

# JEMCOnews

A PUBLICATION FOR JACKSON EMC MEMBERS



## Surprise!

EDUCATORS AWARDED BRIGHT IDEAS  
GRANTS FROM JACKSON EMC



DECEMBER 2020 | IN THIS ISSUE

INSIDE: AN IMPORTANT UPDATE TO BROADBAND EXPANSION



# PROTECTING YOUR MEMBER INVESTMENT

**As your president and CEO, it's my job to protect your interests. I'm passionate about this cooperative and protecting what we've worked to achieve.**

Recently, an issue has come up that could cost members millions of dollars each year. The issue is the rental rates we charge to communication companies, like those that offer broadband to attach their lines to our poles (commonly called pole attachment fees). As I recently shared in *JEMCO News*, this issue is due to be decided by the Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) on December 15. Cable and telecommunications companies have demanded that commissioners arbitrarily lower the pole attachment fees charged by Georgia's electric cooperatives to subsidize their business. If they are successful, those dollars will essentially be taken out of your pocket and placed into the pockets of shareholders at those companies. And even worse, these companies cannot be held accountable to use the financial windfall to expand broadband here in Georgia.

Our argument is simple. As a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative, all of our assets (like poles and equipment) are paid for and owned by our hard-working members. We need to charge a fee for using those facilities that fairly recovers our members' investment to purchase, build, install, maintain and replace those facilities. Maintaining this infrastructure is a huge expense for the cooperative and one you pay for each month with your electric bill.

When Tropical Storm Zeta blew through our service area a little more than a month ago, nearly 100 poles snapped and had to be replaced. Jackson EMC linemen worked around the clock to repair this infrastructure at great expense. The cable and communication companies tethered to our lines didn't pay for any of it. This "maintenance" is included in their yearly pole attachment rental fee.

The storm knocked out power for more than 77,000 of our members, which we restored in three days. Some of you may have waited much longer to have your phone, cable or internet restored.

And, now these companies want more from you, our hard-working members. Cable and telecommunications companies claim co-ops charge too much for rental fees, creating a barrier to the expansion of broadband in the state. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have presented a solution to the PSC that will protect our members financially, and offer a huge incentive to cable and telecommunications companies to expand broadband to unserved areas of Georgia.

We have proposed the "One Buck Deal," which would reduce our pole attachment fees to only \$1 per year for five years for new attachments in unserved areas. In fact, we welcome these companies to our poles because we know these services improve your life. This type of incentive ensures cable companies expand broadband to areas that need it most and provides them five years to recoup their investment.

For the past few months, we've talked to members about the decision facing the Georgia PSC. The elected members of the PSC will decide the fair rental rate to charge cable and communication companies attaching to the poles you pay for, through your monthly electric rates.

If cable and telecom companies get the low, below real cost rates they seek, it will cost Jackson EMC and our member-owners more than \$1.5 million every year. As a not-for-profit, the only way for us to replace those lost dollars is reduce our services or increase electric rates.

Rest assured: I will continue to fight to protect your interests as member-owners of this cooperative.

You can learn more about the issue and how Georgia's electric cooperatives are proposing a fair rate and a solution to incentivize broadband expansion by visiting [emcs4ruralbroadband.com](http://emcs4ruralbroadband.com). Follow Jackson EMC on social media for more information about the PSC's decision.

**Thank you for taking time to learn about the issues that impact the business of your cooperative. Your involvement is what makes a cooperative – a cooperative.**

Chip Jakins, President/CEO



## LOOKING FOR A DEAL ON SMART THERMOSTATS OR LED LIGHTING? SAVINGS AVAILABLE AT JACKSON EMC MARKETPLACE

At Jackson EMC Marketplace – our online store offering energy efficient products – you can find deals on smart thermostats, lighting, smart home products, and products to improve your home's air quality and water efficiency.

Plus, Jackson EMC members receive instant rebates on select smart thermostats purchased through the online store.



SHOP OUR ONLINE ENERGY EFFICIENCY STORE AT [JACKSONEMCMARKETPLACE.COM](http://JACKSONEMCMARKETPLACE.COM).



# Applications Open FOR 2021 YOUTH TOUR EXPERIENCE

Student leaders in high schools across Jackson EMC's service area can apply to participate in the 2021 Youth Tour Experience, sponsored by Georgia's electric cooperatives.

