



2026 INSPIRING EFFICIENCY AWARDS



The Inspiring Efficiency Education Award is presented to an organization that increased knowledge of and action on energy efficiency amongst policy makers, stakeholders and customers through a local campaign or strategy.

2026 WINNER

National Energy Education Development (NEED) Project - Energizing Student Potential

This year, the National Energy Education Development (NEED) Project celebrates 45 years of designing and delivering energy curriculum and training for teachers and students. Energizing Student Potential (ESP) is a collaborative educational initiative designed to empower students to explore opportunities in STEM fields and help them discover their own path to innovation through a variety of classroom subjects. The program begins with a free STEM and energy workshop and continuing throughout the academic year with events and activities for teachers and students. Teachers receive STEM related curriculum, teaching guides which are aligned to state and Next Generation Science Standards, cash grants, hands-on kits and materials for students, and program support. Teachers receive free refresher training during the school year. ESP also provides an opportunity for an educational energy audit of participating schools, where students work alongside Certified Energy Managers to learn how to make their schools more energy efficient and learn more about careers in energy efficiency.

Accepted by: Mary E. Spruill | NEED | mspruill@need.org



The Inspiring Efficiency Impact Award is presented to an organization that has made a significant and measurable impact through a program, campaign or strategy to reduce energy consumption (or resulted in a quantifiable positive impact on health, emissions reductions, energy burden or other societal impact) based on their target market.

2026 WINNER

2024 Oakland SAVES Grant Program

Through a \$5 million investment of American Rescue Plan Act funds and a partnership with Michigan Saves, the nation's first nonprofit green bank, the program upgraded nearly 1,100 households. These improvements reduced energy consumption and utility bills, enhanced health, safety, and comfort, and strengthened community resilience. Beyond the direct benefits to residents, Oakland SAVES generated more than \$7.7 million in local contracting work, supporting jobs and the regional economy. By aligning environmental sustainability with economic opportunity, Oakland SAVES demonstrates how public investment can deliver lasting community impact.

Accepted by: Julie Lyons Bricker | Oakland County, Michigan | brickerj@oakgov.com



The Inspiring Efficiency Innovation Award is presented to a nominee that has developed and implemented a successful new and innovative program, campaign or strategy or has implemented a program in a new and innovative way.

2026 WINNER

MidAmerican Energy Neighborhood Power-Up Pilot

The MidAmerican Energy Neighborhood Power-Up program is a time-limited, place-based offering that works to improve the energy efficiency of homes, small businesses and multifamily housing in neighborhoods of exceptional needs across Iowa and Illinois. We partner with city/community leaders and local organizations to tailor the program to each area. The program can help homeowners, renters and business owners alike reduce their energy expenses by improving the efficiency of their space with custom offerings, like free energy assessments and energy-saving items, plus enhanced discounts on energy-efficient equipment. This pilot focuses on the work down in Rock Island, Illinois.

Accepted by: Sarah McCarville | MidAmerican Energy Company |
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The Inspiring Efficiency Marketing Award is presented to a nominee that has engaged in or supported a successful marketing campaign or strategy to increase the adoption or market penetration of energy efficient products and/or altered public behaviors or practices in the Midwest.

2026 WINNER

ComEd Energy Saving Kit Portal & Marketing Campaign

The Energy Saving Kit portal and marketing campaign enhanced the application process for income-qualified ComEd customers seeking free energy-efficient product kits. It also introduced a secure, mobile-friendly online portal (ComEd.com/FreeKit) that customers could use to request a kit using a streamlined three-step process accessible via mobile phone, tablet, or computer. To support this rollout, Walker-Miller Energy Services and ComEd launched a comprehensive email marketing campaign to raise awareness, empower, and educate customers on how installing these complimentary products can lead to meaningful energy and cost savings. By creating a direct and user-friendly communication channel, we effectively reached customers who were previously unaware of the program, enabling them to engage at their convenience and take advantage of valuable energy-saving opportunities. This approach significantly increased enrollment in the Product Distribution offering.

Accepted by: Paul Grimyser | ComEd | paul.grimyser@comed.com



The Inspiring Efficiency Champion Award is presented to the organization or individual who has served as a strong leader in support of energy efficiency in their city, state, region, company or community.

2026 WINNER

Community Engagement **Brynn Cooksey**

Brynn Cooksey Sr., CEM, CMS—known in the industry as the “Air Doctor”—is a nationally recognized leader in HVACR training, building science, and community engagement. As owner of Air Doctors Heating & Cooling and founder of HVAC U, Brynn has trained over 10,000 technicians, empowering contractors with the skills to deliver energy efficiency, safety, and healthy homes. Beyond business, he has championed workforce development initiatives, especially for underrepresented groups, partnering with utilities, schools, and nonprofits to create pathways into clean energy careers. His commitment to mentoring, education, and community impact embodies the values of the Inspiring Efficiency Champion Award. Brynn’s work continues to improve lives by reducing energy burdens, creating good jobs, and building healthier, more sustainable communities.



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2026 WINNER

Energy Equity

Anand Natarajan, City of Cleveland

Anand Natarajan currently serves as the Assistant Director for the Mayor's Office of Sustainability in the City of Cleveland Ohio, leading subject matter experts and program managers in the built environment, circular economy, nature-based solutions, grants management and education and outreach.

Anand served as the city's Energy Program Manager for 13 years since 2010 and has led community-oriented energy programs such as the City's Community Choice Electricity Aggregation Program for an average of 55K customers, the most recent iteration of which has resulted in \$20M in cumulative program savings for residents and small businesses, while being backed by 100% green-e certified RECs. As energy burden is quite high in Cleveland, these cost savings to tax paying residents are vital. Anand also recently spearheaded a Low to Moderate Income (LMI) Home Solar Pilot project that brought 7 families in Cleveland free home solar as well as an 60% average annual electricity cost savings.



LEADERSHIP

INSPIRING EFFICIENCY AWARDS

WINNER

The Inspiring Efficiency LEADERSHIP Award is presented to the organization or individual who has served as a strong leader in support of energy efficiency in their city, state, region, company, or community.

2026 WINNER

Industry Leader

Emily Andrews, Missouri Gateway Green Building Council

Emily Andrews is the Executive Director of the Missouri Gateway Green Building Council (MGGBC) which is celebrating 25 years in 2026. Emily started in 2008 as its first full-time staff member. Her role has shaped the region's energy efficiency landscape as a catalyst for policy innovation, education, and professional engagement, by leading MGGBC's work with members, municipalities, utilities, and community organizations. Emily was crucial to the development of St. Louis' Building Energy Awareness Ordinance (2017) and the Midwest's first Building Energy Performance Standard (2020), providing technical education and guidance that enabled compliance and adoption. Through workshops, code trainings, and public forums, she has directly impacted LEED-certified projects, professional networks, and the broader built environment, positioning St. Louis as a regional leader in energy-efficient buildings.



