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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2020 IMUA Scholarship Program Applications Available

The City of McLeansboro, in partnership with the Illinois Municipal Utilities Association (IMUA), is again offering a scholarship competition program for **eligible high school seniors**. Each eligible applicant is asked to submit an application and an essay of 500 words or less addressing their choice of one of four utility-related questions (*see attached questions sheet*).

The top four (4) vote-getters in this year's essay competition will receive a **finalist certificate** and a **\$1,000 scholarship award check** from IMUA.

Applicants must be **high school seniors** whose parents or legal guardians are residential customers of the City of McLeansboro Municipal Utility.

According to John Karcher, superintendent for the City of McLeansboro, the program has a dual purpose: 1) to promote and recognize scholastic achievement; and, 2) to create greater awareness among young adults of the many issues facing consumers and public power municipalities today.

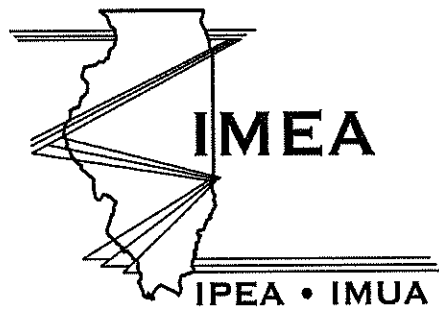
"Today's energy providers, including municipally-owned and operated utilities, face a myriad of economic, environmental and other challenges which warrant creative and innovative solutions," Karcher said. "Creating a greater awareness of these issues among tomorrow's leaders can be the first step in helping to determine effective, long-term solutions, both now and into the future," he added.

"Since its inception in 2000, IMUA's scholarship program has proven to be a very popular and successful program for IMUA, its members and the communities they serve," said Kevin M. Gaden, President & CEO of the IMUA. "Public power communities offer their customers a number of cost, efficiency, service and other advantages compared to those served by other energy providers. IMUA's scholarship program is another example of how municipally-owned and operated utility systems can help return value to their communities while at the same time, provide a measure of financial assistance and support to those students who wish to pursue a college education."

Since it began, the program has awarded more than \$47,000 to 88 students from 29 different IMUA member communities statewide.

Organized in 1948, IMUA is a statewide trade association which represents the unified interests of, and provides services to, 50 municipalities which operate their own electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and wastewater treatment systems.

The deadline for submitting applications and essays is **Friday, March 6, 2020**. Applicants may contact IMUA's **DeeDee Bunch** at (217) 789-4632 or dbunch@imea.org for more information.



IMUA 2020 Scholarship Program Student Guidelines

Program Purposes: To promote and recognize scholastic achievement and to demonstrate the advantages of, and the issues faced by, municipally-owned and operated utilities.

Eligibility and Guidelines: Only high school seniors whose parents or legal guardians are residential customers of an IMUA member utility may submit written essays to win a \$1,000 scholarship.

(Note: IMUA scholarships **are not available** to the employees, staff or immediate family members of the IMUA, IMEA and IPEA, or to the immediate family members of the Board of Directors of these organizations, nor to immediate family members of those individuals who serve on the IMUA Scholarship Judging Panel and Committee.)

1. Students must complete the enclosed application and submit, along with a photocopy of their transcripts, an essay of 500 words or less, typewritten and double-spaced, with the following information included on the cover:
 - Student's first and last name, home address, phone number and e-mail address.
2. Essay should **NOT** mention the student's hometown or hometown utility by name.
3. Sources of information regarding municipal utilities and utility-related issues can be found in the reference section of your library, periodicals, the Internet or individuals employed by your local municipal utility. Search phrases might include: *municipal utility; local ownership; municipalization; public power; public gas system; utility deregulation; Public Utility Holding Company Act (PUHCA); public interest; and, municipal utility rates.* There are many other sources as well. The following websites and sources may also be useful obtaining information helpful in writing your essay:
 - American Public Power Association (www.publicpower.org)
 - American Public Gas Association (www.apga.org)
 - Illinois Municipal Electric Agency (www.imea.org)
 - Illinois Municipal Utilities Association (www.imea.org, then click on the "IMUA link)
 - Illinois Public Energy Agency (www.imea.org, then click on the "IPEA link)
 - Energy Information Administration (www.eia.gov)
 - Your local municipal utility superintendent
 - American Water Works Association (AWWA) (www.awwa.org)
 - Illinois Rural Water Association (IRLWA) (www.ilrwa)

4. Essays **MUST** address your choice of any one of the following three (3) issues/questions:

Question 1 - Energy

Approximately 63 percent of our nation's electricity is generated by burning fossil fuels, ie., coal, natural gas, petroleum and other gases. Many energy experts maintain that using coal to generate electricity will decline in the coming years due to the growth in renewable sources of energy, such as solar, wind and biomass. Do you agree with this assertion or do you believe other factors are causing coal use to decline? What do you foresee the role of coal to be in electricity production in the next 25 years, and why? In the next 50 years?

Question 2 - Telecommunications

5G Wireless Network Technology is being touted by some to be among the next major drivers of our nation's future economic growth and development. Do you agree or disagree with this argument and if so, why? What benefits can be gained from utilizing such technology? What impact do you see it having on your own personal life?

Question 3 - Water

Water continues to be a scarce resource in some regions of our country as well as throughout the world. In some areas, water is becoming increasingly hazardous and unsafe to drink (eg., due to elevated levels of lead contamination) while in others, it's becoming outright polluted with various toxic chemicals, materials and other substances. Given this, what can be done to help alleviate these problems, and what actions can be taken to help ensure the availability of adequate, safe and reliable water supplies? *(Note: Please be specific and provide a detailed response, along with examples to support your arguments).*

5. The deadline for submitting written essays is **Friday, March 6, 2020**. Please send your essay, transcripts and completed application to the address listed on the bottom of the application.

6. A total of **four (4) finalists** will be chosen by the IMUA Scholarship Committee. Each finalist will receive a finalist certificate and a \$1,000 award from IMUA. **Winners will be announced sometime in April.**

GOOD LUCK!

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