

Watts Working

Randolph EMC Invests in Innovative Education

Awards \$14,000 to Local Schools for 'Bright Ideas'

Randolph Electric Membership Corporation recently honored educators by awarding \$14,000 in Bright Ideas education grants to 12 local educators.

“Randolph EMC is committed to making our communities stronger. One way we accomplish that is by investing in education,” said Communications and Public Affairs Manager Nicole Arnold. “For almost 30 years, Randolph Electric has provided grants to local schools. We commend these educators for continually striving to create classrooms conducive to innovation.”

Bright Ideas grants, sponsored by Randolph EMC and North Carolina’s electric cooperatives,



Nicole Arnold, Randolph EMC Communications and Public Affairs Manager; Ryan Gibbs, teacher at North Asheboro Middle School.

are available to teachers for hands-on projects that would not otherwise be funded. Since 1994 North Carolina’s electric cooperatives collectively have awarded more than \$13.6 million in Bright Ideas funding for nearly 13,000 projects supporting teachers and benefitting more than 2.7 million students. Over the past 27 years, Randolph Electric has invested just under \$300,000 in grants within its five-county service area.



Local educators have applauded Randolph Electric’s positive impact. Upon learning of her school’s awards, Uwharrie Charter Academy High School Principal Beth Kearns said, “Thank you very much to Randolph EMC for continuing to support our schools

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through the Bright Ideas grant. Through the years, Randolph EMC has provided money to buy materials that help make learning engaging and relevant for our students.”

This year, Randolph Electric received a record number of applications, and each application underwent a rigorous peer review process. A panel of award-winning educators from area elementary, middle and high schools discussed each application before deciding on the final awards. The names of applicants and schools were kept confidential during this process to ensure impartiality.

The 2021 grants will facilitate projects that positively impact 1,760 students. Winners include the following:

▶ **Jessica Hoffmire of Uwharrie Charter Academy Elementary in Asheboro** won \$482 for her project, Winged Warriors. Students in kindergarten through third grade will learn about the life cycles of butterflies and their need for host plants. The students will raise Monarch and Eastern Swallowtail butterflies and grow host plants

in biodegradable pots. The goal is to promote environmental awareness and a connection to the natural world.

▶ **Daniel Jones of East Middle School in Biscoe, NC**, won \$1,998 to establish a science fair. Students in sixth, seventh and eighth grades will form teams and submit entries in the fields of coding, robotics or rocketry. Teachers will facilitate experiential learning with impacts in a vocational area of interest for students.

▶ **Amy Austin of Uwharrie Charter Academy Middle School** won \$1,439 to build an Interactive Periodic Table. Eighth-grade science students will handle physical elements, observe samples, and sort magnetic tiles on the periodic table board. The students will arrange the tiles according to certain characteristics in order to see patterns and similarities that exist within the groups of elements.

▶ **Cynthia Neal of Southwest Randolph Middle School** won \$427 for her project,

Tomato-sphere. Seventh-grade science students will grow tomato plants from seeds and employ the scientific method to make observations and maintain data which they will send to NASA. One group of seeds originating from the International Space Station will provide this experiment with especially interesting results.

▶ **Marley Knapp of Uwharrie Charter Academy Elementary School** won \$1,890 for an interdisciplinary project called Making Waves for the Environment. Fourth-grade students exploring Earth History and Ecosystems will gain an understanding of how human habits can degrade an environment through erosion. Through Sphero Robotics, student will generate waves and then measure the amount of erosion that occurs. After discussing the impact on shorelines, students will explore designs that minimize erosion.

▶ **Colonel Ashley Worboys of Providence Grove High School in Climax, NC**, won \$750 for a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Robotics Game. Junior ROTC cadets will immerse themselves in science, technology, engineering and math while building robots for regional and national competitions. The goals are to foster better problem-solving skills and to see a project through to completion.

▶ **Chrissy Neelon of Uwharrie Charter Academy High School** won \$1,772 for a project called “Art has to be Seen to be Appreciated.” Students in Beginning Art,



Adults pictured: Randolph EMC’s Nicole Arnold (left) and Dr. Amanda Whately, teacher at Uwharrie Charter Academy High School



Adults pictured: Randolph EMC's Nicole Arnold (left) and Chrissy Neelon, teacher at Uwharrie Charter Academy High School

Graphic Design, Comic Art and Advanced Placement visual art classes will be able to print their digital art creations, including photographs, digital designs and digital drawings. The exhibition of these artworks will encourage a deeper understanding of their art as well as improve technical skills essential for competitiveness in today's digitally dependent landscape.

