IEC’s 2019 Youth Leadership Contest Winners Announced

Four high school juniors competed as speech finalists on Thursday, February 7, in the Indian Electric Cooperative board room.

The students were competing to attend summer leadership trips as part of the Youth Tour to Washington, DC or the Colorado Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp.

All four finalists presented their winning essays to a panel of independent judges. The essays were written on the assigned contest topic, “What is an Electric Cooperative? How could your favorite renewable resource affect electric cooperatives in the future?”

Youth Tour to Washington, DC winners are Sydney Hodson of Mannford High School and Cheyenne Leach of Pawnee High School.

Colorado Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp Winners are Zoey Russell of Pawnee High School and Tony Nyborg of Mannford High School.

IEC congratulates these exemplary students.

On January 7, IEC’s team-essay Energy Camp contest concluded for eighth graders. Independent judges awarded four all-expenses paid leadership camping trips to Katie Baumgarten and Karley Barrett of Oiltong School and Brylee Ballard and Kylie Hewitt of Mannford School.

Energy Camp winners experience leadership during a fun filled four-day summer camp trip at Camp Canyon, near Hinton, Okla.

The 2020 Youth Tour Leadership programs will begin again in the fall. Interested contestants for the leadership programs can find contest information on IEC’s website, www.iecok.com, after the beginning of the 2020 school year. Clara Eulert, Youth Tour Coordinator is available by email, clearae@iecok.com or phone, 918-295-9558. Classroom visits are welcomed and available by appointment. All contestants will be learning about electric cooperatives.
Are you looking for a better way to manage your electric bill?

Our Average Monthly Payment (AMP) plan will spread the costs of heating and cooling across an entire year. The AMP plan will help make your bills more predictable and make budgeting much easier.

**How does it work?**

With the AMP plan, monthly payments are calculated by averaging the previous 12 months KWH usage. At the end of every billing cycle the oldest month drops off the average and the newest month is added. The result is an average payment that varies by a few dollars each month but remains relatively steady.

**Who is eligible?**

The AMP plan is available to residential members with no more than two delinquent payments in the previous 12 months (must have a minimum of 12 months billing history). Additionally, the member’s account must have a zero balance before being eligible for the AMP plan.

**How do you sign up?**

Call the IEC office at 918-295-9500 and ask for an AMP request form. Fill out the form and return to IEC to be added to the plan. You may confirm eligibility by speaking to a Member Services Representative at the number listed above.

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**Collected Taxes Benefit Schools**

Here’s an annual report we enjoy sharing with our members! Each month a “gross receipts” tax is part of your monthly IEC statement. A gross receipts tax is in lieu of a corporate income tax or sales tax. The figures below are based on the miles of electric line running through each district. Schools in the IEC service area benefit from that tax. Below is a list of those schools, showing how much money they recently received from the tax collection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL DISTRICT</th>
<th>MILES WITHIN DISTRICT</th>
<th>TAXES PER DISTRICT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALLEN-BOWDEN</td>
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3,499.39 $1,000,632.58

AMP can help you manage your utility costs.
DIY: Spring Projects to Save Energy

Winter weather can have a big impact on your energy bills, hitting your pockets a little harder than you would have liked. Now that spring is just around the corner, it’s the perfect time to tackle a few DIY efficiency projects for your home. The good news: You don’t have to be an energy expert to do this!

There are several easy ways to save energy, but if you’re willing to take a hands-on approach, here are three projects you can do now to start saving.

**Make the Most of Your Water Heater**

Let’s start with one of the easiest projects: insulating your water heater. Insulating a water heater that’s warm to the touch can save 7 to 16 percent annually on your water heating bills. It should also be noted that if your water heater is new, it is likely already insulated. But if your water heater is warm to the touch, it needs additional insulation.

You can purchase a pre-cut jacket or blanket for about $20. You’ll also need two people for this project. Before you start, turn off the water heater. Wrap the blanket around the water heater and tape it to temporarily keep it in place. If necessary, use a marker to note the areas where the controls are so you can cut them out. Once the blanket is positioned correctly tape it permanently in place, then turn the water heater back on. If you have an electric water heater, do not set the thermostat above 130 degrees, which can cause overheating.

**Seal Air Leaks with Caulk**

The average American family spends $2,000 annually on energy bills, but unfortunately, much of that money is wasted through air leaks in the home. Applying caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing can save energy and money. There are many different types of caulking compounds available, but the most popular choice is silicone. Silicone caulk is waterproof, flexible and won’t shrink or crack.

