

# New Faces on the Lines

Klickitat PUD's operations department continues to grow the lineworker apprentice program. The process begins in the pre-apprentice position and allows these individuals to work with line crews and gain skills and knowledge over a year.

Pre-apprentices are groundmen for the line crews. They pull and prep tools and materials, help load and unload the trucks, frame poles, wire transformers and assist the tree trimming crew in right-of-way maintenance. After a year of training, pre-apprentices can bid for open apprentice lineworker positions.

In the fall of 2022, KPUD brought on three pre-apprentice lineworkers. Additionally, we welcomed a new journeyman lineworker to the Goldendale crew.

## Sean Bryan

Sean Bryan joined the Goldendale line crew as a pre-apprentice.

Sean is local to Goldendale and graduated from Goldendale High School in 2005. After high school, he attended Northwest Lineman College in Idaho.

Following line school, Sean began working in wind energy in 2006. During that time, he held a variety of positions: wind turbine construction crew for three years, maintenance technician for five years and plant manager for eight years.

However, Sean says he "always wanted to be in the trade." The opening with KPUD was an opportunity to get into line work and stay close to home.

"I enjoy this type of work, being outside, working with my



hands and equipment," he says. "Working with the crew is great."

Sean lives in Goldendale with his wife of 13 years, Ashley, and their two children. In his free time, he likes hunting, fishing and dirt biking.

## Alonso Hernandez-Rangel

Alonso Hernandez-Rangel also joined as a pre-apprentice on the Goldendale line crew.

Alonso is from Royal City, where he graduated from Royal High School in 2019. Following high school, he attended Wenatchee Valley College and obtained his associate degree in May 2021. Alonso then enrolled at Northwest Lineman College and graduated in February 2022.

Alonso has friends in line work, and that exposure made him think it would be a good career.

"You get paid to learn on the job," he says. "I enjoy being outdoors and working with my hands. This made it a good fit."

After NLC, Alonso knew he wanted to pursue a career in line work close to home, so he took the opportunity with KPUD.

"I came into the pre-apprentice position knowing very basic tools and techniques, so it's been fun learning new things," he says.

Alonso has relocated to Goldendale since accepting the position and bought a home. In his free time, he likes working out, weightlifting, reading and playing video games.



## Dominic Raether

Dominic Raether is a pre-apprentice on the White Salmon line crew.

Dominic is a White Salmon local. He graduated from Columbia High School in 2019. Dominic wanted to join the workforce right away and was influenced to go into line work by a few lineworkers he had spoken with.

"It's a rewarding career with good pay and benefits," he says.

Dominic attended Volta Line School in June 2021 and then got into working in the trade. He worked for NW Line Clearance and Kemp West tree trimming crews on jobs in Klickitat County. Then he got experience on a construction crew in Utah building high-voltage transmission lines.

The pre-apprentice position on the White Salmon crew allowed Dominic to return home and work in his field of choice.

"I grew up here, and now I can represent myself with Klickitat



## Why We Love Our Lineworkers

### They keep the power running

Think about going without power for just one day. Lineworkers work behind (or, actually above) the scenes so we can keep our lives moving.

### A risky occupation

Dealing with high voltage electrical wires at great heights is dangerous. Linemen are brave enough to get the job done.

### They give up family time for us

They work tirelessly, often during odd hours, away from their families to solve electrical problems.

## Klickitat PUD Stats

- ▶ 9 journeyman lineworkers.
- ▶ 2 apprentice lineworkers.
- ▶ 3 pre-apprentice lineworkers.
- ▶ 18 communities.
- ▶ 2,004 miles of distribution line.
- ▶ 206 miles of transmission line.
- ▶ 13,852 customers.

PUD in my home community,” he says. “I knew it would be a good place to work”

So far, he most enjoys going out on outages.

“I get the most experience and a feeling of pride getting power restored,” he says.

Dominic and his wife, Isabella, were married in May 2022. He enjoys being on the river, fishing and hunting.

### Christian Clark

Christian Clark joined the KPUD Goldendale line crew as a journeyman lineworker in October 2022. He works to build, repair and maintain power lines and equipment throughout central and eastern Klickitat County.

“It’s fun and something new every day,” he says. “I enjoy the challenge.”

Christian grew up in White Swan.

“I knew college was not for me and wanted to get into work right out of school,” he says. “I saw line work as the best option.”

Christian first worked in fabrication and logging. Then in November 2016, Christian started a lineworker apprenticeship with Yakama Power, where he was employed for four years. He completed his schooling through Northwest Line Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee and received his on-the-job hours with Yakama Power.

The position on the Goldendale line crew allowed Christian and his family to relocate to a small community.

“We wanted the small-town feel where everybody can be friendly with everybody,” he says.

He and his wife, Victoria, married in fall 2022, right before he started with KPUD. Together they have two young children. Outside of work, Christian says he enjoys the outdoors, hunting, fishing and camping. ■



KPUD lineworker crew. From left: Alonso Hernandez-Rangel, Jess Beierle, Cort Ladiges, Greg Dechand, Sean Bryan, TJ Lutz, Robert Dorais, Chris Clark, Nate Weller, Todd Niva and Dominic Raether.

## A Brief History of Lineworker Appreciation Day

April 18 is National Lineworker Appreciation Day. The U.S. Senate designated the holiday on April 18, 2013, following the catastrophic damage brought by Hurricane Sandy in 2012. Following Sandy, approximately 67,000 lineworkers of the nation's estimated 115,000 responded to help repair damages inflicted to the region's power infrastructure.

Senate Resolution 95 won unanimous approval in the U.S. Senate.

Klickitat PUD recognizes lineworkers as integral members of our utility. Our lineworkers work in hazardous—often miserable—conditions to construct, maintain and restore unplanned outages on our system to provide power to our customers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Without the quality maintenance and system improvement work performed by lineworkers, KPUD would not reach the **99.971%** reliability goal we strive for.

Please join KPUD in showing appreciation for our own local lineworkers, and when you see them working remember to: #thankalineworker.

**Goldendale Crew:** Jess Beierle, Sean Bryan, Christian Clark, Robert Dorais, Alonso Hernandez-Rangel, Lake Howard, Cort Ladiges and Todd Niva.

**White Salmon Crew:** Greg Dechand, Wade Griffith, Ed Lexa, TJ Lutz, Dominic Raether and Nate Weller.