- ▶ **June Allison of Randleman High School** won \$651 for Full Circle Gardening. Students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities will germinate seeds, prepare a raised garden bed and grow vegetables and herbs. The students will plant, weed, harvest, cook and eat the produce grown in the garden.
- ▶ **Dr. Amanda Whatley of Uwharrie Charter Academy High School** won \$1,349 for a project called The Storytelling of Science. High school students will incorporate interdisciplinary learning into their English curriculum by collecting

field notes and compiling data from agricultural experiments. The students will then use the collected data to formulate environmental impact statements.

- ▶ **Elizabeth Farmer of Uwharrie Charter Academy High School** won \$1,972 for Reality-Works in the Classroom, a hands-on curriculum for students in agriculture classes. Students will learn real-world animal science and veterinary skills including tail docking and ear notching.
- ▶ **Christy Darr Weist of Hopewell Elementary School** won \$270 for STEM bins. Second and third-grade students will explore collaboratively to come up with solutions to problems introduced by bin materials. The hands-on activities will spur critical thinking skills and promote group communication.
- ▶ **Ryan Gibbs of North Asheboro Middle School** won \$1,000 to build a recording studio. Students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade will

use the studio to create, edit and publish videos and podcasts on topics in engineering and biotechnology. They will also produce "how to" videos to be shared with the entire school.

If you know an exceptional educator who may benefit from this program, please encourage him or her to apply for the 2022 grant cycle. The application process will reopen for interested teachers in April 2022. Bright Ideas grant applications are collected each year through mid-September. Winners are announced between Thanksgiving and the end of first semester.

More information about the Bright Ideas grant program can be found on RandolphEMC.com or by contacting Nicole Arnold at Nicole.Arnold@RandolphEMC.com.



Line Worker Brandon McNeill Competes in State Pole Top Rescue Competition

Brandon McNeill, Journeyman Lineman at Randolph EMC, ranked among the fastest in the state at the 2021 Pole Top Rescue Competition at Nash Community College in Rocky Mount.



Journeyman Lineman
Brandon McNeill

This biennial event pits line workers against the clock and each other as they demonstrate essential lifesaving skills and the job knowledge required to maintain the lines that power the lives of electric cooperative member-consumers. To advance to this state championship competition, each competitor had to win a similar event at their local cooperative.

During the competition, each line worker executed a rescue scenario of retrieving an unconscious coworker from atop a utility pole. The competitor, dressed in full climbing gear, must radio for help, scale 20 feet up the utility pole, lower a 105-pound mannequin and begin lifesaving procedures. All NC electric cooperative line workers must complete this same scenario in less than five minutes to maintain their certification to work on co-op lines.

“Randolph EMC is dedicated to safety training that promotes quick thinking when lives are on the line,” said CEO Dale Lambert. “We are proud of Brandon, who demonstrated outstanding standards of excellence in this challenging competition.”

Far left: Brandon McNeill poses with his family: wife, Katie and daughters, Emory and Sawyer.



Energy Efficiency Tip

Maximize your heating system’s performance by inspecting, cleaning or replacing air filters once a month or as needed to reduce energy costs and prevent potential damage to your system.

Make sure radiators, baseboard heaters and warm-air registers aren’t blocked so air can flow freely.

Source: Department of Energy

Are Portable Space Heaters Efficient for My Home?



By Abby Berry

Small space heaters are meant to do exactly as their name says: heat a small space. But unfortunately, many people use portable space heaters to heat their entire home, which can really take a toll on your energy bills. The truth is, whether you should use space heaters really depends on your home's efficiency and energy needs.

If you're using a space heater to compensate for problems in your home, like inadequate insulation, drafty windows and exterior doors, or an inefficient heating system, space heaters are not a practical solution. Your best bet is to improve the overall efficiency of your home. If you're on a tight budget, caulking and weather stripping around windows and exterior doors is a low-cost, easy way to save energy. Depending on the size of your home, adding insulation can be a great next step. Loose fill insulation typically costs \$1 to \$1.50 per square foot. Randolph Electric's Energy Advisors are happy to explain how insulation may help reduce your power bill. Taking proactive energy-saving measures rather than relying on space heaters for supplemental warmth can reduce your heating and cooling bills for years to come.

Perhaps your home is energy efficient but you're cold-natured and want a specific room to be cozier than the rest. In this case, a space heater may work for your

needs. A good comparison is ceiling fans; we use ceiling fans in the summer to cool people, not rooms. A space heater can be used in a similar way during winter months. Only use a space heater in small spaces that you're occupying and, if possible, try to shut off other rooms to contain the warmth provided by the space heater. If you decide to use a space heater to heat a small area in your home, make sure the heater is properly sized for the space; most heaters include a general sizing table.

