

We're in the thick of summer and hope you've been enjoying outdoor activities and family time. Our lineworkers have been busy

# GREETINGS, CHOPTANK ELECTRIC MEMBERS!

preparing for the heat and storms to keep your electricity running. Our staff is continuing to expand our Choptank Fiber buildout and gearing up for events to engage with our community.

Choptank Electric has also been celebrating the future of the Eastern Shore by awarding more than \$30,000 in scholarships to local students. Check out page 20 to meet the winners and see where they're studying.

As a Cooperative, we work for the sustainable development of our communities — many of those being rural. Supporting agriculture and youth programs in the industry is something we've always been passionate about. Whether it's in the livestock ring or under a tent, we're looking forward to seeing you and supporting your local fair or festival this summer (dates below).



*Mike Malandro,  
President & CEO  
Choptank Electric Co-op*

## 2023 FAIR SCHEDULE

### TALBOT COUNTY FAIR

Easton, July 13 - 15

### KENT COUNTY FAIR

Chestertown, July 19 - 22

### CECIL COUNTY FAIR

Elkton, July 21 - 29

### SOMERSET COUNTY FAIR

Princess Anne, July 28 - 29

### CAROLINE/DORCHESTER COUNTY FAIR

Denton, August 2 - 5

### BLESSING OF THE COMBINES

Snow Hill, August 5

### QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY FAIR

Centreville, August 7 - 12

### GREAT POCOMOKE FAIR

Pocomoke, August 11 - 13

### WICOMICO COUNTY FAIR

Salisbury, August 18 - 20

### WORCESTER COUNTY FAIR

Snow Hill, September 15 - 17



**Choptank Electric  
Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy<sup>®</sup>  
Cooperative 

**Choptank  
Fiber**

P.O. Box 430 | Denton, MD | 21629  
Member Service Center: 1-877-892-0001  
Automated Member Service: 1-866-999-4574  
Automated Outage Reporting: 1-800-410-4790  
Text 'OUT' to: 1-800-410-4790  
Use SmartHub to Manage Account,  
Track Usage and Report Outages —>

[WWW.CHOPTANKELECTRIC.COOP](http://WWW.CHOPTANKELECTRIC.COOP)



## Choptank Welcomes New Employees



**Brennan Waldorf**  
System Operator  
Denton District

**Experience:** System operator assistant operator

**Hobbies:** Photography, Education, Exercise, Sports

**Looking Forward To:** Working with others



**Derek Brinsfield**  
Meter & Apparatus Technician 4th Class

**Experience:** U.S. Air Force, The Whalen Company, Fluharty's Elec.

**Hobbies:** Hunting, Fishing, Slow-pitch Softball and Reading

**Looking Forward To:** Starting a new career with new people and new experiences

## Notice of Adoption of Bylaws Amendments

Pursuant to the Cooperative's bylaws, section 10.09(e), this serves as notice to the Members that the bylaws have been amended. These changes were submitted to a vote of the Members and approved at the Cooperative's

Annual Meeting in April 2023. The bylaws are always available on the Governance page of the website at [choptankelectric.coop/governance](http://choptankelectric.coop/governance). Please direct any questions to: [legal@choptankelectric.coop](mailto:legal@choptankelectric.coop).

## Load Control Rider **Save money by reducing usage during peak periods**

Choptank Electric members billed under the General Service – Irrigation (FI) rate or a rate that includes a demand component can enroll in our voluntary Load Control Rider, which provides a credit to members who can control their electricity load during certain peak periods. Notice of control periods will be issued by Choptank Electric

via text message (members may opt in through SmartHub). There is no penalty for not controlling during the designated peak periods.

### Load Control Rider (LC)

- Can be paired with Small Power (S), Medium Power (M), and Primary (P) rates
- Must have a curtailable load of at least 50kW

### Load Control Rider – Irrigation (LC-FI)

- Can be paired only with General Service – Irrigation (FI) rate
- Must have a curtailable load of at least 25kW

If you would like to enroll in the Load Control Rider, give us a call at 877-892-0001.

⚡ Congratulations to **Debbie Gaddis-Roberts**, who has been promoted to Operations Work Order and System Information Analyst position. Debbie began her new duties on April 10, 2023.

⚡ Congratulations to **Clint Mills** for being awarded the Chief Lineman position at the Chestertown District. Clint began his new duties on March 29, 2023.



⚡ Congratulations to **Jeff Rathell**, who received a commemorative gavel from CEO Mike Malandro and Chairman Doug Scott for his dedicated five years of service as the Board Chair.

