

Dear Member:

Electric cooperatives have a unique and storied place in our country's history. We democratized the American dream by bringing electricity to rural areas when for-profit electric companies determined the effort too costly. Back then, cities were electrified, and rural areas were not, creating the original rural-urban divide. Newly established electric lines helped power economic opportunity in rural areas. Today, that spirit of equity and inclusion is a vital part of our co-op DNA.

Equal access for all

When our electric co-op was founded, each member contributed an equal share to gain access to electricity. Each member had an equal vote in co-op matters. That sense of equity and inclusion is still how we operate today. Membership is open to everyone in our service territory, regardless of race, religion, age, disability, gender identity, language, political perspective, or socioeconomic status.

By virtue of paying your electric bill each month, you are a member of the co-op, and every member has an equal voice and vote when it comes to co-op governance. This ties back to our guiding principles of equitable economic participation and democratic control of the co-op.

We encourage all members to vote in MEC's director elections. This year, board of director elections for districts 3,4, and 6 will take place at MEC's 2022 annual membership meeting scheduled for Saturday, May 14. Candidates may be nominated for director by filing a petition signed by at least 15 members of the cooperative who reside in that district. Petitions must be filed on or before Thursday, March 3 and may be obtained at MEC's headquarters facility.

Inclusion

While our top priority is providing safe, reliable, and affordable energy, we also want to be a catalyst for good in our communities. Because we are your *local* electric cooperative, co-op revenues stay right here in our communities. In turn, we invest in our diverse community base through scholarship programs, charitable giving, education programs and more. We strive to make long-term decisions that improve and enrich the communities we serve.

In this respect, MEC's 2022 scholarship application is available at midstateelectric.coop. The deadline to submit the application and all required materials is Monday, May 9. For additional information, call 541-536-2126, option 5.

While today's world is radically different than when we were founded, our cooperative values have stood the test of time and remain relevant today. Our pledge to you, the members we proudly serve, is to continue our culture of service to the greater good of the communities we serve.

Jim Anderson, General Manager