. It is the newest type of resolution and used less frequently than the others.

How An Idea Becomes Law in South Dakota

Idea

- A bill is simply an idea that someone would like to see become law.
- It could be anything from the penalty for committing a crime to the amount of money that can be spent on a state program.
- The idea can come from anyone, but only a State Representative or State Senator can take the idea and guide it to final passage through the State Legislature.

Drafting

- The drafting of the idea into a bill is done by the Legislative Research Council, the permanent, non-partisan staff of the Legislature.
- A bill may be filed by any member of the House or Senate, and generally more than one legislator will sponsor a bill. The legislator whose name appears first on the bill is the “prime sponsor.”

Introduction

- A bill is given to the Chief Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate and is assigned a number. If the bill is sponsored by a Senator, it is a Senate Bill. If the bill is sponsored by a Representative, it is a House Bill.
- The bill is given a First Reading in the “House of Origin.” The “House of Origin” is the chamber that sponsored the bill.
- At a First Reading the bill’s number and title are read aloud.
- The Senate President Pro Tempore or Speaker of the House then assigns the bill to a committee.

Committee

- A committee’s responsibility is to examine a bill carefully, take testimony for and against the bill, and decide what to do with the bill.
- The committee has the following options:
 - Send the bill to the floor with a “Do Pass” recommendation,
 - Amend
 - “Table” the bill, which kills the bill, unless the full body orders the committee to send the bill to the floor (“Smoke-Out”), or
 - Defer the bill to the day after the last Legislative Day, which also kills the bill.

Debate

- If a bill reaches the floor, it is debated and voted on by the body.
- If it passes, the bill is sent to the other body, where it goes through the same introduction and committee processes.

Law

- If a bill passes both the House and Senate, it is sent to the Governor.
- If signed by the Governor, the bill becomes law.
- If vetoed by the Governor, the Legislature has an opportunity to decide whether to override or uphold the veto.
- If the Legislature succeeds in overriding the veto, the bill becomes law.

<http://sdlegislature.gov/docs/studentpage/idealaw.pdf>

October 19-January 5

Pheasant Hunting Season, Statewide, Pierre, SD, 605-223-7660

November 22-January 5

Winter Wonderland, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-275-6060

November 26-December 26

Christmas at the Capitol, Pierre, SD, 605-773-3178

December 15-March 31

South Dakota snowmobile trails season, Lead, SD, 605-584-3896

December 19-21

Strawbale Winery Twilight Flights, Renner, SD, 605-543-5071

December 21-24, 27-28

1880 Train Holiday Express, Hill City, SD, 605-574-2222

December 31

Make-A-Wish New Year's Eve Benefit and Dance, Ramkota Hotel & Convention Center, Doors Open at 7 p.m., Aberdeen, SD, 605-370-4588

January 10

Taste of Sturgis, Sturgis City Auditorium, Sturgis, SD, 605-347-3233

January 12

Yoga on the Ice, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

January 14-15

Paw Patrol Live! Race to the Rescue, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

January 16-17

Media One Funski, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-339-0000

January 24-25: Pro Snocross Races, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

Photo courtesy: travelsouthdakota.com

January 17

Justin Moore & Tracy Lawrence, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

January 18

Lakota Games on Ice, Prehistoric Indian Village, Mitchell SD, 605-996-5473

January 18

Heroes Skate Day, Main Street Square, Rapid City, SD, 605-716-7979

January 31-February 2

12th Annual Winterfest of Wheels, Convention Center, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-231-3100

January 31-February 2

Winterfest, Lead, SD, 605-584-1100

January 31-February 9

Annual Black Hills Stock Show & Rodeo, Rapid City, SD, 605-355-3861

February 1

Lake Hendricks Fishing Derby, Hendricks, MN, 507-828-2113

February 1

Living History Fair, Brookings Renegades, Lake Area Technical Institute, Watertown, SD, 605-693-4589, dhuebner@itctel.com

February 10-16

Frost Fest, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6125

February 14

Snow Ball, Brookings, SD, 605-692-6700

February 21

KORN and Breaking Benjamin, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 21-22

Mardi Gras Weekend, Deadwood, SD, 605-578-1876

February 26

The Harlem Globetrotters, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center Barnett Arena, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

February 27-March 1

SD State Dart Tournament, Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

March 3

RCCA presents Young Irelanders, Rapid City, SD, 605-394-4111

March 14

28 Below Fatbike Race, Ride and Tour, Lead, SD, 605-641-4963

March 20-21, 27-28

Annual Schmeckfest, Freeman, SD, 605-925-4237

March 28

Annual Ag Day at the Washington Pavilion, Sioux Falls, SD, 605-367-6000

To have your event listed on this page, send complete information, including date, event, place and contact to your local electric cooperative. Include your name, address and daytime telephone number. Information must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to your event. Please call ahead to confirm date, time and location of event.