

Roanoke Electric FLASHES

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Roanoke EC CEO to serve on national rural electric co-op board

Curtis Wynn, Executive Vice-President and CEO of Roanoke Electric Cooperative, has been elected to represent North Carolina as a member of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) board of directors.

He was bestowed this honor by a popular vote of electric cooperative leaders in the state of North Carolina at the state association's Annual Meeting held March 8 in Raleigh, N.C.

NRECA is the national service organization that represents electric cooperatives and their members. The NRECA board of directors, consisting of 47 members, reflects one representative from each state containing an electric cooperative.

In this capacity, Wynn will serve as a liaison for the state's 27 electric cooperatives while helping set policy for their national arm. Wynn's effective and progressive leadership style has not gone unnoticed by his colleagues. He is very appreciative of that and thankful for the team of individuals who have prepared him for this daunting new task. "It is with great honor and humility that I accept this new endeavor," said Wynn. "I am also indebted to the members, board of directors, and employees of Roanoke Electric



Curtis Wynn, CEO of Roanoke Electric (left), presents an award to Corey Hayes, an employee of Roanoke Electric Cooperative (right). Hayes completed Overhead Line Construction I at Nash Community College.

Cooperative who have been very supportive of the cooperative's vision, and I accept this honor along with them."

Roanoke Electric Cooperative has made quantum enhancements in its level of service and development. Wynn is approaching his tenth year of serving the organization as its leader.

Known for blazing trails in the electric cooperative realm, Wynn will be the first African-American to serve on the NRECA board of directors. He has made his mark throughout the industry as well as gained prominence in the areas of overall economic and community development.

He once testified before the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee for increased

appropriations to economic development funds administered by cooperatives. Other key appointments in his repertoire include past commissioner for North Carolina's e-NC authority, past president of the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, vice-president of EMC Technologies, LLC, executive committee member of the North Carolina Rural Center, and many more.

While continually seeking innovative ideas to better serve, educate, and support our communities, Wynn looks forward to partnering with national cooperative leaders to enhance the overall quality of life for rural America.

Roanoke EC accepting Bright Ideas applications

Attention, N.C. teachers: We want your Bright Ideas!

Starting May 1, Roanoke Electric Cooperative is accepting Bright Ideas applications for the 2007-2008 school year. The grants will be given to K-12 teachers for innovative and imaginative classroom projects.

All certified K-12 North Carolina teachers are eligible for a Bright Ideas grant. Since the program began 14 years ago, North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives have financed \$4 million into a variety of hands-on projects, including adventures in music, art, history, language, reading, science, career planning and information technologies.

In 2006, Roanoke Electric awarded \$8,000 to area teachers. Winning teachers have reported exciting stories about the inspiration their projects have generated among their students.

Recipients for the 2006-2007 school year were:

- **Terri Harris** of Gaston Junior High, Gaston, Northampton County Schools; \$550 for "Robocamp Goes Feet Wet."
- **Emily Smith** of Weldon High, Weldon, Weldon City Schools; \$1,000 for "Flowers for Romeo, Juliet, and Friends."
- **Barbara Best Toti** of Gates County Senior High, Gatesville, Gates County Schools; \$900 for "Come Play a Part - Improving Literacy and Developing Character Through Dramatic Art."
- **Courtney Barker** of Northampton High-West, Gaston, Northampton County Schools; \$900 for "Revolution in Recyclables."
- **Connie Burgess** of Gates County Senior High, Gatesville, Gates County Schools; \$550 for "Anatomy in Clay."
- **Katrina Cobb** of Colerain Elementary, Colerain, Bertie



**BRIGHT
IDEAS**

County Schools; \$1,400 for "Community Listening Center."

- **Pamela Flack** of Chaloner Middle, Roanoke Rapids, Roanoke Rapids Graded School District; \$300 for "Poetry People."

For more information or to apply for Bright Ideas education grant, teachers can visit www.ncbrightideas.com.

Students selected for Rural Electric 2007 Youth Tour

Roanoke EC chose two high school juniors, Jerrika Alston of Southeast Halifax High School, and Erica Bazemore of Bertie High School, as the co-op's representatives for the 2007 Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, D.C.