LEADERSHIP

INSPIRING EFFICIENCY AWARDS

WINNER

The Inspiring Efficiency LEADERSHIP Award is presented to the organization or individual who has served as a strong leader in support of energy efficiency in their city, state, region, company, or community.

2026 WINNER

Rising Star

Samantha Stahl, Ameren Illinois

Samantha Stahl is a dynamic leader shaping the future of energy efficiency in Illinois. Beginning as an Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency intern in 2020, she quickly rose to lead the Market Development Initiative Internship Program, doubling its retention rate and expanding into clean energy career pathways. Samantha has championed equity-centered program design, launching innovative pilots such as ASL translation services and community “energize” initiatives to ensure accessibility for all. She facilitated Ameren Illinois’ Energy Efficiency Innovation Portfolio, bringing forward solutions for vulnerable customers and aligning initiatives with Illinois’ decarbonization goals. With a bold vision for embedding energy efficiency into community life, Samantha is building scalable models for workforce development, innovation, and education—empowering today’s communities and tomorrow’s clean energy leaders.



The Inspiring Efficiency Chair's Award is presented to the organization or individual who has provided exemplary leadership and support to MEEA throughout the organization's history.

2026 WINNER

Stacey Paradis

Stacey Paradis was appointed to the Illinois Commerce Commission by Governor JB Pritzker on April 3, 2023 and has been confirmed for a five-year term. She serves as co-Vice Chair of NARUC's Committee on Energy Resources and the Environment and is a member of NARUC's Nuclear Subcommittee and EV State Working Group. She was named to the FERC-NARUC Collaborative, NARUC Natural Gas Resource Planning Task Force and serves on the Advanced Nuclear State Collaborative and the NASEO-NARUC GEB Working Group.

Prior to this, Ms. Paradis served as the Executive Director of the Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA), where she led the organization, oversaw the budget and 25+ person staff. She was responsible for the organization's Strategic Action Plan, mission, and vision, as well as managing the MEEA Board of Directors. Ms. Paradis brings more than 25 years of experience in government relations, public affairs, and non-profit management.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to apply or nominate others.

Education Nominees

Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program

The Ameren Illinois Business Symposium is the premier annual customer focused event presented by the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Business Program. This daylong event mixes educational sessions with face-to-face networking and Program Ally vendor participation to create a dynamic opportunity for the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program to engage personally, with business customers. From large industrials, hospitals and schools to churches, nonprofits and small businesses, the Business Symposium includes tailored programming and experiences for all types and sizes of businesses. In addition to learning about the latest energy efficiency technologies and Program offerings, attendees receive a special Bonus coupon that can be applied to future energy efficiency projects to make them more affordable and feasible for their budget.

Program Contact:

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Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program, LLC University

LLC University is a full-day, hands-on workshop presented by the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program, designed to educate a range of industry stakeholders about Luminaire Level Lighting Controls (LLC). This workshop integrates live demonstrations, expert instruction and practical strategies to help business customers lower operating costs and seamlessly integrate lighting controls into their building systems. Not only does LLC University introduce the technology and its benefits; it connects manufacturer representatives, distributors, installing contractors, Ameren Illinois Energy Advisors and customers together — establishing collaborative relationships in the marketplace and increasing adoption across the supply Chain. and controls.

Program Contact:

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Ameren Illinois Workforce Development Program

The Ameren Illinois Workforce Development Program, part of the Market Development Initiative, is a transformative force in clean energy equity. Since 2018, it has funded 127 internships, awarded over 300 scholarships, and served over 600 jobseekers. In 2025, the program reached its largest cohort yet—23 interns placed with 19 employers. Through paid internships, scholarships, and direct job placement, it removes barriers for underserved communities and returning citizens to jumpstart new careers, expand their knowledge, and build generational wealth. Wrap-around services and flexible support ensure inclusive access to opportunity. By aligning workforce readiness with sustainability, and prioritizing employer engagement, this program is not only building careers but transforming lives, fueling community economies and preparing a diverse, skilled pipeline for the clean energy future.

Program Contact:

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ComEd Energy Efficiency Market Development Initiative (MDI)

The Market Development Initiative was launched as a part of ComEd's commitment to equity and innovation and designed to expand economic opportunity in the growing Energy Efficiency (EE) industry. The dual mission of the ComEd Market Development Initiative (MDI) is to: 1. Increase contracting opportunities for diverse business enterprises and community-based organizations (CBOs); and 2. Support a more inclusive, representative Energy Efficiency (EE) workforce.

MDI operates throughout ComEd's northern Illinois service area and organizes its efforts around four focus areas:

- Training and Development,
- Diverse Vendor Resources (DVR),
- Service Provider Network, and
- Community Collaboration.

Program Contact:

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Illinois IBEW Renewable Energy Fund

The REF employs several approaches in training participants that are catered to the populations recruited into the specific programs. For High School programs, all partners are selected based on communities served and the capacity for vocational training. For schools that offer electrical training, the REF provides teacher training, curriculum, and classroom materials covering renewable energy and energy efficiency. For other High School partners, REF instructors deliver the course instruction and hands-on training. For Community Colleges and Community-based Organizations, REF instructors provide all training with flexible hours to accommodate for work, family, and other obligations. All adult classes are located at facilities that are accessible to public transit, includes a travel stipend, and are offered at no charge to the students.

Program Contact:

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Missouri Gateway Green Building Council

2026 marks 25 years of the Missouri Gateway Green Building Council (MGGBC) as a regional leader in advancing energy efficiency education, empowering thousands of professionals, building owners, policymakers, and community members to take action. One of the first 6 USGBC chapters and an early local champion of LEED and Green Buildings, MGGBC shaped St. Louis' landmark Building Energy Awareness Ordinance (2017) and the Midwest's first Building Energy Performance Standard (2020). Through partnerships with the Missouri Botanical Garden, utilities, MEEA, and industry leaders, MGGBC has hosted hundreds of workshops, conferences, and training, fostering knowledge, collaboration, and workforce opportunities. By bridging technical expertise with community engagement, MGGBC has established a model for transforming policy, practice, and people — advancing energy efficiency and equity across the Midwest.

Program Contact:

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Nicor Gas Mission Zoo Possible

The Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program collaborated with Brookfield Zoo Chicago to launch Mission: Zoo-Possible, a nine-week interactive scavenger hunt for families in Fall 2024. The goals were to teach practical energy-saving habits while engaging guests in a fun zoo adventure. We developed the concept, name, branding, app (Android/iOS) and marketing materials. Guests followed the app's playful mission, answering animal-themed trivia tied to energy-saving tips. They learned about how the animals maintain efficient homes while picking up tips to do the same. Completing the mission unlocked a free sweet treat (redeemable at the zoo) and encouraged visits to a photo-ready display to celebrate their victory. Mission: Zoo-Possible made learning about energy efficiency engaging, memorable and perfectly at home in the zoo environment.

