

# SANGRE DE CRISTO ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION, INC.

*The Outlet*

JULY 2022



## MAILING ADDRESS

P.O. Box 2013  
Buena Vista, CO 81211-2013



## STREET ADDRESS

29780 North U.S. Highway 24  
Buena Vista, CO 81211



**ph** 719-395-2412  
**tf** 844-395-2412  
**email** info@myelectric.coop  
**web** myelectric.coop



Facebook.com/SDCEA.Inc  
Twitter: @SDCEA\_Inc

**Your community electric service provider.**



## WHY ARE RATES HIGHER HERE THAN ELSEWHERE?

BY PAUL ERICKSON CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



PAUL ERICKSON

SDCEA serves about seven members per mile of line, compared to investor-owned utilities such as Xcel Energy, which averages 34 customers per mile of line; and municipal utilities, which average 48 customers per mile of line. It is not attractive from a revenue standpoint for investor-owned utilities to provide service to rural areas for this reason. While we work hard to keep costs as low as possible, SDCEA's smaller number of consumers must cover the costs of delivering power over nearly 1,800 miles of line on our system. Our locations are rural, hard-to-reach, mountainous and rugged.

At SDCEA, we don't benefit from the revenue that dense cities generate for utilities, and we don't have large businesses to speak of to help carry the cost of providing service in this territory.

As an electric distribution cooperative, we don't independently generate power. We buy it from others. While we do all we can to buy power as cheaply and as environmentally consciously as possible, the cost of electricity is going up here and around the country for a whole host of reasons.

When it comes to delivering power to your home or business, we in rural America are largely on our own. This means that SDCEA and our members bear the expensive burden of engineering, erecting and repairing power-delivery infrastructure

ourselves. We are also responsible for maintaining the system. The equipment, materials and employee hours to do this work are expensive. We cannot spread these costs among a high number of consumers, so that means we have to be very careful about how we use the resources we have.

We want you to know that we are members of the cooperative, too, and we hear that you are concerned about costs. We want to assure you that we share those concerns as a locally-controlled nonprofit organization, and we are working every day to support our communities and keep costs down while providing safe and reliable electricity for you, our consumers. It's a big job, but it's one we take pride in.

SDCEA's bylaws, rates, policies, board contacts and the like are always posted on our website at myelectric.coop for our members to review. Create an account through the log on on the upper right-hand side of the page. Once on SmartHub, you can access these items either from the menu on the left or from the My Documents drop-down on the landing page.

We also welcome you to call us toll-free during business hours at 844-395-2412 with any questions you may have about the cooperative.

### SDCEA INFO

SDCEA posts board meeting information, annual reports, board contacts and more for members to access at any time. To view these items, create an account on our website at myelectric.coop. Sign in and find this information under our 'Members Only' section, found on the left side of the landing page.

If you want to see rates and policies, that information can be found on the landing page for your account (SmartHub). Go to the My Profile menu item on the top and select Documents from the drop-down menu.

# SDCEA ANNOUNCES SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

We at SDCEA are proud to support our community by offering scholarship opportunities to local students. This year, 16 students from Buena Vista, Cotopaxi, Salida and Fountain Valley High School (Colorado Springs), were awarded scholarships for the 2022-2023 school year.

**“Our scholarship program is just one way that we serve our members and the community. As a nonprofit that is locally controlled, we are able to reinvest our earnings back into the community through programs like this one. We are committed to supporting the next generation of leaders as they pursue their dreams of higher education,”** SDCEA Chief Executive Officer Paul Erickson said.

One four-year scholarship at \$2,000 per year was awarded to Samantha Voeglein, a senior at Cotopaxi School. Twelve one-year \$2,000 scholarships were awarded from SDCEA, one employee dependent award of \$2,000 was granted. Two \$1,000 grants were awarded, comprised of \$500 from Tri-State

Generation & Transmission, with a \$500 match from SDCEA.

A scholarship committee consisting of SDCEA directors and staff not related to students applying for the scholarships evaluated applications to determine awards. Each applicant’s personal identifying information is redacted prior to the independent review by each member serving on the committee, then brought to the committee as a whole for discussion and decision-making.

Subject to the availability of funds, SDCEA may award scholarships each year to assist students in attaining higher education at accredited schools, including students applying for lineworker school. Students who have applied for or received scholarships in previous years are also eligible to apply if they meet eligibility criteria. Application information is posted on SDCEA’s website and made available to area high schools in the company’s service territory in the fall of each year.