Before applying new caulk, clean and remove any old caulk or paint with a putty knife, screwdriver, brush or solvent. The area should be dry before you apply the new caulk.

Apply the caulk in one continuous stream, and make sure it sticks to both sides of the crack or seam. Afterwards, use a putty knife to smooth out the caulk, then wipe the surface with a dry cloth.

**Weather Strip Exterior Doors**

One of the best ways to seal air leaks is to weather strip exterior doors, which can keep out drafts and help you control energy costs. Weather stripping materials vary, but you can ask your local hardware or home store for assistance if you’re unsure about the supplies you need.

When choosing weather stripping materials, make sure it can withstand temperature changes, friction and the general “wear and tear” for the location of the door. Keep in mind, you will need separate materials for the door sweep (at the bottom of the door) and the top and sides.

Before applying the new weather stripping, clean the moulding with water and soap, then let the area dry completely. Measure each side of the door, then cut the weather stripping to fit each section. Make sure the weather stripping fits snugly against both surfaces so it compresses when the door is closed.

By completing these simple efficiency projects, you can save energy (and money!) while increasing the comfort level of your home. And you can impress your family and friends with your savvy energy-saving skills.

*Article written by Abby Berry, who writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56 percent of the nation’s landscape.*
Simple Ways to be Heart Smart

Sometimes making small changes can have a positive impact on your health - including heart health - like drinking more water, taking the stairs instead of the escalator and adding nutritious ingredients to your snacks and meals.

Incorporating nutritious ingredients is an easy way to step up your mealtime - for example, American Pecans can super-ify nearly any recipe by adding flavor and nutrition.

It’s always a good time to include heart-healthy ingredients on your shopping list. Certified by the American Heart Association’s Heart-Check*, American Pecans and their unique mix of unsaturated fats, plant sterols, fiber and flavonoids add up to help promote a healthy heart. In fact, according to the Food and Drug Administration, research suggests, but does not prove, that eating 1 1/2 ounces of most nuts, such as pecans, each day as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may help reduce your risk of heart disease. One serving of pecans (28 grams) contains 18 grams unsaturated fat and only 2 grams saturated fat.

Boosting the heart-smart punch of your favorite recipes can be easy with pecans. Whether topping a salad, sprinkling into bread batter or using them as the foundation of a portable snack, there are few things America’s native nut can’t do.

Start the day right with a bowl of Banana Pecan Cherry Oatmeal - a comforting and hearty combination that can keep you full for hours. For a wholesome, on-the-go option perfect for school snacks, desk drawer or an afternoon pick-me-up, try Cherry Pecan Energy Bites. Dried cherries, dates and crunchy pecans combine for an all-natural burst of heart-smart nutrition to help you power through the day.

Discover more ways to create heart-healthy meals with pecans at AmericanPecan.com.

-- from Family Features

Banana Pecan Cherry Oatmeal

Makes: 10-12 servings

1 cup old-fashioned oats
2 cups water
1/2 cup pecan milk
1 banana, sliced
1/4 cup pecan halves
1/4 cup dried tart cherries
1/4 cup honey

In large, microwave-safe bowl, combine oats and water. Microwave on high 3-4 minutes, or until oats are cooked through. Watch carefully to avoid boiling over.

Remove from microwave, stir and divide between two bowls. Pour 1/4 cup pecan milk over each bowl. Divide sliced banana, pecan halves and dried tart cherries between each bowl and drizzle with 2 tablespoons honey. Serve immediately.

Cherry Pecan Energy Bites

Makes: 10-12 energy bites

1 cup toasted pecan halves or pieces
1 cup dried cherries
4 medjool dates, pitted
1/4 cup old-fashioned oats
1 tablespoon cacao powder, plus additional, for coating (optional)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

In bowl of food processor, combine toasted pecans, dried cherries, dates, oats, cacao powder and vanilla extract.

Pulse until ingredients begin to bind and form loose, dough-like ball.

Roll into 1-inch balls. Roll balls in additional cacao powder, if desired, and transfer to airtight container. Refrigerate until ready to serve, up to seven days.

Note: To make gluten-free, substitute 1/4 cup of certified gluten-free old-fashioned oats.

*Heart-Check certification does not apply to recipes.