

SkyLine to Host Bloodmobile at Corporate Campus February 19



SkyLine Network Operations Engineer Erik Lyons was one of several SkyLine employees and community members who participated in our fall 2019 bloodmobile.

SkyLine begins its second year of hosting two blood drives annually for the American Red Cross, with our first one scheduled for Wednesday, February 19, on the main corporate campus in West Jefferson (1200 NC Highway 194 North). Signs will direct public donors to the lower parking lot and lower entrance to our engineering building. The blood drive will be held from noon to 4:30 p.m. with several Red Cross staff as well as volunteers on hand to register, and refreshments will be provided.

The Red Cross needs to collect more than 13,000 blood donations and more than 2,500 platelet donations each day. The blood collected by the Red Cross helps millions of patients in over 2,500 hospitals and other facilities across the country. Eighty-four percent of blood donations are given at blood drives – hosted by generous sponsoring organizations like ours. And blood collections received here will go to assist our local hospital.

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2020 Frank James–SkyLine Scholarship

Ten scholarships with a total value of \$25,000 are scheduled to be awarded this spring to children of SkyLine and SkyBest telephone service customers to assist them with the cost of a college education.

Five \$1,000 scholarships, renewable up to four years, will be awarded to students who will attend a four-year college or university. Five \$500 scholarships, renewable up to two years, will be presented to students who will attend a two-year community/technical college.

The Frank James-SkyLine Scholarship was established by the Board of Directors in 1987 and is named in memory of Frank James, longtime SkyLine board member and former president, who was a strong advocate of education, having served as a teacher, principal and later superintendent of Ashe County Schools.

To qualify, applicants must be children of current SkyLine or SkyBest telephone service customers (of at least one year), and be graduating high school seniors (including home-schooled students) in the co-op's five-county service area (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga and Johnson). The scholarships will be awarded on the basis of scholastic achievement, financial need, demonstrated leadership and community involvement.

Application packages will be available at area high school guidance departments and all SkyLine Customer Service Centers beginning Thursday, February 6. The deadline for this local scholarship is Friday, March 13.

FRS Scholarship Program Announces New Online Application Process for 2020



In 2019, Sydney Sanford, now a student at Converse College and pictured with SkyLine's Karen Powell, was recognized by the FRS and received a one-year, \$2,500 scholarship. Her family is served by Chesnee Communications, a subsidiary company of SkyBest. Since 2006, a total of 16 scholarships have been awarded to children of customers served by SkyLine and its subsidiary companies.

The FRS will award one-year scholarships in each geographic region of the NTCA membership (including the service area of SkyLine/SkyBest) to graduating high school seniors whose families are served by NTCA member organizations. For each FRS general scholarship, FRS provides \$2,000 and the sponsoring NTCA member company provides \$500.

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Teleworking Works, Thanks to Fiber Connectivity



Zach Barricklow met his wife and Sparta native Lauren Edwards while they both served as volunteers in the Peace Corps, and their shared love of this area, community development and desire to start a family led them to Alleghany. He has observed through his experience here how small communities are willing to work together and combine resources.

Editor's Note: We first shared this teleworking story in our 2019 Annual Meeting Report, and since that time, Zach Barricklow and Wilkes Community College made application to and was accepted as one of five N.C. communities to participate in a community co-hort focusing on "ReCONNECT to Technological Opportunity" through the Institute for Emerging Issues through N.C. State University. The six-member co-hort, including officials from the college, SkyLine as an Internet provider and other community leaders, represents the college's three-county area of Wilkes, Alleghany and Ashe counties, and its goal is to further leverage the exceptional internet connectivity available in this region to build awareness and coordinate efforts with individuals and companies that see the untapped opportunity and appeal of expanding the telework economy to rural areas. "ReConnect to Technological Opportunity"

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WORTH NOTING:

SkyLine & SkyBest Close for Presidents Day Monday, February 17

SkyLine Hosts Bloodmobile Wednesday, February 19 West Jefferson Corp. Campus

Ashe Co. Heart Association's Annual Heart Breakfast Saturday, February 22 7:30 – 10:30 a.m. Winner's Circle Restaurant

FRS Scholarship Application Deadline, Friday, March 6

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is part of a three-year, six-forum series, with this topic culminating in a two-day event February 10 and 11 at N.C. State University.

