Keeping the mission close to home

FORMER SOLDIER MELIN HILL FINDS PURPOSE AND BROTHERHOOD AT PEC



After a military career defined by challenges, milestones, and service, Cedar Park Lineworker Apprentice Melin Hill joined PEC in 2023 and found a familiar sense of purpose.

"When you're on a crew, you have that same camaraderie that you experience on a platoon in the military," Hill said. "You are your brother's keeper, and you have to make sure you're all looking out for each other."

TIME IN THE SERVICE

A native of San Antonio, Hill felt called to serve from an early age. His father spent 22 years in the U.S. Army, and Hill saw how much serving his country meant to him.

Hill spent about six years in the Army from 2016 to 2022. During that time, his primary role was intelligence. He used satellite signals, drones, telecom tools, and on-the-ground communication to help commanders





understand developing situations and make decisions. Throughout his time in the military, he had opportunities to train in Oklahoma, Arizona, Georgia, and Louisiana, and served overseas in Poland and Ukraine.

The military taught Hill the importance of preparation, adaptability, and communication. Each of these skills has proven to be just as valuable in civilian life.

BECOMING A LINEWORKER

After leaving the service in 2022, Hill knew he wanted a hands-on career rather than going to college or working in an office. He researched trades and saw linework as a path that could provide for his family while offering challenge, purpose, and opportunity.

"I wanted something that would allow me to work with my hands and would set me up well to support my family." — Melin Hill

Hill said the job requires the same attention to detail and teamwork he learned in the military. From inspecting gloves and completing preflight checks on bucket trucks to communicating with crew mates, safety depends on everyone looking out for one another.

STRONG ADVICE

Hill has enjoyed the opportunities that have come his way since leaving the service, but he noted the road hasn't always been easy. From getting over his fear of heights to navigating the challenges and uncertainties of becoming a father, his life post military has come with a lot of unknowns.

But he found the strength to endure the hard times and learn from them, and has been rewarded with the blessings of a job he loves and getting to watch his children grow.

"A lot of life comes with fear and uncertainty, but once you get past that inch of fear, there's always a bundle of joy on the other side," he said.

He stressed it's important to have something you want to work for and a passion you want to pursue so that you have a purpose when transitioning back to civilian life.

"It doesn't always have to be college," he said. "I know that's what is promoted, but there's more than one way. Trades can offer a lot of opportunity."

His final piece of advice to veterans entering civilian life: Do everything with integrity.

"Even if everyone else isn't doing the right thing, make sure you're doing the right thing," he said. "It might just save your life."

This Veterans Day, PEC honors Hill and all our veteran members and employees whose service, sacrifice, and commitment to others continue to strengthen the communities they call home.







A magical day for our biggest little fan

PEC gives young member Luka an experience he'll never forget









"Wow!"

— Luka

When word reached us that 4-year-old PEC member Luka loved the co-op and aspired to become a lineworker one day, our Cedar Park office stepped up and organized a very special meet-and-greet for him and his family.

Donning his lightning-bolt shirt and safety vest, Luka was all smiles as he got a personal demonstration from our Cedar Park crew. He even did his homework, already knowing what critical pieces of equipment, like transformers, were. He got to put on safety gear, use a hot stick to pull a switch, and see a lineworker climb a pole with what Luka called his "spikey shoes." He watched in wonder as we sent a crew member as high in the air as a bucket truck will go.

"I hope in the winter the lines in my playground don't fall down," Luka told a crew member. He knows that even though our system is very reliable, there's no way to stop all outages from happening, and that his heroes are always ready to help restore power — rain or shine, at a playground or a home.

"This is what it means for PEC not just to provide a service to the community, but to be part of it," said PEC's David Landry, who helped organize the event.

It was a special day for all involved. Thank you, Luka, for being PEC's biggest fan! We hope to see you join the Crew in Blue one day as Luka the Lineworker.



Neighbors helping neighbors

PEC CREWS LEND A HAND IN SAN ANTONIO









When the call came, PEC answered. In August, a powerful thunderstorm pummeled San Antonio, causing severe damage and hundreds of outages. The storm brought over 65-mph wind gusts, flash flooding, and heavy lightning to the Alamo City. At the peak of the event, as many as 250,000 CPS Energy customers lost power. So, PEC did what any good neighbor would do: stepped up and sent help.

