



Berkeley Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

TO REPORT OUTAGES

Call: 1-888-253-4232

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Hours: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

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MIKE FULLER
 President & CEO

We don't just say thank you...we mean it

THERE'S A PHRASE we hear so often it can lose its meaning: "Thank you for your service." At Berkeley Electric Cooperative, we've made a choice to back those words with something tangible—programs, spaces and ceremonies that honor the men and women who wore the uniform and served this nation. I'm proud to say that supporting military veterans flows naturally from who we are and what cooperatives stand for.

Electric cooperatives were born from a spirit of community. When investor-owned utilities had no financial incentive to run power lines to rural America, farmers and working families banded together and did it themselves. That same selflessness and commitment to a mission larger than oneself are the same qualities that define the men and women who serve in our armed forces.

One of the programs we sponsor is our Reel Steel Military Fishing Expedition. This unique event brings veterans together for a day on the water with fishing, fellowship and a chance to decompress in the company of people who understand what they've been through. For many veterans, the transition back to civilian life is harder than anyone outside that experience can fully appreciate. Programs like Reel Steel aren't just recreation. They are recognition.

But our commitment doesn't stop there. When you visit Berkeley Electric Cooperative's headquarters, you'll find a veteran's monument on our grounds as a testament to the sacrifice of those who served. And we actively seek to employ veterans and accept GI Bill benefits through our electrical lineworkers program.

The co-op has also been honored to host Quilts of Valor presentations at our headquarters. For those unfamiliar, Quilts of Valor are handcrafted quilts presented to veterans as a symbol of gratitude and recognition of their service and sacrifice. Watching a veteran receive one of these quilts and seeing the emotion on their face as they hold something made specifically to honor them is a reminder of why events like these matter.

Why do electric cooperatives make such natural partners in honoring veterans? Because we are member-owned, democratically run institutions rooted in our communities. We don't answer to distant shareholders. We answer to our neighbors. And our neighbors include veterans who powered through hardship, prioritized duty over comfort, and gave years of their lives so the rest of us could live ours.

Michael S. Fuller



Berkeley Electric honors veterans through events such as the Reel Steel Military Fishing Expedition, where they enjoy a guided outing on local lakes.

REYTON DRESS



BERKELEY ELECTRIC

We laced up our sneakers to help teachers

FIVE YEARS IN, and the Bright Ideas 5K is not slowing down!

The race raised \$55,000 for the Bright Ideas Education Grant program and sold out with more than 500 registrations. Clear skies and cool weather made for record attendance as 474 athletes passed through the big, red Bright Ideas arch at Cypress Gardens.

Thanks to the overwhelming support from participants and sponsors, Berkeley Electric was able to provide education grants of up to \$1,500 to 50 local educators. The grants support classroom projects not covered by traditional funding.

Congratulations to Luke Schraeder of Johns Island, who took home the coveted plush alligator prize as the overall male finisher with a time of 21:53. Iris Bias of the Charleston Air Force Base led the female field with a time of 23:11, and received her own alligator.

Visit berkeleyelectric.coop for a full list of this year's grant recipients and relive race memories with an extensive photo album.

Don't forget to save the date for next year's race on April 24, 2027!



JOB FAIR

JULY 1ST

MONCKS CORNER HEADQUARTERS

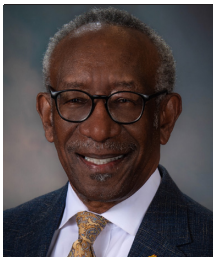
10 AM

UNTIL 1 PM

FREE LUNCH

HONORING VETERANS

- DISABLED ASSISTANCE & ACCESSIBLE PARKING AVAILABLE
- PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING & RESOURCES
- COMMUNITY PARTNERS ON-SITE



Willis Sanders
Trustee, District 6

Using technology to benefit nature

BERKELEY ELECTRIC has long been a proponent of planting the right type of tree in the right location when it's near electrical equipment.

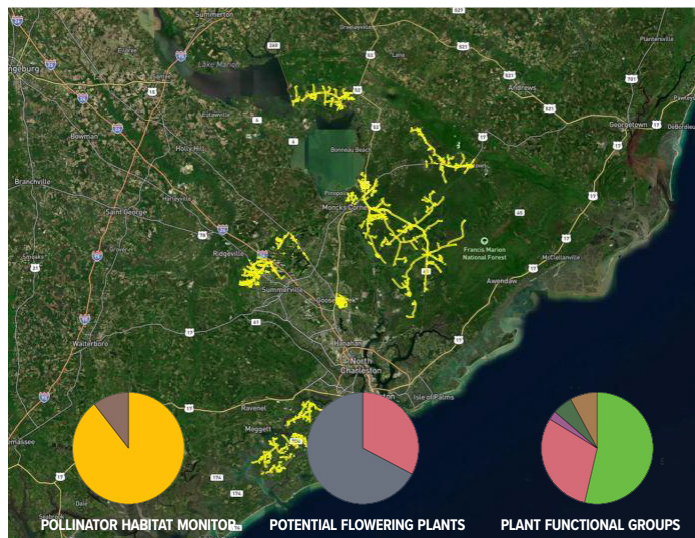
Now, the cooperative is tapping technology to take vegetation management to the next level—all while getting an assist from Mother Nature.