Program Contact:

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Ohio Energy Project — E3 (Energy Efficiency Education) Program

The Ohio Energy Project's E3 program is a K–12 energy education initiative that increases awareness and action on energy efficiency among students and educators statewide. Through interactive teacher training, a standards-aligned curriculum, hands-on classroom labs, and take-home energy efficiency kits, the program connects science with real-world energy conservation. Serving over 400 teachers and nearly 30,000 students in diverse schools—including many with high rates of low-income families—E3 empowers students to become energy-saving ambassadors at home and in their communities. Complemented by the Careers in Energy initiative, the program fosters energy workforce development by introducing students to energy careers through career days and virtual field trips. The entire program is offered at no cost thanks to strong partnerships with utilities and environmental organizations.

Program Contact:

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UIC Energy Resources Center's Energy Efficiency Education Strategy

Established in 1973 by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), the ERC is an applied research center based out of the UIC College of Engineering focused on meeting today's energy and environmental challenges with innovative engineering solutions. Today, the ERC is focused on six core applied areas of research: 1) energy efficiency, 2) distributed energy, 3) biofuels, 4) sustainable landscapes, 5) utility data analytics, and 6) workforce development. This award application highlights the strategic combination of two of the Center's core research areas:

- **Energy Efficiency:** using less energy to perform or achieve the same result, minimizing energy waste, lowering costs, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, and conserving resources
- **Workforce Development:** developing and implementing initiatives and strategies designed to meet the evolving needs of the labor market by equipping individuals with the skills and knowledge to secure employment and thrive in their careers, while simultaneously assisting employers in finding qualified talent.

Program Contact:

Cliff Haefke

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Walker Miller Energy Services and HVAC U

Walker-Miller Energy Services and HVAC U have partnered to build a dynamic workforce development pipeline that trains, certifies, and places diverse talent into high-growth careers in energy efficiency and HVAC. This initiative blends hands-on technical instruction, industry-recognized credentials, and wraparound support services to reduce barriers and elevate underserved communities. By aligning training with utility programs and contractor needs, the program ensures job-ready graduates who contribute to building performance, indoor air quality, and decarbonization goals. Together, Walker-Miller and HVAC U are reshaping workforce equity by making energy efficiency careers more accessible, inclusive, and impactful—empowering individuals while meeting the sector's growing demand for skilled professionals.

Program Contact:

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Impact Nominees

AES Indiana Income Qualified Weatherization- Direct installation of Aeroseal Duct Sealing

Looking to improve our underperforming duct sealing measure, in 2023, AES Indiana worked with a local contractor to test the Aeroseal duct sealing process in 10 homes and found the technology capable of delivering substantially increased energy savings compared to traditional duct sealing methods.

Based on those preliminary results, in 2024, AES Indiana worked with their Income Qualified Weatherization program implementor, CLEAResult, to acquire the equipment, licensing and training to bring the delivery of Aeroseal in-house. Continuing into 2025, this in-house approach has resulted in increased energy savings for customers, a decrease in deferrals, improved cost-effectiveness for the program, and an overall improved customer experience by shortening scheduling lead times and utilizing program staff who are committed to delivering exceptional customer service.

Program Contact:

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Ameren Illinois Market Development Initiative Summer Internship Program

Since 2018, the Ameren Illinois Market Development Initiative (MDI) Summer Internship Program has created a groundbreaking model to expand the clean energy workforce while reducing barriers for underrepresented job seekers. By funding intern wages and providing wraparound support—including educational webinars, DEI training, and community engagement—the program simultaneously builds employer capacity and develops a diverse talent pipeline for the energy sector. In 2025, the program invested \$150,000 to support 23 interns and 19 employers, achieving an 87% post-internship job retention rate for participants. The program delivers measurable workforce and community impacts, positioning Ameren Illinois as a leader in innovative, equity-driven energy efficiency initiatives.

Program Contact:

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Ameren Illinois Public School Carbon Free Assessment Program

The Ameren Illinois Public School Carbon-Free Assessment (PSCFA) Program provides free, customized energy assessments to Illinois public school districts. Designed to support the state's transition to carbon-free energy usage, PSCFA helps schools identify opportunities to reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency and lower operational costs. The Program equips district leaders with actionable data and expert guidance to make informed decisions about clean energy investments. Through strategic outreach and collaboration, PSCFA has accelerated progress toward a more sustainable and resilient public education system—empowering schools to lead in Illinois' clean energy future.

Program Contact:

Stephanie Hill
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Ameren Missouri Energy Efficiency Programs Sustainable Community Initiative

The Sustainable Community Initiative (SCI) brings together community partners focused on reducing energy burdens and increasing access to essential home energy improvements to customers. Using a neighborhood-based approach informed by Ameren Missouri census and ICF energy burden analytics, SCI connects residents to holistic, whole-home energy solutions. Customers pay high energy costs, which can lead to ongoing energy insecurity. While programs and services exist, they often operate separately, making it harder for customers to get the full support they need. SCI works to coordinate these efforts so customers can access the right programs at the right time, helping them lower costs and improve comfort in their homes. The program has an average energy savings of 15%, which is the equivalent of two utility bills per year.

Program Contact:

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Center for Energy and Environment's (CEE) One-Stop Efficiency Shop

CEE's One-Stop Efficiency Shop (One-Stop) provides free energy efficiency consulting and efficiency-based rebates to small and mid-sized commercial properties in Xcel Energy Minnesota territory. The program has been sponsored by Xcel Energy since 2000. One-Stop originally focused on lighting retrofits, but the program has evolved as market needs and technologies changed. In recent years, One-Stop has added direct install lighting and smart thermostat offerings, launched grow lighting rebates to serve the state's recreational cannabis industry, and expanded HVAC and refrigeration rebate offerings. Over the past 25 years, the One-Stop team has helped over 20,000 commercial clients upgrade to efficient HVAC, lighting, and refrigeration equipment conserving nearly 1 million GWh of energy.

Program Contact:

Laura Bedo-Ekanayake
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CenterPoint Energy

CenterPoint mapped out and developed a new customer experience for the Low-Income Rental Efficiency (LIRE) program making it easier for customers to learn about and sign up for the program. Through targeted digital marketing, stakeholder engagement with key cities and a new program website that allows for application submissions, the program has seen a year over year participation increase of over 1700% (34 to 622) and a year over year energy savings increase of over 3600% (99.96 Dth to 3733.98 Dth).

Program Contact:

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ComEd's Instant Discounts Energy Efficiency Fork Truck Offering

The ComEd Instant Discounts offering, along with implementing contractor DNV, launched an energy efficiency incentive program to transform the fork truck market from fossil-fueled trucks to all-electric equipment. As electrification comes into the forefront with new legislation, ComEd and DNV have worked to educate and transform the market to clean energy. The fork truck offering was launched in January 2023 with no prior market engagement and no ancillary programs to rely on. To date, it has jumpstarted transformation in the marketplace, with more than 350 fork trucks switched from fossil fuel technology and over 35 GWh saved. \$8.5 M of incentives have been provided, and the offering continues to grow as the market becomes more aware of the ComEd program and the benefits of electrification.

