



J.C. Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award



The Council of Rural Electric Communicators and NRECA Announce The 2021 J.C. Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award Call for Entries

Deadline: October 30, 2020

Go to cooperative.com/jcbrown for more information

About the J.C. Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award

The award was established by the Council of Rural Electric Communicators (CREC) and the Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC) Program Board and was first conferred in 2004. The competition falls under the Spotlight on Excellence Awards program and is administered by the CREC and CCC Program Board, with support from NRECA communication staff.

The award memorializes the late J.C. Brown and his unwavering dedication to the importance of communication as a vital link connecting electric cooperatives with each other and with their consumer-members, and to advancing the cooperative business model. Individuals nominated for the J.C. Brown Award should demonstrate through their actions a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the strategic role of communication in employee, member and community relations.

The executive should have a proven track record of advancing the role of communication at his or her electric cooperative, public power district, statewide association, or generation and transmission (G&T) system. The CEO/general manager's cooperative must be a voting member of NRECA.

Entry Fees, Deadlines and Critical Information

The **deadline** for **electronic receipt** of nominations at NRECA is **October 30, 2020**. Nominations must be made online (*see J.C. Brown web page for more information*). The award will be presented annually unless the judges conclude that no nominee adequately meets the award's criteria. Non-winning nominations from the previous year's competition may be resubmitted.

The entry fee is \$125. The fee must be paid prior to receiving access to the entry form. Payment and entry must be submitted using the online form on the J.C. Brown webpage by October 30, 2020. Once the fee is paid, you will be issued a confirmation page with a link to the entry form. Entries for which payment has not been made will be disqualified.



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Entry Changes and Cancellations

Before starting the online nomination form, you may want to prepare your written responses using a hard copy of the J.C. Brown Award nomination form. This contains identical information as the online form.

Note: You cannot save the online form and come back to it later. There are four criteria; each has a 500-word limit.

Entries and cancellations will be accepted until October 30, 2020. Cancellations for entries are fully refundable. Cancellations to the entire entry and additional entries can be made online via cooperative.com > Member Center > My Registrations.

Payment Questions

Questions regarding payment should be directed to the Accounts Receivable Department at 703.907.6875 or by email to accountsreceivable@nreca.coop.

Submission of Entries

Please read all instructions carefully and provide all information requested in the entry form. Failure to provide all requested information could cause you to lose points. All entries must be submitted using the online form provided after payment on the J.C. Brown webpage. This form allows for uploading additional support materials, including audio and video clips, PDFs (preferred) and jpegs.

1. Entries must be made by an employee of the cooperative and may NOT be entered by a marketing, advertising or PR agency or any other paid/outside consultant.
2. Use the online entry form to enter all your submissions. You cannot go back into an entry once you press "Submit."
3. All entries are treated in a confidential manner. The leader being nominated will **NOT** be notified that he/she has been nominated.

Submission Questions

Questions regarding entry guidelines or specifics should be directed to Alexis Dunnum at alexis.dunnum@nreca.coop.



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Disqualification

Entries submitted by a marketing, advertising, or PR agency or any other paid/outside consultant will not be accepted

Entries for which payment is not received will be disqualified.

Entrants will be notified of disqualification and entry fees or judges' fees will not be refunded. The CREC, CCC and NRECA reserve the right to pull an award if it is revealed that an entrant was not forthright on his/her entry form.

Retention of Entries and Review by Peers

Highlights of the winning entry will be displayed at the Spotlight Café at CONNECT and will be featured on cooperative.com and in other NRECA features or communications.

Notification

The **submitter** for the winning entry will be notified no later than **December 4, 2020**. All other **submitters** will be notified no later than **December 11, 2020**.

Award Recognition

The award will be presented to the winner at the [CEO Close-Up Conference](#) in January 2021. In addition, the CEO/GM winner and his/her communications team will be recognized in conjunction with the Spotlight on Excellence Awards program at the [CONNECT Conference](#) in May 2021.