A word about safety: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates more than 25,000 residential fires are associated with the use of space heaters every year, resulting in more than 300 deaths. If you must use a space heater, purchase a newer model that includes the most current safety features and make sure it carries the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) label. Choose a thermostatically controlled heater to avoid energy waste and overheating and place the heater on a level surface

away from foot traffic when in use. Always keep children and pets away from space heaters.

Consider alternative ways to stay warm like extra layers of clothing or UL-approved electric blankets. If you have hardwood or tile floors, lay down area rugs to provide additional insulation (and appeal!) and maintain warmth.

We know it's cold out there, but remember in addition to safety concerns, space heaters can greatly increase your energy bills if used improperly.

If you're looking for alternative ways to save energy and increase comfort in your home, contact our Energy Advisors at 1-800-672-8212. We're here to help you manage your energy use.

Abby Berry writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.

A Word About Randolph Electric

From CEO Dale Lambert



SHEDDING LIGHT ON SOLAR

Dear Members,

When you flip that light switch, turn on the TV, charge your electronic devices, adjust the thermostat or dry your clothes, the electricity powering your life comes from a reliable and diverse mix of generation resources.

Recently, I was speaking to a member-owner of Randolph EMC who had inquired about the resources that generated his power. I thought that would be a good topic to review this month along with some information and considerations for solar generation.

Currently, 65 percent of the energy we deliver to our members comes from carbon-free resources. This is a big deal and a great story to tell. This carbon-free generation is comprised of 56 percent nuclear, 7 percent renewables and 2 percent hydroelectric power.

The remainder of our generation resources is comprised of 20 percent natural gas, 10 percent from market purchases and only 5 percent from coal. Our coal generation mix has continued its downward trend for the last several years.

Renewable generation, mainly solar, continues to grow as part

of our generation portfolio. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), North Carolina ranked third for total solar capacity installed through the first quarter of 2021. This means only California and Texas are ahead of us in total solar capacity.

Currently, Randolph EMC has 97 solar interconnections on the system, spread across Alamance, Chatham, Montgomery, Moore and Randolph Counties. There are 33 solar installations on homes, 15 of which include battery storage. We currently have 52 small-scale solar installations and 12 large utility-scale solar installations interconnected to our grid.

We believe your cooperative has more solar connected to our grid, as measured by percentage based on load, than any other electric utility in the state. Most of this generation is from these large, utility-scale projects. Having this significant level of solar generation provides us with real-world data that demonstrate solar's operating characteristics and limitations, which I have shared in the past.

In 2016, Randolph EMC installed a 100-kW community solar facility at our Asheboro headquarters, adjacent to Interstate 73/74 and

McDowell Road. The SunPath™ Community Solar Farm consists of 360 photovoltaic panels.

This solar generation project is unique because it allows you as a Randolph EMC member-owner the opportunity to participate. Your Board of Directors' goal for constructing this solar project was to give any member interested the opportunity to receive the benefits of renewable energy directly. The project can especially benefit those who would not be able to participate in renewable energy programs otherwise.

The community solar project may provide a solution for members who like the idea of offsetting their carbon footprint with renewable energy but might have some of these obstacles standing in their way:

- ▶ They may find the sizeable expense of installing or maintaining a solar facility at their home or business to be cost prohibitive.
- ▶ They would rather not have holes drilled in the roof of their homes.
- ▶ Their location is not suitable for placing solar panels because

of their home's orientation or trees obstructing the sunlight.

- ▶ They rent their home or business and therefore cannot make permanent changes to the physical structure.

Currently, 227 panels comprising 60% of the SunPath™ Community Solar Farm have dedicated subscribers. To participate, members subscribe to receive a credit for the energy produced by their pro-rata share of the solar farm's output. Please contact our Asheboro office if you are interested and have additional questions on how to join this program.

As more members consider installing solar generation and solar with battery storage on their homes, we encourage you to investigate fully the proposals from solar developers before signing for the projects. Unfortunately, we are hearing from a growing number of members who are disappointed *after* their project installation because the return on their investment is much different from what they were promised. Please understand: there are qualified solar developers who deliver exactly what they promise. However, it is always wise to understand all the implications of this significant and long-term investment prior to signing any contracts.

As I have noted many times before, Randolph EMC does not expect members who do not install solar generation on their homes to subsidize those who do. As the old saying goes, "Everything's affordable as long as someone else is paying for it." This is not how we handle solar at



Randolph Electric. Through our rate policies, our goal is to be fair and recognize the true value of solar on our system for those who install it and those who do not.