Program Contact:

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ComEd Whole Home Electric Offering

Whole Home Electric (WHE) is a comprehensive offering that provides energy efficient electrification services to income eligible (IE) single family and multifamily customers throughout ComEd's northern Illinois service territory. By replacing fossil fuel appliances and heating and cooling systems with electric appliances and systems, customers save money on energy bills and reduce their overall energy usage. Eligible single-family homeowners and multifamily tenants receive home upgrades—with an average investment of \$45K for single family households and \$18K for multifamily units—at no cost to the IE customer. While most offering participants' household system end uses are fully electrified, a partial electrification pathway has been introduced in 2025, providing even greater flexibility and options for customers to begin their electrification journey.

Program Contact:

Emily Hill
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EnergyWise Custodial Training – delivered by TRC + ASK Energy on behalf of Energy Trust of Oregon

EnergyWise Custodial Training, led by TRC & ASK Energy on behalf of Energy Trust of Oregon, empowers custodial, maintenance, and security staff in SEM-enrolled buildings across Oregon and Southwest Washington to support sustainability goals through hands-on, accessible education. Piloted in 2024 with four in-person workshops and 50 participants, the program expanded in 2025 to over 440 participants. Enhancements included virtual and Spanish language sessions, flexible scheduling, and inclusive content for broader roles. Two bilingual facilitators—Frances Portillo (Portillo Consulting) and Angel Swanson (Beira Consulting)—now lead the training. Participants learn to identify energy and water waste, collaborate with building management, and contribute to healthier, more efficient workplaces. EnergyWise is a scalable, equity-driven model that engages frontline staff in meaningful climate action and operational improvement.

Program Contact:

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Focus on Energy: Community Impact Pilot

Focus on Energy's Community Impact Pilot partnered with small businesses and nonprofits across Wisconsin to deliver energy efficiency upgrades that supported their missions. The pilot was designed to collaborate with community-based organizations and local utilities to identify deserving small businesses. It offered up to \$30,000 toward energy-saving improvements in facilities located in select areas, chosen based on energy burden, income, poverty rates, presence of Trade Allies, and geographic diversity. Through free energy assessments, technical support, and funding for high-efficiency equipment, the program reduced energy costs, improved comfort and air quality, and allowed participants to reinvest savings into revenue streams and community services. Since its 2023 launch, it has reached 13 communities, upgraded 105 sites, and delivered \$1.6+ million in improvements and \$175,000+ in annual savings.

Program Contact:

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MidAmerican Energy Company

MidAmerican's Home Energy Reports have transformed customer insights into measurable savings and equity. Launched as a 50,000-customer pilot in 2012 and now reaching 350,000 Iowa and Illinois households, including low-income participants, the program delivers personalized print and digital communications proven to help customers reduce their usage. Independent evaluations confirm cumulative savings of 391 GWh and 12.3 million therms—reducing customer bills by \$54.5 million and avoiding 338,095 t CO₂, equal to powering 54,000 homes for an entire year. HERs have been MidAmerican's most cost-effective residential offering across two regulatory cycles (2014-18, 2019-23) and the campaign continues to expand with enhanced LMI targeting, additional digital touchpoints, and an upcoming small-business pilot.

Program Contact:

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Nicor Gas Community Connection Center (C3)

Launched in April 2022, the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program created the Community Connection Center (C3) in response to increased customer requests for energy assistance due to economic conditions and the lasting impacts of the pandemic. Empathizing with customers facing hardships, C3 was established as a resource to provide customers with access to energy-saving offerings, bill payment assistance, housing support, food, and other essential resources. The Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program wanted to go beyond delivery of energy-saving services to provide more comprehensive support for customers in need. We created the online Community Assistance Navigator (CAN) that allows customers anonymously to explore specific assistance options, based on individual needs, or customers can work directly with one of our team members to customize their needs.

Program Contact:

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Innovation Nominees

The 4-Way Win: Michigan's New Manufactured Homes

Certified New Manufactured Homes offer a strategic avenue to enhance the residential portfolio for underserved customers; Consumers Energy identified this opportunity and proved that significant savings can come from developing the new manufactured homes market. Through collaborative relationships with key market players and a midstream incentive design for above-code homes, the pilot resulted in tangible benefits for the utility, manufacturers, community owners, and residents. DTE Energy launched a similar pilot, expanding impact across the state. Its collaborative, cross industry approach accelerated adoption of best practices and demonstrated significant, scalable impact in reducing energy usage among hard-to-reach consumers. These pilots stand out for their novel design, measurable outcomes, and potential to serve as a national model for transforming energy efficiency into affordable housing.

Program Contact:

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Ana Gargollo

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Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program Mobile Home Channel

The Ameren Illinois Mobile Home Channel is an equity-focused initiative targeting income qualified residents living in mobile or manufactured homes—segments historically underserved due to structural and logistical barriers. Through a tiered model, the campaign distributes energy-saving kits, provides data-driven energy literacy education, and delivers comprehensive weatherization upgrades to qualified homes. By blending community-based outreach, local contractor development, and innovative program design, the Channel overcomes deep-rooted inefficiencies in mobile housing stock and sets a new standard for market-based delivery in hard-to-reach sectors. This campaign not only reduces energy usage but builds capacity within local agencies and diverse contractors—driving lasting impact across equity, workforce development, and energy savings.

Program Contact:

Stephanie Hill

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Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program Smart Savers

The Smart Savers Initiative offered through the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program offers customers within select residential communities the ability to receive a professionally installed smart thermostat for free. Ameren Illinois customers who live in the qualifying ZIP codes and are heating their home with Ameren Illinois gas or electricity, may be eligible to participate in the Smart Savers Initiative. Customers heating their home with propane are also eligible.

Program Contact:

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Ameren Illinois Residential and Commercial EV Managed Charging Pilots

Ameren Illinois's EV Managed Charging Pilot is designed to prepare the grid for a fully electrified future while bringing the benefits of transportation electrification to every customer. The pilot deployed a three-pronged strategy: discrete demand response events, recurring load-shift schedules, and Dynamic Load Optimization, which allows management of localized constraints, like thermal stress on distribution hardware, while meeting customer charging needs. The pilot established EVs as a dispatchable grid asset while pioneering a new standard for equity. A core program goal is to deliver 40% of benefits to Equity Investment Eligible Communities (EIECs). The pilot exceeded its residential EIEC enrollment target in just three months, offering a scalable model for using EV managed charging to support a reliable, affordable, and equitable power system.