Program Oversight

The J.C. Brown Award program receives oversight from the Awards & Recognition Committee of the Council of Rural Electric Communicators (CREC).

Judges

For each cycle of the J.C. Brown Award, the same three judges will review all the nomination materials for each candidate, regardless of how many nominations are submitted. Judges work individually and independently on evaluating the entries. The panel consists of one retired CEO or senior communicator-



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from the electric cooperative industry, and two judges from outside the industry who possess senior-level experience. The identity of the three judges selected by NRECA’s J.C. Brown program manager will remain confidential.

Scoring

Judges consider the completeness of the entry forms and whether entrants followed all instructions. The effectiveness of entries in achieving the stated goal will be heavily weighted in the scoring. Evaluations will be based on absolute scores rather than a comparison of entries.

Judges’ Evaluation Form

The evaluation form is the centerpiece of the awards judging. It lists four criteria—each weighted differently—with a maximum allowable number of points. All entries will be evaluated and scored independently by all judges. The work of all judges has equal weighting when averaging nominees’ individual scores.

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|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The Cooperative Difference | Maximum 35 points |
| 2. Strategic Approach | Maximum 25 points |
| 3. Integrated Approach | Maximum 20 points |
| 4. Measures of Success | Maximum 20 points |

Total Allowable Points	100 points
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J.C. Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award Criteria

There are four criteria which are defined below. **Written descriptions are limited to 500 words per criterion.** Point values have been assigned to each criterion to guide the panel of judges. (Supporting evidence is optional and, while illustrative, will not enhance the point values assigned to the four criteria. If included, supporting material must be uploaded using the area provided in the online nomination form.)

Note: A hard copy of the J.C. Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award nomination form and other helpful resources outlining the requirements of the award are available for download on the J.C. Brown webpage on cooperative.com.



(1) The Cooperative Difference (35 points) – In what ways does the CEO’s commitment to communication, both internal and external, help advance the seven cooperative principles, philosophy and way of doing business?

- Statement/evidence may include any type of leadership action, communication activity or product that promotes the cooperative principles to staff, consumer-members or other audiences.

(2) Strategic Approach (25 points) – In what ways does the CEO integrate communication into the organization’s strategic planning and management processes?

- Statement/evidence may include, but is not limited to, a well-defined strategic communication plan, as well as adequate annual budgets and resources devoted specifically to communication. (Note: budget size alone is not a major factor; it is part of the overall plan.)
- How often is the strategic communication plan updated and reviewed for its effectiveness?

(3) Integrated Approach (20 points) – In what ways does the CEO demonstrate support for the cooperative’s communication staff?

- Does the CEO view all employees of the organization as part of the communication team? For example, are staff members in all areas of the organization—particularly those who have contact with consumer-members—kept informed about the co-op’s priorities and kept up to date on important organizational developments?
- Is there evidence of an effective employee communication program at the co-op, as well as two-way communication within the co-op, i.e., top-down and bottom-up? Statement/evidence may include, but is not limited to, demonstrating how information on critical projects and management decisions is shared in timely and open fashion in executing the cooperative’s communication plan.
- Other examples include a dedication to hiring professional communication staff people, as well as providing adequate educational and training opportunities for staff.



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(4) Measures of Success (20 points) – Please note indicators of the success of the cooperative’s communication/marketing programs during the CEO’s tenure, and on which he or she has had an influence. This criterion is not intended to be an evaluation or showcase of the cooperative’s communication products and services as defined in the larger Spotlight on Excellence awards program.

- Statement/evidence may include awards received by the cooperative during the CEO’s tenure but should not be limited to that. For example, the statement/evidence should include how the organization measures the success of its communication programs and projects, i.e., what evaluation techniques and methods are used to determine whether strategic communication goals have been met. CEO involvement or endorsement should be described.
- Statement/evidence should include how the organization’s communication programs have led to changes in thinking, attitudes or actions among consumer-members and/or other key publics, and how the CEO has been a part of this result.

As of 8.28.20

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