

# Career Education Cooperative

The first official project of the Southwest Partners was and is the Career Education Cooperative (CEC). Kicked off on a cold and icy night in January of 2015, the CEC has grown its membership, tripled the number of students involved, and developed new apprenticeship education programs in 2016. Here are a few of the most commonly asked question, their answers, and why we are Southwest Partners. ▶



Richland Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



MY CO-OP

Morgan Goodyear, a student at Richland Center High School, works at her apprenticeship at Schmitt Woodland Hills.



**What is the CEC mission?** “To create a regional school to career pathway that prepares students for living wage career opportunities for educational growth and good citizenship.” CEC’s mission developed out of a process of hundreds of one-to-one relational meetings where we listened deeply to business, school, and community leaders. We heard the stories about the tight budgets of schools, the ongoing labor shortages in industry, as well as the fact that many of our regional youth were leaving the area upon graduation from high school. We researched other programs across the state, held community

visioning sessions, and created a new regional cooperative.

**“The CEC experience helped me with a vision for a career.”**

**What is the Career Education?**

The CEC program starts the summer of the junior year of high school when students begin apprenticeships in regional businesses. The apprenticeships are paid positions

that include 450 hours of employment that last through the school year and summer of the students’ senior year. During that time students take college courses (seven to nine credits) that can be applied to degree programs at Southwest Technical College or the UW colleges. Students also complete 10 hours of community service where they learn why it is important work for the common good. Students love the experience. Employers love the apprenticeships. Parents love the college credits. The colleges love the partnership. Check out our website [www.careereducationscoop.com](http://www.careereducationscoop.com).

**What are the Career Pathways?** Currently there are four: manufacturing, medical laboratory, laboratory science, and medical pathways. Students who join us can explore careers in engineering, dairy, nursing, hospitals, welding, and others while gaining almost a full semester of college credit. What’s fun is that last year 11 students were involved and this year we’ve expanded to 20 students. Look for more students and programs in 2017.

**Where do the students come from?** Participating students come from school districts of Richland, Ithaca, Kickapoo, Hillsboro, Riverdale, and the private Eagle Schools! A valuable partner in making all this work is CESA, the Cooperative Educational Service Agency.

**What business are a part of the CEC?** Well, that’s a fun question because we are growing! Lowe Manufacturing, METCO, Miniature Precision Components, Rockwell Automation, Schreiber Foods, Scot Industries, SEATS, Richland Center Utilities, Schmitt Woodland Hills, Homeward Bound, Inc., Harvest Guest Home, Bethel Homes, Gunderson

St. Joseph’s Hospital and Clinics, Richland Center Renewable Energy, and more relationships are being built for the future partners.

**What are students saying about the CEC?** With the closing of the first group of student apprenticeships, 10 students received certificates of completion at their respective school scholarship awards ceremony. Reflecting back to the conversation with these students, their comments include the following:

- “This was a great experience and I would encourage other students to participate.”
- “I was able to save money and buy a car. I pay my own car payments and insurance.”
- “The CEC will look very good on my resumé.”
- “The college credits will save a lot of money and time.”
- “The CEC experience helped me with a vision for a career.”
- “I thought I knew what I wanted to do—changing my mind now will save a lot of money and time in college.”

*Larry Engel, Southwest Partners Executive Committee and CEC Co-Chair*

*Becky Dahl, Southwest Partners Executive Committee and CEC Co-Chair*

**CAREER EDUCATION  
COOPERATIVE**  
SCHOOL • BUSINESS • COMMUNITY



**Why is the CEC part of Southwest Partners?**

Well, because that’s what the partners are all about—listening to the needs of the community, creating innovative solutions, and helping make Southwest Wisconsin a community of choice! Check out the Pine River Trails Project and other community enhancements of Southwest Partners.

[www.pinerivertrails.com](http://www.pinerivertrails.com)

[www.richlandcenter.com](http://www.richlandcenter.com)

# Cooking up holiday energy savings

For many of us, the best holidays involve home-cooked meals and wonderful aromas of turkey, stuffing, and baked goods wafting throughout the house. It means a busy kitchen and a bustling house full of family and friends. If this rings true for you, despite the increased kitchen activity, you still have an opportunity to save energy during the holidays.

**Cut carbs (carbon) painlessly** In addition to being the “heart of your home,” your kitchen could pump savings back into your wallet. According to the Department of Energy, cooking accounts for 4.5 percent of total energy use in U.S. homes. This number, combined with the energy use associated with refrigeration, dishwashing, and water heating means that as much as 15 percent of the energy in the average American home is used in the kitchen. So, saving energy here can have a significant impact on your household budget.