⚡ Congratulations to **Doug Scott** for being elected as Chairman of the Board, **Bob Arnold** for being elected as Vice Chairman of the Board, **Matt Holloway** for being elected as Secretary and **John Burke** for being elected as Treasurer.



# YOUR 2023 ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING

By Katie Lockett, Manager Marketing, Communications and Education



**Mike Malandro, President and CEO of Choptank Electric Cooperative, addresses a packed house at our 2023 Annual Meeting**



**T**hank you to all our members and guests who attended Choptank Electric Cooperative's 85th Annual Meeting on April 27 at the Talbot County Community Center. We had a great turnout with more than 300 attendees who enjoyed a delicious dinner, networking, vendor displays, and remarks about the success of Choptank Electric and its subsidiary, Choptank Fiber. A full recap of the Cooperative in 2022 can be found online at [choptankelectric.coop/financial-information](http://choptankelectric.coop/financial-information).

The following uncontested Board members were reelected to another three-year term at the meeting: John Burke Jr. of Cecil County, Craig Mathies of Somerset County, Jeff Rathell of Talbot County and Robert

Thompson of the Ocean Pines District. Ten \$1,000 Luck of the Draw scholarships were awarded to high school seniors in attendance at the meeting (see page 21 for the winners). A few members were also randomly drawn to receive bill credits up to \$500.

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*Thank you to all the members, volunteers and vendors; we couldn't have done this without you!*

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We hope to see you in person again next year! If you missed the meeting and would like to read more about it or watch the video recording, please visit > [www.choptankelectric.coop/annual-meeting-0](http://www.choptankelectric.coop/annual-meeting-0).





# Supporting a Path to Independence

Choptank and Perdue team up in support of the blind

By Bobby Schaller, MultiMedia Manager



**BISM's President, Dr. Michael Gosse, gives a tour of his Salisbury facility to Trust Board Chair Tom Terry**

## DISABILITIES ARE NOT FAIR.

No one requests for their life to be even more difficult. Although the levels vary, all of us deal with adversity on a day-to-day basis.

This story is a story of human resilience and how our co-op helped to make a difference.

The CDC reports that 1 in 4 people in America live with a disability. It also reports that nearly 5% of our population is legally blind.

Imagine living your life, with all of its required navigation and responsibilities that life holds, and one day you wake up and you can't see anymore. Your eyesight is gone, but everything you have to do and all the places you have to go are all still there. You still have to get up, get ready, get to work, be productive, and then come home, make dinner, clean up and get ready for bed. All while being blind. This life-changing event happens often, and the people who this happens to are the exact

same people that Blind Industries & Services of Maryland (BISM) train, employ and build their nonprofit organization around. BISM helps the blind adapt to the realities of life and gives them training to regain independence. The majority of staff that train blind people are blind too. Danielle Earl, Manager of the Seeing Program and blind herself, says, "We believe that the skills taught from a blind person to another blind person are the best."

Blind Industries has two locations in Salisbury, Maryland. One of the main products they produce is the GEN III, Layer 4, Cold Weather Gear System for the U.S. Army. These

jackets help protect our freedom, they have to be perfect and 500 coats are produced by blind workers every day. With 14 different sizes, there is a lot to keep track of, inspect and organize. One location cuts all of the fabric and the other location puts it all together. The factory that pieces the jackets together also has a training facility that helps the blind adapt to their disability and gain independence.

The entranceway into the training facility had become unsafe and was beyond repair. "Every day we would walk up here for work and feel like we were going to fall through it," says Danielle.



*“The ultimate goal of BISM is twofold, employing blind people with meaningful jobs and supporting our training programs. And, community partnerships are part of the way to get there so we greatly appreciate Choptank for stepping up for this project.”*

**- Dr. Michael Gosse,  
Blind Industries President**



Choptank Trust Board member Ed Henry of Wicomico County caught wind of this important need and we teamed up with Perdue Farms to donate \$35,000 for a safe and proper entranceway. The Choptank Electric Trust donated \$5,000, funds made available through our program, Operation Round Up®. The new entranceway and deck was installed this past March with a ribbon cutting in May.

*“This entrance is so much better than what we had before,” Ms. Earl concludes.*

Thank you to our partnership with Perdue and thank you to BISM for allowing us the opportunity to support such a great cause, as well as everything you do for the blind community. To learn more about our Operation Round Up® Trust program go to [choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund](https://choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund).

To help support BISM and order great products at competitive prices, go to [www.shopbism.com](https://www.shopbism.com).



