Clinton County Connection

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Published by Clinton County Electric Cooperative, Inc. • cceci@cceci.com • www.cceci.com

Local students represent CCEC in D.C.

At the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting in Chicago in 1957, Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson addressed the crowd, stating, "If one thing comes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents." Soon thereafter, Illinois sent a busload of young people to Washington. By 1964, approximately 400 students from 12 states made the trip to D.C. The word of the program continued to spread, and today, over 1,800 students and their chaperones participate in the Youth Tour every year.

Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) was proudly represented by two local students on this year's "Youth to Washington" tour, held from June 16-23. Alayna Benhoff and Simon Toennies were chosen to attend this year's "Youth to Washington" tour. Alayna and Simon boarded a bus in Mt. Vernon early Friday morning, June 16, and started what was an eye-opening experience, seeing numerous D.C. area attractions and monuments, learning more about electric cooperatives, and creating countless friendships that will last for many years to come.

Over 1,800 young adults, from all over the United States, gathered at the Hyatt Regency Hotel one evening for the Youth Day assembly to hear phenomenal speakers. The students were privileged to hear keynote speaker Mike Schlappi, who delivered an inspiring message from his wheelchair. Mr. Schlappi was accidentally shot at age 14 and doctors told him he would never walk again. Prior to his accident, he was dreaming of a career as a top American athlete. In his message, he stated, "Just because you can't stand up, doesn't mean you can't stand out." His message was inspiring for the young and old.

The week in Washington, D.C., was action-packed with students representing cooperatives from the entire state of Illinois. The students visited historical and cultural sites, including Gettysburg, Arlington National Cemetery, the Supreme Court, the White House, the National Mall, the Smithsonian Institution, the Holocaust Memorial Museum, Ford's Theatre and many more memorials and historic sites. Among the fun activities the students enjoyed was an assembly of Youth Tour participants from across the nation. A highlight of the trip was the opportunity to meet our U.S. representatives and senators. Alayna and Simon were able to personally meet with United States Congressman Mike Bost. The Youth

Continued on 18B ▶

"Local students" continued from 18A

Pictured from left, Simon Toennies, Congressman Mike Bost and Alyana Benhoff.

Program allows today's students to experience government firsthand by visiting Capitol Hill and seeing the historical sites in Washington, D.C. Alayna and Simon, along with all the students from Illinois who attended, did not want this awesome week to end. They made long-lasting friendships and will remember their week of learning more about our wonderful nation for a very long time.

Each year Clinton County Electric sponsors two students to attend this weeklong all-expense-paid educational trip. Children of board members and employees are eligible to attend at their own expense. The program is kicked off each year in March or April with Youth Day in Springfield and followed by the trip to Washington, D.C., in June. Information about next year's trip will be available in the December issue of the Illinois Country Living magazine or can be found on our website at www.cceci.com under the Youth Programs tab.

Attention Educators and Administrators!

Have an educational project you'd like funded?

$4,000 available through Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants

Enter Touchstone Energy's Classroom Empowerment Grant Competition and your submission could win a $500 grant for classroom and education enhancement projects!

Touchstone Energy Classroom Empowerment Grants totaling $4,000 are being funded by Clinton County Electric Cooperative (CCEC) for the 2023-2024 school year. For more information about the grant program, or to get an application, please contact your school superintendant or Carrie Trame at Trame@cceci.com.

Grant applications will need to include the following information:

1. A description of the project and what it will accomplish
2. The estimated cost of the project
3. An explanation of why outside funds are necessary to complete the project
4. Whether other funding options have been pursued, and if so, how
5. When project will be completed
6. The number of people affected by the project
7. If the project's goals are measurable, and how
8. How the project ties in Touchstone Energy's four core values of Integrity, Accountability, Innovation, and Commitment to Community

Photos and supporting data are optional. Grant applications must be received at CCEC by November 6, 2023. Entries will be evaluated by an impartial panel of judges. Awards will be announced on December 8, 2023.

Touchstone Energy®

The power of human connections

Last year's winners:

$500 – Carlyle Grade School
Submitting educator: teacher Brandi Gore

$1,500 – Germantown Elementary
Submitting educators: Superintendent Robin Becker, and teachers Cheri Markwell and Kristine Beer

$1,500 – Mater Dei Catholic High School
Submitting educators: teachers Erika Knolhoff, Pam Zurliene, and Cory Arentsen

$500 – Trenton Elementary School
Submitting educator: teacher Sara Barton

HELP THE LINEWORKER RESTORE POWER

Occasionally, severe weather can cause power disruptions. When outages occur, our lineworkers get to work! They restore power as quickly and safety as possible.

Help the lineworker reach the transformer to fix the power outage.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Did you know fall is the perfect time to schedule a tune-up for your heating system? Home heating accounts for a large portion of winter energy bills, and no matter what kind of system you have, you can save energy and money by regularly maintaining your equipment.

Combining proper equipment maintenance and upgrades with recommended insulation, air sealing and thermostat settings can save about 30% on your energy bills.

Source: Dept. of Energy

Considering Solar? Call us first!

Before deciding to buy a solar array, examine the economics to determine if such a system will lower your monthly electricity costs. If you do decide to install a solar array, contact our office as early as possible in the process.

A CCEC representative will provide information on our interconnection process and policies, as well as answer any questions you may have. That way, you and your installer will have the information needed as you progress with your system.

For more information on CCEC policies and requirements, please contact our office Monday through Friday, between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. at 800-526-7282.

Our office will be closed Monday, September 4 in honor of Labor Day.

Although the office will be closed, obtain your account information and pay your bill 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by visiting our website at www.cceci.com or by calling 800-526-7282.