



Media Release

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PRVEPA awards Round Up for Education scholarships for second year

More than 170 students from throughout Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association's 12-county service area will receive scholarships of \$1000 to attend state community colleges this year, thanks to the generous spirit and support of the Association's member-consumers.

This is the second year for the Round Up for Education scholar's program, which is funded by members who round their bills up to the nearest dollar each month, an average of about 50 cents monthly. Scholarships are available to members who do the round up, as well as for their spouses or dependent children who are enrolling for their first semester at a Mississippi community college this fall.

"Throughout our history, Pearl River Valley Electric has not only been providing electric service to rural areas, but working to improve the quality of life of our members and the communities where they live," said General Manager Randy Wallace. "We believe that education is vital to improving the future for all of us in south Mississippi, and the Round Up program was designed to encourage more young people to further their education.

"Members working together to achieve a common goal is a unique hallmark of cooperative organizations, and I am proud of the positive response we've received on this effort. More than 90 percent of our members have remained enrolled in the program and we're very thankful for their support.

"As we are now able to see, the accumulation of what would normally be spare change for an individual has added up significantly. These funds will help create long-term educational opportunities as well as economic benefits, which is good for everyone in the communities we serve."

PRVEPA serves more than 47,000 meters. Since the Round Up program began in November 2012, more than \$390,000 has been collected and deposited in an account overseen by the Greater Pine Belt Community Foundation. At least ten percent of each year's funds are set aside in an endowed fund for future use. The remaining money is divided equally between the number of eligible applicants, resulting this year in 172 scholarships worth \$1000 per student (the maximum award per the program's guidelines).

83 of the scholarship recipients this year are attending Pearl River Community College, 31 are at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, and 48 are at Jones County Junior College. Ten other students are attending 3 other state community colleges. Overall, students came from 18 different high schools and home school programs.

“This is a phenomenal opportunity for Pearl River Community College students,” said Dr. William Lewis, president of PRCC. “It is an accepted fact in today’s society that investment in higher education is one of the most significant investments a person will make in their lifetime. The opportunity that PRVEPA and its customer base is providing for students in its service area will provide untold dividends for generations to come. We are most grateful for the progressive leadership that PRVEPA has provided on this issue. It will make a difference in the lives of many students in the future and for our society in general.”

“The PineBelt Community Foundation administers a variety of scholarship programs that grant between \$250 and \$2,000 to high school, community college and university students,” said Theresa Erickson, Executive Director of the Foundation. “The Round Up for Education Scholarship program is the largest scholarship program we manage. We often see how small contributions from large numbers of people can grow into significant amounts that benefit many individuals, and when people continue their education it not only benefits the individual, but it also benefits their family and ultimately their community.”

Round Up for Education funds collected after August 1 go toward next year’s scholarships. Applications for 2015 scholarships will be available beginning in February.

2014 PRVEPA Scholars Program Recipients (172 total)

Community Colleges Students are Attending

Pearl River	83
Jones	48
Gulf Coast	31
Southwest	7
Hinds	2
Co-Lin	1

High Schools Recipients Attended

Stone	31
Purvis	22
Oak Grove	20
Forrest County AHS	18
West Marion	15
Columbia	15
Sumrall	12
Columbia Academy	11
East Marion	9
Lamar Christian	9
Poplarville	2
Homeschool	1
Lawrence County	1
Prentiss Christian	1
Lumberton	1
George County	1
Presbyterian Christian	1
St. Stanislaus	1
Sarah T. Reed	1