



## NREDA News Brief | August 2022



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### President's Message



As September comes upon us, it marks the changing of the seasons and the three-quarter mark of the year, school is starting, pools are closing, harvest is beginning, and summer is walking out the back door waving goodbye. How's IT stacking up for you?

Take some time to evaluate how far you have come this year. What are the milestones you have reached? What are those that are "ripe for the picking?" All too often we look at the missed opportunities, where we may not have measured up. While our successes and failures are the world's way to keep score, focus on the process where we grow and mature.

In this edition of the newsletter, you can find an excellent opportunity to invest in yourself at the annual conference in Albuquerque NM this November. David Cleveland of Jackson EMC, Georgia, has led the conference committee and they have put together a spectacular lineup of speakers and mobile classroom experiences which will feed your inner economic developer passion.

Ginger Johnson will lead the conference interacting with you on the power of connections. And this is only where we start. Breakout sessions on community and economic development, the arts, and automation surround a great mobile classroom lineup. While you're there invest some time in southwest history and culture to give you perspective on time and change.

Over the years, the most regenerative part of the conference has been the connections between old and new, rural and urban, economic development and cooperative practitioners. I encourage you to invest the time and money into some of the best three days you'll find for your growth in the industry. Take advantage of the opportunity, and if you are a new member there are discounts too! See you in Albuquerque.

Dan Boysel, NREDA President

### Annual Conference

**REGISTER NOW**



**2022 NREDA Annual Conference**  
*Rising into the Future*  
**November 2-4, 2022**

# Registration is LIVE!

[Visit our NEW conference website!](#) Here you can learn everything you need to know about this year's conference such as information about the speakers, view the agenda, and book your hotel room.

Registration is open until Nov. 4, 2022.  
Discounted rate ends Oct. 10, 2022. No cancellation refunds will be given after Oct. 10.  
Must be signed in to register.

[Register Now](#)

## NREDA 2022 Award Nominations

We need your help identifying those deserving of recognition for their outstanding leadership in rural economic development. The National Rural Economic Developers Association honors deserving individuals across America yearly at the Annual Conference.

**Nomination forms are due no later than September 1.**

### NREDA 2021 Rural Economic Development Leadership Award

Do you know someone who should be recognized for his or her outstanding leadership in the field of rural economic development? If so, the National Rural Economic Developers Association (NREDA) seeks to honor deserving individuals for that purpose with its Rural Economic Development Leadership Awards program.

In recognition of outstanding leadership in the field of rural economic development, NREDA seeks to honor deserving individuals across America. Nominees may be economic development professionals, rural electric cooperative/rural telephone staff, or board members. Nominees are those who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in an economic development project resulting in the improvement of the quality of life, creation of new jobs, and opportunity for growth and development in rural America.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Attraction, retention, or expansion of business
- Development of unique partnerships to enhance the economic vitality of an area such as the establishment of a new economic development organization; development of a business incubator or entrepreneur program; participation in revolving loan fund or development of an industrial park or speculative building; new housing initiative (new construction or renovation); development of a marketing program; tourism development; and legislative initiatives.

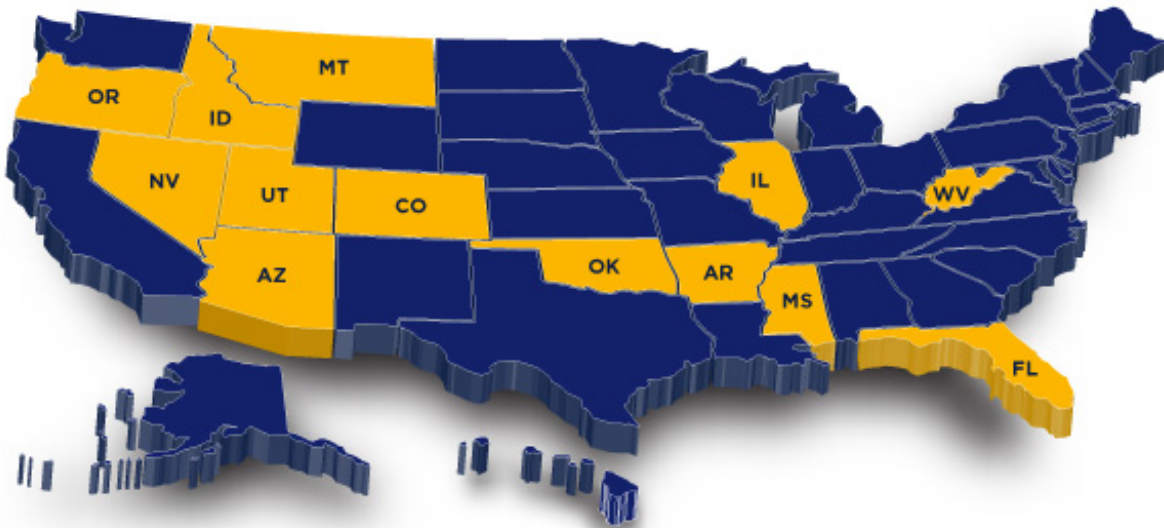
[Submit Nomination](#)

### NREDA 2021 Organization Excellence Award

The Organization Excellence Award is designed to recognize utility/economic development organizations or associations/government entities that have implemented a successful rural economic development program for their area. The focus will be on the success of communicating the program, improvements to the business climate, and measurable results and outcomes.

