



Mike Smith
President and CEO



Co-op students engage lawmakers during annual AIEC Youth Day

On March 25, 168 students sponsored by 24 electric and telephone cooperatives across the state gathered in the Illinois State Capitol for Youth Day, an annual event designed to introduce young leaders to state government and the cooperative principles that serve their communities. Students met with elected officials, explored historic sites, and experienced the workings of state government firsthand.

Representing McDonough Power Cooperative included Timothy Todd and Meg Carson (West Prairie High School), Alex Simmons and Sydney Hamm (Macomb High School), Brady Trone and Lily Heitz (Rushville-Industry High School), and Devon Scholine (United High School). **12127B7C-1059B**

Representing McDonough Telephone (MTC) included: Cruz Castillo and Deacon Zaehring (Illini West), Jude Eveland and Mi-Colette Mbula



(Rushville-Industry), Lillian Sheffler and West Markham (West Prairie).

“As cooperatives, we’re committed not only to providing reliable service but also to investing in the next generation,” said Kelly Hamm, energy services manager at McDonough Power Cooperative and facilitator of its youth programs. “Youth Day helps students understand the cooperative difference and the impact they can have as informed citizens.”

State Senator Neil Anderson met with the students representing McDonough Power and McDonough Telephone.

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Every month we will have four map location numbers hidden throughout **The Wire**. If you find the map location number that corresponds to the one on your bill (found above the usage graph), call our office and identify your number and the page that it is on. If correct, you will win a \$10 credit on your next electric bill.



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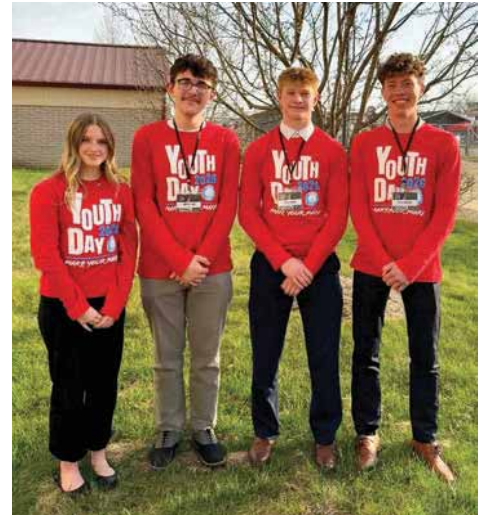
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“Youth Day” continued from page 18A



In addition to meeting elected officials, the students also learned more about their cooperatives’ roles in their own communities and had the opportunity to tour the Capitol Building and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. **9324D7-350A**

During lunch, Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs addressed the students. He shared his journey from a small town in Illinois to his current role, emphasizing the importance of finding interesting and challenging opportunities. He encouraged students to pursue their passions, participate and become lifelong learners.

“You have found time to participate here today by coming to Youth Day,” Frerichs said. “You’re talking to people. You are learning. And I’ll tell you that learning never stops. It only stops when you decide you don’t want to learn anymore. ... If you decide to push yourself and become a lifelong learner, you’ll grow from it.”

Participants also met Micah Anderson, the 2025-26 Illinois Youth Leadership Council representative, who was sponsored by Adams Telephone Cooperative during the 2025 Youth Day and Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. He spoke of his experiences over the past year, saying that representing Illinois has been one of the most fulfilling things he’s done in his life.

“Throughout the year, I’ve grown in many ways that I could have never imagined,” Anderson said. “I never thought that I would be able to see myself as a leader. I never thought that I would be confident enough to get in front of a crowd and deliver a speech. ... But here I am in front



of all you today. I’m a testament to the growth that you can undergo if you take advantage of the opportunities that are placed in front of you. I challenge you all to do the same.”

At the end of the day, the attendees were interviewed for the chance to participate in AIEC’s Youth Tour and FRS’s Youth Tour, an annual trip to Washington, D.C., sponsored by McDonough Power and McDonough Telephone. This year’s trip will be held in June. Meg Carson and Timothy Todd will represent McDonough Power on the weeklong AIEC trip. Brady Trone and Alex Simmons were also selected as alternates. Deacon Zaehring and Lilly Sheffler will represent McDonough Telephone on the weeklong FRS trip, with West Markham as the alternate. They’ll have the opportunity to meet their elected officials, see historic sites, learn firsthand how cooperatives work and gain valuable leadership skills.

“From touring Washington, D.C., to learning the cooperative difference, Youth Tour is much more than a trip,” said Rachel Kerns, MTC’s director of marketing. “It’s an experience they will carry long after high school.” **612B3-168A**

Director candidates needed

The Board of Directors of McDonough Power Cooperative, located in Macomb, Ill., is seeking interested candidates to serve as a director representing District 6. This opportunity is available due to the retirement of a long-time board member.