**JADON COOK**

Talbot County, Homeschooled  
College: University of Mount Olive  
Major: Plant Science



**MACY COOK**

Talbot County, Homeschooled  
College: University of Mount Olive  
Major: Business Administration



**EMILY CROSSLEY**

Queen Anne's County High School  
College: West Virginia University  
Major: Agriculture Education



**RINA DIRICKSON**

Stephen Decatur High School  
College: Johns Hopkins University  
Major: Neuroscience & Biophysics

**Each receiving  
\$2,000 to further their  
continued education,  
these are the 2023  
Choptank Electric  
Trust Scholarship  
Winners!**



**KAITLYN EATON**

North Carolina High School  
College: UMES  
Major: Clinical Exercise Science



**ASHTON ELZEY**

Cambridge S. Dorchester High School  
College: Virginia Commonwealth Univ.  
Major: Medical Laboratory Sciences



**ZACHARY GORSUCH**

Cambridge S. Dorchester High School  
College: Wilkes University  
Major: Mechanical Engineering



**EMILIE SCHANKEN**

North Dorchester High School  
College: DE Technical Comm. College  
Major: Medical Sonography



**KAITLIN SCHLESNER**

North Carolina High School  
College: University of Maryland  
Major: Early Childhood Education



**JOANNA SCHOONOVER**

Colonel Richardson High School  
College: Shepherd University  
Major: Historical Preservation



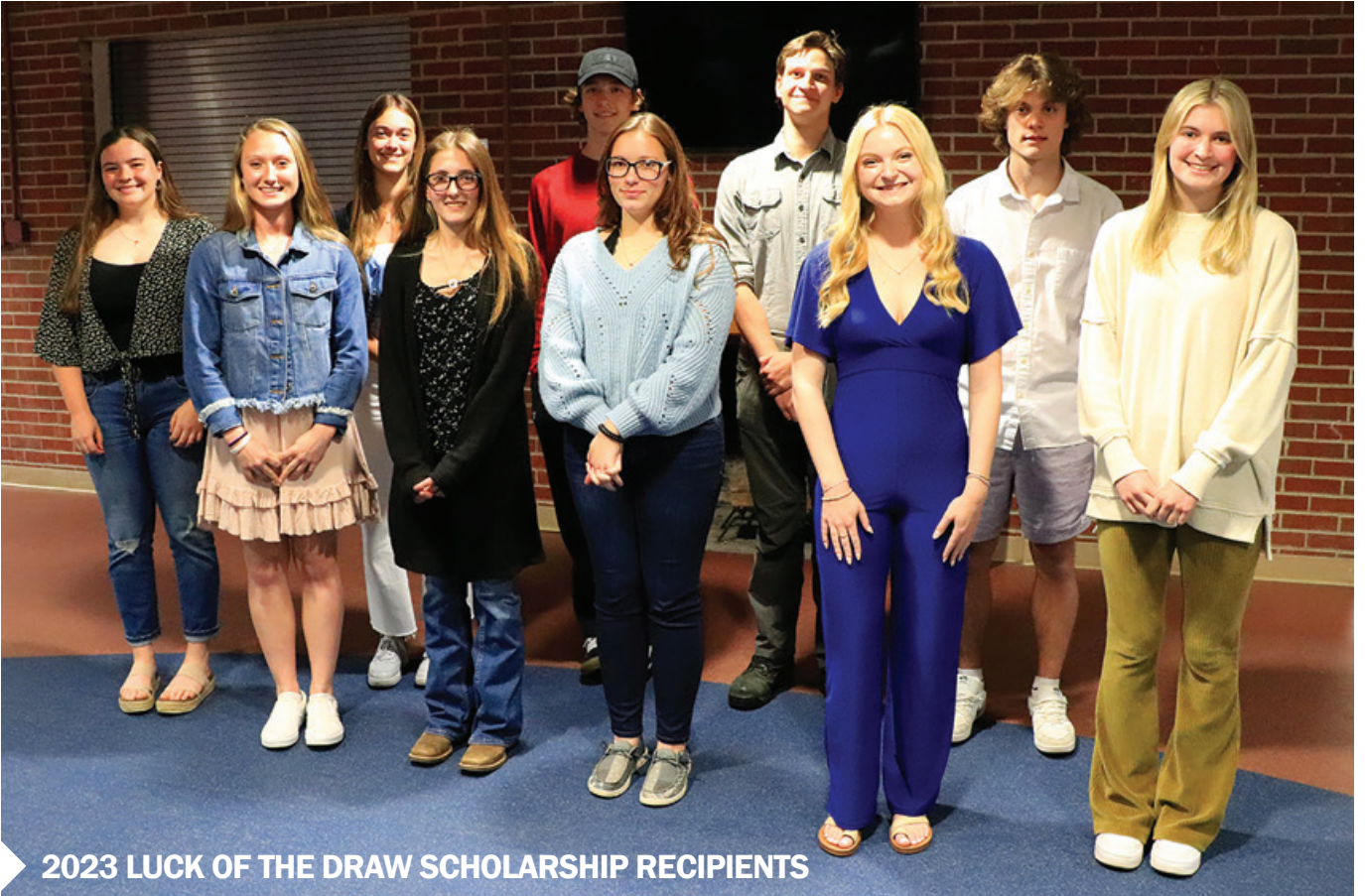
**LYDIA YATES**

Cambridge S. Dorchester High School  
College: Stevenson University  
Major: Biology/Premed