Students will participate in an interactive, virtual leadership experience with live Q&A sessions with elected officials, and business and community leaders. Featured sessions will include community development training, networking, current issues, and the cooperative business model.

The Youth Tour Experience is scheduled for morning sessions June 21-25, 2021.

Current high school sophomores and juniors with demonstrated potential for leadership, academic success and community service should apply for the 2021 Youth Tour Experience by visiting [jacksonemc.com/wyt](http://jacksonemc.com/wyt). The deadline to apply is Jan. 29, 2021.

The Youth Tour Experience is an alternative leadership program from the Washington Youth Tour being offered by Georgia's electric cooperatives, due to COVID-19 restrictions.

## STUDENTS CAN APPLY FOR \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIP

Jackson EMC is accepting applications for the annual Walter Harrison Scholarship, which provides \$1,000 for academic expenses to students pursuing post-secondary education at Georgia colleges and technical schools. **Applications are due by January 22, 2021.**

Applicants must be accepted, or enrolled currently, as a full- or part-time student, at any accredited two- or four-year university, college, or vocational-technical institute in Georgia. Student applicants must live in a primary residence served by Jackson EMC.

The scholarship is merit-based, and students are evaluated on financial need, grade point average, academic standing, scholastic honors and community involvement. Students must complete an application and submit a biographical sketch with educational goals.

The Walter Harrison Scholarship is named in honor of a leader in the state and national electric cooperative movements. Eleven students across Georgia will be awarded scholarships, which are sponsored by Georgia's 41 electric cooperatives.



TO RECEIVE AN APPLICATION, VISIT [JACKSONEMC.COM/WALTERHARRISONSCSCHOLARSHIP](http://JACKSONEMC.COM/WALTERHARRISONSCSCHOLARSHIP).



# Surprise!

## EDUCATORS AWARDED BRIGHT IDEAS GRANTS FROM JACKSON EMC

Jackson EMC employees recently delivered big checks to 47 teachers in 25 middle schools to fund their innovative class projects. Overall, the cooperative awarded \$64,000 in Bright Ideas grants for projects representing a variety of disciplines.

“Even though the learning environment is quite different this year, our teachers have created innovative projects and lessons for both students learning digitally and in-person,” said Karen Ewing, community relations representative for Jackson EMC.

Now in its sixth year, the Bright Ideas grant program awards up to \$2,000 annually to middle school teachers in Jackson EMC’s service area for innovative class projects that would go unfunded otherwise. Educators for sixth through eighth grades can apply for a grant.

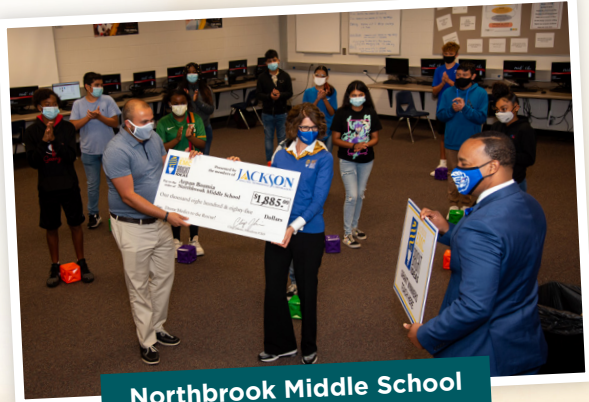
The 2020 Bright Ideas grants represent a variety of disciplines, including engineering, music, agriculture, physics, computer programming, math, business, English Language Arts and more.

Funded projects must involve the students directly, provide a creative learning experience with ongoing benefits through innovative teaching methods, create opportunities for teamwork and support the continuous improvement of education in Georgia. For this year’s grants, teachers submitted project ideas that could be done virtually by students.