**“We wish these students all the best in their future endeavors and know that they**

**will make us proud. Congratulations!”** Erickson said.

The scholarship program is supported through unclaimed or donated capital credits, not through charging higher rates to our consumers.

SDCEA, based in Buena Vista, is an electric cooperative which provides electricity to 14,000 services in Chaffee, Fremont, Custer, Lake and Saguache counties in central Colorado. For more information on SDCEA, please visit [myelectric.coop](http://myelectric.coop).

## SDCEA 4-YEAR: \$2,000 PER YEAR



▲ Samantha Voeglein, Cotopaxi High School

### SDCEA \$2,000 • COTOPAXI HIGH SCHOOL



▲ Annalise Walker



▲ Dane Voeglein

### SDCEA \$2,000 • FOUNTAIN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL



▲ Maya Magee

### SDCEA \$2,000 • SALIDA HIGH SCHOOL



▲ Reece White, Colorado Mountain College



SDCEA \$2,000 • BUENA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL



^ Elena Dunn



^ Aja Hogan,  
Colorado State University



^ Sage McGinnis  
(employee dependent),  
Chadron State University

---

TRI-STATE \$500 + SDCEA \$500  
MATCHING GRANT •  
BUENA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL



^ Seth Moss



^ Shea Moss, University of  
Colorado - Colorado Springs



^ Quinn Philips



^ Cheyenne Montoya



^ Brennan Pratt



^ Tanner Richmond



^ Chandler Smethers



^ Sara Shannahan

Congratulations SDCEA  
scholarship winners!



# SDCEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION RESULTS: ATTEBERY, HELLBUSCH WIN

**O**n June 6, SDCEA announced the results of the 2022 election for the SDCEA Board of Directors. Board seat challengers Sandra Attebery and Nick Hellbusch were elected to three-year terms, representing members in Custer and Fremont counties, respectively. The new board members will be seated at the June 29 board meeting.

“The SDCEA board welcomes the new directors and are looking forward to working together to serve members of the cooperative,” Board Chair Joe Redetzke said. “On behalf of the board, I thank everyone who cast a vote in the election. We look forward to an ongoing dialogue with members as we develop future programs and policies at the cooperative.

“The board is committed to being open and transparent with members about cooperative business and forthcoming decisions that may impact them. We want to hear member concerns and use that feedback to inform our decisions about how best to serve our membership. We thank you for

your engagement in the democratic process and look forward to working together for the betterment of the cooperative.”

Attebery defeated incumbent Tommy Flower to represent Custer County, 1262 to 429 votes. Hellbusch defeated incumbent Geoff Gerk to represent Fremont County, 1194 to 469 votes.

“The directors and staff of SDCEA extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to Geoff Gerk and Tom Flower for their dedication and years of service governing the cooperative,” Redetzke said.

All 11,533 SDCEA members as of April 7 were eligible to vote in the election, which was held by mail-in balloting only. Ballots were due to Survey & Ballot Systems, a third-party company engaged to conduct the election, by June 2 to be counted. Just over 15% of eligible voters cast ballots in the election — 1,747 valid ballots were returned to SBS by the voting deadline.

Results of the election were certified June 6 by the SDCEA election and credential committee. Self-reported campaign

expenditure disclosure forms and candidate questionnaires are available on the website by sign-in under the Members Only section.

SDCEA is an electric cooperative, a form of business owned and controlled by the people who use it — members, who are consumer account holders. As it is not possible for all 11,500 members to directly make all cooperative decisions, SDCEA is governed by a board of directors, elected by the membership to represent the membership. Acting as a group, directors employ the cooperative’s chief executive officer, establish operating policy and direct the cooperative’s overall business operating goals.

Seven board members govern SDCEA’s business operations and represent geographic areas in SDCEA’s service territory. Board members’ three-year terms are staggered to ensure continuity of governance. All cooperative members are eligible to vote in elections, regardless of the district in which they live.



## BEEP BEEP! There’s a new kid— well, KIA — in town!

Be on the lookout for SDCEA’s electric KIA Niro EV traveling through the service territory. We hope to learn more about the performance of this vehicle in our climate and terrain. We look forward to sharing what we learn with you, our cooperative members.

Interested? Stop by and check it out.