

## September AROUND TOWN CALENDAR

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**Labor Day**  
SMECO offices closed.

The Customer Care Center  
is available 24/7.

1-888-440-3311  
smeco.coop

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**Pitch Card Party**

7:30 to 10 p.m.

Knights of Columbus Hall  
16441 Three Notch Road, Ridge.

301-872-5114

Sponsor: Ridge Lions Club

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**Drayden African  
American  
Schoolhouse  
Open House**

11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Drayden  
African American Schoolhouse

301-994-1471

Facebook.com/DraydenSchool

Sponsor: St. Mary's County  
Museum Division

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**Seafood Dinner**

11:30 a.m. 4 p.m. 21340 Colton  
Point Road, Avenue.

301-769-3332

holy01angels@aol.com  
angelsinavenue.org

Sponsor: Holy Angels  
Catholic Church

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**All-You-Can-Eat  
Spaghetti Dinner**

4 to 8 p.m. Mt. Zion United  
Methodist Church, 27108  
Mt. Zion Church Road (by the  
Apple Basket), Mechanicsville.

301-884-4132  
mtzionmech.org

Sponsor: Mt. Zion United  
Methodist Church

High temperatures  
could lead to high  
electric bills.

Log in to your  
Account Manager  
to track your  
energy usage,  
look at forecasted  
bills, and get tips  
to save.

smeco.coop/  
accountmanager

Find more events at [smeco.coop/aroundtown](http://smeco.coop/aroundtown).

## Four students attend the 2019 Youth Tour

In early June, four high school students from SMECO's service territory joined other cooperatives from around the nation at the 2019 Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. SMECO chaperones **Natalie Cotton** and **Charlie Herbert** accompanied **Briana Bowen** from St. Mary's Ryken High School, **Jacob Gilbert** from Patuxent High School, **Nia Mack** from McDonough High School, and **Sydney Walters** from Gwynn Park High School to the Youth Tour.

The goal of the Youth Tour is to help students learn more about the United States government in action. During their week-long study-tour of the nation's capital, students met members of congress, attended workshops on the roles that cooperatives play in communities, and visited an electric cooperative opportunity fair.

During Youth Tour, one student from each state is selected to represent their state on the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Youth Leadership Council (YLC). SMECO's own Briana Bowen was selected as the Maryland Youth Leadership Council Delegate. The selected delegates return to Washington, D.C. in July for a leadership workshop that focuses on the electric cooperative industry.

In 1964, approximately 400 young people from 12 states attended. Since that time, the Youth Tour has continued to grow, and in 2019, more than 2,000 young people and chaperones represented 43 states. More than 50,000 students have participated in the Youth Tour over its history.



Briana Bowen, St. Mary's Ryken High School, was selected as the Maryland Youth Leadership Council Delegate.

## Stay vigilant and watch out for scams

SMECO wants to help customers recognize when scammers are trying to cheat them out of their hard-earned money. Protect yourself with these tips to stay safe from scams.

- Know what you owe.
- Use the number printed on your bill to call your service provider.
- Legitimate businesses usually send letters in the mail if there is an issue.
- Government agencies like the IRS do not call or email people, they send letters via the U.S. mail.
- Only give payment information over phone or email if you initiate contact.
- Do not meet strangers at a location in order to pay them, your personal safety could be at risk.
- Scammers can make the name of real businesses appear on your caller ID. They can also trick you by duplicating voice recordings and imitating utility phone systems.
- Scammers frequently target the elderly, people who speak English as a second language, and businesses.



If you don't want to fall for a scam, be skeptical, and learn to tell the difference between what is real and what is fake.

For more information about scams, visit our website at:

[smeco.coop/stop-scams](http://smeco.coop/stop-scams)



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- 2 College scholarships awarded to four high school seniors in Southern Maryland.
- 3 Four students attend the 2019 Youth Tour in D.C.
- 4 Stay vigilant and watch out for scams.

# SMECO refunds members' capital credits

SMECO is refunding members' capital credits totaling nearly \$5.4 million. Of that total, a general refund of approximately **\$3.4 million** was issued in July.

- Eligible active members received credits on their bills.
- Checks are issued to eligible former members.
- Special refunds of about \$2 million will be paid throughout the year to estates of deceased members.

