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## Operation Round Up: Giving Back to Families in Need

Sometimes, all we need is a guardian angel and a little bit of luck. In the spring of 2015, Shaunte Pittman, a mother of eight children, was desperately in need of funding for safety and health related renovations to her home in Statesville, NC. With just the right amount of luck, Shaunte was able to connect with EnergyUnited Foundation, which provided funds for the renovations, with support from generous members as part of Operation Round Up.



Before EnergyUnited became involved with the restoration project, Shaunte and her husband, Jeffrey, contacted Our Towns Habitat for Humanity about needed renovations to their home. The renovations would help with health related issues that Shaunte and some of her children were having, such as breathing

problems attributed to mold in the house. Habitat helped Shaunte and her family get a plan in place for the construction, but they were missing a key ingredient: the resources to pay for the extensive renovations.

That's when Shaunte found herself at EnergyUnited's Statesville office with her cousin to pay an energy bill. When a customer care representative learned of Shaunte's situation, she encouraged her to apply for a grant from the EnergyUnited Foundation. In November 2015, the nine-member board of the EnergyUnited Foundation approved \$10,000 to pay for the costs of renovations on Shaunte's home.

The funds for this program come directly from EnergyUnited members who contribute to Operation Round Up. Each month, over 65,000 members choose to "round up" their energy bills to the nearest dollar. The excess change is placed into a fund and is then donated to families in need across EnergyUnited's 19-county service area by the EnergyUnited

Foundation board. The goal is to assist community members with bills and expenses that they cannot afford due to a catastrophic health issue, loss of a job, loss of a spouse or other situations that may hinder a person from having the necessary finances to support their family's health and home.

For Shaunte, the \$10,000 from the EnergyUnited Foundation, combined with a \$5,634 gift from Our Towns Habitat for Humanity, was essential to providing a safe home for her family. Renovations to her home included replacing old carpet with laminate floor to eliminate respiratory problems, leveling the floors, repairing the HVAC system, updating the electrical system, replacing a range hood, replacing kitchen cabinets and countertops to remediate mold and repairing



**Continued on page 2**

## Operation Round Up Continued...

before



after



plumbing fixtures in the kitchen and bathrooms to improve the drainage system. The family was also able to replace handrails and steps throughout the house and remove decaying ceiling tile and insulation in one of the bedrooms. Jeremy Bushay, Shaunte's 13-year-old son, recently created a short video to highlight some of the renovations and repairs made to the home. You can see his video by searching for the EnergyUnited Electric Cooperative channel on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and going to the EnergyUnited Foundation playlist.

The renovation project has truly been a community effort, and Shaunte and her family have been directly involved from the beginning, going above and beyond the 15 hours of "sweat equity" required by Habitat for Humanity. "They have really put in a lot of time and dedication to make these renovations a reality," said Jamie Hofmeister-Cline, Repair Program Coordinator for Habitat.

"We are so grateful for the help we've been given," said Shaunte during a recent visit to her home. "God knows this assistance really helped us out. We sow seeds when we barely have anything. We are faith driven. We teach our children to

put God first." Shaunte is a hard-working, loving mom to her eight children. She grew up in Manhattan, New York City, and spent time working as a park enforcement patrol officer before relocating to North Carolina with her family in 2010. She is now taking classes at Liberty University in interior design and writing poetry in her spare time. Her husband, Jeffrey, is a gospel singer, songwriter and an ordained minister. Their renovated home creates the perfect backdrop for a family rooted in love, faith and joy.

If you know of someone in need in your community, reach out and encourage them to apply for a grant from the EnergyUnited Foundation. Applications can be found in your Member Account Portal on [www.EnergyUnited.com](http://www.EnergyUnited.com) or by contacting one of our customer care representatives at 1-800-522-3793. We'd like to offer our sincere thanks to all members who currently "round up" and give to Operation Round Up! Your donation each month is critical to supporting families in our community. If you are not currently participating in this uplifting program and would like to, please contact our customer care department at 1-800-522-3793.

## Twice in a Lifetime: Austin Story, EnergyUnited's Fastest Lineman



All of EnergyUnited's linemen recently completed a pole top rescue training exercise. As part of the training, each lineman was required to climb a pole and rescue a training mannequin that was hanging from the utility pole. The lineman must then be able to secure the mannequin using clips and ropes,

safely bring it back to the ground and conclude with CPR. The linemen must perform in less than five minutes in order to maintain their certification to work on power lines.

After all linemen at EnergyUnited finished the pole top rescue, our safety team identified the lineman with the fastest time and a runner-up to compete against other North Carolina electric cooperative linemen in the finals in Raleigh, NC. Austin Story, from the Foothills region, is one of EnergyUnited's youngest and fastest linemen and will be representing EnergyUnited, with a winning time of 1:45.60. Levi Fagan, from the Lake Norman region, is runner-up with a time of 2:02.22.

Winning this competition is really exciting for Austin as *it's happened twice in his lifetime*. Austin represented (continued on page 4)



## Your Vote Matters

You may have heard yourself referred to as a “Member” by EnergyUnited in publications like the *Connect* newsletter or in conversations with customer care representatives. But what does it mean to be a member of EnergyUnited? We are an electric cooperative, which means that anyone who purchases energy from this company also owns a share of the company, and has a voice in how we conduct business. One of the most important ways to use that voice is by voting in the board of directors election.

