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**Stowe Electric Department receives national energy innovator award**

**Seattle, Washington, June 20, 2023** — The Stowe Electric Department, of Vermont, received an American Public Power Association Energy Innovator Award during the American Public Power Association’s National Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. The award honors utilities that have developed or applied creative, energy-efficient techniques and technologies to their work, in order to provide better service to electric customers or projects that increase the efficiency of utility operations or resource efficiency.

In 2021, Stowe Electric Department began a partnership with the University of Vermont to offer college seniors a “service learning” opportunity working at a project site. Students contributed research and site studies to revitalize a historic sawmill, including presenting research for their academic capstone projects on topics such as invasive species mitigation, recreational river access, hydropower, solar integration, and storm water management. The partnership allowed Stowe to leverage the project into several grants, in addition to attracting visits from members of Vermont’s congressional delegation and support from the Idaho National Laboratory. Moreover, the students’ proposed design plans offered alternative options for the utility to consider alongside those from paid consulting firms, while also connecting students with the firms for potential future employment.

The program’s success led the university to pursue an expanded rural development partnership to provide similar support for small communities throughout the state, while the electric department has expanded its educational partnership to include Husson University in Maine and is pursuing relationships with Vermont Technical College and Norwich University.

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*The American Public Power Association is the voice of not-for-profit, community-owned utilities that power 2,000 towns and cities nationwide. We represent public power before the federal government to protect the interests of the more than 49 million people that public power utilities serve, and the 96,000 people they employ. Our association advocates and advises on electricity policy, technology, trends, training, and operations. Our members strengthen their communities by providing superior service, engaging citizens, and instilling pride in community-owned power.*