The annual tour, scheduled for June 9-15, is sponsored by the nation's electric cooperatives and is attended by more than 1,400 high school juniors and seniors from 44 states. On this all-expenses-paid, six-day trip, Alston and Bazemore will spend a day on Capitol Hill, tour the White House, visit national monuments and museums, learn about the cooperative way of doing business, and take a cruise on the Potomac River.

Jerrika, daughter of Barbara Alston of Halifax, is an honor student and is also an active member of the Marching Band, Jazz Band, and Reading Soul



Jerrika Alston

Sisters. "I'm so excited about this trip," said Jerrika. "I look forward to attending this youth tour," Jerrika said.

Erica Bazemore, daughter of Moses and Cynthia Bazemore of Bertie, is also an honor student and is very active in the sports programs at her school. She is a member of the varsity basketball team, varsity track team and the high school band. Erica is involved with many community and school activities. "Erica keeps me busy" said her mom. Erica and her parents are very excited about her



Erica Bazemore

attending the 2007 Rural Electric Youth Tour. In Erica's spare time, she enjoys spending time with her family and friends.

Both Jerrika and Erica were chosen from among other high school applicants from REC's service area, which includes Gates, Bertie, Halifax, Northampton, Hertford, Chowan, and Perquimans counties. Judges selected the two students based on essays on "Without electricity, how would your day-to-day life be different?"

ACE project paves way for new career path through partnerships

What has 18 wheels and a smile as wide as the state of North Carolina? You could ask a recent graduate of Carolina Trucking Academy, Patricia Arrington, but she's probably on the road in the cab of the big rig she's been driving since completing her training and obtaining her CDL.

Arrington was one of several individuals who participated in the Women's Economic Equity Project, a statewide initiative locally known as



Trucking school graduates at a networking session.

ACE (Achieving Career Excellence) whose purpose is to provide unemployed or underemployed individuals with the right set of skills to meet both the individual and employer needs.

Arrington, along with fellow students Randall Butler, Antwan Turner, and Arrington's 23-year-old son Joshua, were the first set of ACE participants to successfully complete the two-week intensive truck driving curriculum at Carolina Trucking Academy in Raleigh. Tamika Bynum was only in need of her license at the time others were attending school. She has been successful in obtaining her Class B and is currently searching for opportunities.

"It was a pleasure to be able to point the participants towards a career in the trucking industry," said Carolina Trucking Academy CEO Charlie Gray. Gray was one of the many collaborators who partnered with REDI (Roanoke Economic Development, Inc.) to make this project possible.

Connectinc, a nonprofit organization in Battleboro and a

major partner in the ACE project, was instrumental in introducing these students to a new career path. In addition to being a network of support services, Connectinc bridges the gap between where individuals and families are and where they need to be. The organization introduces and matches clients with opportunities provided by the Workforce Investment Act.

According to Tameka Bynum, seeing is believing. Bynum found out about ACE from her sister, but didn't believe the program was for real until she attended the first meeting to hear it for herself. "It's real," she said. "The people, the programs, the settings, they're all working. I would recommend ACE to anyone. They really have it together," she said.

"It has been a joy assisting each ACE participant reach their personal career goal," said one Connectinc ACE representative. "I'm continuously seeking new individuals to participate in the program."

Joshua Arrington had initial doubts about the program, too. "I didn't believe it until I took the first step," he said. Arrington obtained his Class B license as a result of his participation in the program, but already has his sights set on following in his mother's footsteps and obtaining his class A. "I have my permit, now it's just a matter of saving up the money," he said.

Bill Evans, one of the case managers with the Employment Security Commission/Joblink at Halifax Community College, said he enjoyed working with the participants and felt the partnerships and collaboration worked out very well. "I think this has been a very productive endeavor," he said.

Bynum and Arrington both agree. "All they want is cooperation," said Bynum. "Dedication is what it takes, but that starts with knowing what you want and they help you figure it out. It's just a matter of how bad you want it."