While the day-to-day operations of EnergyUnited are handled by a leadership team, the long-term strategic vision for the company is partially determined by a democratically elected board of directors. These directors are members, just like you. They live and work in the communities they represent, so that they can bring the needs and concerns of your community to the table when making important decisions about the future of EnergyUnited.

It is important that each of our members shows their support for this cooperative by voting in the upcoming board of directors election. To facilitate the voting process, we’ve made it easy to cast your vote. Members can vote both through the mail and online. All members will receive either a hard copy ballot in the mail or an email with instructions on how to vote electronically. The board of directors election will launch on August 1 and end at 11:59 p.m. EST, September 6. For any

questions related to the election process, please contact Survey & Ballot Systems by phone at 952-974-2339 or via email at support@directvote.net. For all other questions, contact a customer care representative at EnergyUnited.

Electric cooperatives were built upon communities joining together to support their neighbors and bring electricity to rural areas. I’d like to extend my sincerest thanks to all members who join together in the coming months to vote for our board of directors. Each of our members are part of what makes this cooperative strong. With your direction, we will continue to provide safe, affordable and reliable power for years to come.

### 2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION



## VOTE & WIN

one of three \$100 VISA GIFT CARDS



OR



### HOW CAN I VOTE?

Online at [directvote.net/euec](http://directvote.net/euec) or by hard copy ballot via U.S. Mail. Voting doesn’t just ensure that you’re a part of the democratic process. It could also give you the chance to win \$100! Voting begins on August 1 and ends at 11:59 p.m. EST, September 6. Any member who votes either online or mails in a ballot will be eligible for the drawing to receive 1 of 3 \$100 VISA gift cards. Be sure to vote and you’ll have a chance to win a \$100 VISA gift card.

### WHY SHOULD I VOTE?

The board of directors that you elect has the final say on all major decisions made by your cooperative, from setting policies to determining the rates we charge for energy. It’s important for members to vote in the election as we need to have a minimum of one percent of our membership vote to validate the election.

### 2016 EnergyUnited Annual Meeting

#### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Attend the annual meeting at 6:00pm to hear results of the election! Pre-registration is not required.

#### STATESVILLE CIVIC CENTER

301 South Center Street  
Statesville, NC 28677

(continued from page 2)



EnergyUnited at the statewide competition in Raleigh in 2014, with a time of 1:50.44, which earned him sixth place. He hopes this time that he will improve his score. While time is one aspect of the competition, Austin made no mistakes with his work skills or rescue techniques, which he plans to do again this year. "I'm very excited and thankful to be going to Raleigh again to compete and to represent EnergyUnited," said Austin. "I feel very honored that I've been given this second chance. I'm tickled to death. It's so surreal to me."

At the upcoming competition, the participants must react to a scenario where a fellow worker is unconscious atop a utility pole. Each competitor must call out to the training mannequin, run to the truck and make a mayday radio call to the dispatch center, grab his tools, put on climbing gear and scale 20 feet up a utility pole.

When he is at the top, he must rig a rope, rescue and lower the training mannequin to the ground safely and perform CPR. This competition pits linemen against the clock and each other as they demonstrate essential lifesaving skills. Each competitor had to win a local competition in order to advance to the championship in our state capital.

The event will be held on the lawn of the North Carolina Electric Cooperatives building in Raleigh on Tuesday, September 27. Best of luck to all linemen, but especially to our own Austin Story!

Be sure to check for updates on Austin on EnergyUnited's social media platforms:

[www.facebook.com/EnergyUnited](http://www.facebook.com/EnergyUnited)

[www.twitter.com/EnergyUnitedEMC](http://www.twitter.com/EnergyUnitedEMC)

Watch his video, and the video from his 2014 run, by searching for the EnergyUnited Electric Cooperative channel on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).



## EnergyUnited Board-Appointed 2016 Credentials and Election Committee

Each year the board of directors appoints a Credentials and Elections Committee made up of no less than three and no more than nine member volunteers to supervise the election of directors. The Credentials and Elections Committee will meet on Thursday, September 15, 2016, just prior to the commencement of the Annual Meeting, to review and certify the 2016 election of directors.

### The 2016 Credentials and Election Committee

#### District 1

**Steve Tulbert**  
765 Union Grove Rd  
Union Grove, NC 28689

**Danny Nelson Cook**  
469 Cattleman's Rd  
Statesville, NC 28625

**Sara Wallace**  
266 St. Matthews Rd  
Mocksville, NC 27028

#### District 3

**Carroll Gray Smith**  
7250 Linwood Southmont Rd  
Lexington, NC 27292

**Tony Oszlanyi**  
121 River Birch Cir  
Mooresville, NC 28115

**Tracy Palmisano**  
9153 Washam Potts Rd  
Cornelius, NC 28031

#### District 2

**James H. Grogan**  
1855 Dodgetown Rd  
Walnut Cove, NC 27052

**Kenneth D. Meredith**  
220 Meredith Ln  
Winston-Salem, NC 27107

**Jane Everhart**  
701 Sam Sharp Rd  
Linwood, NC 27299



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Please send questions, comments and story ideas to **Maureen Moore**, Communications Manager at [maureen.moore@energyunited.com](mailto:maureen.moore@energyunited.com).



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EnergyUnited Electric Cooperative

**H. Wayne Wilkins** Chief Executive Officer

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.