Program Contact:

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Center for Energy and Environment's (CEE) One-Stop Efficiency Shop LED Direct Install Program

In 2023, CEE piloted a lighting direct install offering focused on businesses in most need of additional resources to complete lighting upgrades. The program is available to businesses in underserved areas with a demand of 400 kW or less and businesses outside those areas with a demand of 50 kW or less. The program provides free installation of LED screw-ins, tubes, and exit signs. As part of this effort, CEE collaborated with the City of Minneapolis and the City of Saint Paul to identify priority corridors with businesses unlikely to participate in efficiency

programs without additional support. In 2025, CEE expanded the priority corridors to Justice40 and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) environmental justice areas. The initial pilot exceeded the goal, and CEE continued the program in 2024 and 2025. By the end of 2025, CEE will have installed over 386,182 LED tubes in Minnesota businesses. Over the past three years, participants have saved:

- 30.5 GWh
- 23,790 tons of CO₂

Program Contact:

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ComEd Public Schools Carbon-Free Assessment and K-12 Outreach

Designed in compliance with Illinois' Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), ComEd's Public Schools Carbon-Free Assessment (PSCFA) program provides a first of its kind no cost, utility-led decarbonization assessment for public K-12 schools in ComEd's service territory. The overall goal is to provide a roadmap for schools to become carbon-free by 2050. Assessments include analysis of full facility electrification and include recommendations related to lighting, HVAC, water heating, kitchen, fleet vehicle electrification, electric service upgrades requirements, building envelope and mechanical insulation and onsite solar power generation potential. Schools receive tailored recommendations and are connected to relevant third-party experts who offer technical assistance on district project prioritization and guidance on grant and funding opportunities. The support provided is key in turning a district's goals into actionable projects.

Program Contact:

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SEEL, LLC with Eco-Logical

Eco-Logical®'s OMNI™ Split System Heat Pump Water Heater removes the long-standing space and installation barriers that have kept many income-challenged homes—specially manufactured housing and small multi-family—from high-efficiency hot water. OMNI's two-piece design (compact outdoor heat pump + standard indoor tank) and installer friendly Eco-Connect™ pre-charged lines enable low-cost, low disruption installs. To reach households that typically lack access, Eco-Logical® partners with SEEL, LLC—an equity-focused, nationally certified minority business enterprise and service-disabled veteran-owned implementer. SEEL delivers income-qualified outreach, in-home audits, weatherization and health-and-safety triage, trade-ally recruitment/training, call center/CRM, incentive processing, and multilingual customer care. Together, OMNI + SEEL provide a turnkey pathway for utilities and housing agencies to deliver measurable savings, lower bills, and equitable access to premium, climate-friendly water heating across hard-to-reach housing stock.

Program Contact:

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Efficient Technology Accelerator Program of Minnesota

Minnesota's Efficient Technology Accelerator (ETA) is a statewide market transformation program that accelerates deployment and reduces the cost of emerging and innovative efficient technologies, bringing lower energy bills and environmental benefits to all Minnesotans. ETA is working to accelerate adoption of a portfolio of select efficient technologies to bring them to the market faster than they otherwise would. The ultimate goal is that technologies will become the standard practice to harness enormous energy savings potential and benefit end use customers. The current portfolio of initiatives includes:

- Residential dual fuel air source heat pumps (MN ASHP Collaborative)
- Residential high-performance windows (Wise Windows Hub)
- Commercial luminaire level lighting controls (LLLC initiative)
- Commercial dual fuel heat pump rooftop units with energy recovery ventilators (NextGen RTUs)
- Codes Advancement

Program Contact:

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Evergy Grid Resiliency Program

Evergy's Grid Resiliency program transforms how utilities respond to emergency events. Launched in summer 2025 with Uplight and ecobee, the program supplements traditional demand response by dispatching all connected ecobee thermostats during grid emergencies—regardless of enrollment status. Operating on an opt-out model, the program uses proactive communication and small, nearly imperceptible temperature adjustments to preserve customer comfort and control. During its first emergency event, over 15,000 thermostats across Kansas and Missouri participated, delivering 23 MW of peak load reduction and boosting Evergy's dispatchable capacity by 31%. By unlocking mass-market participation, Evergy is able to avoid blackouts for 1.6 million customers while deferring costly infrastructure investments. Evergy's Grid Resiliency program transforms how utilities respond to emergency events.

Program Contact:

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Nicor Gas Commercial Gas Heat Pump Pilot

The Nicor Gas Commercial Gas Heat Pump Pilot (CGHP) team launched a successful engagement and capacity-building campaign to increase awareness and comfort with CGHP technology. This effort culminated in the Northlake CGHP project, a first-of-its-kind installation in the Midwest, showcasing next-generation gas technology designed to improve customer comfort and energy savings while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy bills for a hard-to-reach customer segment: income-eligible multi-family property owners.

This installation increased the overall system efficiency to 101.3%, an 18.3% improvement over the baseline efficiency. As an income-eligible multi-family property, the project was fully incentivized through Nicor Gas's Energy Efficiency Program (EEP), marking the first time Commercial GHPs have been incentivized for a multi-family building under this program.

Program Contact:

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Wasmer Company – Proactive Power Quality Optimization and Microgrid Design for Industrial Energy Resilience

Wasmer Company developed a proactive, installation-ready solution that prevents costly power quality disruptions before they occur. High-resolution monitoring, waveform analysis, and root-cause diagnostics identified emerging risks—such as harmonics, voltage sags, and load imbalances—before they could trigger downtime. Simultaneously, a custom microgrid design was engineered, validated, and prepared for immediate future deployment, integrating solar PV, battery storage, and intelligent load management. This approach moves beyond reactive repairs, creating a future-ready system that safeguards operations, reduces costs, and supports clean energy adoption. By acting early, Wasmer avoided potential production losses, improved equipment reliability, and positioned itself to seamlessly implement a resilient, renewable-powered microgrid when timing and budgets align. This model offers a scalable blueprint for Midwest manufacturers to protect productivity while advancing sustainability.

Program Contact:

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Marketing Nominees

AES Indiana Income Qualified Weatherization Limited Time Offer Campaign

Through a series of marketing tactics, AES Indiana developed a marketing campaign to increase program awareness and to increase the demand for program participation by offering residential customers a limited time offer for a free Amazon Echo Dot for scheduling and completing an In-Home Energy Assessment.

Program Contact:

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AES
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Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program Market Development Initiative

The Market Development Initiative (MDI) has been an integral part of the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program for many years. The MDI aims for energy efficiency equity. MDI has three goals intended to infuse equity throughout the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program – to engage customers who have not previously benefited from energy efficiency, to increase the number of energy efficiency jobs available to local and diverse candidates and to support new or growing energy efficiency businesses. With the MDI being such a critical part of the Program, we wanted to create a brand identity to help represent visually MDI and increase awareness and recognition within the communities we serve.

Program Contact:

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Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program Website

In 2023, from customer behavior data and the growth of the user experience web field, the Program looked at the website and determined a large overhaul was needed to improve the customer experience from an educational and operational standpoint. In 2024, internal review of each of the pages were evaluated so a wireframe could be created for a new site build. In 2025, the new website was launched with features that included mega navigation, accessibility features and a navigational chat bot to help improve the overall customer experience.

Program Contact:

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CenterPoint Energy

CenterPoint Energy's campaign aims to increase awareness of and participation in income-qualified energy efficiency residential programs in CenterPoint's natural gas service territory in Minnesota. For customers making up to 80% area median income, CenterPoint offers free or discounted services such as insulation, the replacement or tune-up of natural gas heating appliances, home reviews, and energy kits.

