PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE NORTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES (NDAREC)

2017

NDAREC MENU OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS

NDARECs
North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives
Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative
UNDERSTANDING THE ELECTRIC BUSINESS, NRECA CREDENTIALED COOPERATIVE DIRECTOR #2610

January 28 — Mandan

The electric utility industry is an evolving high-tech system that must be designed and engineered to meet regulatory and consumer standards for reliability, quality and safety. This requires an appropriate investment on a planned and ongoing basis. This course gives directors an understanding of the key components of the electric utility industry.

KEY TOPICS
- Basic functions and cost components of generation, transmission and distribution
- Current and emerging technologies that are impacting utility operations and policies
- Issues related to distributed generation that the board may need to address
- Environmental issues and national policies that impact the cooperative
- The board’s role to ensure a safe working environment

Instructor: A native of Ohio, Mike Core began his career with rural electric cooperatives in 1976 at a local electric distribution cooperative. For more than 35 years, he has worked with distribution cooperatives, statewide trade associations, and generation-and-transmission (G&T) cooperatives. Prior to joining Big Rivers G&T in Kentucky, he was chief executive officer of the Indiana Statewide Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives for five years. Today he serves as an instructor for National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) courses, and works with cooperatives in strategic planning and other facilitation projects.

Core has also served on numerous NRECA, National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative and statewide advisory committees. He currently serves on the Western Electricity Coordinating Council board of directors, a 14-state regional electricity reliability organization.

CONVERSATION SKILLS OUTSIDE THE BOARDROOM, NRECA BOARD LEADERSHIP #943

February 4 — Mandan

Many cooperatives are getting member requests for information as the energy industry evolves toward a consumer-centric model. Co-ops are well-positioned as their members’ trusted energy advisor to provide education and information on the changing energy landscape. While directors are not the co-op’s official spokespersons, they are sometimes asked questions by members when they’re out in the community.

This course provides directors with skills and guidance on how to handle such situations by either responding to or referring questions to the co-op’s chief executive officer (CEO) or designated spokesperson. Participants will observe and practice how (and how not) to communicate their co-op’s policies, plans and positions on timely matters like rates, distributed energy resources, and the benefits of belonging to a consumer-centric cooperative utility.

KEY TOPICS
- Distinguishing the CEO’s role as primary co-op spokesperson from the director’s role in co-op communications efforts
- Understanding what is being communicated through body language
- Effective techniques for referring questions to the CEO or designated spokesperson
- Recognizing that anything directors say can be recorded by a smartphone and wind up on the Internet
- Responding to media inquiries and interviews if and when necessary

Instructor: Jody Severson has more than 25 years of experience as a communications and political troubleshooter for electric cooperatives across the United States, in addition to being an instructor and conference speaker for NRECA. He teaches NRECA’s board-governance course
on communication policy and planning; the marketing and communication coursework for the Management Internship Program; and helped author NRECA’s Communication Planning Toolkit. He has assisted distribution cooperatives, generation and transmission cooperatives and statewide associations with polling on controversial issues, as well as working with a number of them on rate-increase issues.

Severson provides strategic consulting, political advice, poll interpretation, database analysis, and marketing and communications consulting for electric and telephone cooperatives as well as numerous commercial businesses and political clients, including U.S. senators and representatives, governors and state legislators.

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES: CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING FOR DIRECTORS, NRECA BOARD LEADERSHIP #924
March 8 — Mandan

Cooperatives are subject to the ongoing challenges of providing continuous service to their membership in the face of natural and man-made disasters. Whether it’s a hurricane, tornado, cyberattack or employee sabotage, directors play an increasingly important role in monitoring the activities of management to ensure that physical and information-technology assets are secure and safe.

This course focuses on the director’s role in disaster planning and recovery, showing how they can fulfill the responsibility they have to their members by ensuring the continuity of electrical and business operations.

KEY TOPICS
- Ways cooperatives currently handle emergencies
- Factors that contribute to cooperatives’ needs to create emergency response plans
- Elements of and resources for emergency response and business continuity plans
- The director’s role in emergency response and business continuity plans
- Available resources for emergency response and business continuity plans

Instructor: Mike Guidry has been active in the cooperative industry for more than 30 years as a staff member, CEO and board member. He served as a distribution CEO for 24 years — and as board member of a statewide association, a generation-and-transmission cooperative, a finance cooperative and NRECA.

During his career, Guidry has had many opportunities to represent cooperatives. He was chosen by both Republican and Democratic governors to serve on state committees; testified before Congress on behalf of finance and telecommunications cooperatives; and served as chairman of numerous committees on the local, state and national levels. Guidry also led a successful fight against an attempted municipal takeover of cooperative members.