The successful candidate will be elected by a vote of the membership at the 2026 McDonough Power Annual Meeting, scheduled for Sept. 2, 2026, at The Crossing Church on West Jackson Street in Macomb.

The board encourages a diverse pool of candidates to consider this leadership opportunity. Those interested are encouraged to visit mcdonoughpower.com/board-positions or contact the cooperative during normal business hours for additional information.

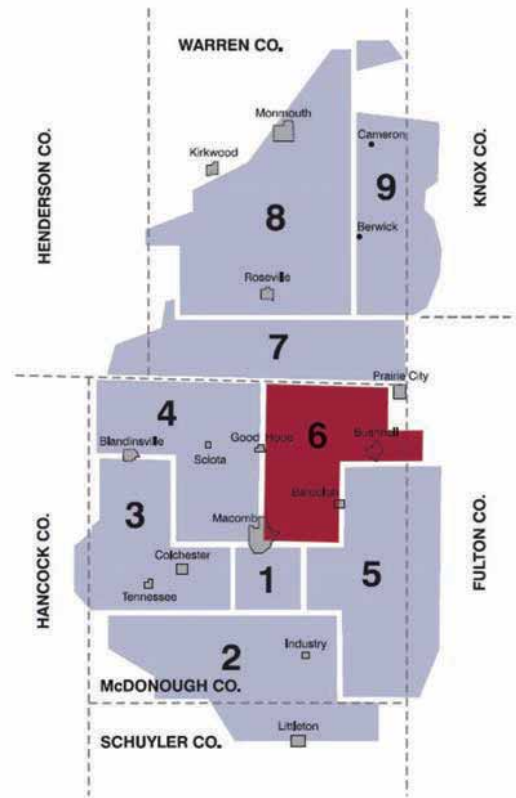
Director qualifications include:

- Must be a member of the cooperative in good standing and primarily reside in District 6. District 6 includes all of Macomb, Walnut Grove, Bushnell and Prairie City Townships in McDonough County, as well as a portion of Lee Township in Fulton County.

- Must have been a member of McDonough Power Cooperative for at least two years prior to the election.
- Must not be employed by the cooperative or have a financial interest in any competing business that sells electric energy or supplies to the cooperative.

To be placed on the ballot, candidates must submit a petition signed by at least 15 McDonough Power Cooperative members. Petitions must be submitted to the cooperative office at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting. At that time, the board secretary will post the names of all qualified candidates. **10228D7-302C**

Final determination of candidate eligibility, in accordance with the cooperative's bylaws, will be made by the board of directors and the cooperative's legal counsel.



For complete details, please visit mcdonoughpower.com/board-positions or contact the cooperative office.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

As temperatures start to rise, many homeowners focus on staying cool. Don't forget about the small gaps around windows and doors. While air sealing is often associated with keeping cold air out during winter, it's just as important during summer. Tiny cracks and worn weatherstripping allow cool, conditioned air to escape and hot, humid air to seep indoors. This forces your air conditioner to work harder than necessary and increases energy costs. Take a few minutes to check for drafts, replace weatherstripping and seal leaks. A tighter home keeps you more comfortable and helps manage energy use.

Source: energy.gov



TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



If you receive a call from someone stating you have overpaid your energy bill and you should provide your banking information or a credit card number to receive a refund, hang up because it's likely a scam. If you overpay your bill, your utility will apply the overpayment credit to your account balance or mail a check. They will not call and request your banking information to issue the refund.

Source: *Utilities United Against Scams*





Check these monthly to keep your home and family safe.

Kitchen

- Clean refrigerator coils and allow space for airflow.
- Store and use appliances away from the sink.
- Use and test GFCI outlets.
- Inspect cords for cracks or frays.
- Keep cords off counters; unplug when not in use.

Bedroom

- Place and test smoke and CO detectors on every level and near sleeping areas.
- Keep cords out from under rugs or furniture.
- Unplug devices and chargers when not in use.
- Make sure lightbulbs are the correct wattage.
- Plug window AC units into a dedicated circuit.

Basement

- Ensure washer and dryer are stable and ventilated.
- Remove dryer lint after each use.
- Set water heater to 120°F or lower.
- Have furnace inspected and confirm proper ventilation.

Bathroom

- Keep appliances away from water (sink, toilet, tub, shower).
- Unplug appliances when not in use.
- Use and test GFCI outlets.

Living Room

- Use safety caps on unused outlets, especially if children or pets are present.
- Ensure electronics have space for airflow.
- Replace cracked light switch or outlet covers.
- Avoid overloading outlets, power strips and surge protectors.

Garage

- Use and test GFCI outlets.
- Inspect cords for cracks or damage.
- Unplug tools and appliances when not in use.
- Place garage refrigerators/freezers on dedicated appliance circuits.

Learn more at: SafeElectricity.org

MEMORIAL DAY

Our office will be closed on **MONDAY, MAY 25TH**, in observance of Memorial Day.