



SkyLine CEO Jimmy Blevins Retires and is Honored with Building Dedication

After 32 years of service and 10 years as its Chief Executive Officer (CEO), SkyLine's Jimmy Blevins has retired from the company, effective June 30. Following the cooperative's June Board of Directors' meeting on June 11, a special ceremony was held on the corporate campus to officially name and dedicate the Engineering Building as "The Jimmy C. Blevins Engineering & Technology Building," recognizing Blevins' long career with SkyLine and contributions he's made to the company. As the architect of the cooperative's present-day network, Blevins spent a significant part of his career working in and leading the Engineering Department.

With remarks by SkyLine Board President R.C. Mitchell, the ceremony was attended by the Board of Directors of SkyLine and SkyBest as well as senior leadership and key staff. "While Jimmy has held several titles at SkyLine, his first career passion was engineering," Mitchell said. Referencing SkyLine as a 'great company,' he added, "Great, due in part to Jimmy's vast engineering contributions toward keeping SkyLine at the forefront of technology and among the leading telecommunications cooperatives in the nation. Jimmy has been an inspiration to many employees with his tireless work ethic, his passion for improving things and his innovative mindset. May his engineering legacy continue to inspire others."

Earlier this year, Blevins received the "Manager Life Achievement Award" from NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association for his leadership in establishing a company culture that is both forward-looking and customer-centric. During his tenure as CEO, Blevins has introduced and implemented several visionary initiatives including the

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SkyLine/SkyBest Supports LMC Summer Theatre

SkyLine/SkyBest is pleased to be a corporate sponsor of the Lees-McRae Summer Theatre program again this year. This season, LMC Summer Theatre will present another outstanding lineup beginning with *The Wiz*, which opened on June 24 and ends with a matinee on July 1. Following *The Wiz is My Way*, which opens on July 13 and ends with a matinee on July 18. Finally, LMC presents *In the Heights*, which opens on July 31 and ends with a matinee on August 5.

For ticket and complete schedule information, visit www.lmc.edu.

SkyBest Among Sponsors of An Appalachian Summer Festival's Popular Series

SkyBest Communications will be among the Popular Series sponsors at An Appalachian Summer Festival, the month-long summer arts program that features a variety of music, theatre, film and dance on the campus of Appalachian State University in Boone. As one of the nation's largest regional multi-arts festivals with over 26,000 people in attendance each year, the festival is presented by the Appalachian State University Office of Arts & Cultural Programs. For ticket and complete schedule information, visit www.appsummer.org.



Kim Shepherd Named New SkyLine CEO

SkyLine Chief Management Officer (CMO) Kim Shepherd has been named the new CEO of SkyLine following the June 30 retirement of CEO Jimmy Blevins. Shepherd has been serving as Chief Management Officer (CMO) since November 2016.

In her role as CMO, Shepherd assumed more of the day-to-day management operations of the company and joined the CEO for monthly board meetings and attending both regional and national industry meetings with the Board of Directors. The 20-year employee has held various leadership positions with SkyLine over the years including Repair Services Supervisor, Customer Service Manager and Executive Director of Customer Operations, overseeing both Customer Service and Field Service departments.

"We are very pleased to announce that Kim Shepherd will lead SkyLine and its subsidiary operations into the next dynamic era of telecommunications," said SkyLine President R.C. Mitchell. "She brings a broad level of expertise and knowledge having led multiple areas of SkyLine's operations that have focused on connecting our customers to the latest technology and delivering a high level of customer service. In this newest role, Kim will carry her predecessors' forward-thinking and visionary legacy forward, and keep SkyLine at the forefront of technology as a rural telecom leader, positioning our service areas toward continued economic growth and prosperity."

A native of Ashe County, Shepherd is a 1994 graduate of Northwest Ashe High School, and she holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Appalachian State University and a master's degree in Business Administration (MBA) with a concentration in Human Resources from Gardner-Webb University. In her role as SkyLine CEO, she will lead the executive management group including Executive Director of Engineering Operations Robbie Farmer, Executive Director of Finance Cindy Rothstein, Executive Director of Competitive Operations Edward Hinson and Executive Director of Customer Operations Brian Tester. She also will serve as president of SkyBest Communications, Inc., CEO of Chesnee Communications,

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WORTH NOTING:

Wednesday, July 4

SkyLine Customer Centers to Close for Holiday

American Cancer Society's Relay for Life

Ashe County

Friday, July 20

Ashe County High School

STAFF:

Kim Shepherd
Chief Executive Officer

Brian Tester
Executive Director of
Customer Operations

Angie Poe
Customer Service Manager

Jamey Jenkins
Retail Sales Manager

Karen P. Powell
Public Relations Administrator
& Editor



Area Frank James-SkyLine Scholarship Winners

The 2018 Frank James-SkyLine Scholarship honors the memory of the cooperative's former Board President and are awarded to children of SkyLine/SkyBest customers. The scholarships, announced at area high school awards day programs, officially will be presented to students at SkyLine's Annual Meeting in September.