To assist members in researching a proposal from a solar developer, your Randolph EMC team has developed some resources that may assist you in your analysis. "A Member-Owner's Guide to Solar" is an informational brochure designed to help guide you through any solar installation process that you may be contemplating. The Frequently Asked Questions document provides answers to the questions we receive from our member-owners. Both of these resources can be found on the RandolphEMC.com website, and copies are available for members at either office.

Please do not hesitate to contact our Asheboro office if you have questions about installing solar on your homes. We never want to see members taken advantage of. As your trusted energy partner, we want you to receive what you expected and paid for.

Cooperatively Yours,

Dale F. Lambert
Chief Executive Officer



Randolph Electric Membership Corporation provides safe and reliable power with exceptional value to more than 32,000 member accounts in Randolph, Moore, Montgomery, Chatham and Alamance counties.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Electric Service

Asheboro (336) 625-5177
..... (800) 672-8212

Robbins: (910) 948-3401
..... (800) 868-7014

Report Outage (877) REMC-OFF
..... (877) 736-2633

Account Info
& Bill Payments: (877) 534-2319

Business Hours: 8 am – 5 pm, M-F

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RandolphEMC.com



Keep Track of the Energy You Use

Monitor your monthly usage & cost of electric service. Be sure to read your meter on the same day each month.

Month	Date Read	Reading	kWh Used	Bill Amount	Date Paid
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					
Totals					

2022 Cycle Billing Schedule

READ DATE	1	DEC 24	JAN 24	FEB 24	MAR 24	APR 24	MAY 24	JUNE 24	JULY 24	AUG 24	SEPT 24	OCT 24	NOV 24
	2	JAN 1	FEB 1	MAR 1	APR 1	MAY 1	JUNE 1	JULY 1	AUG 1	SEPT 1	OCT 1	NOV 1	DEC 1
	3	JAN 8	FEB 8	MAR 8	APR 8	MAY 8	JUNE 8	JULY 8	AUG 8	SEPT 8	OCT 8	NOV 8	DEC 8
	4	JAN 15	FEB 15	MAR 15	APR 15	MAY 15	JUNE 15	JULY 15	AUG 15	SEPT 15	OCT 15	NOV 15	DEC 15
BILL DATE	1	JAN 3	FEB 1	MAR 1	APR 4	MAY 2	JUNE 6	JULY 5	AUG 1	SEPT 6	OCT 3	NOV 1	DEC 5
	2	JAN 10	FEB 7	MAR 7	APR 11	MAY 9	JUNE 13	JULY 11	AUG 8	SEPT 12	OCT 10	NOV 7	DEC 12
	3	JAN 17	FEB 14	MAR 14	APR 18	MAY 16	JUNE 20	JULY 18	AUG 15	SEPT 19	OCT 17	NOV 14	DEC 19
	4	JAN 24	FEB 21	MAR 21	APR 25	MAY 23	JUNE 27	JULY 25	AUG 22	SEPT 26	OCT 24	NOV 21	DEC 27
PAST DUE DATE	1	JAN 28	FEB 28	MAR 28	APR 28	MAY 28	JUNE 28	JULY 28	AUG 28	SEPT 28	OCT 28	NOV 28	DEC 28
	2	FEB 5	MAR 5	APR 5	MAY 5	JUNE 5	JULY 5	AUG 5	SEPT 5	OCT 5	NOV 5	DEC 5	JAN 5
	3	FEB 12	MAR 12	APR 12	MAY 12	JUNE 12	JULY 12	AUG 12	SEPT 12	OCT 12	NOV 12	DEC 12	JAN 12
	4	FEB 19	MAR 19	APR 19	MAY 19	JUNE 19	JULY 19	AUG 19	SEPT 19	OCT 19	NOV 19	DEC 19	JAN 19
SUBJECT TO DISCONNECTION	1	FEB 7	MAR 7	APR 11	MAY 9	JUNE 13	JULY 11	AUG 8	SEPT 12	OCT 10	NOV 7	DEC 12	JAN 9
	2	FEB 14	MAR 14	APR 18	MAY 16	JUNE 20	JULY 18	AUG 15	SEPT 19	OCT 17	NOV 14	DEC 19	JAN 16
	3	FEB 21	MAR 21	APR 25	MAY 23	JUNE 27	JULY 25	AUG 22	SEPT 26	OCT 24	NOV 21	DEC 27	JAN 23
	4	FEB 28	MAR 28	MAY 2	MAY 31	JULY 5	AUG 1	AUG 29	OCT 3	OCT 31	NOV 28	JAN 3	JAN 30

Automatic Draft Dates

CYCLE 1
28th of month

CYCLE 2
5th of month

CYCLE 3
12th of month

CYCLE 4
19th of month