



La Plata Electric Association, Inc.

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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NEWS

Rachel Schur Wagner named Staff Engineer at LPEA

Wagner active volunteer with FLC Village Aid Project/Engineers Without Borders

DURANGO, Colo. – Rachel Schur Wagner has joined the La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) engineering team as a new Staff Engineer.

Raised in Pagosa Springs, Wagner returns to Southwest Colorado after four years in Portland, Ore. working in the electric utility industry with consulting firm HDR and Bonneville Electric Power Association. She completed her degree in Mechanical Engineering at Colorado State University in 2010 after attending Fort Lewis College for general course study.

Wagner's interest in engineering was sparked during her junior year at Pagosa Springs High School when she attended a "women in engineering" conference in Boulder and was struck by a presentation about the international Engineers Without Borders program.

"That's when it really hit me, what an impact engineering can have, and so I decided that afternoon that I was going to be an engineer," said Wagner. "When I got to Fort Lewis College I asked on my second day of class if they had an Engineers Without Borders program, and they had started one just the year prior."

For the past 10 years Wagner has been active with the program, volunteering her time to assist rural villages in Southeast Asia and South or Central America. Projects have generally focused on water and sanitation efforts.

"It's hard work," she said. "You're up at dawn, working past dark every night, lifting 50-lb. bags of concrete, digging trench, but you're working there with the people. They're so appreciative and you make such good friends. I love it. It drives me and keeps me going."

Wagner and her husband, Jason Wagner, whom she met through the program, are now advisors laying the groundwork for the FLC Village Aid Project/Engineers Without Borders efforts in countries such as Nicaragua and Myanmar, and heading up the teams of Fort Lewis students involved with the program. Information and the opportunity to financially support the program is available at www.fortlewis.edu/ewb.

While at Pagosa Springs High School, Schur Wagner was awarded the LPEA scholarship – a full-four year scholarship based on academic achievement – and she interned during her college years at the LPEA Pagosa Springs and Durango offices.

“I love Southwest Colorado and I’m happy to have the opportunity to return and work for LPEA,” said Schur Wagner.

LPEA, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative established in 1939, provides to its more than 30,000 members, with in excess of 42,000 meters, safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost, while being environmentally responsible.

LPEA offers a variety of apprenticeships and employment opportunities. To explore employment, or for additional information, visit www.lpea.coop.

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