RATE STRATEGIES FOR 21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES, NRECA BOARD LEADERSHIP #974
October 7 — Mandan

NRECA and the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation developed a publication titled, “Rate Strategies for 21st Century Challenges: A Guide to Rate Innovation for Cooperatives,” which is featured in this course. Directors discuss the complex issues they must balance when considering business plans, financial policies, and alternative rate philosophies and strategies.

This course addresses how current rate methodologies affect rising power costs and the current focus on energy efficiency and conservation. Attendees will use case studies and problems to analyze and discuss issues such as equity goals, long-range revenue requirements, achieving fairness for multiple rate classes, and dealing with proposed rate increases.

KEY TOPICS
- Components of a rate philosophy
- Key steps in the rate-making process
- Effective rate design that will support financial and other strategic goals

Instructor: Rod Crile retired from the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) in 2015, after serving 13 years as a regional vice president. During this time, in addition to his normal CFC duties, he also served as an instructor for NRECA.

Prior to joining CFC, Crile was Vice President of Business and Engineering Systems and Support for the National Information Solutions Cooperative (NISC). Other positions held with NISC included member support director, industry advancement manager, and cost/general accounting administrator.

Combining his tenure at NISC, CFC and two Ohio rural electric cooperatives, Crile brings more than 36 years of cooperative experience to the classroom.
Boards have ultimate responsibility for ensuring and evaluating the long-term health of the organization. They help fulfill this duty through strategic thinking; identifying goals through strategic planning; and authorizing the appropriate allocation of resources through the adoption of financial policies, budget review and approval; and monitoring management’s progress toward strategic goals. This course teaches directors how to participate effectively in strategic thinking and planning processes.

**KEY TOPICS**
- The difference between strategic thinking and strategic planning
- Analysis of your cooperative’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- The board’s oversight responsibility
- The strategic plan as an evaluation tool for the cooperative’s accomplishment of goals and as the foundation for the CEO’s performance appraisal

**Instructor:** Since 1991, Scott Luecal has been providing consulting and training services to consumer-owned utilities, their business subsidiaries and community-directed organizations, the leading insurance company to the consumer-owned electric and telecommunications industries, water companies and economic development agencies.

As a trainer to the rural electric industry, Luecal delivers courses related to strategic planning, financial planning, cost of service and rate design, equity management and capital credits, understanding financial statements, board and management roles and responsibilities, technology planning, and understanding the electric utility business. He also served as the Manager of University Programs for NRECA for eight years.

Luecal has held various executive-level positions with Central Area Data Processing and NISC. In 2007 he left NISC to start his consulting business.

**THE EVOLUTION OF ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE POWER SUPPLY, NRECA BOARD LEADERSHIP #961**

Electric cooperative boards face a rapidly evolving energy landscape where power supply decisions are more complex, involve greater risks, and have greater cost consequences for members than ever before. The low price of natural gas, the combination of state renewable portfolio requirements, the falling prices of wind, solar and environmental regulations are leading a fundamental shift in the U.S. electricity generation portfolio. This shift has significant implications for electricity suppliers and consumers.

This course focuses on strategies boards can pursue in the face of this uncertainty including understanding what members want, working closely with power suppliers, communicating with members, and being their trusted energy advisor.

**KEY TOPICS**
- Brief history on “how we got here”
- Regulations
- Transmission/markets
- The electric cooperative today

**Instructor:** Kevin Sump retired in January 2013, following 24 years as the president and CEO for South Central Indiana REMC, an electric distribution cooperative in Martinsville, Ind. He has 40 years of electric cooperative experience, 33 of those years as a general manager/CEO.

Sump was an original member of the Brand Steering Committee that began developing an electric cooperative brand initiative in November 1996, which resulted in the formation of Touchstone Energy®. He was also instrumental in forming the Circle City Group, LLC, a cooperative effort among five distribution cooperatives to provide their systems with joint and shared services.

During his electric cooperative career, Sump was actively involved in generation and transmission, statewide association, Touchstone Energy, and NRECA boards and committees. His extensive experience includes working with board members, particularly in the areas of board governance, corporate restructuring, disaster recovery plans, the CEO appraisal process, strategic planning, board self-evaluations, and development of succession plans.
LEADING FROM BEHIND & OTHER
LESSONS FROM A HORSE
February 9 — Bismarck

This unique half-day program is co-sponsored by the N.D. Member Services Association (NDMSA), and will be held in conjunction with the NDMSA meeting scheduled for Feb. 9 and 10.

How effective are you in working with your co-workers or team to complete a project successfully? As a leader, how do you respond when roadblocks occur or time constraints and resources become an issue? How do you communicate with team members at your cooperative and with member-owners who have different and changing expectations?