Operation RoundUp grants given to local non-profits

Through its Operation RoundUp program, Roanoke EC awarded grants totaling \$8,200 to 5 area non-profit organizations for the first quarter of 2007. They were:



- Bertie County American Relay for Life: \$1,000
- The Boys and Girls Club of Halifax County: \$1,000
- Northampton County 4H: \$1,000
- Gates County Extension Service: \$1,700
- Hannah's Place: \$3,500

The RoundUp program, which is administered by the Roanoke Electric Care Trust, grants funds each quarter to non-profits that serve local communities. The grant money comes from members who consent to rounding up their electric bills to the next whole dollar.

If your organization is a non-profit organization with 501c3 status and is located in Bertie, Hertford, Gates, Halifax, Northampton, Chowan or Perquimans counties, then you are invited to submit grant applications to Roanoke Electric Cooperative's Operation RoundUp program.

Grant requests can be made for up to \$5,000 and are given out in January, April, July and October. The next grant application deadline is July 5 by 5 p.m. For more information or to receive an application, visit our Web site at www.roanokeelectric.com and click on Services, then Community.

The ACE program is supported by grants from Z. Smith Reynolds and the North Carolina Department of Commerce Division of Workforce Development.

For more information, contact Connectinc at 1-888-927-3230 or Roanoke Economic Development, Inc. at (800) 433-2236 or visit www.roanokecenter.org

—By Stephanie Duffey

Bakers Elementary welcomes CISNE's PaSS tutoring program

A recent Memorandum of Agreement between Communities In Schools of the Northeast and Bakers Elementary School in Scotland Neck makes the school the second in Halifax County to engage the Partnership for School Success (PaSS) program.

"PaSS provides mentoring in support of third graders who are preparing to take End Of Grade (EOG) exams with support they need to be successful," said Communities In Schools of the Northeast Program Coordinator, Rosetta Smith. Mrs. Smith and Diana Mitchell, CISNE's Executive Director, met recently with Bakers Elementary School officials to discuss programs to enhance the school's learning curriculum.

How does it work? Communities In Schools solicits volunteers from the community who must pass a criminal background check and complete a tutor training course. The training material provides the volunteers with tools and techniques that help engage students in 10 weeks of one-on-one tutoring to achieve greater levels of learning.

Teachers and principals identify the students who are most likely to benefit from the program. The school then carefully matches the students with a tutor to provide the best possible tutoring experience as he/she prepares for the statewide EOG exams.

"My experience working with young people in the area helped me to see the need that is reflected in literacy statistics," said Bakers' reading coach Gloria Harris. Harris believes the partnership with CISNE will provide additional ways to engage students in extensive knowledge based learning.



Bakers Elementary School Parent Volunteer Yvonne Powell (front left) stands alongside CISNE's Executive Director Diana Mitchell (front right). Also celebrating the partnership are (back row, left to right) Bakers Elementary School Principal Edna Williams, CISNE's Program Coordinator Rosetta Smith and Reading Coach Gloria Harris.

"Our goal goes beyond taking advantage of the opportunity available through the PaSS program to developing student confidence and motivating students to read and comprehend," she said, admitting that there aren't any quick solutions. "We embrace PaSS as an extension to learning through community resources and partnering which aids us in grasping the challenge of helping every child to succeed."

The mission of Communities In Schools of the Northeast is to champion the connection of needed community resources with schools to help young people successfully learn and stay in school and prepare for life.

For more information about CISNE or to volunteer, contact Rosetta Smith at (252) 539-2236 ext. 280.

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Outlet Safety: "Respect your Receptacles"

Did you know almost 4,000 injuries, with one-third of those children, associated with electrical receptacle outlets are treated in hospital emergency rooms per year? And electric receptacles are involved in 5,300 fires annually, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission?

Here are some tips on how to play it safe with your electrical outlets:

- To safely unplug cords, grasp the plug and remove from the receptacle. Do not yank on the cord.
- Do not place cord where people will trip over them.
- Avoid running cords long distances, because this increases the danger of overheating and also causes the appliance or equipment to run less efficiently.
- Check for outlets that have loose fitting plugs, which can overheat and lead to fire
- Replace any broken wall plates that appear broken.

Don't become a part of the disturbing statistics mentioned above. Keep your homes and buildings free from electric receptacle dangers.