

J.C. Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award

This 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.



J.C. Brown Award Winners

- **Duane Highley**, 2019
Arkansas Electric Cooperative Assn., Little Rock, Ark.
- **Patrick W. O'Loughlin**, 2018
Ohio's Electric Cooperatives, Columbus, OH
- **Curtis Wynn**, 2017,
Roanoke Electric Cooperative, Ahoskie, NC
- **Kent Farmer**, 2016
Rappahannock Electric Cooperative, Fredericksburg, Va.
- **Doug Johnson**, 2015
Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corp., Lenoir, NC
- **Dan Blesi**, 2014
Crawford Electric Cooperative, Bourbon, Mo.
- **Michael D. Tirpak**, 2013
Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Inc.,
Cambridge Springs, Penn.
- **Michael Sims**, 2012
Butler Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc., Oxford, Oh.
- **E.A. "Bucky" Jakins Jr.** 2011
Baldwin County EMC, Summerdale, Ala.
- **Bob Ray**, 2010
Flint EMC, Warner Robins, Ga.
- **Chris Hamon**, 2009
White River Valley Electric Cooperative, Branson, Mo.
- **Ray Beavers**, 2008
United Cooperative Services, Cleburne, Tex.
- **Jim Duncan**, 2007
Sumter Electric Cooperative, Inc., Sumterville, Fla.
- **Martin Hillert Jr.**, 2006
Adams-Columbia Electric Cooperative, Friendship, Wisc.
- **Kyle Kuntz**, 2005
Sam Houston Electric Cooperative, Inc., Livingston, Tex.
- **Brian Newton**, 2004
Consolidated Electric Cooperative, Mount Gilead, Oh.

RECENT J.C. BROWN WINNERS



DUANE HIGHLEY | 2019
Arkansas Electric Cooperative Assn.
Little Rock, AR



PATRICK O'LOUGHLIN | 2018
Ohio's Electric Cooperatives
Columbus, OH

RECENT J.C. BROWN WINNERS



CURTIS WYNN | 2017

Roanoke Electric
Ahoskie, NC



KENT FARMER | 2016

Rappahannock Electric
Fredericksburg, VA



DOUG JOHNSON | 2015

Blue Ridge Electric Membership Co-op
Lenoir, NC

2019 WINNER: DUANE HIGHLEY

- Created and utilizes multiple internal communication channels to share strategic vision, share information
- Promotes transparency by sharing board actions and decisions after board meetings
- Uses Touchstone Energy's Balanced Performance Scorecard to align business activities to the vision, strategy of AECC to improve communication, measure performance



Highlights: DUANE HIGHLEY

- Promotes cooperative edge in creative and engaging ways
- Authored dozens of articles and several books on cooperative difference, business model
- Speaks nationally on energy issues



Highlights: DUANE HIGHLEY

- Leads community engagement activities and partnerships
- Received Humanitarian Award for AECC's community service work
- *Arkansas Business* recognized AECC as "Best Places to Work" in 2016 and 2018



2018 WINNER: PATRICK W. O'LOUGHLIN

HIGHLIGHTS

- Reinvented Communications Dept.
- Broadened OEC communications scope
- Developed three-year strategic communications plan, integrating OEC's strategic planning and management processes



Highlights: PATRICK W. O'LOUGHLIN

HIGHLIGHTS

- Led rebranding and redesign of *Ohio Cooperative Living* to more effectively tell the co-op story
- Increased social media and earned media presence
- O'Loughlin's team helped co-ops in their system create strategic communications plans



Highlights: PATRICK W. O'LOUGHLIN

HIGHLIGHTS

- Convened (first) annual communications conference for OEC members to share leading practices and discuss common issues and challenges among co-op communicators
- Supports continuous learning to more effectively communicate the co-op story
- Created foundation to serve community



2017 WINNER: CURTIS WYNN

HIGHLIGHTS

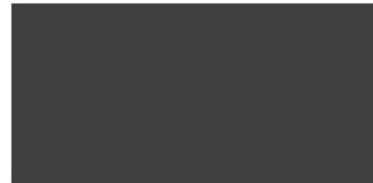
- Deeply involved with region
- Promotes “Roanoke Connect”
- Boosts local Internet availability



Highlights: CURTIS WYNN

HIGHLIGHTS

- Considers all employees communicators
- Expanded co-op's outreach channels with apps, social media, blogs and newsletters
- Initiated "Straight Talk" forums to promote face-to-face dialogue



Highlights: CURTIS WYNN

HIGHLIGHTS

- Developed strategy map that identified core values
- Established strategy execution team to measure goals
- Takes steps to ensure consumer-members understand they control the co-op



2016 WINNER: KENT FARMER

HIGHLIGHTS

- Committed to doing business in unconventional manner and inspiring culture of excellence
- Collaborates and innovates to serve 22-county service area; actively engages with members and community REC serves
- Uses member feedback to evaluate and launch new services, improve operations and member satisfaction



Highlights: KENT FARMER

HIGHLIGHTS

- Recognizes importance of developing next generation of leaders; encourages value of learning for employees and Board members
- Develops strategic vision and strategy with employees from all levels and management; uses multiple platforms to communicate effectively



Highlights: KENT FARMER

HIGHLIGHTS

- Influential in incorporating co-op business model into college level curriculum and development of new industry-focused trainings in rural areas
- Maintains strong grassroots communication through “Get Connected” events and member advisory committees



2015 WINNER: DOUG JOHNSON

HIGHLIGHTS

- Shares strategic vision and strategy with employees and members; uses multiple platforms to communicate regularly
- Uses Balanced Scorecard to align business activities to the vision and strategy of the organization, improve communication and measure performance



Highlights: DOUG JOHNSON

HIGHLIGHTS

- Uses ongoing member surveys to provide a feedback loop from members to staff for improvements that rank BRE among the nation's best performing utilities
- Increased member participation from 800 to 7,000 by changing the annual meeting process, using mail-in and online ballots



Highlights: DOUG JOHNSON

HIGHLIGHTS

- Created BRE's Community Leaders Council to partner with local business, civic and government leaders on economic development and other key initiatives
- Maintains strong grassroots communication through member advisory committees

