

Along the LINE

JUNE 2026

For members of
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC Awards Basketball Camp Scholarships to Local Students

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC proudly announces two local students as recipients of the 2026 Cooperative All-Stars Sports Camp Scholarships, giving them the opportunity to attend summer basketball camps at two of North Carolina's largest universities.

Congratulations to Alice Prophter of Hobgood Charter School, who will attend the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp at NC State University; and Cayden Hudson of Rocky Mount Academy, who will attend the Carolina Basketball School at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Both students received full scholarships from Edgecombe-Martin County EMC.

These scholarships cover all expenses for the overnight camps, where students get a true taste of college life. Campers stay in dorms, participate in practices led by Division I coaching staff, and receive both individual and group instruction to strengthen their basketball skills. In addition to developing their abilities on the court, campers also build important life skills such as teamwork, communication, and goal setting.

During the weeklong experience, Alice and Cayden will join other electric cooperative scholarship recipients from across North Carolina, creating lasting friendships while representing their communities.

Each year, Edgecombe-Martin County EMC offers these scholarships as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting youth and education. The cooperative typically awards one scholarship to a rising sixth or seventh grade boy to attend the UNC-Chapel Hill camp and one to a rising sixth or seventh grade girl to attend the NC State Women's Basketball Camp. The application period generally opens in December and runs through March.

Edgecombe-Martin County EMC is proud to invest in opportunities that empower local students and help them succeed both on and off the court.

Congratulations again to Alice and Cayden on this exciting achievement!



Monica Speight, Manager of Communications at Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, with Alice Prophter and Principal Juliana Harris.



Monica Speight, Manager of Communications at Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, with Cayden Hudson, his family, and his basketball coach.

Welcoming New Team Members and Celebrating Promotions at Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

At Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, our employees are at the heart of everything we do. We're excited to share both new additions to our team and well-deserved promotions that reflect the dedication and talent within our cooperative.

Welcoming New Employees

Please join us in welcoming two new employees who recently joined the co-op family. Justin Montana has come on board as an Engineering Technician, and Travis Starkweather joins us as a 3rd Class Technician. Both began their roles in April and are eager to serve our members and get involved in the communities we support.

Outside of work, Justin enjoys cooking, riding side-by-sides, hunting, spending time on the tractor, and being with friends and family. Travis also enjoys hunting and values spending time with his wife, young daughter, and friends. We're excited to have them on our team and look forward to the contributions they will make.

Recognizing Employee Promotions

We are also proud to recognize several employees who have recently earned promotions within the cooperative.

Justin Francis has been promoted to Line Coordinator. His strong work ethic, dedication and commitment to going above and beyond have made a meaningful impact, and we are confident he will continue to serve our members well in his new role.

We are also pleased to recognize Dylan Craft and Tyler Perkins, who have both been promoted to Lead Line Technicians. Their hard work, reliability and commitment to safety and excellence have earned them these well-deserved advancements, and we are excited to see them continue to grow in their new roles.

In addition, we are pleased to announce promotions within our accounting department. Karren Braswell has been named Vice President of Finance, Michael Harrell has been promoted to Manager of Accounting and Alissa Cutler now serves as Accountant. Each of these individuals plays a vital role in the success of our cooperative, and their leadership and commitment help ensure we continue providing reliable and affordable service to our members.

Please join us in welcoming our new employees and congratulating these team members on their well-earned achievements. Together, they help strengthen our mission of serving you—our members—with excellence every day.



Pictured from left to right: Travis Starkweather and Justin Montana.



Pictured from left to right: Karren Braswell, Justin Francis, Dylan Craft, Alissa Cutler, Michael Harrell, and Tyler Perkins.

Why Vegetation Management Matters

There's something timeless about trees. They ground us. They remind us of where we've been, and they stretch toward what's ahead. Here in our community, we take pride in the natural beauty that surrounds us—the shade on a summer afternoon, the colors that mark the changing seasons, the quiet strength of something that grows slowly but endures.

At the same time, we share another responsibility—one that's just as essential to our daily lives. The responsibility to keep the lights on, to power our homes and businesses, to make sure that when you flip a switch, the energy you depend on is there.