This program will feature equine-assisted learning activities to encourage participants to consider new ideas and unexpected outcomes for professional and personal growth.

KEY TOPICS
- Challenging basic beliefs about leadership, communications and teamwork
- Building relationships and valuing the strengths of others in the organization
- Fostering creativity through life lessons

Instructor: Cherie Sanstead is the owner/manager of Harmony Stables & Equine Training Center, and a member of Capital Electric Cooperative. She grew into her horse passion as an adult, after working in the human resources field and owning several small businesses. Passionate about providing people with access to the horses, in the form of riding lessons, training clinics and equine-guided learning activities — Sanstead knows firsthand how horses enrich people’s lives and provide invaluable life lessons. She and her husband, Jon, have two teenage children along with several pets, including a goat named “Mo.”

ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS
CONFERENCE
March 2 and 3 — Minot

The N.D. REC Engineering and Operations Association provides technical training for engineers, operations and construction personnel at its annual conference. This year’s conference will feature a full-day session on March 2, on “Major Changes and General Overview of the 2017 National Electrical Safety Code (NESC).

KEY TOPICS
- Scope and purpose of the NESC
- Major changes and general overview of the substation rules
- Major changes and general overview of the overhead line rules
- Major changes and general overview of the underground line rules
- Major changes and general overview of the work rules


Marne is company president and senior electrical engineer for Marne and Associates, Inc. in Missoula, Mont., where he specializes in NESC training, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training for power and communications workers, engineering design training and expert-witness services related to the NESC, and OSHA standards for Power and Communication workers.

Marne has more than 30 years of experience in the utility industry, engineering and managing transmission and distribution line projects, substation projects, electrical system planning studies, and providing training and expert witness services.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE
August 11 — Location to be announced

This professional development program will be held in conjunction with the North Dakota Office Managers and Accountants Association meeting. All REC employees are welcome to attend this half-day program.

Are leaders born or can they be developed? We’ve learned that leadership skills can be developed while styles are innate to our own behaviors. This workshop will take participants on a journey of understanding leadership-style effectiveness, behaviors that influence organizational culture, and how to make the best of their own style to meet the needs of the cooperative and various work teams. Participants will also have an opportunity to use the DiSC Behavioral Styles self-assessment to help determine individual strengths, the value of other styles and using them effectively to lead at work and in the community.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
FOR EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATIONS

KEY TOPICS
- Discover your DiSC behavioral style
- Understand how your leadership style is most effective
- Relate to other styles and learn how to positively influence others
- Use your strengths to develop yourself and help to develop others

Instructor: Lynn Moore worked in the electric cooperative industry for 10 years as the director of member relations and development for the Indiana Statewide Association. She spent much of that time contributing to state, regional and national programming. Her accomplishments include educational design and program delivery for all employee groups, RELITE — a successful 15-year employee leadership program, Youth Leadership development both locally and nationally, and nationally recognized efforts for the “Our Energy, Our Future” campaign.

Nationally, her partnerships include Touchstone Energy, where she served as a member of the National Cooperative Advisory Council and continues her work with brand education and youth leadership as an NRECA Youth Leadership Council program facilitator. Moore is a Franklin Covey Facilitator, a DDI Master Trainer and DiSC Licensed Facilitator.

COOPERATIVE STRUCTURE: A STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE FOR CO-OP STAFF, NRECA #119
October 11 — Bismarck and October 12 — Fargo

The cooperative business model provides unique advantages to electric co-ops in today’s challenging and shifting energy environment. Electric cooperatives that “live” their purpose and operate in accordance with the cooperative business model empower their members to improve their quality of life.

KEY TOPICS
- Ways co-op employees may tap into the strategic advantage of the cooperative structure
- Increased understanding of the cooperative principles and values
- Assessment of how and why a cooperative culture is key to member engagement

Instructor: Adam Schwartz is the founder and principal of The Cooperative Way, a consulting firm dedicated to helping cooperative businesses succeed. Schwartz has served cooperatives from different sectors for more than 20 years and has extensive knowledge of the key factors that lead to high-performing, sustainable success for cooperatives from all sectors.

Prior to founding The Cooperative Way, Schwartz served as vice president for public affairs and member services from 2005 to 2011 for the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA), the only national cross-sector member association with a mission of developing, protecting and advancing cooperative businesses. His responsibilities included directing public policy, communications, marketing and strategic alliances.

Prior to his service at NCBA, he served as vice president of external affairs for the National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative in Herndon, Va. and a senior legislative representative for NRECA in Washington, D.C.