Program Contact:

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City Utilities of Springfield, MO

City Utilities of Springfield, MO is a progressive, community-owned utility that has proudly served since 1945. We provide electricity, natural gas, water, broadband, and public transportation. CU Peak Rewards is our smart thermostat demand response program that rewards customers for saving energy. Once enrolled, City Utilities will adjust the smart thermostats of participating customers up to 3° during high demand days. These adjustments help reduce CU's electric usage during peak times, and participants receive a financial incentive for their voluntary participation. Launched in March of 2025, the CU Peak Rewards program plays a critical role in maintaining grid reliability and delaying the need for additional power generating infrastructure. Anytime we save energy, we all win. It's good for the climate, the environment, and our community.

Program Contact:

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ComEd Retro-Commissioning (RCx) Offering: Building Operator Certification (BOC) Strategic Marketing Campaign

The "Unlock Your Potential" BOC campaign included targeted email and call campaigns, eNewsletters, and BOC content provided in RCx reports. Additionally, BOC training was promoted by active RCx Energy Efficiency Service Providers (EESPs) throughout the ComEd service territory. The BOC training is targeted at commercial customers in large facilities, aiming to advance their skills in the energy-efficient operation of their facilities. Campaign efforts commenced in mid-2023, building awareness of available training. Since launch, participation has increased from 36 participants, 4.2 GWh, and 26,000 therm savings from 2022-2023 to 69 participants, 7.7 GWh, and 74,000 therm savings from 2024-2025 (to date). Attendees are actively applying what they've learned in class to make both financial and energy-efficient impacts within their facilities.

Program Contact:

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Consumers Energy Home Energy Assessment Program

Consumers Energy developed a campaign to increase program participation for home energy assessments using a giveaway promotion that enticed customers. The campaign leveraged a “hot” giveaway to shift customer behavior to go from not participating in a home energy assessment to signing up for one. On top of receiving energy efficient home upgrades on the spot during a home energy assessment, eligible customers also received a JBL speaker just for signing up. This giveaway was highly successful in raising awareness about the program and led to an increase in program participation during the campaign’s run time. This campaign will inform future initiatives and help Consumers Energy to get more customers involved in energy efficiency programs.

Program Contact:

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“The Efficient Home” - ComEd Lifestyle Energy-Efficiency Magazine

ComEd reimaged how a utility can inspire energy efficiency—by replacing transactional brochures with a full-fledged lifestyle magazine. Instead of telling customers what to install, “The Efficient Home” magazine shows how energy efficiency fits seamlessly into everyday life. Through stories, photography, and tips, the magazine makes efficiency aspirational, relatable, and actionable. The magazine aimed to enact behavior changes through customer’s participation in energy efficiency programs. The printed magazine is currently being distributed in lobbies and waiting areas of 3,000 small businesses, the digital magazine attracted 1,260 sessions, and the launch email to 613,000 customers generated a 45% open rate, well above utility benchmarks. These outcomes confirm treating energy efficiency as a lifestyle, versus a product, is successfully driving engagement and behavior change.

Program Contact:

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Champion Nominees

Alfred Earl Pryor Jr.

Alfred, a dedicated member of his Southern Illinois community, became a contractor and instructor to address local needs, particularly among elderly and underserved groups. By establishing a pre-apprenticeship class, he enabled ten graduates to begin careers in construction. Alfred promotes equity through outreach and youth workforce programs and envisions an inclusive energy efficiency ecosystem where all communities are represented and engaged. He plans to expand vocational arts and inspire youth to rebuild their hometowns using sustainable, efficient practices.

Derrick Brodanex (Qute Insulation)

We are nominating Qute Insulation for the Inspiring Efficiency Champion Award for their significant contributions to energy efficiency. Their innovative insulation products and installation methods have redefined industry standards, leading to a substantial reduction in energy consumption for both commercial and residential buildings. Qute Insulation's use of proprietary, eco-friendly materials results in superior thermal performance, effectively minimizing heat loss in winter and heat gain in summer. They have also developed a unique, rapid-install system that ensures a flawless fit, eliminating common thermal bridges and air leaks. Their commitment to excellence has been demonstrated through a portfolio of projects that consistently show a 25-40% improvement in a building's energy performance rating, directly translating to lower utility bills and a smaller carbon footprint for their clients.

Ishalena Moore, Sparkle Palace Construction & Project Management

Ishalena Moore, a native of West Englewood in Chicago, stands as a beacon of resilience and service in her community. As a founder of Sparkle Palace Construction, Ishalena leads a reputable, highly accredited and award-winning construction company, ensuring the highest standards of quality and safety in her work as a certified home inspector and notary. Her commitment to service has garnered prestigious accolades, including a US Presidential Award for her volunteer efforts at Holy Cross Hospital. Additionally, serving as the President and Secretary of Urban ROOTS Alliance, Ishalena channels her passion into restoring hope, providing outreach, and equipping communities with the tools for survival.

Natasha Pickett, Temperature Doctors Heating & Cooling, Inc.

Natasha Pickett is a co-founder of Temperature Doctors Heating & Cooling, a minority-owned HVAC contractor serving the Midwest since 2006. With nearly 20 years in the trades, she combines expertise with a passion for mentorship and innovation. Under her leadership, the company delivers cutting-edge energy-efficient solutions, trains technicians and creates meaningful career opportunities for young people, minorities and others who haven't had the opportunity to enter the trades. She hopes this will leave a lasting legacy of workforce development, sustainability, and community impact.

Nortek Environmental, Inc.

Nortek Environmental, Inc. is an HVAC Service & Installation Provider serving the Chicago Suburban area since 2001. Nortek provides repair, installation, and maintenance services to both residential and commercial customers to help ensure their home comfort needs are met. As a family-owned and operated organization, Nortek prides itself on extending that same sense of family to their team of employees, and to their customers as well. Nortek stands out as a company who prioritizes the quality of their work, ensuring long-lasting results and customer satisfaction. Nortek actively works with giving back to the community, which includes their annual Help the Homeless Coat Drive event, which will begin its 8th year in November of 2025.

Target Air HVAC

Jonathan, the founder and CEO of Target Air HVAC, integrates HVAC solutions with energy assessments to empower residential clients to achieve unparalleled energy efficiency. Jonathan's passion for innovation and sustainability is rooted in his diverse background, including certifications as a Building Analyst Professional and recognition as an alumnus of the Goldman Sachs 10kSB Program and the Walker-Miller Diverse Contractor Program. Jonathan has served 1000+ energy homes in the Detroit area alone to uncover inefficiencies, reduce carbon footprints, and optimize energy usage. Jonathan currently partners with the local utilities, the City of Detroit and State of Michigan on initiatives that brings energy efficiency to some of the most underserved neighborhoods. Jonathan identifies ways to save energy and is also helping people live more comfortably and affordably.

Leadership Nominees

April Cannon | ASK Energy, Inc.