"SMECO members invest in their cooperative every time they pay their bill. When SMECO meets its financial obligations and we can issue refunds to members, we are happy to do so," said Austin J Slater, Jr., SMECO president and CEO. He added, "All SMECO members share the responsibility of financing the co-op, and receiving a refund of a portion of SMECO's margins is one of their rewards."

SMECO's margins for 2018 totaled more than \$27 million. SMECO uses margins—revenue minus expenses—as working capital for system improvements and construction. SMECO's members help to finance operations, and they realize one of the benefits of being a member when they receive a refund. Passing savings on to members is a basic co-op principle.



At the end of each year, SMECO's margins are allocated to a special capital credit account for each member, based on how much electricity the member purchased and the rate at which the account was billed. SMECO's Board of Directors regularly evaluates the financial condition of the cooperative and determines when SMECO member's capital credits will be refunded.

All eligible active members received a credit on the bill for their primary account. If members wish to contact SMECO to designate their primary account, they may call 1-888-440-3311.

Eligible former members will receive a full refund of the balance in their capital credit account if the balance is \$100 or less.

**AMOUNT OF CAPITAL CREDIT REFUND?**  
⚡ USE = PERCENTAGE OF MARGIN \$

*Each member's share of the co-op's margins is based on how much electricity the member used and the rate at which the account was billed.*

## Types of utilities



### Cooperatives

- Owned by the people they serve\*
- Not-for-profit



### Investor-owned

- Private companies owned by shareholders/investors
- Operate for a profit



### Municipal Systems

- Owned by cities, counties, or states
- Not-for-profit

*\*When customers establish service with SMECO, they become members of the cooperative.*

# College scholarships awarded to four high school seniors in Southern Maryland

SMECO awarded four scholarships to high school seniors for 2019. Each year, SMECO awards four college scholarships to students who live in the cooperative's service area. Scholarships are based on the applicants' scholastic achievement, financial need, and school and community involvement. SMECO has awarded scholarships to 108 students in the 27 years since beginning the program in 1993.

The following students each received a \$1,500 college scholarship:

- Alyssa Dorsey
- Samuel Guzzone
- William Runyon
- Andrew Tolarski

**Alyssa Dorsey**, graduate of Chopticon High School in St. Mary's County, plans to attend the College of Southern Maryland and to pursue a career in nursing. She is an active volunteer with the Hollywood and Mechanicsville volunteer rescue squads. Through the Academy of Health Professions at the Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center, Dorsey has worked to earn her Certified Nursing Assistant certificate. She has also competed in Skills USA and was awarded first place at a regional competition. Dorsey also completed an internship in the emergency room at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. Dorsey is the daughter of Scott Allen Dorsey of Mechanicsville.

**Samuel Guzzone**, son of Amy and Darren Guzzone of Indian Head, is a graduate of Henry Lackey High School in Charles County. Guzzone plans to become a mechanical engineer. An accomplished athlete and musician, Guzzone played soccer and tennis at Lackey, and he played in the symphonic band and jazz

band. He is also the drummer in the Flippin' Eyelids, a band he formed with his brothers. Guzzone is also active in the Mathematics Engineering Science Accomplishment club, the National Honor Society, 4H, It's Academic and Chess Club. He has done volunteer work through the Appalachian Service Project and Farming4Hunger.

**William Runyon**, graduate of Thomas Stone High School in Charles County, plans to attend Georgia State University and to pursue a career as an attorney. Runyon is a musician who has played the violin since elementary school. He performed with the All-County Orchestra and for the musical Beauty and the Beast at Thomas Stone. He also plays guitar and participated in the musical All Shook Up at Stone, and is a student of Aikido, a Japanese martial art that promotes peace and cooperation. Runyon is the son of Lea Sadler of Waldorf.

**Andrew Tolarski**, graduate of Leonardtown High School in St. Mary's County, plans to attend the University of Maryland and to major in Music Education in order to become a music teacher. He plays the viola and piano and sings. He is a member of the International Thespian Society and was the student conductor of two choirs for the Maryland All-State Chorus. He is a choir section lead at Lexington Park United Methodist Church, a member of the community choir Musica, and a volunteer and employee at Greenwell State Park, where he assists with summer camp. Tolarski is the son of Laura Tolarski of Hollywood.

SMECO provides scholarships to local students who excel in their endeavors and who show promise in their chosen field of study.