

Sitka Electric Utility Internship Program

An aerial photograph of a large concrete dam with water cascading over it. To the left of the dam, a winding road curves through a lush green forest. A red line, possibly a cable or pipeline, stretches from a small structure on the left towards the dam. The background shows a dense forest and a body of water under a blue sky.

In collaboration with Sitka Conservation Society
With support from the Department of Energy, Energy to Communities Program
With technical assistance from the National Renewable Energy Lab

Sitka Electric Utility

The mission of the Sitka Electric Utility (CBSE) is to deliver clean, renewable power safely, reliably, and at the lowest long-term cost to the community of Sitka

The utility runs almost 100% on hydroelectric power

Currently hiring Journeyman Lineman

Sitka Conservation Society

Protecting the Tongass and
supporting thriving communities
across Southeast Alaska.

Long history of leading/supporting
joint internship programs

A focus on workforce
development and renewable
energy

Program Overview

The Sitka Electric Utility Internship Program is a priority strategy to recruit and develop local talent to fill critical roles. By offering meaningful career exposure, professional development and hands-on experience to high-school and post-secondary aged students, this program will build career pathways for in-demand and high-paid jobs, benefitting youth, CBSE and the energy sector as a whole.

Success: Intern alums are hired into full time positions at CBSE.

Program Goals

1. Inspire Future Energy Leaders | Build awareness and excitement among local youth about career opportunities in renewable energy and at CBSE
2. Build Skill Sets | Develop interns professional and technical capacity through hands-on projects, training and quality mentorship.
3. Develop a Sustainable Workforce | Create career pathways that result in local talent entering the energy sector, staying in or returning to Sitka, and taking jobs at CBSE
4. Enhance Summer Staffing | Apply interns' skills and time to effectively support CBSE operations and accomplish impactful projects.

Program Indicators

Youth Engagement. Number of applicants per year, number of interns per year, results of intern program evaluations.

Work Accomplished. Contributions by interns to CBSE summer operations, number of projects finished.

Career Pathway Advancement. Number and percentage of intern alumni who pursue education, training, or apprenticeships in the energy sector or a related field.

Workforce Integration. Number and percentage of alumni securing full-time positions at CBSE, the energy sector or a related field.

Retention. Duration that alumni hires at CBSE stay in their position, number and percentage of alumni who stay in/return to Sitka for work.

Relationships. Number of CBSE communications to alumni, number and percentage of alumni who stay in touch with CBSE staff (initiating contact or responding).

Meet Our 2026 Interns

Landon Kirkness



As the summer internships wrap up, we're excited to celebrate Landon Kirkness, one of this year's interns with the Sitka Electric Utility Technical Internship Program, hosted by the City and Borough of Sitka in partnership with Sitka Conservation Society.

Born and raised in Sitka, Landon spent the summer learning more about the systems that carry electricity from Blue Lake to homes and businesses across the community. His curiosity, love of design, and interest in renewable energy made him a great fit for the program.

This fall, Landon will begin studying Electrical Engineering at the University of Texas at Dallas. In the future, he hopes to help design and improve renewable energy systems both in Southeast Alaska and beyond.

We're grateful Landon chose to spend part of his summer exploring Sitka's electric utility and are excited to see where his interest in clean energy takes him next.

Meet Our 2026 Interns

Theron Johnson



As the summer internship season comes to a close, we're proud to recognize Theron Johnson, one of this year's interns with the Sitka Electric Utility Technical Internship Program, hosted by the City and Borough of Sitka in partnership with Sitka Conservation Society.

Theron was born and raised in Sitka and graduated from Sitka High School this year. He plans to pursue an education and career in Industrial Process Instrumentation and Process Technology—a field that connects closely with many of the systems and skills he explored during his internship.

Throughout the summer, Theron gained firsthand experience in a working utility environment while learning about the wide variety of careers that keep Sitka's electric system running.

Outside of work, he enjoys 3D printing, small electronics projects, competing with the Sitka Shore Shots youth shotgun team, and spending time camping, boating, hunting, and fishing. We're grateful for Theron's curiosity and willingness to dive into new experiences, and we look forward to seeing how he puts his technical skills to work in the years ahead.



Tools



SUMMER CHECKLIST: ONBOARDING TO OFFBOARDING

KEY: Mandatory, Recommended, Optional/As Needed

1. ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

Welcome to the Sitka Electric Utility! This checklist is a guide for your first two weeks on the job as a Temp Electric Utility Assistant. It is the joint responsibility of you and your supervisor to make sure you have access to everything listed here. If you are missing an item on this checklist, please reach out to the person listed in the 'POINT PERSON' column.