I'm a passionate and purpose-driven leader working at the intersection of energy efficiency, equity, and community impact. As a Project Manager at ASK Energy, I lead multifamily and commercial SEM programs and drive initiatives in sustainability, EH&S, and business development. I also serve as a City Councilor for Banks, Oregon, where I advocate for inclusive, transparent governance. In the past year, I've taken on leadership roles with NWSEMC and AESP Women in Energy, judged national energy awards, and mentored emerging professionals. I bring empathy, creativity, and a strong work ethic to everything I do—whether it's shaping policy, building partnerships, or leading internal teams. I'm committed to making energy efficiency more accessible, equitable, and impactful for the communities and organizations I serve.

Julie Michals, E4TheFuture/National Energy Screening Project

As Director of Valuation at E4TheFuture, Julie Michals has been at the forefront of rethinking how we value energy efficiency. Under Julie's leadership, NESP published the original National Standard Practice Manual (NSPM) in 2017, drawing on the experience of the nation's experts on benefit-cost analysis (BCA) to propose a new framework for understanding EE's impacts. Then followed the 2020 expanded NSPM for DERs. The NSPM has been cited across the country and is guiding BCA in Minnesota and Michigan in the Midwest. Julie also spearheaded the creation of the Methods, Tools and Resources Handbook of valuation methodology, the Database of Screening Practices (DSP) that documents state BCA tests, and in 2024 the follow-up publication Distributional Equity Analysis for Energy Efficiency and Other Distributed Energy Resources.

Kari Gehrke, Alliant Energy

Kari Gehrke is an energy efficiency leader at Alliant Energy who is transforming how utilities approach demand-side management. To proactively manage a 2 GW jump in demand across Alliant Energy's territories, Kari Gehrke is leading an initiative to integrate Alliant Energy's demand-side solutions, customer touchpoints, and device types into a cohesive, holistic 'Demand Stack' portfolio—while expanding demand response capabilities to maximize load shed potential. Kari's collaborative approach with internal teams, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), and multi-state regulators is creating replicable frameworks that benefit the entire utility industry. Her work demonstrates how demand-side resources can serve as virtual generation capacity, offering a sustainable, cost-effective alternative to traditional power plant construction.

Matt Armstrong

Matt Armstrong, Manager of Energy Efficiency at Ameren Illinois, is a policy expert and trusted leader who exemplifies stakeholder-centered utility planning. With five years at Ameren, Matt leads the Regulatory and Compliance Team and has championed the development of both the 2021–2025 and 2026–2029 Energy Efficiency Plans. His leadership is defined by a deep commitment to collaboration, transparency, and building enduring trust with stakeholders across Illinois. Matt's approach is rooted in mutual respect and shared purpose, elevating stakeholder engagement into a model of meaningful partnership. His work not only advances energy efficiency but also strengthens community ties and reduces energy burden, making him a standout leader in the field. And he makes energy efficiency raps!

Minnesota Department of Commerce

The Minnesota Department of Commerce (MN COMM) exemplifies visionary leadership in energy efficiency through the development and coordination of the state's forthcoming HOMES and HEAR rebate programs. By integrating state-level initiatives for electric panel upgrades and heat pumps under a unified umbrella, MN COMM is streamlining access to incentives and maximizing impact. Their commitment extends beyond rebates: MN COMM has championed workforce development and standardized training for the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), ensuring a skilled, credentialed workforce statewide. Through strategic partnerships, innovative training, and a focus on accessibility and impartiality, MN COMM is laying the groundwork for lasting, transformative energy efficiency in Minnesota.

Rupesh Devapati, Midwest Industrial Training and Assessment Center

Rupesh has been the Lead Intern since 2021 in Industrial Training and Assessment Center (ITAC) which is federally funded by US Department of Energy for promoting energy efficiency and greenhouse gas reduction in central Midwest industries. I serve as the Director of ITAC. He has mentored 40 interns and has participated in and led over 90 industrial energy assessments, which have resulted in energy cost savings of \$38million to these industries, reduced energy use by 4TBu and reduced carbon emissions by 0.25million tons per year, according to DOE. He has been instrumental in contributing to an energy ready engineering workforce and the economic bottom line of regional industries through his excellence in engineering topics related to energy efficient manufacturing and helping train other students.

Thanks to the 2026 Inspiring Efficiency Awards Review Committee

MEEA would like to thank all of our members and Board Members who spent hours promoting the 2026 Inspiring Efficiency Awards and reviewing the nominations. We received 50 applications this year in the six categories. There was great diversity among the applications from across the Midwest representing a wide variety of industries. The Inspiring Efficiency Awards represent the best in the Midwest and all of the great work you are doing.

Please join us in thanking our members for their time and service:

Amalia Hicks | Cadmus

Laura Bebo Enkanayake | Center for Energy and Environment

Todd McVicker | City of Columbia Utilities

Dan Merchant | CLEAResult

Angela Ziech-Malek | DNV

Jose Goncalves | DTE Energy

Cory Fox | Energy Hub

LeAndra Archuleta | Energy Solutions

Kelly Mulder | Equinox Creative

Neb Kisic | Erthe Energy

Dean Laube | Franklin Energy

Chad Whitehead | GDS Associates

Maria Onesto Moran | Green Home Experts LLC

Laura Agapay-Read | Guidehouse

Nate Baer | i3 Energy

Alex Citron | ICF

Quinn Zeagler | ICF

Kevin DeMaster | LG

Amanda Winters | Michaels Energy

Todd Parker | Michigan Saves

Chanda Rowan | Nicor Gas

Scott Yee | Resource Innovations

Gabrielle Gordon | SEEL LLC

Theresa Collins | Senior Services Plus

Deb Dynako | Slipstream

Maddie Emerson | TRC

Scott Steiner | TRC

Chris Baker | VEIC

Julie Blackwell | Waypoint Energy

Past Award Winners

Chair's Award

2025: Brandon Renaud
2024: Kristol Simms
2023: Shawn White
2021: Nick Mark
2020: James J. Jerozal Jr.
2019: Lauren Casentini
2018: Jon Williams
2017: Jeanine Penticoff
2017: Llona C. Weiss
2016: Randy Gunn
2015: Tim Melloch
2014: Alecia Ward
2014: Wendy Jaehn
2014: Jay Wrobel
2013: Sam Sirkin
2012: Commonwealth Edison
2011: David Eijadi
2010: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
2009: Janet Streff
2008: Sara Ward
2006: Mary O'Toole
2005: David Leishman
2004: Val Jensen

Champion's

2026: *Energy Equity* Anand Natarajan, City of Cleveland
Community Engagement Brynn Cooksey, HVAC U
2025: *Community Engagement* Building Energy Exchange St. Louis
Energy Equity Quinn Parker
2024: City of Cincinnati
2023: Kristol Simms, Ameren Illinois