That's why Edgecombe-Martin County EMC works every day to strike a careful balance between preserving the beauty we cherish and delivering the reliable electricity you expect.

One of the most important ways we do that is through regular tree trimming.

Now, it may not always be obvious, but keeping lines clear of overgrown vegetation plays a major role in preventing power outages. We've all seen what can happen when severe weather rolls in—strong winds, heavy ice or sudden storms can bring down branches and, with them, power lines and poles. In fact, nearly half of all power outages can be traced back to trees and vegetation coming into contact with electrical infrastructure.

That's why you may notice crews from Edgecombe-Martin County EMC or our trusted contractors working in neighborhoods throughout the year. Our crews are highly trained and certified, following the latest industry standards to ensure the job is done safely and effectively. Their work might seem routine, but it's anything but—it's a proactive step that helps prevent problems before they start.

And it's not just good practice—it's required. Electric utilities across the country are obligated to manage vegetation near power lines. Scheduled trimming helps remove dead or weakened limbs and keeps fast-growing trees from becoming hazards. It's about staying one step ahead, especially as we prepare for the increasing frequency and intensity of severe weather events.

We're also using new tools and technologies to do this work smarter. Through drone inspections, for example, we can monitor power lines and surrounding vegetation more efficiently, reducing costs while improving accuracy. These small but powerful tools allow us to identify potential risks early and respond quickly.

But beyond reliability and efficiency, there's another reason this work matters: safety.

Electricity is a powerful force, and when trees grow too close to power lines, that power can become dangerous. Branches that touch lines—or even come close—can carry electrical current. Children climbing trees in their own yards may not realize the risk. And during storms, fallen trees can create hazardous conditions not only for families but also for our lineworkers working to restore service.

There's also a financial reality we can't ignore. Preventative maintenance—like tree trimming—is far more cost-effective than repairing widespread damage after an outage. Left unchecked, overgrown vegetation can lead to more frequent disruptions and higher costs for everyone. A thoughtful, strategic vegetation management program helps keep those costs down for our members.

You can help, too. When planting new trees, consider their mature height and distance from nearby power lines. Trees that grow up to 40 feet should be planted at least 25 feet away from overhead lines. Larger trees—those that exceed 40 feet—should be planted at least 50 feet away. If you're landscaping near pad-mounted transformers, keep shrubs at least 10 feet from the front and 4 feet from the sides to allow safe access.

If your neighborhood has underground lines, don't forget to call 811 before digging. It's a simple step that can prevent serious accidents.

At the end of the day, we all want the same thing: a community that's safe, resilient and beautiful. At Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, we're proud to be part of that effort. Our roots run deep here, just like the trees we work to care for.

Cooperatively,

Sammy Clark

Please Inform Your Co-op Before Adding Load to Your Service

Don't forget to let Edgecombe-Martin County EMC know about any changes made that add load to your service.

With ongoing improvements in electric vehicle technology and affordability, an increasing number of Americans are likely to transition to electric vehicles.

If you own or are considering the purchase of a plug-in electric vehicle, please let us know so that we can ensure our equipment is set up to properly handle the increased load and help you save energy and money!

Due to advancements in technology, modern farms and agricultural operations work far differently than those a few decades

ago. These changes include the sensors, devices, machines, and information technology. We need to be informed of any changes or upgrades you have made to your operations since last year. It is possible that we may need to make changes to our distribution system to allow for any added load, such as additional bulk barns or grain dryers.

Call the Cooperative at 1-800-445-6486 or 252-823-2171 to let us know of any change to your account(s).



Edgecombe-Martin County EMC offers a special EV rate for owners who use most of their energy overnight when charging their vehicle. The co-op also provides a \$200.00 rebate for members with an electric vehicle to help with electric service improvements to charge their EV.

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June Rights-of-Way

In order to provide safe, reliable electrical service, we maintain the rights-of-way under and around our power lines. We do this through rights-of-way and vegetation management. This requires pruning, removing, and cutting vegetation to prevent interruption of your electric service.

Throughout May, Lucas Tree Experts will utilize the sky trim, buckets and bushhogging equipment, in the Whitakers area and various hotspots on the system.

Examples of trimming methods

