

Wires to Wi-Fi: Educational Programs Open Doors

As a community-focused electric cooperative, BARC believes that investing in young people is one of the most meaningful ways to strengthen the future of our industry and our region. BARC proudly supports high school programs designed to help students explore the wide range of career opportunities available in the electric utility and broadband fields.

One program BARC supports every year is Girl Power™. On Oct. 30, young women from across the commonwealth, including Rockbridge County, attended the fifth annual Girl Power Camp hosted by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives.

This initiative provides high school girls interested in the electric utility or broadband industry a chance to explore these career paths. Campers learned about fiber technology, climbing a utility pole, operating a bucket truck and met with human resources professionals to review their resumes. Kally Botulinski and Maddie Lipscomb attended from Rockbridge County High School, along with several BARC staff members who volunteered time to support this



“These experiences help reinforce our concern for community.”

statewide cooperative initiative. By supporting this program, we aim to encourage more young women to pursue these in-demand fields and to help build a stronger, more diverse future workforce.

In addition to this effort, we recently welcomed a career-shadowing group from Bath County High School. During their visit, students spent the day exploring several departments across our co-op. They observed line crews in the field, learned about system operations, met with broadband techs and saw how member services and operations staff keep our co-op connected to the community. The experience gave students a realistic view of what it takes to provide safe, reliable electricity and high-quality internet service.

Luke Turner, a student at Bath County High School, says, “Shadowing the BARC team showed me how important electricity and broadband careers are to our communities.”

These programs reflect our co-op’s commitment to education, workforce development and community support. Ashley Hash, BARC’s HR director explained, “These experiences help reinforce our concern for community in the development of the students, allowing a behind the scenes view of our environment and the thoughtfulness used to maintain the quality of life for the community.”

It’s an investment not only in their futures, but in the long-term success and resilience of the communities we proudly serve.

BARC ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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• Education Scholarship Applications Opening page 16

• Digital Delivery Notice

For March, *Cooperative Living* will be delivered electronically due to rising postage and printing costs.

Check your inboxes in March.

Attention High School Seniors:

*Scholarship Application
opens Jan. 5*



BARC is excited to announce that the 2025-26 VMDAEC Scholarship Foundation application window will open from Jan. 5 until March 20. Each year, the Scholarship Foundation awards \$1,000 scholarships to deserving high school seniors pursuing postsecondary education. These scholarships are awarded by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC) Education Scholarship Foundation and can be applied toward the applicant's tuition, student fees, room and board, or textbooks.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- The primary residence of the applicant's parent or legal guardian must receive its power from one of the 16 electric cooperatives served by a VMDAEC member cooperative.
- Applicants applying for a scholarship must be a senior graduating from either high school or homeschool in 2026.
- Applicant must be entering his or her first semester at a postsecondary school in the fall of 2026.

The Foundation's board of directors will select recipients based on a combination of weighted criteria that includes: 40% financial need, 40% academic achievement and 20% personal statement. Questions about the application process can be directed to pr@barcelectric.com or barcelectric.com/scholarship-program.

We Want to Hear From YOU!

Our CEO will be answering member-submitted questions in an exclusive Q&A series featured throughout 2026 – both in our magazine and online.

Whether you're curious about our right-of-way (ROW) maintenance, energy demand needs, or how we manage outages, now is your chance to ask.

Send your questions to pr@barcelectric.com and be part of the conversation that guides what comes next!

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