For example, when preparing side dishes, baked goods, soups and such, consider using small appliances like a crock pot, toaster oven, microwave, or warming plate instead of your conventional oven or stovetop. These small appliances are a smart, energy-saving alternative, typically using about half the energy of a stove.

**Seal in efficiency** When using your oven, don’t peek! Opening the oven door can lower the temperature by as much as 25 degrees and causes your stove to work harder (consuming more energy) to return to the desired cooking temperature. If your recipe calls for baking the dish more than an hour, it is not necessary to preheat the oven. If your oven is electric, you can likely turn the oven off for the last five to ten minutes of cooking and allow the residual heat to complete the job. Clean burners and reflectors increase efficiency and offer better heating, so don’t neglect this small but important task.

Just as keeping the oven door closed seals in efficiency and enables the stove to operate more economically, the same rules apply to the refrigerator and freezer. Keep the doors closed as much as possible so cold air doesn’t escape. However, leaving the door open for a longer period of time while you load groceries or remove items you need is more efficient than opening and closing it several times.

If you are entertaining a large group, you may be able to give your furnace a brief holiday. When your oven is working hard and you have a house full of guests, the heat from the stove and the guests will keep your house comfortable, enabling you to turn down the thermostat.

**Clean up with energy savings** When it’s time to clean up, extend fellowship to the kitchen, and wash and dry dirty dishes by hand. This uses less energy than a dishwasher. However, don’t leave the water running continuously, or you will waste energy. If you do use the dishwasher and rinse dishes before loading them, use cold water. Run

the dishwasher with full loads only, and if possible, use the energy-saving cycle. Note that dishwashers that have overnight or air power dry settings can save up to 10 percent of your dishwashing energy costs.

By adapting these efficient practices in your kitchen, energy savings will be one more thing to be thankful for this holiday season.



## Cooking Efficiency Tip

Every time you open the oven door to check on a dish, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees, increasing cooking time - and energy use! Try using the oven light instead.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES



## HAIRCUT

**Ma cut my hair with a hand-operated clipper that pulled like**

**the dickens. Getting a haircut was in the same category as having a tooth drilled. On special occasions, Pa took me to the barber in town. This was usually just before school started in the fall, before the school Christmas program, and maybe one or two other times during the year. Mr. Ehlert was the barber, a man of considerable reputation for his ability to talk nonstop.**

At one of those times when I was to get a “paid for” haircut, Pa dropped me off at the barbershop and said he’d be back in about an hour to pick me up. I soon learned that one person was ahead of me, so I sat down and picked up a copy of *Outdoor Life* and began paging through it.

Nothing seemed to quiet Mr. Ehlert. He talked about the weather, about the trout in the millpond, about what the upcoming winter was likely to be like. The electric clipper hummed, the shears clicked, and a pile of hair accumulated on the floor.

Soon the customer was finished, he got up from the chair, and looked at himself in the mirror before putting on his cap and coat.

“Next,” said Mr. Ehlert.

I crawled up in the chair and made myself comfortable.

“You’re Herman Apps’ kid aren’t you?”

“I am,” I said.

“How do you want your hair cut?”

“Pretty short, so Ma doesn’t have to do for a while,” I answered. “Her clipper pulls like everything.”

Mr. Ehlert chuckled. He’d likely heard from other kids whose mothers cut their hair with handheld clippers.

Mr. Ehlert kept on talking as he worked on my hair. But I wasn’t listening much. I had other things to think about, like

school, and the upcoming winter. When he finished my haircut Pa hadn’t come back yet, so I sat down in an empty chair to wait.

“Next,” Mr. Ehlert said. He took the barber cloth and gave it a massive shake so that it snapped.

A big, burly looking man stood up. He was huge, well over six feet tall and wide as an oak tree. I didn’t know him. He shuffled across the floor and sat down heavily in the barber chair. Mr. Ehlert flung the barber cloth around the man’s neck, fastening it in the back.

“And how would you like your hair cut?”

“In silence please,” the big man said, loud enough so everyone in the room could hear.

Well, you’d think a tree had fallen on Mr. Ehlert. He turned an odd shade of white, and for a moment he said nothing. The other men in the barbershop heard what the big man said and began laughing, louder and louder.

Mr. Ehlert pretended he didn’t hear all the laughter as he busied himself cutting the hair of this customer who requested silence. Folks later said that Mr. Ehlert was quieter that day than they had ever remembered. Just then Pa came by and we left. I couldn’t wait to tell him what I had just witnessed.



Go to [www.Jerryapps.com](http://www.Jerryapps.com) for information about Jerry’s books and TV shows.

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