IN ADVANCE:

TASK	POINT PERSON
☐ Route personnel order for hire	Utility Director
☐ Notify staff about details of the internship program ☐ Job description ☐ Dates of employment ☐ Internship housing responsibilities (shadowing, safety rules) ☐ Intern names and backgrounds (resumes)	Utility Director
☐ Meet with utility staff to draft the internship workplan and identify possible internship projects	
☐ Finalize expected internship workplan & calendar	
☐ Make technology requests ☐ Computer ☐ Email account	Sustainability Co
☐ Get licenses and set up accounts and online workspaces ☐ GIS License ☐ CAD License ☐ HSI Training Program account ☐ Assign modules and due dates ☐ Sharepoint Folder	Sustainability Co

FIRST TWO WEEKS:

TASK	POINT PERSON
☐ Learn Sitka Electric Utility mission and history ☐ Review website	You
☐ Meet with supervisor and other interns to discuss: ☐ Job description and summer calendar/workplan ☐ Your focus area and key projects ☐ Weekly routines and supervisor check-ins ☐ Office days, field days ☐ Office culture norms ☐ Who to go to with questions, challenges, concerns ☐ Key safety & security policy rules (over/under 18 years of age) ☐ Safety equipment ☐ Locking up ☐ Driving ☐ CBS property	Electric Director
☐ Tour all Electric Utility Facilities ☐ Green Lake Development - Senior Mechanic ☐ Blue Lake Development - Senior Operator ☐ Substations - Senior Relay Technician ☐ Transmission and Distribution System - General Foreman	Listed Contact
☐ Take HSI Safety Trainings / Trainings	
☐ Spend your first Friday with the SCS team	
☐ Take a headshot and draft a short introductory social media post for SCS the City Public Relations, Melissa Wileman	
☐ If relevant/needed - identify potential internship projects ☐ Review existing workplan activities ☐ Brainstorm other ideas based on what you have learned so far ☐ Think about what topics and activities you are most interested in (GIS, CAD, electrical engineering, mechanics, lineman work, public education, research, renewable energy systems, etc.) ☐ Think about questions about the utility/energy sector you want answered by the end of the summer	
☐ Discuss your idea with your supervisor ☐ Is this feasible in the time available? ☐ Will this be interesting and teach me something new? ☐ Who could help me with this?	
☐ If a project is identified, fill out an Internship Project Workplan	
☐ Attend any all-team meetings	
☐ Prepare to meet one-on-one with every Electric Utility Unit Lead ☐ Identify all units ☐ Identify all unit leads ☐ Identify all unit team members ☐ Develop specific questions for an informational meeting ☐ What does this unit do	



2. EXPERIENCE CHECKLIST

Over the course of your work as a Temporary Electric Utility Assistant, we hope that you will get to have most of the below experiences. Work with your supervisor to prioritize activities based on what most aligns with your interests and skills, and the Utility's needs. You are invited to be a leader in crafting your experience.

POSITIONS TO SHADOW

- ☐ Apprentice Lineman/Lineman
- ☐ Electric Utility Director
- ☐ Foreman
- ☐ General Foreman
- ☐ Generation Facilities Mechanic
- ☐ Lead Power Plant Operator
- ☐ Meter Reader
- ☐ Meter Technician
- ☐ Power Plant Operator
- ☐ Project & Regulatory Engineer
- ☐ Relay Control Technician
- ☐ Relief Power Plant Operator
- ☐ Sustainability Coordinator
- ☐ Electric Utility Director

ACTIVITIES // Check off listed experiences as you have them and document additional activities

- ☐ Have an informational meeting with every Unit Lead
- ☐ Complete one or more special projects, identified with your supervisor
- ☐ Data collection, digitization, and visualization
- ☐ Use GIS Software

CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA | ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT TEMPORARY ELECTRIC UTILITY ASSISTANT WEEKLY WORK PLAN

Date: _____ Week: _____

GOALS OR PRIORITIES FOR THE WEEK: What do you want to accomplish this week? Think about your internship project and assigned activities. Write down one to three things you will focus on; you do not need to list everything you will do this week. Ex: *Complete geotagging of all electric poles on Halibut Point Road*

WORK SCHEDULE: Fill in where you will be and what you will be doing; one to three priorities per day. For flexible days, plan what projects you will work on. Ask for additional tasks & support as needed to use your time well. Ex: *Monday AM shadow mechanical director.*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
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Career Visits

- Ben Mathys, Electrician, Southeast Sparks
- Jessica Archer, EM1, United States Coast Guard Sitka Base
- Nick Mackie, Chief Engineer, Seafood Producers Cooperative
- Allison Bidlack, PhD, Research Associate Professor, Alaska Climate Adaptation Science Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks
- Adriana Northcutt, Energy Educator and Energy Catalyst, Renewable Energy Alaska Project, Sustainable Southeast Partnership

+ Two part workforce readiness training with Spruce Root

Wrap Up & Questions