

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME: JACKSON LITTLE LEAGUE RECEIVES ANNUAL MIKE ANDERSON MEMORIAL

Longtime employee and General Manager Mike Anderson was the living, breathing definition of concern for community. He exemplified this seventh cooperative principle through his actions and dedication to the surrounding community. This year, Mike’s legacy will carry on through young athletes with the Mike Anderson Memorial donation presented to Jackson Little League.

“Jackson Little League is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to providing the youth of our community with an opportunity to play the game of baseball or softball,” shares Jackson Little League President Chad Ellingson. “Volunteer coaches teach the fundamentals of the sport, promote sportsmanship, encourage teamwork, and ensure that the

players have fun and grow in their skills.”

The Black River Falls portion of Jackson Little League composes of 14 board members, 60 head and assistant coaches, 32 teams, and about 350 players aged 5 to 14. “There are nine communities in the Jackson County Little League Co-op, with Black River Falls as the league manager,” shares Chad.

In addition to volunteer coaches, parents/coaches all help with the concessions stands, which is one of the main funding sources for the Little League. “The league relies on continuous hard work and dedication from its numerous volunteers,” Chad explains.

Jackson Little League plans to distribute the funds equally among Black River Falls, Alma Center, Blair-



Line Superintendent Eric Steien presents Jackson Little League President Chad Ellingson with the Mike Anderson Memorial check.

Taylor, and Melrose-Mindoro. “The funds may be utilized to purchase either umpiring or catching equipment to provide maximum safety and protection to those individuals,” concludes Chad.

ON TO THE NEXT CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Jackson Electric has been awarding scholarships to deserving students who desire to further their education following high school graduation. This annual youth scholarship program offers up to ten \$1,000 scholarships to students whose parents/guardians are active members of Jackson Electric. In addition, Jackson Electric offers a \$1,500 youth ambassador scholarship to a qualified student who participated in Jackson Electric’s youth ambassador program.

Scholarship awards are funded through Jackson Electric’s unclaimed capital credits. Every year Jackson Electric submits these funds to the Federated Youth Foundation. These funds can only be used for scholarships and qualified charitable giving.

Jackson Electric gave \$11,500 in scholarship awards to students in the class of 2024.



Amanda Dalton
Melrose-Mindoro H.S.



Breanne Nortman
Black River Falls H.S.



Chloe Gunderson
Osseo-Fairchild H.S.



Ella Jerome
Sparta H.S.



Katie Sedelbauer
Black River Falls H.S.



Kaylee Wyss
Lincoln H.S.



Kaylee Youngthunder
Black River Falls H.S.



Luke Fischer
Lincoln H.S.



Mary Dux
Neillsville H.S.



Wyatt Madvig
Black River Falls H.S.



Ella Halverson
Youth Ambassador
Scholarship

*“Your
imagination
is your
preview of
life’s coming
attractions.”*

– Albert Einstein

YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM PREPARES STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE

A note from Brandi:

Jackson Electric's youth ambassador program was established in 2010 because there wasn't a program of its kind available to educate youth in our service territory on the cooperative business model while developing important leadership skills and demonstrating concern for the community. Since then, the program has educated more than 89 students, including me.

I participated in the program from 2012–2014. I was the first student from Lincoln High School to participate and recruited other students from my school to get involved and represent that area of Jackson Electric's service territory. My participation opened the door to a summer internship and eventually a full-time position at Jackson Electric. I am grateful for the leadership opportunities this program provided and the opportunity to shift roles and lead the youth ambassadors during my first few years at Jackson Electric.

It's hard to believe that it has already been five years since my first group of youth ambassadors graduated. I had an opportunity to catch up with a few of these students. I'm happy to hear of their successes and the lasting impact the program has had.

Rebecca Ross

When Rebecca Ross graduated from Black River Falls High School in 2019, she originally planned to pursue an agricultural degree and enrolled in the Agri-business program for one semester at Western Technical College (WTC). "I decided that ag was more of a hobby for me than a career," shares Rebecca. "I was always interested in the medical field and decided to switch to the Medical Administrative Professional program."



