

PROGRAM OVERVIEW



INTRODUCTION

The Bonneville Power Administration's Transmission Business Line (TBL) is actively seeking participants for its Community High School Outreach Program (CHSOOP). This program helps prepare high-school students to become familiar with the high-voltage electrical transmission industry.

BACKGROUND

The Bonneville Power Administration is a federal agency headquartered in Portland, OR, that markets wholesale electricity and transmission to the Pacific Northwest's public and private utilities as well as to some large industries. BPA provides about half the electricity used in the Northwest and operates over three-fourths of the region's high-voltage transmission. The agency is a major employer of electrical trade workers and engineers. These employees are located throughout BPA's service area, working at more than 400 BPA locations in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. Line and construction crews move throughout the system to wherever their services are needed.

The ongoing nature of construction and maintenance needed to supply a constantly growing demand for electric power and the need for new electrical workers trained to handle the demanding mental and physical requirements of the electrical trades are in short supply. Many high schools and junior colleges have tried to fill the gap by offering classes that include both textbook and lab experience in electrical theory and procedure. But there is no substitute for a

safe, yet extensive, exposure to real power line and substation work.

THE COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAM

BPA's Transmission Business Line launched an outreach program in 2002 to high school juniors in an effort to create a bridge between schooling and actual electrical craft application. This program is offered during the summer, and provides hands-on experience, working side-by-side with TBL employees, in three different electrical crafts.

Applications will be accepted between November 1 and the first Friday in March of each academic year. On March 1st applications will be reviewed and student candidates interviewed and selected.

To be eligible, students must meet the following requirements:

- At least 17 years of age and a Jr. in high school
- A U.S. citizen or in the U.S. legally
- Maintain at least a 2.5 GPA
- Able to effectively communicate
- Able to complete all physical tasks

ADDITIONAL SUBMISSIONS

Candidates must provide BPA with: (1) Official high-school transcript that shows good academic standing and a resume indicating previous job experience. (2) An essay describing experiences the applicant has had outside of their traditional academic course work that has expanded or given them interest in the electrical crafts. Students can write about how their life experiences--such as specialized electrical training classes--are applicable to their career goals in the electrical transmission industry or to BPA needs. Grammatical clarity, composition, completeness of ideas and narrative content will be the evaluating criteria. (3) Three letters of recommendation--one from a community member, one from their school and one from anyone else supporting their interest.

BPA will select several candidates who will be rated from the pool of eligible students. They must provide parental consent and recommendations from their electrical technology teachers. Individuals selected will be interviewed by representatives from TBL's technical work force prior to a final selection being made. TBL representatives will be available for meetings or conversations with parents and school administrators to address any questions or concerns.

JOB DESCRIPTION & GENERAL DUTIES

During their high-school summer break, and in rare occasions over the winter holidays, students will have the opportunity to gain onsite experience with three or more different electrical craft crews, as well as possible interaction with TBL engineering staff. They will assist in a variety of lesser skilled, but relevant, journeyman craft tasks, such as:

- Becoming familiar with journeyman skill requirements
- Learning the tools of the trade and how they are applied
- Participating in cleanup and maintenance work
- Becoming familiar with the paperwork necessary for these craft positions

Specifically, a student could perform the following physical actions:

- Hoist materials and tools to workers
- Use common hand tools and small power tools to thread, cut, drill, and make incidental repairs
- Cut and crimp electrical wires and make up protective lugs
- Gain familiarity with electrical blueprints and learn how to check point-to-point wiring

All these activities will be performed in a limited fashion under the careful watch of experienced supervisors. This will enable students to expand their technical knowledge as well as learn how to comply with government regulations, BPA Accident Prevention Manual requirements, and labor regulations

Onsite physical work can be demanding, involving strenuous physical exertion, sometimes in confined quarters, under adverse weather conditions and uneven floor surfaces. When necessary the wearing of approved safety equipment is required.

EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated by regional managers and craft crew members based on criteria explained to the students during the orientation, which includes but is not limited to: attitude, job performance and punctuality. This criterion may vary from region to region. Students must perform in a reliable and satisfactory manner to progress to the next level of training. Students must dress appropriately (such as wearing long pants and work shoes for field work) and be neat in appearance for indoor/educational activities. Students must not engage in conduct that presents a hazard or creates an unsafe working condition for their fellow students and/or crewmembers. Failure to do so will result in immediate termination. Unexcused absences are also grounds for dismissal. Disciplinary actions are at the discretion of the regional managers.

Student participation may be terminated for unsatisfactory progress or behavior. Supervisors will provide all the tools necessary for students to become successful, but will expect students to follow the instructions of crew members at all times.

SEQUENCE OF TRAINING

High-school participants in years one and two of the program will undergo a progressively

challenging exposure to the electrical crafts and trades. Following is a general schedule of anticipated events:

1. A three-month on-site rotation of crew participation with three BPA electrical crafts, with one month in each craft and activities customized for each regional facility. This rotation usually begins mid June and ends August 31.
2. Attendance at educational opportunities covering electrical fundamentals and BPA craft policy and procedures. These would occur at BPA regional facilities.

BPA may also offer continuing college educational assistance to CHSOOP students interested in a two-year junior college electrical technology program. This assistance is available to students who qualify following high school graduation and is dependent on their previous performance in BPA's program as well as successful evaluation by regional managers and crews.

COMPENSATION

Student participants in years one and two of the program, working under BPA volunteer guidelines will receive a stipend from the Business Education Compact (BEC) of \$2,500 for the first and \$3,500 for the second year of participation. Upon completion of this program, students may be recommended by supervisors to apply for acceptance into one of TBL's student programs.

FUTURE APPLICATION

No electrical utility, including BPA, can guarantee a student an apprenticeship or job placement after such a program concludes. But the training students receive will clearly enhance their opportunities for long-term employment with any electrical transmission utility.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

TBL's Community High School Occupational Outreach Program gives students the chance to see firsthand what it means to see a downed line being repaired, make delicate, critical adjustments to sensitive equipment and a host of other duties that make the electrical crafts attractive to so many skilled workers. They will also know how it feels to be part of a reliable team that maintains electrical service for the entire Pacific Northwest.

For more information, please contact:

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<http://businesseducationlinks.org/pls/pdxlinksp/home.html>

