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## **ENERGYUNITED KICKS OFF THE BRIGHT IDEAS PROGRAM**

### *Teachers can apply for educational grants up to \$2,000*

**STATESVILLE, N.C.** – EnergyUnited and the other 25 co-ops in the network of North Carolina’s electric cooperatives have collectively pledged nearly \$600,000 to the state’s teachers in Bright Ideas education grant funding for the 2017-2018 school year. Educators can submit an application of up to \$2,000 for creative, hands-on classroom projects that would not otherwise be possible.

“For more than 20 years, Bright Ideas grants have helped teachers bring innovative ideas to life and get students excited about learning,” said Maureen Moore, communications manager at EnergyUnited. “We are committed to the communities we serve, and we believe there is no better investment than in the education of our youth.”

EnergyUnited expects to award over \$40,000 in Bright Ideas grants this year to teachers in the counties it serves. The grants are available to K-12 teachers from public, public charter, private and Christian schools for innovative projects in any subject. Teachers can apply individually or as a team and must apply online.

Applications will be accepted April 1 through September 15, but Moore noted it could pay to apply early. Teachers who submit their applications by the early bird deadline of August 15 will be entered to win a \$100 Visa gift card.

To apply, teachers must include a budget, explain the implementation, goals, creative elements and evaluation of the project and have approval from the school principal. Applications will be judged in a competitive evaluation process, and selection committee will be on the lookout for projects that feature innovation and creativity. Teachers can learn more and apply online at: [www.energyunited.com/bright-ideas-program](http://www.energyunited.com/bright-ideas-program).

Since 1994, EnergyUnited and North Carolina’s electric cooperatives have worked to enhance education by engaging students in meaningful learning projects that encourage creative approaches. In the past two decades, North Carolina’s electric cooperatives have contributed more than \$10.9 million to teachers for 9,800 projects benefiting more than two million students.

“Teachers have amazing, creative ideas to help students succeed, and we never want a lack of resources to limit the implementation of those ideas,” Moore said. “The enthusiasm and dedication of educators never ceases to amaze us, and we are proud to support their efforts.”

**About EnergyUnited** EnergyUnited Electric Membership Corporation (EMC) is the largest electric cooperative in North Carolina serving nearly 124,000 metering points. Headquartered in Statesville, EnergyUnited provides electric service in portions of nineteen counties in west central North Carolina which include Alexander, Cabarrus, Caldwell, Catawba, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Gaston, Guilford, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Randolph, Rockingham, Rowan, Stokes, Wilkes and Yadkin. EnergyUnited Propane provides products and services to more than 25,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in 74 counties across North and South Carolina. Visit EnergyUnited online at [www.energyunited.com](http://www.energyunited.com) to learn more about our electric and propane businesses.

**About the Bright Ideas Education Grant Program**

The Bright Ideas education grant program, sponsored by North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives, strives to improve education in North Carolina classrooms by awarding grants to Tar Heel teachers in grades K-12 for innovative, classroom-based projects that would not otherwise be funded. Since 1994, the program has touched the lives of more than 1.8 million students who have participated in 9,800 Bright Ideas projects, and given out more than \$10.9 million. Each year, close to 600 grants are funded across the state.