Annually, SkyLine awards \$1,000 renewable and \$500 renewable scholarships to students pursuing four-year and two-year degree programs, respectively.

ALLEGHANY COUNTY



JORDAN ROTEN
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Parents: Kathy & Jeff Roten

ALLEGHANY COUNTY



SETH HAMMACK
N.C. State University
Parents: Sandy Hammack, Susan Hammack

ALLEGHANY COUNTY



CARINA CARRANZA
Surry Community College
Parents: Noemi Garcia & Javier Carranza

ASHE COUNTY



EMILY KISSINGER
UNC Chapel Hill
Parent: Amy Wilcox, Grandparents: Dean & Joan Taylor

ASHE COUNTY



TAYLOR HEAD
Wilkes Community College
Grandparents: Robert & Bertha Houser

AVERY COUNTY



FARIS SERAFIM
Lees-McRae College
Parent: Cameron Serafim

AVERY COUNTY



MILLIE BUMGARNER
Sandhills Community College
Parents: Mary & David Bumgarner

WATAUGA COUNTY



ANYA LAWS
Appalachian State University
Parents: Christopher & Christy Laws

WATAUGA COUNTY



EMMA WARD
Catawba Valley Community College
Parents: Brent & Lisa Ward

JOHNSON COUNTY

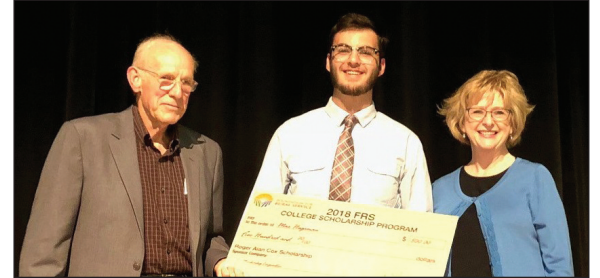


HANNAH GREER
Northeast State Community College
Parent: Carollee Spencer

SHEPHERD NAMED NEW CEO CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A SkyBest Company, and Loretto Telecom, A SkyBest Company, and she will be a member of the following boards: Carolina West Wireless, Carolina-Virginias Telephone Membership Association, Tennessee Telecommunications Association and South Carolina Telecommunication & Broadband Association.

She and her husband Derek reside in Warrensville, and they have two children, Ethan, who works with Sumter Utilities, Inc. and Emma, a rising senior at Ashe County High School.



Watauga High graduate Max Hagaman (center) received the Roger Alan Cox Scholarship through the FRS, which is matched with an additional \$500 from SkyLine as the local sponsor. SkyLine Board Vice President Joe McNeil and PR Administrator Karen Powell presented Max his award at the Watauga High Awards Day Program.

Watauga High Senior Named National Scholarship Winner

Max Hagaman of Zionville has been named a recipient of a national scholarship through the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS). The 2018 graduate of Watauga High School has been awarded a \$500 Roger Alan Cox Scholarship and will receive an additional \$500 match from SkyLine Membership Corporation as the local sponsor for a total scholarship award of \$1,000. Max is the son of Steven and Mary Ruth Hagaman of Zionville, and he plans to major in Agricultural Business Management and Communications at N.C. State University.

BLEVINS RETIRES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

concept of a "Smart Home" retail center, and under his leadership, SkyLine and SkyBest have introduced new and diversified service offerings including monitored security/medical alert, automation and surveillance, streaming TV, hosted VoIP and hosted data storage. Over the past few years, Blevins led expansion efforts to provide fiber communications services to the business communities of Lenoir, Boone and Mountain City. In more recent strategic initiatives, Blevins and his senior staff have pursued growth opportunities through the acquisition activities to secure the purchase of Chesnee Telephone Company in upstate South Carolina in 2017 through SkyBest Holdings, LLC, a subsidiary of SkyBest Communications, and a second company acquisition in 2018 of Loretto Telecom in Tennessee in 2018.

SkyLine has received national awards and recognitions in recent years tied to the company's efforts to complete a fiber-optic overbuild of its cooperative service footprint. NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association named SkyLine among the first rural-based companies in the U.S. to be certified Gig-capable, and the following year received the "Smart Rural Community (SRC) Showcase Award" for being a top-performing broadband provider and having a fiber network to support innovative economic and community development initiatives. Blevins also identified a local need that garnered a SRC grant award for using innovative technology deployments that helped Ashe Assisted Living and Memory Care in West Jefferson to enhance the level of security and care of its residents.

He and his wife Judy reside in Crumpler, and they have a son, Jacob, who is a rising senior and nuclear engineering major at N.C. State University.



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