In April 2022, Rebecca graduated from WTC with her Medical Administrative Professional degree. After working in the field, she realized that she would be happier working in direct patient care. "My mom is a nurse and inspired me," Rebecca says. "I'm a hands-on person, and I realized I enjoy the caretaking aspect of the medical field."

Rebecca is set to graduate from Chippewa Valley Technical College in December 2025 with her associate

degree in nursing. She currently works part-time at Pine View Terrace in Black River Falls. "After graduation, I plan to stay in the area and work as a bedside RN," she says.

Participation in the youth ambassador program enhanced Rebecca's volunteerism and leadership skills. She recalls the many community service activities she was part of during the program. The program also taught her about collaborating with others to achieve a common goal. She has carried this into her adult life. "I am currently the secretary of the Jackson County Dairy Committee, and I also volunteer my time to help with the youth at the fair," shares Rebecca. "I also plan to join the nursing club at CVTC this fall."

Hearing from Rebecca, we know that her youth ambassador experience had a positive impact on her young adult life. "I never would have joined if I didn't hear about it from classmates and how much it impacted them," Rebecca says. "The program taught me that getting outside of your comfort zone is important for personal growth. Even if you are not members of the cooperative, you can still benefit from participating in this great program."

Landon Lockington

Landon Lockington graduated with the Melrose-Mindoro class of 2019 and spent the next four years at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa. He graduated in 2023 with a degree in kinesiology. "I played football all four years of college," shares Landon.

Involvement in sports developed Landon's leadership skills throughout his life. He was able to apply these skills in college where he served as the captain of the college football team and had the opportunity to spend two weeks in the Bahamas during college. "While in the Bahamas, we visited local schools and foster homes," he shares. "We taught children and students various American games and activities."

The youth ambassador program enhanced Landon's leadership skills by providing him with the program's focus on the community and volunteerism. "Being a youth ambassador helped show me how much people appreciate volunteer work and helping out whenever possible," says Landon. "I have tried to carry that on through college and now my adult life."

Landon is currently the manager at Best Kept Portables, where he has been employed since high school. After graduating from college, he compared the kinesiology jobs and benefits and decided to stay with Best Kept Portables. "My next goal is to build a home," Landon concludes.





Emma Goodenough

Following graduation from Black River Falls High School in 2019, Emma Goodenough went on to study at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. She then transferred to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where she is currently pursuing a degree in nursing. “I always knew I



wanted to work in the medical field, but I wasn’t exactly sure on what I wanted to do,” shares Emma. “I am 100% certain now that nursing is where I want to be.”

Emma resides in Eau Claire and is working as a Certified Nursing Assistant during the summer. Following graduation, she plans to work as a nurse in the Eau Claire area. After dealing with a serious illness over the past couple of years, Emma is eager to get involved in the community again. “Now that I am healthy, I look forward to taking on more leadership roles and joining

organizations when I return to college in the fall,” shares Emma. “Volunteering is something that is important to me, and I am also planning to join UW-Eau Claire’s Student Nursing Association.”

The youth ambassador program had a positive impact on Emma and her future career as a nurse. She enjoyed all aspects of the program, but her favorite part was volunteering at the area nursing care facilities. “I will never forget the residents there, and I think of them often,” she shares. “This experience has driven me to be the person I am today and pursue a career in the medical field.”

NEW EMPLOYEE CONTINUES 30-YEAR CO-OP CAREER AT JACKSON ELECTRIC

She may be new to Jackson Electric, but she has over 30 years of experience in the electric cooperative business. Janet Brandli has joined the Jackson Electric team in the communications coordinator role. “I grew up in Price County, Wis. (Ogema/Phillips), and spent the last 31 years in Chippewa County near Cornell,” she says.

Janet holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Crown College and 30 years of member service, billing, and operations experience at Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative (CVEC). These skills and years of knowledge will transfer well into her new position, where she will be assisting with member services, social media, website development, and article writing. “I’m willing to help wherever I can and learn how I can apply my previous experience to the processes at Jackson Electric,” Janet says.



After her many years at CVEC, Janet was excited to accept Jackson Electric’s job offer and remain in the electric cooperative family. Janet and her husband recently moved to the area due to a change in her husband’s employment.

“I am excited to be more involved with the member services side of the cooperative,” shares Janet. “Though I started out in member services, I have mainly been involved with the operations department, working with new members and coordinating jobs with electricians.”

