

Meet Your Board of Directors

Kristine Bingham



When longtime IEC board member Ronald Myers retired last summer, the search for his replacement did not have to reach very far. His daughter, Kristine Bingham, was one of many applicants, undergoing the same rigorous interviewing process as the rest. The only difference? Kristine emerged as the nominee, a position which is particularly meaningful for her.

"It's special to me," she says, thinking of the decades her grandfather and father served as directors before her. She is certainly up for the challenge, though: "There's a huge amount of information I have to learn, but it's all very interesting."

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Illinois Electric Cooperative

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Kristine, a fourth-grade teacher at Griggsville Elementary School, where her career has spanned 30 years, understood from experience how demanding the position of director can be.

“I knew it was a huge time commitment,” she recalls, “but I thought it would be fun to expand my horizons.” Her outlook for the future of Illinois Electric Cooperative is optimistic, and includes the exciting areas of internet and electric expansion across the service area. “I hope it makes the communities grow, and kids come back home to stay.” Of course, there are challenges on the path forward, including the proliferation of fiber optic internet to new areas, but the potential is there for great things, and Kristine is ready to step up to the plate as a director to help realize those goals.

What Kristine believes she brings to the board almost certainly comes from her years working with students and parents in the educational system. “I think I have learned how to work with people, including consumers, to solve problems successfully,” she notes. While her experience thus far has been limited by the short time since she filled the position, she also has hopes for what she will gain from her time with IEC. “The satisfaction of doing the best I could to help our communities,” she remarks. “That’s what I’d like to take away from it in the end.”

With a husband of 30 years and four children — Jennifer, a senior in high school; Daniel, a junior in college; Allyson, currently pursuing a master’s degree; and Jacqueline, who has completed her graduate work — Kristine’s proudest role in life is as loving wife and mother. Her involvement with the board of directors has only reinforced her awareness of the importance of family. “My perspective has changed,” she says of her life now that she’s stepped into her father’s and grandfather’s shoes. Illinois Electric looks forward to the many ways which her involvement will benefit the co-op and its members.



Kristine Bingham with student Eli Musgrave in her classroom at Griggsville Elementary School.

This article on Kristine Bingham is the twelfth in a series of written profiles on Illinois Electric Cooperative’s Board of Directors, which have been compiled and written by Noah Sellars, one of our college interns.



Fiber Internet for Calhoun Schools

Back row (l-r): Christie Lorschbach, Luke Fraley, Randy Long, Shawn Rennecker, Tom Meehan, Kevin Brannan, Cody Schnettgoeke, Jim Freeman, and Cheri Burrus. Front row (l-r): Dr. Kevin Klein, Dr. Kate Sievers, Kurtis Weber, Aaron Rodhouse, and Julia Eberlin.

Illinois Electric Cooperative recently completed construction of fiber internet service to Calhoun Elementary School and Calhoun High School. The project was made possible through FCC E-Rate funding that Calhoun Schools applied for and funding from the Illinois State Board of Education. Illinois Electric Cooperative was selected by the schools as the contractor.

The speed will enable 21st century learning experiences for the students in Calhoun County. "The co-op and the Board of Directors know how critical high-speed internet is today. If there's a way we can help schools in our service territory get faster internet, then we want to do it," said Tom Meehan, Illinois Electric Cooperative Board President.

"Calhoun Unit Schools are now reaping the benefits of the collaborative efforts between Illinois Electric Cooperative and Calhoun CUSD #40," said Dr. Kate Sievers, Superintendent. "Through Federal and State grant programs, both entities have worked

to bring another source of internet service to Calhoun County and CUSD #40 has been afforded the opportunity to upgrade its internet service to the District at a lower cost."

"The savings and increased internet service is a win-win situation for the District. The collaboration was seamless and a new working relationship has been established. We cannot wait for the citizens of Calhoun County to be part of this new opportunity, too. On behalf of the staff, students, administration and School Board Members, we would like to thank not only Illinois Electric Cooperative but our local State and Federal Representatives who helped make this a reality," Dr. Sievers said.

Through a separate FCC E-Rate fund project, Brussels school system will be receiving fiber internet service as well. The co-op has been chosen as the contractor on this project and anticipates completion in late spring.

Attention High School Juniors: Apply Now for CEO



CEO is now accepting applicants for the fall 2020 class. Students who will be entering their senior year may apply.

The CEO programs take high school seniors out of their schools and meet in business settings throughout the year. Around 60 leaders of the business, agricultural, and professional communities make presentations to the groups, and the classes visit a like number of businesses throughout the year.

In the first half of the school year, the students develop a class business, which helps fund their individual business in the second half of the year. Students in the program are also paired with a mentor from their business community.

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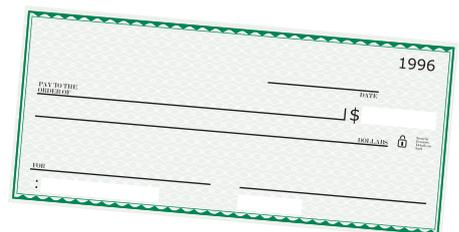
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The programs are sponsored by over 100 investors, along with Jacksonville Regional Economic Development Corporation, the Health and Wellness Foundation of Pike County, District One Foundation, and Illinois Electric Cooperative.

Interested high school juniors should speak with their high school guidance counselors. Applications for Morgan-Scott and Greene-Calhoun CEO programs are due by March 20th. Pike CEO applications are due by March 16th.

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