



P.O. Box 2710, Manassas, VA 20108
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Tip of the Month
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What's Current

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LAUNCHES LINE WORKER TRAINING AT MIDDLETOWN CAMPUS

Thomas Hensley of Stephens City, Virginia was one of 11 young men enrolled in the first cohort of Laurel Ridge Community College's new 14-week Power Line Worker Training Program. The first classes were held at the Middletown campus in September



Thomas Hensley is an aspiring lineworker and a student of Laurel Ridge Community College's Power Line Worker Training Program.

2025. Hensley said, "I was looking for something where I could work outside, do something physical."

Hensley and his cohort earned seven different industry-recognized certifications — CDL Class A, Heavy Equipment Operation, Power Industry Fundamentals, Power Line Worker

Level 1, VDOT Work Zone Flagger — Intermediate, OSHA 10, and First Aid/CPR.

The young men also engaged in hands-on learning for the Power Line Worker Level 1 certification at Southside Virginia Community College in Blackstone, Virginia. Students spent November and December 2025 tackling lineworker-specific education while living in dorms at Fort Pickett, a training facility for the National Guard near Blackstone.

NOVEC Manager of System Construction Mark DeChristopher said the Co-op hopes to be able to recruit students now that they have graduated.

By the end of 2026, a pole yard and equipment building will be in place at Laurel Ridge so students will be able to complete all their training close to

home. Jeanian Clark, vice president of Workforce Solutions and Continuing Education at Laurel Ridge, said that the college has ordered two bucket trucks for students to use during their training.

She said the program was developed in only 16 months thanks to many helpful partnerships, and described the training as "hands-on" and "high-impact."

Del. Delores Oates (VA-31st District) addressed the crowd at a groundbreaking ceremony for the program, pointing out that typical student debt in Virginia for a graduating student is \$40,000. "This program leaves students with little or no debt and gives them the potential for a six-figure salary," she said.

Plus, she added, they get to be heroes in their communities by keeping the lights on.



NOVEC HELPS, Hands Engaged in Local Public Service, is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization of NOVEC employees who volunteer their time to help others and engage other employees in community service projects. The NOVEC HELPS' board of directors votes on programs and events to support, whether through financial donations or with feet on the ground.

NOVEC HELPS IS EMPOWERING CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY

NOVEC HELPS members held their eighth annual Day of Caring at House of Mercy in Manassas on Oct. 29, assisted by their NOVEC co-workers. It was a day dedicated to service, compassion, and community impact.

Nearly 30 NOVEC employees volunteered in two shifts, lending their time and energy to support House of Mercy's food pantry, thrift store, and donation center. Volunteers cleaned, sorted, and stocked essential goods to prepare for the busy holiday season.

"We are proud to organize the annual Day of Caring and support the vital work of House of Mercy," said NOVEC HELPS Chair Nan Musick. House of Mercy is committed to providing essential goods and services to those in need throughout Northern Virginia. In 2024, House of Mercy was supported by more than 2,700 volunteers. They served an average of 85 hungry families every day, providing more than 500,000 pounds of donated food, and distributed more than 52,000 articles of clothing, shoes, and coats to local adults and children.

House of Mercy is one of 86 organizations NOVEC HELPS assisted throughout 2025. Through donations from employees and the public and its annual golf tournament fundraiser, NOVEC HELPS donated a total of \$85,200 to community efforts across Northern Virginia. These efforts help with food insecurity, housing, youth programs, and the arts.



From front, Kevin Bowling and Mark Windsor organize items in the thrift store.



NOVEC HELPS Chair, Nan Musick helps pack bags in the food pantry.

IT'S TIME TO APPLY!

NOVEC Scholarship Applications are Set to Open Feb. 1

Scholarships are awarded to students living on NOVEC lines in Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, and Stafford counties, and the City of Manassas Park.

For details including academic requirements and how to apply, go to novec.com/scholarships.

NOVEC HOLIDAY OFFICE CLOSURE

Monday, Feb. 16, 2026
NOVEC offices will be closed for Presidents Day.

Our system control center is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, even on holidays. To report outages, visit novec.com or call 703-335-0500.

Our Promise to You

As the demand for electricity continues to grow, our commitment to providing you with reliable power remains steadfast. Looking ahead, we are dedicated to:

- Advocating for energy policies that support our local communities.
- Leveraging innovative technologies to strengthen our grid.
- Listening to your feedback to enhance co-op programs and services.