Outside of the cooperative world, you’ll find Janet playing piano, which was a skill and hobby she developed at the age of 5. She also taught lessons for 27 years in addition to her co-op job. “I have since resigned from formally teaching and look forward to working on my own skills and the enjoyment of playing and composing,” she explains. “My husband is a pastor, and I also enjoy spending time outside of work in ministry with him. I am on the leadership team of a non-profit organization, Sparking Hope Women’s Ministry, and I love organizing our women’s event.”

Janet looks forward to this new opportunity to serve the Jackson Electric membership. “I am very thankful to the Jackson Electric leadership team for giving me the opportunity to join the team,” she concludes.



MAY PHOTO WINNER

Congratulations to Jane Tande from rural Black River Falls on winning the May photo contest. Jane will receive a \$25 energy credit on the next billing statement.

If you have a photo that you feel expresses life in Jackson Electric’s service territory, submit it in July’s photo contest for a chance to win an energy credit. Go to jacelec.com and click the Photo Contest button to enter.



JACKSON ELECTRIC WELCOMES NEW FINANCE MANAGER

“I would be lying if I said I wanted to be an accountant when I grew up,” states Jackson Electric’s new finance manager, Bradley Elvaker.



“Some kids say they want to be a doctor or teacher, but before the age of 10 I was pretty much set on being a WWE wrestler. To say the least, that dream did fade, and reality set in.”

Bradley grew up near Taylor, in the Franklin Township. After graduating from Blair-Taylor High School in 2015, he moved to La Crosse to study at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, where he earned his Bachelor of Accountancy degree. Employment led him to the Minneapolis/St. Paul area where he lived for 2.5 years before moving to Onalaska in 2022, where he currently resides.

“Working in public accounting over the past several years, I have been able to develop teamwork, communication, and project management skills that I look forward to bringing to Jackson Electric,” he shares. “During my interview, I heard about the positive team dynamic, and I will do my best to maintain, if not further, that dynamic in my new role.”

At his most recent employer, Bradley worked directly with income tax compliance. In his day-to-day responsibilities at Jackson Electric, he will provide financial analysis and advice to the general manager and board of directors to develop and implement a strategic financial plan for the cooperative, plan and prepare the annual budget, oversee monthly

operation reports and journal entries, understand member service responsibilities, and maintain an ongoing working relationship with the team. “Coming from a service role, I am excited to start establishing work relationships and serve the members by holding true to the cooperative principles,” Bradley says.

Bradley likes to spend his time outdoors taking care of his list of projects to do around the house after spending most of the day indoors. He says he’s also a friends-and-family type of guy. Whether it’s a random get-together or celebra-

tion, he’ll be there. “I am by no means a fantastic cook, but sometimes after a long day I use a new recipe to unwind or really test out the skills that I’d like to think I have,” Bradley shares.

Asked his idea of a perfect day, Bradley notes that you can tell he is easily pleased and very much looking forward to summer: “My perfect day would be in the water or lounging on a beach most of the day with friends and family. Then, I would end the night with a bonfire, good tunes on a speaker, and a cold drink in hand,” he concludes.

WELCOME, TRENTON AND NICK

Jackson Electric welcomed two new team members, Trenton Tondola and Nick Matejka as 1,000-hour laborers. Both graduated from Chippewa Valley Technical College’s Electrical Power Distribution course in March. This position is often an opportunity for graduates of this program to advance into future electric lineworker apprenticeships and careers. Both say they are happy to be here.

Trenton

Where are you from? Humbird

How did you become interested in this career path?

“My dad is a lineman, and his pride in his work inspired me to follow in his footsteps.”

What are you looking forward to in this position? “I hope to gain experience and learn more about the trade. My end goal is to become a journeyman lineman.”

Hobbies/what you like to do in your spare time? Deer gun season, some bow hunting, lots of hiking.



Nick

Where are you from? Whitehall


How did you become interested in this career path?

“I have a few friends and family members that are linemen and enjoy their career.”

What are you looking forward to in this position? “I hope to learn as much as I can from the crew and eventually become a journeyman lineman.”

Hobbies/what you like to do in your spare time? Fishing, bow and gun hunting.



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