UNDERSTANDING SERVICE ACCOUNT COLLECTIONS AND DISCONNECTS
Date to be announced — Mandan

For most business enterprises, collecting past-due debts is time-consuming, stressful and subtracts from the organization’s overall productivity. There are federal and state laws with which to comply, as well as the overall customer and public relations issues to consider. This program is designed to assist utility service providers in collecting past-due accounts with a maximum of return on resources invested, minimal hassle, and in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations. Using class discussion, small-group activities and practice sessions, attendees will gain insight into the following key topics:

KEY TOPICS
- Key provisions of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, and applicable terms of the Consumer Credit Protection Act of 1977
- Rules and regulations covering service discontinuance/disconnection
- Collections from estates and bankruptcies
- Small claims courts and collection agencies
- Tips and techniques designed to maximize the effectiveness of communication regarding cutoffs and past-due bill collections

Instructor: Debra Ballard founded her consulting company, the Ballard Group, in 1996. She conducts training and consulting services in leadership, planning, change management, customer service and communication. Her major clients are electric cooperatives, municipals and investor-owned utilities throughout the United States, as well as the U.S. Air Force, the Boeing Corporation, small businesses, non-profit organizations and technical schools.
The following webinars provide learning opportunities from the convenience of your office. Each webinar is a 60-minute presentation, followed by a brief question-and-answer period. For continuity in instruction, Kayla Barrett will serve as the instructor for all four webinars. Please refer to the end of this section for her biographical information and credentials.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: THE SECRET SKILL FOR REAL RESULTS
April 4 — 10 a.m. Central Time
For all employees

Sometimes the hardest thing about your job isn’t your task list – it’s the people! The pressure of work, deadlines and interpersonal conflict can cause employees and managers to react negatively toward each other. Learn how to build relationships, enhance your credibility and most importantly, get the results you need as you interact with others.

KEY TOPICS
- Understanding emotional intelligence and its impact on business results
- The four domains of emotional intelligence (EI) and the behaviors that are critical with each
- A personal action strategy to build your EI that engages your team and achieves positive team outcomes

EMPLOYEE ON-BOARDING: CONNECTIONS, COMPETENCE AND CONTRIBUTION
May 9 — 10 a.m. Central Time
For supervisors and members of the co-op management team

Let’s face it. Starting a new job is tough. New employees are walking into your organization where everyone knows each other and knows what to do. In today’s fast-paced environment, there is a cost to effective and efficient on-boarding of new team players.

This interactive webinar equips leaders to think like a new hire to ensure not only the right information is shared with them, but at the right time and with the most effective approach to ensure employees are productive as quickly as possible. Business results occur at a faster pace and new employees become engaged more quickly.

KEY TOPICS
- Learn the five big questions every new hire has on day one of their job
- Identify the key players in your on-boarding process
- Understand the four phases of on-boarding to advance productivity and increase new-hire retention

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: THE BUSINESS SKILL THAT CREATES SUCCESS
September 12 — 10 a.m. Central Time
For all employees

Impressions matter. They’re critical to both your external and internal customer relationships. Those impressions are developed with each interaction, and set the stage for how you get work done through others, how to get what you need from others, and how to foster relationships that move you forward. This webinar will help you learn how to build a respected and positive reputation across the organization.

KEY TOPICS
- The importance of diplomacy and tact in today’s demanding workplace
- Body language in sync with the intended message
- Maintaining composure and confidence in tough situations
- How to effectively communicate criticism, bad news or in conflict situations
LISTENING: THE OTHER HALF OF COMMUNICATION
October 3 — 10 a.m. Central Time
For all employees

In today’s time-strapped environment, listening more and talking less is crucial for anyone who wants to be successful. In this interactive webinar, you will discover the emotional and logical components of business listening; techniques for listening in different situations (i.e. highly emotional, hostile, business meetings); and ways to communicate with others based on four different listening styles. These business skills will greatly improve your ability to influence and lead others.

KEY TOPICS
- The business costs of effective versus ineffective listening
- The emotional and logical process involved in business exchanges
- Four distinct listening styles and how they impact the listening process
- Practical actions that will increase your focus and recall of business conversations

Instructor: Kayla Barrett has been involved with human resources, training and development since 1991. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Communication and Master of Science degree in Organizational Communication with an emphasis in training and development from Murray State University.

Barrett previously served as a director of human resources. In addition, she has served as Director of Organizational Strategy for the Gaylord Entertainment Hotels division. Her additional work experience includes roles in sales training with a large corporation and technology training with another. She is a member of the Association for Talent Development and the Society of Human Resources Management.

*For the most up-to-date seminar and webinar details and registration information, please visit the NDAREC website at www.ndarec.com.