PEC moved quickly, assembling a crew of 50 lineworkers and support staff to travel south and make repairs alongside CPS crews. They worked in tandem from Sunday, Aug. 30, until CPS customers were fully restored on Tuesday night, Sept. 1. On Wednesday, PEC crews returned home.

Journeyworker Dakota Marshall was eager for the chance to work alongside another utility and especially passionate about helping a community near and dear to him — his hometown.

"We were working in some of the neighborhoods where my grandmother lives, my cousins, aunts, and friends who were all affected," he said. "It felt really good to go back to help get the power back for my family and former community."

Out in the field, crews encountered unique obstacles characteristic of the historic city — navigating narrow traffic-filled streets in bucket trucks and dodging debris, downed lines, and fallen limbs from centuries-old trees. Homeowners and volunteers gathered around their neighborhoods to pick up the pieces.

Regional Operations Supervisor Josh Herrick recalls the feel-good energy of working with CPS toward a shared goal.

"We were out there shaking hands, saying hello, and trying to build camaraderie between everyone to get the job done," Herrick said. "It was 100 degrees, and we really felt for the customers, so we were all trying our hardest to get everyone back in their homes with A/C as quickly as possible. That's the beauty of our job — making a difference."

While physical damage was widespread, spirits remained strong. Crews say neighbors kindly came by to offer water and thank them for their help. PEC assisted with everything from downed lines, pole changeouts, and crossarm work to tree trimming, splicing wire, and repairing arresters blown by lightning strikes.

While no utility looks forward to needing mutual aid, none are immune to Mother Nature's wrath either, and PEC is proud to be a good neighbor. We know CPS would do the same for us.

"Lending a helping hand is core to the co-op culture," said PEC CEO Christian Powell. "I'm proud of our crews for answering the call and safely working together with CPS."

PEC'S EVENT RESPONSE BY THE NUMBERS



PEC CREWS WORKED
3,400 HOURS



PEC CREWS DROVE
21,000 MILES
WITHOUT ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES

MEMBER FOCUSED. PEOPLE DRIVEN.



Make safety the first thing you're thankful for

THIS THANKSGIVING, KEEP SAFETY IN MIND WHEN COOKING YOUR HOLIDAY FEAST

STAY NEARBY

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, food left unattended while cooking is a leading cause of kitchen fires, and they tend to happen more often around the holidays.

DON'T FORGET THE MITTS

To avoid burns, remember to put on oven mitts. Use your stovetop's back burners to keep grease splashes and boiling liquids off your body.

BE MINDFUL OF FLAMMABLE ITEMS

Move items such as pot holders, oven mitts, food packaging, towels, or paper products away from stovetops, ovens, or other heat sources. Keep your space clear.

KIDS IN THE KITCHEN?

Make sure the kids know how to stay safe in the kitchen, too. Teach them to cook with close supervision.

DONUT BREAD PUDDING

Indulge this holiday season with PEC's employee recipe contest winner Kyle Moreland's donut bread pudding!





INGREDIENTS

- 10-12 glazed donuts (or about 1 pound of plain/glazed donut holes). Stale donuts work best, as they hold their shape and soak up more custard.
- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream (or 3 cups of half-and-half)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly-grated nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries or raisins
- Powdered sugar (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F and lightly butter or grease a 9x13-inch baking dish.
2. Cut the donuts into bite-sized chunks and spread them evenly into the prepared dish. Add your pecans and dried cranberries or raisins.
3. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, heavy cream, sugar, vanilla extract, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt until smooth and combined.
4. Pour the egg and cream mixture evenly over the donut pieces. Press the donut pieces down lightly so they soak up the custard.
5. Let the mixture sit for 15 to 20 minutes before baking, or cover and chill overnight in the fridge.
6. Bake for 35 to 45 minutes, or until the top is golden-brown and a knife or toothpick inserted into the center comes out mostly clean. Let cool for 10 minutes. Serve warm on its own or with a dusting of powdered sugar.