



Media Release

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More than 200 students receive 2015 PRVEPA Round Up for Education scholarships

The education careers of 209 students from throughout Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association's 12-county service area will get a financial boost this fall. Each will receive a scholarship of \$975 to help them attend state community colleges this year, thanks to the generous spirit and support of the Association's member-consumers.

This is the third 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. Scholarships are available to members who do the round up, as well as for their spouses or dependent children who are enrolled as freshmen 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 continue to round up their bills 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 48,000 meters. Since the Round Up program began in November 2012, more than \$617,000 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 209 scholarships worth \$975 per student (the maximum award per the program’s guidelines is \$1000). In the program’s 3 years, more than 550 students have now received scholarships.

91 of the scholarship recipients this year are attending Pearl River Community College, 50 are at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, and 46 are at Jones County Junior College. An additional 22 students are attending 7 other state community colleges. Overall, students came from 20 different high schools and home school programs.

“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 2016 scholarships will be available beginning in November.

2015 PRVEPA Scholars Program Recipients (209 total)

<u>Community Colleges Students are Attending</u>		<u>High Schools Recipients Attended</u>	
Pearl River	91	Stone	46
Gulf Coast	50	Sumrall	26
Jones	46	Purvis	24
Southwest	8	West Marion	21
East MS	4	Oak Grove	19
East Central	3	Forrest County AHS	16
Hinds	3	Columbia	13
Co-Lin	2	East Marion	11
Holmes	1	Columbia Academy	9
Coahoma	1	Lamar Christian	8
		Lumberton	4
		Poplarville	3
		Homeschool	2
		Prentiss	1
		Prentiss Christian	1
		Quitman	1
		Christian Collegiate Acad	1
		Youth Challenge Acad	1
		NorthEast (MD)	1
		Harker Heights (TX)	1