According to the latest telecommunicating trend data from Global Workplace Analytics (August 2019), 4.7 million employees (3.4 percent of the workforce) now work from home at least half the time. While teleworking is not a one-size-fits-all approach, it is proving to be quite effective even in rural areas.

At age 27, Michigan native Zach Barricklow co-founded Versado Training with his siblings to provide custom learning solutions for the life sciences industry. In its first seven years, Versado grew to 30 employees and 100 contractors spread across seven time zones.

With national recognition as one of Inc.'s 5000 Fastest Growing Private Companies, Versado is based in Raleigh, but Barricklow often works remotely from his home in Alleghany County. Having access to high-speed broadband has made all the difference.

"There is absolutely no doubt that this wouldn't have been possible without SkyLine's fiber network in place," Barricklow said. "From utilizing the internet connection for VoIP, web conferencing and dealing with thousands of documents before cloud storage became available, I could rely on the service here."

His role at Versado shifted in recent years to focus on the company's nonprofit arm, Versado Foundation, and he has been actively engaged with initiatives to benefit the county, including consulting Wilkes Community College (WCC) on its five-year strategic plan.

His work with WCC further fed his passion to make a positive difference through community development. Because WCC serves everybody, Barricklow said he has "fallen in love with the community college. I see it as a significant tool for the betterment of our communities and neighbors." As WCC's new Vice President for Strategy, Barricklow maintains an office in Sparta, where he still works remotely at least two days a week.



SkyLine is proud to partner with the American Red Cross and be a part of all they do for our community, our country and around the world. Our blood drive is important to patients in need, but the collection and distribution of blood is just a small part of all the Red Cross does. The enormity of what the Red Cross accomplishes every day is astounding and this is one of the reasons we chose them as one of our community outreach partners.

- Every hour of the day, more than 1,200 people in America are assisted by the American Red Cross.
- More than 17,000 people every day receive lifesaving Red Cross health and safety training.
- Every day, the Red Cross provides more than 1,100 services to military members, their families and veterans.
- About 170 times a day, Red Cross workers help families affected by a home fire or other disaster.

We are grateful to our many donors who participated last year and hope you'll join us on February 19. Our sincerest thanks for supporting our event and other blood drives hosted across our region.

In addition to the FRS general scholarships, FRS has the following named scholarships*:

- Staurulakis Family Scholarships
- TMS Scholarships
- Everett Kneece Scholarship
- Roger Alan Cox Memorial Scholarships
- Good Neighbor Scholarship
- Herbert and Isabel Bitz Memorial Scholarship

*Submitting one application is sufficient for eligibility of all available scholarships.

According to the FRS, more than two-thirds of rural Americans with postsecondary degrees never return to their rural communities, so this program gives particular emphasis to those students who plan to return to their community following college. Eligibility requirements include the following:

- Applicants must be graduating high school seniors and reside full-time with their parent(s) in the companies' service area.
- Applicants must be children of SkyLine members or SkyBest customers who subscribe to either company's facilities-based services.
- Applicants must have at least a C grade-point-average (GPA). FRS scholarships will be awarded to deserving students whose academic credentials fall within an average to above-average range.
- Applicants must be accepted to an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school.
- Applicants must express an interest to return to a rural community following graduation.
- Applications must be sponsored by SkyLine, an NTCA-member company.

The Foundation for Rural Service (FRS), in cooperation with NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, seeks to sustain and enhance the quality of life in America by advancing an understanding of rural issues. Through its various programs and initiatives, FRS strongly supports the continuing education of rural youth. If any SkyLine-sponsored students are named winners, they will be announced in May, in conjunction with area high school awards day programs.

Visit www.FRS.org/student for full instructions on how to create an account and for all necessary materials required. The deadline for this year's FRS Scholarship is Friday, March 6.

If you have additional questions about the FRS Scholarship, please contact Karen Powell at SkyLine's corporate offices at 1-800-759-2226.

Note: Children of SkyLine employees or directors are not eligible for this scholarship.

Recipe of the Month

Nancy's Pond Mountain Great Biscuits

Ingredients:

- 3 1/4 cups self-rising flour
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons powdered sugar
- 1/2 cup solid Crisco
- 2 cups sour cream

Instructions:

Mix together flour, baking powder and sugar. Cut in Crisco. Blend in sour cream. Turn out on lightly floured surface, make into a ball and pat or roll out, cut with biscuit cutter. Bake at 450° for 10 to 12 minutes for delicious biscuits!

Submitted by Nancy Barbee of Ashe Co.

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