



October 5, 2020

## Electric Cooperatives Lineworkers Graduate to Next Level

Twenty-one lineworkers from 9 electric cooperatives in Virginia have graduated from apprentice to journeyman status following their completion of thousands of hours of extensive training.

The lineworkers completed their final Step 8 journeyman class on Oct. 2 at the Electric Cooperative Training Center in Palmyra, Va. The Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives owns and operates the state-of-the-art center, which opened in May 2019.

They are:

**Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative:** Kaleb May, Thomas L. Coates IV, Matthew Norman, Mark Mohler, Alec Gutt, Bryan Sours, J.T. Jacobs (Jacobs is also an Association instructor at the Training Center)

**NOVEC:** Tom Geer, James Davison

**Central Virginia Electric Cooperative:** Billy Cascio, Dale Richardson

**Rappahannock Electric Cooperative:** Eric Butler

**BARC Electric Cooperative:** Will Reid, Cody Minter

**Prince George Electric Cooperative:** Ronald Wall

**Southside Electric Cooperative:** Albert Gaines Kiser, Jason Barringer

**A&N Electric Cooperative:** Tyson Scott Arnold, George Sylvester Floyd III

**Northern Neck Electric Cooperative:** Blaine Swann, Martin Pinon

To enter the Association's journeyman program, lineworkers must complete 8,000 hours of classroom and on-the-job training. Todd Butcher, the Association's manager of safety training, said the program incorporates climbing skills, knowledge of electricity, underground and substation work, safety and leadership, among other topics.

"We try to marry every step with the last step so that these students are six months in between each step," Butcher said.

Increasing the pool of available journeyman lineworkers is important to deal with retirements in the profession, Butcher added.

"We have to have somebody in the bullpen ready to go all the time," he said. "The more they know, the better they are going to be as lineworkers."