Berkeley has partnered with Orion Solutions to photograph and inventory its rights-of-way to reduce herbicide use and allow beneficial plants to fill the space.

You may not realize it, but right-of-way maintenance is a significant investment by our members, and it's important to ensure the reliability and safety of our distribution system. Falling tree limbs and climbing vines are among the more frequent causes of system outages, so effective vegetation management is critical to keeping our members' service interruptions to a minimum.

We're only in the first year of leveraging this technology through Orion Solutions, but it is already proving to be essential for Berkeley Electric to increase efficiency and manage costs.

Last year, the cooperative's vegetation management contractors wore GoPro cameras while they were treating the areas in that year's cycle. They captured images of 870 miles of vegetation. That data has been used to identify and classify the height and density of various vegetation in the area—woody plants such as trees and shrubs,



Berkeley Electric is partnering with a technology solutions company to survey its system and encourage beneficial plant growth in its rights-of-way.

pollinator habitat, or functional vegetation such as grasses.

The idea behind this program is that if the co-op has better visibility into the exact types of plants growing in its rights-of-way, our employees and contractors can more precisely remove or restrict incompatible species. Once those are under control, we can then let Mother Nature fill those spaces with compatible species that help support our pollinators and other wildlife.

This technology helps reduce the amount of herbicide used, which is both cost-saving and beneficial to the environment. The co-op has already cut herbicide usage by more than half. It is important to point out that Berkeley uses an herbicide that only targets woody growth and does not contain glyphosate found in other mixtures such as Roundup Weed Killer.

With advanced tools like Orion's data-driven planning software, we can dramatically improve how, why, and where we spray. Over time, we'll be able to see where our right-of-way areas are improving, predict where incompatible species are likely to occur, and focus our treatments there to help keep the Lowcountry beautiful and natural.

Sincerely,

Willis Sanders

| BERKELEY AT-A-GLANCE | FEB. 2025 | FEB. 2026 |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total kWh sold | 378,440,583 | 436,476,950 |
| No. meters served | 133,583 | 137,765 |
| Avg. residential kWh/meter | 972 | 1,152 |
| Avg. residential bill/meter | \$144.69 | \$189.10 |
| Miles of line | 6522 | 6652 |
| Avg. daily high temperature | 68 | 63 |
| Avg. daily low temperature | 43 | 40 |

A summer to remember

Local students selected for leadership experiences

WHILE MOST HIGH SCHOOL students see summer vacation as a chance to go to the beach or lounge by the pool, a select group of students is dedicating a week of their summer to improving their leadership and networking skills at Washington Youth Tour and Cooperative Youth Summit.

Washington Youth Tour, held in June, is an all-expenses-paid trip to the nation's capital for high school juniors. Berkeley's delegates will be joined by other electric cooperative delegates from across the state, as well as thousands from across the nation, for an experience that includes visits to the museums, monuments and memorials in the area.

There's a lot to learn during the entire week-long trip, with stops at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and the U.S. Capitol. Berkeley Electric's delegates will also visit the offices of their U.S. House members and participate in discussions with our state's senators on the Capitol steps.

The students will also experience first-hand how cooperatives operate. Throughout the week, the student-run Soda Pop Co-op provides snacks and beverages to everyone on the trip. It's not all hard work, however. There are plenty of opportunities for students to interact and make lifelong friends, including during a dinner cruise on the Potomac River.

Berkeley Electric also offers a similar all-expenses-paid leadership experience for high school sophomores during Cooperative Youth Summit in July. Students selected spend a week in Columbia learning about state government, visiting local attractions and trying their hand at a variety of lineman skills during a visit to a local cooperative.

Just like Washington Youth Tour, students will have plenty of opportunities to make new friends and have new experiences, especially since these trips often mark the first time students have flown, left the state, or even traveled outside the Lowcountry.

Be sure to follow our social media channels for updates from the trips, and you can learn more about both trips by visiting "My Community" at berkeleyelectric.coop.



BERKELEY ELECTRIC

Washington Youth Tour and Cooperative Youth Summit offer opportunities to make once-in-a-lifetime memories. Pictured above, students have a conversation with Sen. Tim Scott on the Capitol steps.

Graduating? Take the next step

FOR THOSE READY to enter the workforce, Berkeley Electric is now taking applications for electrical lineworker internships at berkeleyelectric.coop under the "My Co-op > Careers" menu.