Education

2025: The Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program
2024: Xcel Energy, Center for Energy and Environment and CenterPoint Energy
2023: ComEd's Energy Efficiency Service Provider (EESP) Incubator Program
2022: DTE Energy and Consumers Energy New Home Construction Programs
2022: Focus on Energy
2021: Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program
2020: School Energy Manager Project, Kentucky School Boards Association
2019: Ameren Illinois
2018: National Energy Foundation, Think! Energy
2017: Xcel Energy

2016: Alliant Energy
2016: Columbia Water & Light
2015: Nicor Gas
2014: AEP Ohio
2014: Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program
2013: AEP Ohio
2013: Xcel Energy, BOMA Greater Minneapolis, and BOMA St. Paul
2012: Advanced Technology Environmental and Energy Center (ATEEC)
2011: Energy Center of Wisconsin
2010: Commonwealth Edison and Chicago Urban League
2010: Commonwealth Edison and US EPA ENERGYSTAR Change the World
2010: Smart Energy Design Assistance Center
2009: Interstate Power & Light Company
2008: Schools for Energy Efficiency
2006: Missouri Botanical Gardens EarthWays Center
2005: University of Illinois Energy Resources Center
2004: Wisconsin Focus on Energy Residential Programs

Impact

- 2025:** CEJA Grant Writing Program / (& Michigan Farm Energy Program
- 2024:** ComEd
- 2023:** The Chicago Smart Lighting Program
- 2022:** Consumers Energy
- 2022:** Peoples Gas Public Sector Energy Efficiency Program
- 2021:** DTE Energy Efficiency Assistance (EEA) Program
- 2021:** Greenlite Lighting Corporation USA
- 2020:** Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden's Light Up Avondale Program
- 2019:** Minnesota Army National Guard
- 2018:** Ameren Illinois
- 2018:** ComEd Energy Efficiency Programs
- 2017:** Focus on Energy
- 2017:** Michigan Saves
- 2016:** ComEd
- 2016:** MidAmerican Energy
- 2015:** City of Chicago - Retrofit Chicago
- 2015:** Illinois Public Housing Authority Efficient Living Program - Illinois Energy Now
- 2014:** Commonwealth Edison and Nicor Gas, New Construction Services
- 2014:** Columbia Gas of Ohio
- 2013:** Xcel Energy
- 2012:** Association of Illinois Electric

- Cooperatives
- 2011:** Commonwealth Edison
- 2010:** Interstate Power & Light Company, an Alliant Energy Company
- 2009:** Orion Energy Systems, Inc.
- 2008:** MiraCit Development Corporation
- 2006:** Alliant Energy- Wisconsin Power & Light
- 2005:** MidAmerican Design Assistance
- 2004:** The Compressed Air Challenge

Innovation

- 2025:** Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative
- 2024:** ComEd
- 2023:** DTE Equity Insights and Inclusion Study
- 2023:** ComEd Multi-Family Energy Savings Program, In Partnership with Nicor Gas, Peoples Gas, North Shore Gas and Franklin Energy
- 2022:** International Center for Appropriate and Sustainable Technology
- 2021:** City of Minneapolis Home Energy Disclosure
- 2021:** ComEd Energy Efficiency Program
- 2020:** Focus on Energy Disaster Relief Offerings
- 2020:** Virtual Commissioning™ Program
- 2019:** Focus on Energy's Strategic Energy Management (SEM) Initiative
- 2018:** ComEd Energy Efficiency Programs

- 2018:** Focus on Energy and Madison Gas and Electric
- 2017:** AEP Ohio
- 2017:** Iowa Economic Development Authority
- 2016:** AEP Ohio
- 2015:** AEP Ohio's Continuous Energy Improvement Program
- 2015:** DTE Energy / DTE Insight
- 2014:** Focus On Energy
- 2013:** Ohio Development Services Agency
- 2012:** Ohio Hospital Association
- 2012:** Energy Innovation Corridor (Xcel Energy & Centerpoint Energy)
- 2011:** DTE Energy
- 2011:** Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- 2010:** Ameren Illinois Utilities, Watts Solution Program
- 2010:** Ameren Illinois Utilities, LED Refrigerated Case Project
- 2009:** Keyser Visual, Inc. and Florida Plastics International, Inc.
- 2008:** George Bialecki, Jr., Alternative Energy Builders (AEB)
- 2006:** District Energy St. Paul
- 2006:** The Cleveland Green Building Coalition
- 2005:** Center for Technology Transfer, Inc.
- 2004:** Community Energy Cooperative's Energy-Smart Pricing Plan

Leadership

2024: Angela Tovar
2023: Rudolph Chahine, Consumers Energy
2023: Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program & Senior Services Plus
2023: Angie Ostaszewski, Ameren Illinois
2022: Carla Walker-Miller, Walker-Miller Energy Services
2022: Minnesota State Senator Jason Rarick & Minnesota State Representative Zack Stephenson
2021: Ohio Environmental Council
2021: Winneshiek Energy District
2020: Senator Megan Hunt, Nebraska State Legislature
2019: Mayor Rahm Emanuel, City of Chicago
2018: Louis James, SEEL, LLC
2018: Governor Rick Snyder, State of Michigan
2017: George Malek
2017: Kim Winslow
2016: Rick Sites, Ohio Hospital Association
2015: Jim Jerozal, Nicor Gas
2015: Carol Stemrich, Public Service Commission of Wisconsin,
2014: The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County (IL) Board President
2013: Commissioner Cheryl Roberto, Public Utilities Commission of Ohio

2012: Jennifer Easler, Iowa Office of Consumers' Advocate
2011: Commissioner Monica Martinez, Michigan Public Service Commission
2010: Janine Migden- Ostrander, Ohio Consumers' Counsel
2010: Tom Casten, Recycled Energy Development
2009: Governor Jim Doyle, Wisconsin
2008: State of Minnesota
2008: State of Illinois
2008: City of Ann Arbor, Michigan
2006: Diane Munns, Iowa Utilities Board
2006: Robert L. Cowles, Wisconsin State Senate
2005: Governor Jennifer Granholm, State of Michigan
2004: Governor Tim Pawlenty, State of Minnesota

Marketing

2025: People Gas and North Shore Gas Energy Efficiency Program
2024: Consumers Energy
2023: Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program & Peoria Guild of Black Artists Partnership
2022: Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program
2021: Focus on Energy

2020: Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program, Unexpected Love Story Campaign
2019: Focus on Energy's Wisconsin Is In Campaign
2018: Ameren Illinois
2018: Vectren Corporation
2017: Nicor Gas
2016: Consumers Energy
2015: Nicor Gas, energySMART, Customer Journey Marketing Strategy
2014: Ameren Illinois ActOn Energy Business Program
2013: Nicor Gas
2012: DTE Energy
2012: AEP Ohio
2011: Xcel Energy
2011: Prairie Power
2010: Interstate Power & Light Company, an Alliant Energy Company
2010: R.L. Just & Associates, P.C. Architect
2009: Wisconsin Focus on Energy
2008: Rochester Public Utilities
2006: MidAmerican Energy
2005: Interstate Power & Light Co.