

# NEWS



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## For Immediate Release:

## **FIRELANDS ELECTRIC CO-OP'S RICK BOWERS GRADUATES FROM LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

**NEW LONDON, OH, Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2022 at 9:45 AM** — Rick Bowers, a lead lineman for Firelands Electric Cooperative, recently graduated from a statewide program aiming to hone the skills of the next generation of electric cooperative leaders.

The year-long Cooperative Leadership Edge program was hosted by Firelands Electric's statewide association, Ohio's Electric Cooperatives, and required six courses, two assessments, and a capstone project. Coursework focused on coaching employees, managing conflict, adapting communication approaches, carrying out difficult conversations, and delivering results.

"The Cooperative Leadership Edge program has allowed me to learn and embrace new skills, along with the strengths identified in a personality assessment conducted during training," says Bowers. "These skills have provided me with a different strategy and style in communicating with other personality types," he adds.

Bowers has been with the cooperative since March of 2008. He began as an apprentice lineman, advancing to a journeyman lineman position in June 2012 after receiving his power lineman certification from Marion Technical College. Firelands Electric promoted him to a lead lineman position earlier this year. Bowers is responsible for running a line crew and handles all types of electric power line problems: overhead and underground distribution lines, transformers, reclosers, and substations. His duties include line construction and maintenance tasks, such as changing out poles, transformers, and wires. Bowers also handles all advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) equipment located in the cooperative's substations and metering points.

Working for Firelands Electric over the past fourteen years has given Bowers numerous opportunities to assist others in need. He was one of 5,000 electric co-op workers to provide a helping hand in rebuilding the electrical distribution system following Hurricane Harvey. He was also part of the massive effort to restore power to an estimated 1.3 million co-op members following Hurricane Irma. In 2016, Bowers was given the opportunity to participate in NRECA International, which has brought safe, reliable, and affordable electric power to more than 110 million people in 42 countries over the past 56 years. Bowers traveled with volunteers from several of Ohio's electric cooperatives to La Soledad, Guatemala, as part of a two-week rural electrification project — bringing electricity to the isolated mountaintop village for the first time.

Firelands Electric invests in employee training and development with the goal of serving consumer-members with top-rated talent and skills. "We're not just an electricity provider — we're here to make this area an even better place to live, work, and serve," says General Manager Dan McNaul. "This means investing in our employees and making sure we're providing the best possible community services. We're really proud of Rick for his accomplishment, and we're pleased to have him on our staff," he adds.

Originally a native of Greenwich, Bowers resides in the New London area with his wife, Natalie. The couple have a son, Sam; an adult daughter, Alex; and are the proud grandparents of Vinny and Evie.

Firelands Electric, A Touchstone Energy Cooperative®, is a member-owned, not-for-profit electric utility serving more than 9,100 homes and businesses in rural areas of Ashland, Huron, Lorain, and Richland counties that ranks among the highest energy utilities in the country for customer satisfaction.

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**ATTACHED: PHOTO OF RICK BOWERS**



Rick Bowers, left, is presented with his leadership edge certificate by Tim Street, Ohio Electric Cooperative's former director of cooperative development.