



**Oakdale Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner



The POWER behind your power

MY CO-OP

As April arrives, it brings with it the showers that produce spring flowers. It also heralds the beginning of a potentially stormy season that can inherently include power outages. While Oakdale Electric Cooperative strives to provide reliable electricity to our members, there are times when Mother Nature has other plans. Most of us can ride out a storm from the comfort and convenience of our homes. However, there is a group of professionals that spring into action when the weather takes a turn for the worse—co-op lineworkers.

One of the most dangerous jobs

Braving stormy weather and other challenging conditions, lineworkers often must climb 40 or more feet in the air, carrying heavy equipment to restore power. Listed as one of the 10 most dangerous jobs in the United States, lineworkers must perform detailed tasks next to high-voltage power lines. To help keep them safe, lineworkers wear specialized protective clothing and equipment at all times when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant clothing that will self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect them from electrical shock. While the gear performs a critical function, it also adds additional weight and bulk, making the job more complex.

In addition to the highly visible tasks lineworkers perform, their job today goes far beyond climbing to the top of a pole to repair a wire. They are also information experts that can pinpoint an outage from miles away and restore power remotely. Line crews use their laptops and cell phones to map outages, take pictures of the work they have done, and troubleshoot problems. In our community, Oakdale Electric Cooperative lineworkers are responsible for keeping 2,735 miles of lines across five counties working, in order to bring power to your home and our local community 24/7, regardless of the weather, holidays, or personal considerations.

While some of the tools that lineworkers use have changed over the years, namely the use of technology, the dedication to the job has not. Being a lineworker is not a glamorous profession. At its essence, it is inherently dangerous, requiring them to work near high-voltage lines in the worst of conditions, at any times of the day or night. During storms, crews often work around the clock to restore power. While April is known for spring showers, there is also a day set aside to “thank a lineworker.”

Lineworker Appreciation Day is April 9. So during the month of April, if you see a lineworker, please pause to say thank you to the power behind your power. Let them know you appreciate the hard work they do to keep the lights on, regardless of the conditions.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONGRESS



AN EXCITING OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The annual WECA Youth Leadership Congress (YLC) is a dynamic three-day event for youth leaders across Wisconsin to develop their leadership skills while learning about the purpose, operation, and scope of cooperative businesses.

Who is eligible to attend?

- Oakdale Electric Cooperative (OEC) will sponsor up to six students per qualifying high school to attend the 2018 YLC at UW–River Falls, July 25–27, 2018.
- Student must be a son or daughter (or under legal guardianship) of an active member of OEC residing in the same household.
- Student must be entering his/her senior year in the fall of 2018 at one of 12 qualifying schools: Brookwood, Mauston, Necedah, Nekoosa, New Lisbon, Pittsville, Reedsburg Area, Royall, Sparta, Tomah, Wisconsin Dells, and Wonewoc.

Members of the youth board have an opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., in June as part of the National Youth Tour. Last year, OEC's own Conor O'Donnell and Sam Peterson were elected to the youth board and will be joining other student leaders across the country on the National Youth Tour this spring. You could have the same opportunity!

What does it cost?

- All costs are covered by OEC, including transportation to and from UW–River Falls.

Interested? Here's how to apply...

- Registration materials are available at each respective high school guidance office in spring. Or contact Deana Protz, dprotz@oakdalerec.com, for more information.
- Each high school selects its own student representatives.

Take the opportunity to...

- See what makes the cooperative business model different and successful, and then apply this knowledge to fun and challenging cooperative activities.
- Identify and learn how to develop your own leadership skills.
- Discuss cooperative careers with professionals in the industry.
- Be entertained and challenged by highly acclaimed motivational speakers who understand teens and address topics that are important and relevant in your life.

The Youth Leadership Congress is a by-teens, for-teens conference that is planned and developed by a youth board elected at the previous year's event.





SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Available through Oakdale Electric Cooperative

Would you like to learn how to apply for a scholarship to apply towards a post-secondary education? Oakdale Electric Cooperative has three scholarship opportunities available. Scholarships are funded directly through the Federated Youth Foundation by unclaimed capital credits. A volunteer, member-appointed scholarship committee will review and select scholarship recipients.