# Supporting the Future Generation

## Over \$30,000 in scholarships awarded to members

We are committed to providing opportunities for our local students across the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Choptank Electric Cooperative, with the Choptank Electric Trust Board and the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives, awarded 22 scholarships totaling over \$30,000 to students attending college or university in the fall of 2023.



2023 LUCK OF THE DRAW SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Choptank Electric's Luck of the Draw scholarship winners were randomly selected from those who applied and attended the Annual Meeting on April 27. Winners of the \$1,000 scholarship included: (Right to left) **Delaney Bennett** of Wicomico County, **Blaire Smith** of Wicomico County, **Emilie Schanken** of Dorchester County, **Gunnar Hoffman** of Caroline County, **Ashton Elzey** of Dorchester County, **Drew Swanger** of Wicomico County, **Emma Duff** of Cecil County, **Catherine Cronan** of Talbot County, **Kai Kelly** of Talbot County and **Kinley Elliott** of Caroline County.

**THE VMDAEC \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIP** was awarded to three Choptank Electric Cooperative students this year. The recipients are:

- 1. Macy Cook** of Talbot County, homeschooled, attending University of Mount Olive.
- 2. Rina Dirickson** of Worcester County, Stephen Decatur High School, attending Johns Hopkins University.
- 3. Justin Hurney** of Worcester County, Snow Hill High School, attending West Virginia University.

Keep an eye out this fall for information on our 2024 scholarship opportunities at [www.choptankelectric.coop/scholarships](http://www.choptankelectric.coop/scholarships).



# MEMBERS' NOTES

Our members are the reason Choptank Electric Cooperative exists. Whether on social media, by phone, or through handwritten letters, we appreciate when members let us know that we are doing a good job!

**Thank you, all!**

*Hello Member Services,  
I was reading my March issue of Cooperative Living, with the big outage story in Virginia and thought to call and thank y'all for always keeping my lights on!*

*— Carol Donohue*

## Choptank Electric Trust Awards

The Choptank Electric Trust is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation funded by Operation Round Up donations from members of Choptank Electric. Funds from the Trust are distributed in all nine counties of MD's Eastern Shore.

To apply, or to find out more about this program:

> [www.choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund](http://www.choptankelectric.coop/operation-round-trust-fund).

### April 2023

- Crisfield Heritage Foundation - \$5,000
- Eastern Shore Ballet Theatre - \$348
- Lower Shore Land Trust - \$421
- Mary Mac Foundation - \$1,200
- Talbot County Agriculture & Education Center - \$5,000

### May 2023

- 4 Steps Therapeutic Riding Program - \$1,500
- Horizons of Kent and Queen Anne's County - \$2,500
- SOS (Sink or Swim) - \$1,750

**The total of approved applications for April and May was \$53,156, which included \$35,437 for individual home and medical expenses.**



**Choptank Electric Cooperative**

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

**Choptank Electric Cooperative, Inc.**

Choptank Electric, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, is a not-for-profit, member-owned, electric distribution co-op serving approximately 56,000 residential, commercial and industrial members in all nine counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

#### **President and CEO**

Micheal E. Malandro

#### **Board of Directors**

Douglas D. Scott  
Chairman, Dorchester Co.

Robert E. Arnold  
Vice Chairman, Queen Anne's Co.

John J. Burke Jr.  
Treasurer, Cecil Co.

Matthew R. Holloway  
Secretary, Wicomico Co.

Amy I. Brandt  
Caroline Co.

Olin S. Davis III  
Kent Co.

Craig N. Mathies Sr.  
Somerset Co.

Jeffrey D. Rathell Sr.  
Talbot Co.

Robert B. Thompson  
Ocean Pines District

Donna R. West  
Worcester Co.

**Choptank Fiber**

#### **Choptank Fiber, LLC**

Choptank Fiber, LLC is a wholly-owned broadband subsidiary of Choptank Electric Cooperative. Choptank Fiber's goal is to install true Gigabit broadband with no data caps one community at a time until we serve all our members on the Eastern Shore.