



Virginia Chamber of Commerce Work-Based Learning Spotlight

Company Name:

Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC)

Please provide a brief overview about your company:

Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC) is a member-owned electric utility serving over 172,000 connections in portions of 22 counties in Virginia. The REC workforce, of over 430 employees, maintains and manages 18,000+ miles of power lines to connect the member-owners with safe, reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy solutions. The REC culture and its diverse team make the cooperative a “best” place to work. REC employees are hired because of their remarkable character, and focus on the shared values of caring, service, integrity, and respect. REC employees find fulfillment in serving the members in the communities where they themselves, live and work. REC’s culture is represented in every aspect of the service delivered by the outstanding work its caring employees do every day.

Please provide a brief summary about your company’s internship/apprenticeship/returnship program(s):

Internship

REC’s InternConnect program brings new ideas and energy into the workplace, while also cultivating talent. Building a pipeline of future REC employees offers career exploration and development in an environment designed to build new skills. Interns learn how their course of study applies in the real world and builds valuable experiences that make our interns stronger job candidates.

Apprenticeship

Rappahannock Electric Cooperative offers several different apprenticeships which include: Linework, Apparatus, Substation, Metering and Member Services. Those that successfully complete our Member Services Field Representative (MSFR) and Line Worker apprenticeship programs are eligible for an Associate Degree program. This program is in collaboration with Southside of Virginia Community College’s (SVCC) Industrial Maintenance Technician Associates Degree.

The participants of the apprenticeship programs may enroll in the Industrial Maintenance Technician program to obtain an associate degree with the completion of only 30 credit hours as opposed to 66 credit hours. The on-the-job training translates to the remaining 36 credit hours.

What is something that is interesting or innovative about your internship/apprenticeship/returnship program that you would want colleges/high school students to know about?

InternConnect includes a Career Development Workshop that includes:

Resume Development: Interns learn how to build their skill set by learning how to use clear and concise language, action verbs, and facts and figures to attract the interest of hiring managers and recruiters.

Interviewing Skills: Interns are taught the mechanics of an interview and how to prepare for one by knowing the job description, researching the company, appearing professional, creating questions for the interviewer, and learning how to respond during an interview.

Link Up with LinkedIn: Interns learn how to build their brand as an intern by showcasing their skills and experience with a professional social media presence.

A Safety Ride-a-Long

Interns join REC's Safety Team members for an opportunity to view REC territories and the work fieldworkers perform daily. In addition, the interns learn about power line distribution, the different types of trucks used to restore power to our member owners, and they learn about safety practices used to keep our workers safe.

Round-Robins

Round-Robins are a way for the interns to learn about the various departments at REC and an opportunity to collaborate with employees outside of their respective departments. The goal of the Round-Robins is to expose the interns to an array of careers at REC.

Compensation

Compensation is based on the school requirements and the type of internship.

Apprenticeship

REC's MSFR and Line Worker apprenticeship programs are combined with Southside of Virginia Community College's (SVCC) Industrial Maintenance Technician Associates Degree program. The participants of the apprenticeship program may enroll in the Industrial Maintenance Technician program to obtain an associate degree with the completion of only 30 credit hours as opposed to 66 credit hours. The on-the-job training translates to the remaining 36 credit hours.

What kinds of work assignments are interns/apprentices responsible for at your company?

Interns

Marketing projects
Research economic development projects
Compile a commercial real estate database over 22 counties
Crunch stats on revenue and energy usage by member type
Build a proof of concept dashboard for home resources and products and services
Cybersecurity monitoring actions Website development
Create public relations announcements
Attend company community events
Participate in ride-a-longs with our safety team Attend safety meetings
Attend team meetings
Build programs

Apprenticeship

On-the-job training
Special projects

If another company wanted to start an internship/apprenticeship/returnship program, what words of advice would you share with them?

Internship

Conduct research on your company/business to identify the employees who are interested in supporting an intern. Once you have identified those individuals who are interested in supporting an intern, educate the group on what an internship entails, the time commitment, goals for the interns, and the expectations for the intern and internship.

Apprenticeship

Work with your region point of contact for the Virginia Department of Labor & Industry to complete the required documents to become a Registered Apprenticeship. The apprenticeship model produces highly skilled workers to meet the demands of employers competing in a global economy, through a combination of on-the-job training and related technical instruction.

Contact person (for those who want to reach out to you to talk about your program):

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