



## Meet Your SEC Employee: Brandon Rust



**Line Technician**  
**7 years of service**  
**Powhatan Office**

*By Lauren Irby, Communications Specialist*

If you have watched Southside Electric Cooperative's (SEC) Day in the Life of Lineman reality-show-themed video, then you've seen footage of Brandon Rust working on a utility pole in the rain. You can even hear him saying — with a smile on his face — “You gotta love it!”

And Rust does love his job as a line technician. “You absolutely have to love it. It is definitely a job that is not for everyone. Sometimes when you've been out there working 17 hours straight, and you're tired, wet and cold — you do have to love it to keep going!” he explains.

Originally from Nottoway County, Rust now lives in Powhatan. He attended Nottoway High School and completed two years at Old Dominion University, studying mechanical engineering.

Before coming to SEC, he worked in the satellite television industry, then in backup power, then transitioned into government contracts, and later worked as a night-shift maintenance electrician.

Rust knew he wanted to become a lineman, so he followed his dream and joined SEC. He started out as an apprentice line technician and completed the four-year program. He worked in the Crewe office for five years and has since transferred to the Powhatan office.

He says the most challenging aspect of his job is the amount of attentiveness required. “We need to always be focused on what is going on. You have to make sure your hands and your head are in the same place,” he adds. “We are always looking out for our fellow employees. It’s second nature.”

But that constant attention to detail is worth it at the end of the day. Rust enjoys seeing the members’ happy faces after storm restorations. “That is the most rewarding.” He explains, “I remember when we had worked on the line half a day; we were helping another co-op out of town. We rode past a house where kids were in the front window jumping up and down because the power was back on. It’s a good feeling knowing that you can help someone.”

Rust has also assisted with SEC’s Day in the Life of a Lineman program as a presenter and he has appeared in the two main videos used in the program. Day in the Life of a Lineman seeks to educate local high school juniors and seniors about the power-line-worker industry and gives students a hands-on look at what the lineman profession involves.

His experience with teaching about line work helped this past summer when he was on a crew in South Carolina. SEC employees were helping a sister co-op with restoration after Hurricane Matthew. After working long hours for about five days straight, they were tired and began to wear down. “We were working in a backyard when two kids came outside with their parents. We had an extra hard hat in the truck and let them wear it. Their excitement was unreal. It lifted our spirits and recharged us. Plus, the kids were happy because they thought they were helping us!”

Rust’s favorite part of his job is working outside with his coworkers — he considers them his friends. He says he spends more time with them than with his family due to his schedule.

When he is not helping to keep the lights on, Rust enjoys spending time with his daughter Brantley, 4, his girlfriend Lisa, and her two daughters, Hannah, 16, and Brittany, 14.

He likes to ride his side-by-side UTV and to work on vehicles. “My dad and I have a 1969 Mach 1 that we have been restoring for 17 years,” he explains. “That’s my pride and joy!”