



CASE STUDY: TEACHER EXTERNSHIPS

Georgia Power Teacher Externship Program

Teachers and Utilities: A Look at Georgia Power's Teacher Externship Program

Keeping your community's electricity supply running reliably, safely and efficiently is a primary focus for Georgia Power's business operations. As the largest energy provider in Georgia, Georgia Power is continuously investing in workforce development and educational programming, such as Teacher Externships, to build a strong talent pipeline.

Bridging the Gap

The Teacher Externship aims to bridge the gap between perceptions of skilled trade careers and the reality that Georgia Power offers substantial pay, benefits, and career opportunities for Georgia students and future workers. The Externship brings together CTAE instructors, counselors, and other educators to gain first-hand experience in various roles across Georgia Power's operations, including careers for both technical school and four-year degree students. Educators are recruited from across the state, expanding the reach of the program to metro, urban and rural areas. Focusing on groups of fewer than 20 educators, Georgia Power creates an intimate environment where teachers can exchange ideas and build relationships with both Georgia Power employees and fellow educators across Georgia.

Three Days of Discovery

The Teacher Externship takes place over three days and includes evening events that facilitate networking among attendees.

- **Day 1:** A noon check-in at Georgia Power headquarters gives attendees a chance to hear from company leadership about key initiatives including electric transportation, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and community and economic development. Tours of company departments are included on Day 1 as well.
- **Day 2:** This day covers both power transmission and power generation. Educators are exposed to lineworker careers, which gives technical school-track students opportunities to develop a career on the front lines keeping Georgia's electricity supply flowing. A tour of a Georgia Power training center offers educators the perspective of an apprentice lineworker, taking part in morning briefings, working alongside line technicians, and gaining operational experience working on power lines. Next, educators get a first-hand look at a power plant to learn about power delivery careers. This provides a different perspective from the lineworker track, as power generation requires both college graduates and skilled technical employees.
- **Day 3:** Educators engage in an exploration of network underground installation/management careers. This career track also features both college graduates and technical school certification options, focusing on specific skill sets needed to lay and maintain underground cables. Educators engage directly with Georgia Power employees and experience an employee training session at a network underground facility.

Teaching the Teachers

After completing their career exploration experiences, educators return to Georgia Power headquarters to teach the group what they've learned and what they plan to bring back to their students. This offers educators a chance to confirm their newfound knowledge about energy careers and discuss how they can best transfer this knowledge to students and school districts. The goal is to make sure educators have the resources (job descriptions, aptitude assessments, etc.) needed to advise students on in-demand skills and abilities and can introduce students to Georgia Power internships and careers.

Higher Investment, Higher ROI

The higher investment required for teacher externships is offset by a higher return on that investment, considering the hands-on experience gained by the educators and the operational knowledge they can bring back to their students. Teacher Externships:

- Create awareness, including income potential, access to scholarships and technical training, and ease of beginning a career in the energy industry, and
- Help Georgia's CTAE programs and College & Career Academies develop innovative, in-demand programs to meet the State's growing workforce needs

Keys to success:

- Identify key careers to highlight and key employees to guide teachers during externship day
- Plan program agenda that shows teachers skill needs and entry-level careers
- Keep participant number manageable