[Submit Nomination](#)

## Membership Challenge



**NREDA**

*National. Rural. Connected.*

**Membership Challenge**

**Winner to be announced at the 2022 Annual Conference**

The NREDA Membership Committee has set its goals for the year and is calling for your help. The committee is targeting new members from **telcos** and **states** with low membership numbers.

The NREDA member that recruits the most new members in either of these categories will be awarded in a grand way at the Annual Conference this fall in Albuquerque.

**Make sure they mention that you recommended them in their application.**

States that qualify include:

Arizona  
Arkansas  
Colorado  
Florida

Idaho  
Illinois  
Mississippi  
Montana  
Nevada

Oklahoma  
Oregon  
Utah  
West Virginia

## Sharing NREDA Member Success



### **NREDA Board President-Elect Promoted to Managing Director, Business Development and Governmental Affairs position at Jackson EMC**

**David Cleveland** has recently been promoted to the Managing Director, Business Development and Governmental Affairs position at Jackson EMC, located in Jefferson, GA. David joined Jackson EMC in 2017 and has most recently worked as the Director of Business Development. He is a graduate of the University of Georgia where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, and also Georgia College and State University where he completed the MBA program. David is active in multiple civic organizations and community groups. He serves on the Executive Board of

Directors for the National Rural Economic Developers Association. He recently completed the Management Internship Program (MIP) through NRECA.

David and his wife Stephanie have three beautiful children, Mary Kate (13), Mills (12), and Madden (9).

### **WCR to Seward: A lesson in patience**

Submitted by Rick Nelsen: "A project 18 years in the making! Our NPPD team played a key role in maintaining the relationship throughout the years."

July 8, 2022

WCR Incorporated, an industry leader in heat exchanger parts and service, has announced plans to open a location in Seward, Nebraska to help service production facilities in the Midwest, particularly the many ethanol plants that dot Nebraska and the rest of the Corn Belt. With groundbreaking in June and a projection to be operational by November of 2022, it can seem like projects like this happen almost overnight. But that couldn't be further from the truth in this case, and that stands as a reminder of the importance of patience for anyone involved with economic development.

Brian Vasa of NPPD Economic development had his first conversation with WCR vice president Jeff Newman in 2004.

"They (WCR) were a cold call lead from a trade show that year. We would do follow-up emails and then nothing until the next trade show we would see them at," Vasa said. "Each time, Jeff would want to take another run at it but it was always the barrier of convincing corporate they needed a Nebraska location."

Maintaining that relationship with the company through Newman was key to eventually landing this project, but that took more than just consistent contact. Providing real value to a prospect, even when results don't seem to be coming, helps to keep their attention and focus over the long term, and Vasa did that with a combination of his contacts and NPPD's resources.

"Each time he would explain where they were at in the buildout and that they needed a Nebraska location. Early years I would call into the office and our research group would take the building request and have something back to me by the end of the day. As technology progressed I could have it on my iPad within minutes." Vasa said. "We also connected the company with ethanol plants utilizing our relationships to strengthen our position on recruiting them to Nebraska."

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## New Member Highlights



### Sheena Thomas

*Rural Opportunity Zone Program Manager*

**Office of Rural Prosperity (State of Kansas)**

#### **What does your job entail?**

I manage and direct the Rural Opportunity Zone (ROZ) Program for the Kansas Department of Commerce. This program is a student loan repayment assistance program for new residents of ROZ counties.

#### **What is your background?**

I have a Bachelor's degree in business administration from Wichita State University. I most recently was employed at the county level in Public Works administration, and I have lived and worked in rural Kansas for most of my adult life.

#### **What is the one thing you enjoy most about your position?**

I enjoy being able to help rural Kansas thrive where they want to live, not where they are forced to move.

#### **What is the one thing you'd like to learn from your experience with NREDA?**

I would like to learn as many other strategies for rural economic development as I can, as well as meet others who are just as invested in making rural America thrive.

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## Welcome New Members

#### **Brittany Cox**

Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives  
Winchester, KY

#### **Michael Jansen**

Marana, AZ

#### **Stephen Milner**

Planters Telephone Cooperative  
Newington, GA

#### **Brian Tapp**

Iowa Area Development Group  
Des Moines, IA

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## Action Items

## We Need Our Member's Help!

What are your success stories? We want to share them for future posts on social media and brag about our members! Email Jay Buchholz at [jay.buchholz@siouxvalleyenergy.com](mailto:jay.buchholz@siouxvalleyenergy.com).

## #NREDA

Don't forget when posting on social media to use the hashtag #NREDA when sharing your stories! This way we can spread it to all of our members!

## Upcoming Events

### NREDA Annual Conference

November 2-4, 2022  
Albuquerque, NM

## NREDA Staff

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