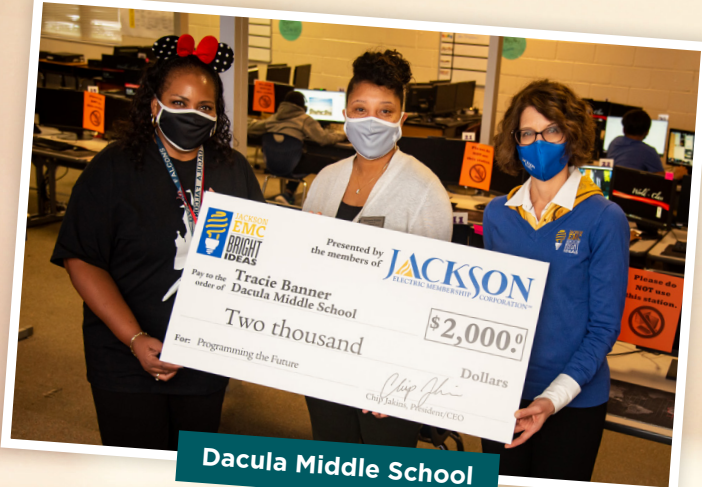
The period to apply for a Bright Ideas grant for the 2021-2022 school year will open during the summer.



Chestatee Academy of Inquiry & Talent Development



Northbrook Middle School



Dacula Middle School



Jones Middle School



East Jackson Comprehensive High School (Eighth Grade)

SCHOOL NAME	AWARD	EDUCATOR	PROJECT
Arts & Innovation Magnet Program	\$1,880.00	Ashley Bailey	Innovation Station: Robotics
Banks County Middle School	\$2,000.00	Lori Taylor	Rubber Band Racers
Barrow Arts & Sciences Academy	\$1,262.00	Ysheena Lyles	The Bigger Picture
Bear Creek Middle School	\$664.00	Katherine Huberty	Raised Garden Beds
Bear Creek Middle School	\$1,620.00	Donna Morris	Differentiated Digital Learning
Bear Creek Middle School	\$1,935.00	Kellie Rutledge	Math Cam!
Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School	\$1,260.00	Barb Saunders	Still Growing at Home
Cherokee Bluff Middle School	\$294.00	Stacy Loverde	Flexible Engagement for Special Needs Learners
Chestatee Academy of Inquiry & Talent Development	\$1,900.00	Dawn Hudgins	Fighting for the Lives and Rights of Others
Chestatee Academy of Inquiry & Talent Development	\$1,590.00	Glen Lawson	Scientists Read Here
Chestatee Academy of Inquiry & Talent Development	\$2,000.00	Jeanne Rountree	Adventure Virtual Reality
Coleman Middle School	\$1,461.00	Sheila Harmony	Greenhouses, Gardens and Green Thumbs
Da Vinci Academy at South Hall	\$1,533.00	Sara Atwill	The Interconnected Underwater World
Dacula Middle School	\$2,000.00	Tracie Banner	Programming the Future
East Jackson Comprehensive High School (8th Grade)	\$1,140.00	Tyler Gamble	Print to Learn
East Jackson Comprehensive High School (8th Grade)	\$528.00	Amelia Johnson-Scofield	Techno Savvy Science
East Jackson Comprehensive High School (8th Grade)	\$1,135.00	Bucky Sorrow	1-2-3 Baseball
East Jackson Comprehensive High School (8th Grade)	\$338.00	Jessie Wood	Virtuous Virtual For All
East Jackson Middle School	\$1,626.00	Christopher Strickland	Chorus for Community
Gainesville Middle School	\$558.00	Linda Kennedy-Murray	Garden Access for Everyone
Gainesville Middle School	\$1,800.00	Dory Moore	Digital Music for the 21st Century
Gainesville Middle School	\$1,980.00	Jane Reed	Portable Lab Station
Haymon-Morris Middle School	\$2,000.00	Nancy Murray	Pen Reader
Hull Middle School	\$1,377.00	Aimee Burgamy	Digital Drawing with a PEN
Hull Middle School	\$447.00	Beth Feustel	Koozie Maker
Hull Middle School	\$645.00	Susan O'Neill	Sensory Tools for Special Needs Learners
Hull Middle School	\$1,856.00	Kari Salomon	Green Communities
Jefferson Middle School	\$947.00	Tracy Pratt	English Learner's Lab
Jones Middle School	\$2,000.00	Maile Steimer	Classrooms without Borders: Immersive Learning with Virtual Reality
Jordan Middle School	\$1,177.00	Lori Leigh Alderman	Tactile Learning Beyond Walls
Lumpkin County Middle School	\$402.00	Mariam Brunner	Virtual Marketplace
Lumpkin County Middle School	\$1,105.00	Heather Rairigh	It's SEW FUNDamental!
Northbrook Middle School	\$1,885.00	Arpan Bosmia	Drone Medics to the Rescue!
Radloff Middle School	\$2,000.00	Celia Ayenesazan	Sustainable Communities: A Model for the Future
Russell Middle School	\$840.00	Angela Brown	The Mean and MAD Scientist
Russell Middle School	\$349.00	Megan Scott	Nearpod in Action
Twin Rivers Middle School	\$1,980.00	Andrew Cox	Radioactive Radon
Twin Rivers Middle School	\$739.00	Sarah Farr	Literacy Through Social Studies
Twin Rivers Middle School	\$1,990.00	Anna Herdliska	Microscopy from Miles Away
Twin Rivers Middle School	\$2,000.00	Jason Hurd	Driving By With Auto AI
Twin Rivers Middle School	\$2,000.00	Jessica Morse	Wireless for Zoom Lessons
West Jackson Middle School	\$502.00	Kasey Bryson	Wonderful Wood Works
West Jackson Middle School	\$1,982.00	Dana Harrell	When We Lift Our Voices
West Jackson Middle School	\$953.00	Raechel Hunt	Books for Digital Learning
West Jackson Middle School	\$1,532.00	Caralena Luthi	3D Physics Car Derby
Westside Middle School	\$1,523.00	Jennifer Deckard	Let's Get Digital, Physical!
Westside Middle School	\$1,265.00	Tamra Morris	Bridging the Gap Through Digital Microscopes

