



POWERGRAM

A monthly newsletter for OCEC Members

2025 YOUTH TOUR DELEGATES CHOSEN

Four local students have been chosen to attend the Washington, D.C., Youth Tour in June.

These young leaders will spend a life-changing week in the nation's capital, meeting with U.S. representatives and senators, touring some of the finest museums in the world, visiting historic monuments and memorials, and developing lifelong friendships and connections with delegates from across the country.

Interested students submitted an application, two written essays, and a recommendation letter from a school official. In-person interviews were held, and the top applicants were chosen to participate in this all-expenses-paid trip this summer.

Then-Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson addressed a crowd at the 1957 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's annual meeting, proposing that rural teens should have the opportunity to experience Washington, D.C., and see their government in action. America's electric cooperatives were the perfect organizations to facilitate this idea.

That summer, a few Texas cooperatives sent teens from their service areas to Washington, D.C. The next year, Iowa and Illinois followed suit and brought their own busloads of rural youth to Washington, D.C.

In 1964, NRECA—the national service organization representing America's electric cooperatives—began coordinating the activities. Youth Tour has grown bigger and stronger in the 60-plus years since the first students ascended on the capital.

Otero County Electric sponsored its first group of students in 2017. Please help us congratulate the 2025 OCEC Youth Tour delegates and wish these young leaders well on their summer trip!



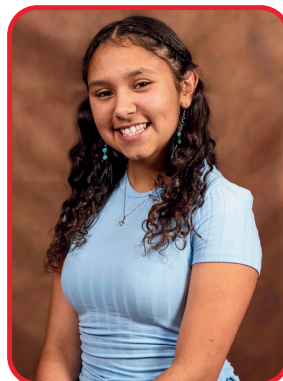
Kenya Fernandez Chacon
Hondo High School



Emily Grinder
Alamogordo High School



Marisa Romero
Cloudcroft High School



Isabella Salcido
Hondo High School



MARCH CALENDAR PHOTO
submitted by Isaiah Salazar

MARCH 2025

CLOUDCROFT
575-682-2521

ALTO
575-336-4550

CARRIZOZO
575-648-2352

LOBBY HOURS
8 AM - 4 PM
MONDAY - FRIDAY

**TO REPORT AN
OUTAGE, CALL**
1-800-548-4660

**FOR BALANCE
INFORMATION OR TO
PAY YOUR BILL, CALL**
1-855-940-3957

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Your Touchstone Energy
Cooperative

TIPS TO AVOID ENERGY SCAMS



Never make a utility bill payment to anyone calling you on the phone, coming to your door (unless that is a verified bill payment method used by your utility company), texting you, or emailing you. Always call your utility company, at the number provided on your bill or on the utility's website, if you have a question about payment or billing information. Know your utility bill payment options—online, by phone, automatic bank draft, mail, or in person.

Source: Utilities United Against Scams



ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP

March is an ideal time to service your home cooling system, ensuring it runs efficiently when the heat of summer arrives. Routine maintenance, like cleaning or replacing filters, checking refrigerant levels and inspecting parts, can improve your system's energy efficiency and lower your energy bills. By addressing potential issues early, you can avoid costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of your unit. Scheduling service in the spring helps you beat the peak-season rush, giving you faster access to qualified technicians. A well-maintained cooling system can save energy and keep your home comfortable all summer long.

WRAPPED IN SAVINGS

Ensuring your home is properly insulated can improve energy efficiency and make your home more comfortable. Insulation acts like a cozy coat that reduces heat loss during winter months and a protective layer that reduces heat gain during summer months.

Many older homes have less insulation than newer homes, but even newer homes can benefit from additional insulation. While it's not the least expensive efficiency improvement, adding insulation and air sealing your home can provide the biggest bang for your buck in energy savings and overall comfort.

The most common areas to insulate are attics, ceilings, crawlspaces or unconditioned basements, exterior and interior walls, floors, and ductwork located in unconditioned spaces.

The amount and effectiveness rating of insulation required for each area varies by climate, but many websites like The Department of Energy or Home Depot provide easy-to-follow recommendations. Visit energy.gov/insulation to learn about recommended R-values for specific areas of the home based on climate zones.

It's important to understand how insulation effectiveness is measured. Insulation is rated in R-value, which measures the material's resistance to conductive heat flow. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness. The R-value you'll need depends on factors like climate, type of heating and cooling system and which area of the home you plan to insulate.

Insulation is offered in a wide range of materials from bulky fiberglass rolls to cellulose materials made from recycled paper products. If you're considering installing additional insulation, talk to an expert who can offer guidance on the right materials for your budget, climate and comfort needs.

Investing in proper insulation for your home not only enhances comfort but also reduces energy consumption.



VEGETATION MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Crews working to trim trees and vegetation in rights-of-way are currently in the following areas and are expected to remain there for the next few weeks.

- Timberon
- Sacramento
- Tularosa Canyon - Mescalero
- Highway 70 - Mescalero
- James Canyon

We kindly ask for your cooperation when you see crews in your area working to keep these areas clear. This task plays a vital role in reducing fire hazards and ensuring consistent power delivery to members.

WINTER MORATORIUM PROTECTION ENDS MARCH 15, 2025

Protection from winter shut-off began November 15, 2024. To avoid potential disconnection of service please contact the Human Services Department at 1-800-283-4465, or the appropriate tribal or pueblo entity for eligibility information for Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Your service will not be disconnected from November 15, 2024, through March 15, 2025, if you meet the qualifications of LIHEAP and have no past due amounts or you remain current on any settlement or installment agreement for amounts due as of November 15, 2024.

Members of New Mexico tribes or pueblos who need help with translation or with other matters may contact the commission's consumer relations division at 1-888-427-5772, who will contact the appropriate tribal or pueblo official for assistance.

STAY IN THE KNOW



Stay connected by keeping your contact information up to date. Current contact information benefits you in multiple ways.

- ✓ Faster outage reporting and response
- ✓ Timely alerts about planned outages and other important updates
- ✓ Smoother customer service interactions
- ✓ Improved access to member benefits and programs

Ensure your phone number, email address and mailing address are up to date so you can enjoy the benefits of staying connected.