#1: Youth Scholarship

Scholarships are awarded as follows to the authors of the top three essays to students at each of the 12 participating public high schools:

- First place – \$1,500
- Second place – \$1,250
- Third place – \$1,000

ELIGIBILITY:

- Participants must be between their junior and senior years in high school while attending the Youth Leadership Congress (YLC).
- The student must be a son or daughter (or under the legal guardianship) of an active member of the Oakdale Electric Cooperative.
- Student must be planning to attend a college, university, or vocational/technical school within the next 12 months after receiving the award, or the scholarship will be forfeited.
- A prerequisite for earning a scholarship is participation in Youth Leadership Congress, held on the UW-River Falls campus during the summer, and writing a winning essay upon the student's return home.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONGRESS:

Oakdale Electric Cooperative will sponsor up to six students per high school to attend the 2018 YLC at UW-River Falls, July 25–27. Registration materials are available at each respective high school guidance office in spring. The high school is responsible for selecting its student representatives.

DEADLINE:

The essay will be available following Youth Leadership Congress, and must be postmarked by August 24, 2018.

#2: At-Large/Non-Traditional Scholarship

A \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a high school senior not enrolled in one of the 12 participating public high schools in our service area (At-Large), OR an individual returning to university or technical college after spending time in the work place or raising a family (Non-Traditional) yearly.

ELIGIBILITY:

- Applicant must be a member or the son or daughter (or under the legal guardianship) of an active member of the Oakdale Electric Cooperative in good standing and accepted at a post-secondary program or accredited training program.
- Applicants do not have to attend Youth Congress, but are required to write an essay.
- The disbursement of this scholarship will be awarded after all qualifications are met and verification of enrollment.

APPLICATION:

The complete rules and application for the At-Large/Non-Tradition scholarship are currently available on our website, www.oakdalerec.com. Otherwise, they can be mailed or emailed to interested applicants.

DEADLINE:

The essay must be postmarked by May 4, 2018. The scholarship will be awarded in June 2018 and claim for the \$1,000 award can be made at that time.

#3: LINEWORKER SCHOLARSHIP

A \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a high school senior pursuing a post-secondary education in an electrical lineworker program. ▶



ELIGIBILITY:

One \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to an applicant pursuing a post-secondary education in an electric lineworker program. Any applicant enrolling in an electric lineworker program or any applicant who can prove he is on a waiting list for the next open enrollment period is eligible. Preference will be given to OEC members, and residents of Monroe, Juneau, Jackson, Sauk, and Wood counties.

APPLICATION:

The complete rules and application for the Lineworker Scholarship are currently available on our website, www.oakdalerec.com. Otherwise, they can be mailed or emailed to interested applicants.

DEADLINE:

The essay must be postmarked by May 4, 2018. The scholarship will be awarded in June 2018 and claim for the \$1,000 award can be made at that time.

For complete rules on all scholarships visit our website, www.oakdalerec.com, or contact Deana Protz at dprotz@oakdalerec.com or 608-372-4131.



OAKDALE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE WELCOMED TWO NEW EMPLOYEES IN FEBRUARY

Ethan Thorson recently joined the operations department as an apprentice lineman. He completed the Technical Studies – Journeyworker program at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College this past May, and was eager to begin his hands-on experience. A career in electrical distribution appealed to Ethan due to the outdoor working conditions, as well as working alongside good-hearted and hard-working co-op linemen.

Ethan will assist crews as he develops his job skillset, and works towards the required 400 hours of on-the-job training. Grateful for this opportunity, Ethan stated, “I am looking forward to a long, successful career with Oakdale Electric Cooperative.”

Originally from Hillsboro, Ethan has plans relocate to the Tomah community in the near future. A commonality among linemen is their love for the great outdoors, and this also rings true for Ethan. He likes to hunt and fish in his spare time, and jokingly stated he also enjoys “eating!”



Sam Moseley accepted a temporary warehouse/purchasing position at Oakdale Electric. Sam brings over six years of warehouse supervisory experience to the cooperative. He worked previously at a manufacturing company in Tomah for over 10 years, and is an active member of Air National Guard.

Sam was born and raised in Warrens, where he still lives today. He has a hand in operating the family business, Moseley’s Roadside Market, which consumes much of his spare time although he still makes room in his busy schedule to enjoy basketball, golf, and fish.

“I am excited for the opportunity to work for Oakdale Electric,” Sam said.

Oakdale Electric Cooperative is proud to hire these hard-working, high-quality individuals.



Bruce Ardel, General Manager

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Deana Protz, Editor



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Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 7:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
24-Hour Emergency Power Restoration: 800-927-6151
Toll-free Online Bill Payment 866-392-4307

Diggers Hotline: For underground cable locates and power line clearance information, call 800-242-8511.