A TOTAL OF  
**\$64,000**  
 GRANTED THROUGH  
 THE BRIGHT  
 IDEAS GRANT  
 PROGRAM

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BRIGHT IDEAS GRANT PROGRAM, VISIT [JACKSONEMC.COM/BRIGHTIDEAS](http://JACKSONEMC.COM/BRIGHTIDEAS).

## OPERATION ROUND UP: YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

The Jackson EMC Foundation board of directors awarded a total

**\$84,030 IN GRANTS**

during its October meeting, including \$79,030 to organizations and \$5,000 to an individual.

### ORGANIZATIONAL GRANT RECIPIENTS:

**\$15,000 | Habitat for Humanity, Athens Area**, to provide HVAC mechanical expenses, cabinets, paint and trim for two homes in its "Kinda Tiny" program, which targets individuals who make 50% or below of the HUD established average median household income in Athens-Clarke County.

**\$15,000 | For Her Glory**, a Gainesville agency that provides breast cancer patients in Banks, Barrow, Franklin, Gwinnett, Hall, Jackson and Lumpkin counties with items that are not covered by insurance, such as wigs, bras, compression sleeves and gloves.

**\$15,000 | SISU of Georgia, Inc.**, a Gainesville nonprofit organization providing educational,

therapeutic, nursing and family support services to children with disabilities in Banks, Barrow, Gwinnett, Hall, Jackson and Lumpkin counties, to support the Early Intervention Program that provides special needs children with classroom instruction, individualized therapy and nursing services.

**\$10,000 | Georgia Healthy Family Alliance**, for its Tar Wars-Hall County Strike Force program, an anti-tobacco and anti-vaping education and prevention program targeting school-aged children in Hall County schools, to provide curriculum supplies.

**\$10,000 | NOA's Ark, Inc.**, for its Trauma Counseling Program, designed to serve adults and children in Gwinnett, Hall and Lumpkin counties recovering from family violence, child sexual assault, and dating violence.

**\$7,500 | Lekotek of Georgia**, a charitable organization that provides accessible play, adaptive technology and toys, information and resources to children with disabilities from Banks, Barrow, Clarke, Franklin, Gwinnett, Hall, Jackson, Lumpkin and Madison counties, to provide services through its Gwinnett satellite office.

**\$5,000 | Northeast Georgia History Center**, in Gainesville, for its Land of Promise exhibit renovation and updated content, which will complement state-mandated school curriculums and educational programming that is open to all schools in the Jackson EMC service area.

**\$1,530 | Enotah CASA, Inc.**, to purchase food for its Backpack Buddy program, which provides six meals, snacks and drinks each week to children identified by Family Advocacy as food insecure.

### INDIVIDUAL GRANT RECIPIENTS:

**\$5,000 |** to help a disabled citizen purchase an HVAC unit.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING LATEST GRANT AWARDS AND HOW TO APPLY FOR A GRANT, VISIT [JACKSONEMC.COM/FOUNDATION](http://JACKSONEMC.COM/FOUNDATION).