If selected, candidates will enroll in Trident Technical College's Electrical Lineworker Program, free of charge. All necessary tools and equipment will be covered by the cooperative.

Students in the ELW program experience conditions similar to those on the job in the outdoor training lab constructed at TTC's North Charleston campus. Students also receive expert classroom training in electrical theory and other subjects vital to launching their career as a lineworker and will graduate with a third-class lineman certification. When not actively participating in a class at TTC, they will work in the field with one of Berkeley Electric's line crews.



PENTON DRESS

WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR



Alistair Fiveash
Philip Simmons High



Alyssa Holcomb
Timberland High



Jasmin Kidd
Cane Bay High



Kyla Patrick
Berkeley High



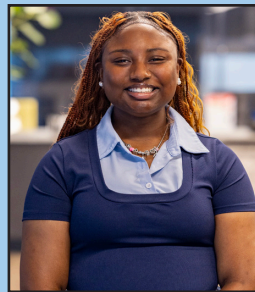
Lacy Starbuck
Homeschool



Matthew McBee
Berkeley Middle College



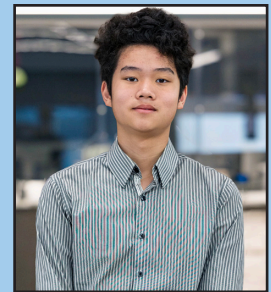
Nevaeh Gadsden
Berkeley Middle College



Ny'Aja Shepherd
Cross High



Trinity Fletcher
SC Governor's School



Yidong Ye
Academic Magnet

COOPERATIVE YOUTH SUMMIT



Ainsley Reyes
Northwoods Academy



Jacob Trussell
Berkeley High



Jasmine Smith
Cross High



Kylie Milligan
Timberland High



Makenzie Wilbourn
Charleston School of Arts



Rileigh Smith
Goose Creek High



Sarah Maxwell
Goose Creek High



Zyaire Carroll
Berkeley High

Second verse, same as the first (almost)

Longtime former manager returns in new role

BY JOSH CROTZER

FROM A LINEMAN HELPER to a line superintendent, Tony Simmons spent 38 years making sure Berkeley Electric Cooperative members received safe, reliable power.

His retirement, however, only lasted 12 months.

To be fair, even after decades of service with the cooperative, Simmons wasn't experiencing career burnout. His reasons for leaving were related to family, not to fatigue.

"I really loved what I was doing," he says. "I loved the people I worked with and serving our community. I took myself out of the equation because my aging parents needed me."



Tony Simmons, vice president of Strategy and Risk Management

A new beginning

Simmons retired in December 2022, but he returned to Berkeley Electric in a part-time capacity in 2024. Last September, Simmons was back to walking the halls at Berkeley but in a new position: vice president of Strategy and Risk Management.

"In my wildest dream, I never imagined coming back part-time, let alone full-time," Simmons says. "But to come back and really contribute, it's just an awesome opportunity."

In the new role, Simmons works across all departments at Berkeley Electric to align their day-to-day operations with the co-op's strategic initiatives, including making sure the system keeps up with the region's rapid growth, protecting the co-op's digital systems, putting new technologies to work, helping members use energy more efficiently and keeping rates fair and affordable.

Managing moving parts

Essentially, Simmons' role is to make sure the big picture stays in focus as changes ripple through the energy industry—and the communities the co-op serves.

"We developed this position to provide focused leadership as the energy industry becomes more complex," says Louise Meade, Berkeley Electric's vice president of Human Resources. "Tony was the ideal choice because of his deep knowledge of our organization, hands-on experience, and strong commitment to our cooperative values. His leadership will help us plan ahead, manage risks, and make sure our projects are best

serving our members."

Simmons exemplified that type of leadership in his pre-retirement role as district operations manager for the Goose Creek district. In one of the fastest-growing service areas in the state, he oversaw thousands of service and work orders each year while managing crews and contractors.

That experience is an asset as Simmons once again collaborates with every department, reviewing processes and identifying ways to improve efficiency. Though, the new position does require a new skillset.

Collaboration versus control

"I was used to having total control," he says. "Now, I'm managing projects, but not necessarily the people that are doing the work. I'm looking objectively at what's being done and seeing if we can improve on the way we're doing it."

For Simmons, it all comes down to the people at the end of the lines.

"I focus on the day in and day out that we have control over. Making that as efficient as possible will have a direct impact on rates and make us a better service provider for our members," he says.

Through a career in which he started as a helper and now is at the executive table, Simmons' brief detour into retirement helped him see what the co-op means to him.

"Berkeley Electric is really intertwined with who I am," Simmons says. "To step away, reset, and come back, it's just so exciting to be able to contribute to serving our members and our community."



MICAH PONCE

Simmons, along with Project Management Specialist Hayley Coleman, make up the newly minted Strategy & Risk Management Department, which collaborates across the co-op.