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I had the pleasure of being assigned to the Cullman Electric Cooperative during this year's Educator Exchange. The hospitality that I experienced at Cullman EC was above and beyond the call of duty for the week. The employees were so generous to give of their time and energy in order for me to observe the everyday operations of the cooperative, both in the office and out in the field.

The importance and regard the cooperative has for their customers was obvious immediately. For example, customers are called members, because they are a part of the deciding body of the organization. The cooperative's main focus is on member services and placing members' needs first. I spent a portion of my time in the member services' department, observing how the cooperative handles members' needs. I saw the chain of action that occurs when a member calls with an issue and how that issue is resolved, from the service order being placed to line workers being called to the scene.

I spent time in the dispatch area where leading technology is used to track Cullman EC vehicles and send employees to the scene of a repair or new job. I was impressed with the amount of technology that is being utilized throughout the cooperative. Electronic mapping systems, meters that can be remotely accessed, and laptops in every truck are just some of the technologies the cooperative is using.

Due to the amount of technology that exists in the workforce today, it is important that students are exposed to new technology in the classroom. I would like to accomplish this through using more technology in my career coaching. There is an abundant amount of information available on the internet that students can use in job hunting and learning more about different career paths. In addition, I would like to share with students the types of technology that today's industries, like the cooperative, are using.

One thing I took away from Cullman EC is the amount of teamwork that exists among the employees. When there is a storm or power outage, employees have to work together in order to resolve the issue. For this reason, I plan to implement more teamwork within my classroom curriculum where students have to work together to accomplish goals.

Because of the nature of my work in career coaching, it was very beneficial for me to learn the career options available within the power industry. I plan to share the experience and education that is required for individuals who are interested in working as a line worker, member services representative, or engineer with the students that I meet. Individuals interested in accounting, information technology, or public relations can also pursue a career within the power industry.

At Cullman EC, employees have the opportunity to grow within their careers. Employees are provided with opportunities to become more familiar with different areas of the cooperative and continue their education. With the rising concern of new employees changing jobs multiple times, high school students should know the benefit of committing to a company and enjoying the longevity of a

position. Students can be aware of the pride that comes with working in industries that support their communities and benefit others.