## MEMBERS MAKE IT DELICIOUS

### Macaroni & Cheese Complete Dinner



#### INGREDIENTS:

- 4 Tbsp. flour
- 4 Tbsp. butter
- 3 cups milk
- 8 cups extra sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup diced smoked ham
- 1 large jalapeño pepper, deseeded and chopped fine
- 1 lb. elbow noodles, cooked

#### DIRECTIONS:

Melt butter in saucepan on medium heat. Stir in flour. Add milk and stir until smooth. Add 4 cups of cheese; stir. Add ham and jalapeño; stir. Add cooked noodles; stir.

Pour noodle mixture into 9x11-inch baking dish greased with butter. Top with the remaining 4 cups of cheese. Bake at 375 degrees for about 30 minutes or until golden brown.

“This makes a very good meal, especially during the cold weather. We like to try different meats in it and always put the jalapeños in. That’s what makes it an adult mac and cheese.”

— EULE STEWART, GAINESVILLE



SEND US YOUR BEST RECIPES: [RECIPES@JACKSONEMC.COM](mailto:RECIPES@JACKSONEMC.COM) OR MAIL TO:  
COOPERATIVE COOKING | JACKSON EMC | PO BOX 38 | JEFFERSON, GA 30549  
FIND MORE RECIPES AT [WWW.JACKSONEMC.COM/RECIPES](http://WWW.JACKSONEMC.COM/RECIPES).

**At Home of Hope at Gwinnett Children's Shelter, families receive far more than a roof over their heads. They get help in learning life skills to navigate their way to independent living.**

Open since 1986, the residential care facility provides up to 12 months of transitional housing for homeless children ages 0-17 and their moms. With capacity to serve 20 families, the shelter operates on the belief that providing practical services helps families achieve self-sufficiency in terms of financial stability and permanent housing.

The Jackson EMC Foundation recently awarded Home of Hope a \$15,000 grant for its program, which provides life skills training and life coaching.

"Our goal — and the reason we exist — is to end the cycle of homelessness for children and young moms while keeping family units together in a loving, nurturing, supportive environment," said Executive Director Maureen Kornowa. "The end goal is that families receive all the resources they need to begin a successful, independent lifestyle."

Last year, the shelter served 147 mothers and children. The shelter anticipates serving more than 200 individuals representing 70 families this year, according to the director. Its grant from the Jackson EMC Foundation will fund case management personnel who work with families to facilitate life skills group activities, create and achieve life plans, and match with community resources.

"Our program gives families a place to stay rent-free while they focus on completing their GED, pursuing higher education, resume building, interviewing skills, career exploration, and securing and maintaining stable employment," Kornowa said. "Our programs empower families with a supportive environment so they can apply their energies toward building a better future while also teaching the necessary skills to ensure lasting stability."

Funding is especially important now because fundraising events were put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the executive director.



**Maureen Kornowa spends time with Home of Hope shelter residents.**

"While COVID has the whole world stopped, Home of Hope has never closed its door to children and families in need," Kornowa said. "With the help of Operation Round Up and the Jackson EMC Foundation, organizations like ours are able to continue the mission of keeping families together and leading them back to independence."

Home of Hope provides support to children and their moms. Parents are required to get a job within 30 days of enrollment and must save 50% of their paycheck if working fulltime or 30% if working parttime while enrolled in school.

Last year, 29 families graduated from the program with an average savings per family of \$3,500. These families transitioned into permanent housing and maintained their housing through the 90-day follow-up period, according to Kornowa.

"The return-on-investment is moms who were once homeless are now taxpaying citizens," she said. "They have the mental, emotional and economic capacity to make good decisions and offer housing security for themselves and their children."



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOME OF HOPE, VISIT [HOMEOFHOPEGCS.ORG](http://HOMEOFHOPEGCS.ORG).

## STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Jackson EMC is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the following: the provisions of Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; the Civil Rights Act of 1991, as amended; Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991, as amended; Section 42 of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended; 41 CFR Part 60-300, and other protected veterans; and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Labor, OFCCP, which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability or Vietnam or disabled veteran status shall be excluded from participation in, admission, or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities. **This contractor and subcontractor shall abide by the requirements of CFR 60-300.5(a) and 60-741.5(a). These regulations prohibit discrimination against qualified individuals on the basis of their status as protected veterans or individuals with disabilities, and prohibit discrimination against all individuals based on their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin. Moreover, these regulations require that covered prime contractors and subcontractors take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, protected veteran status, or disability.**

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is Keith Johnson, Vice President, Human Resources and Employee Development. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

**YOUR POWER.  
YOUR COMMUNITY.**

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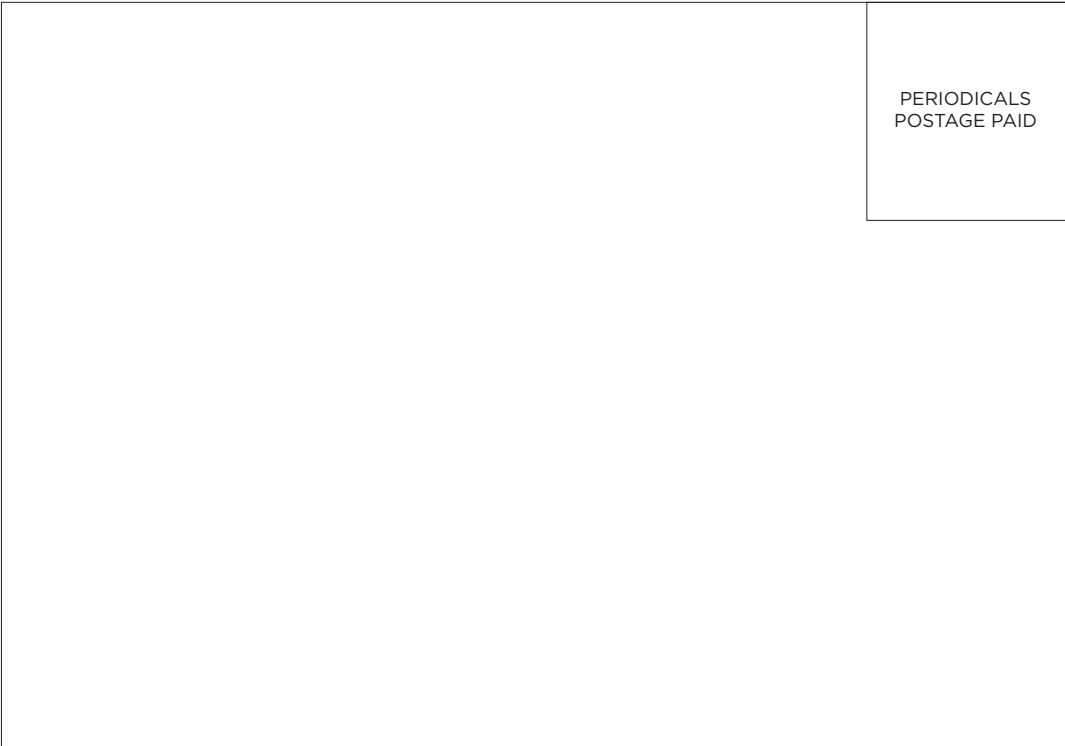
**JACKSON EMC OFFICES**  
1000 Dawsonville Highway  
Gainesville, GA  
(770) 536-2415

85 Spratlin Mill Road  
Hull, GA  
(706) 548-5362

850 Commerce Road  
Jefferson, GA  
(706) 367-5281

825 Buford Dr  
Lawrenceville, GA  
(770) 963-6166

**EMC SECURITY**  
55 Satellite Blvd., NW  
Suwanee, GA  
(770) 963-0305 or  
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# JACKSON EMC RETURNS \$13 MILLION TO MEMBERS IN MARGIN REFUNDS

Approximately 228,000 current and former members of Jackson EMC will receive their share of a total of \$13 million in margin refunds. The electric cooperative is mailing checks in December.

“As owners of a not-for-profit cooperative, Jackson EMC members are eligible to receive a portion of the funds left over at the end of the year after all the cooperative’s expenses are paid. We call that money margin refunds. Your board is proud to be able to return it to you,” Board Chairman Otis P. Jones said.

Margins are refunded for a combination of years so both longtime and newer members, as well as former members, benefit from belonging to an electric cooperative. This year, margin refunds will go to those who received electric service from Jackson EMC in 1991, 1992, 1993 and/or 2019. The sum of each member’s refund check is calculated according to the amount each member paid for electric service during those years.

After this December’s refund, Jackson EMC will have refunded \$160 million in margin refunds to our member-owners since our cooperative was founded in 1938.

