



The Power Source

Igniting the Future of Florida



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Power Profile: Kayla Allemang, P.E.
Senior Engineer – Transmission Services
Seminole Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Kayla, you are a Senior Transmission Services Engineer for Seminole Electric Cooperative, can you tell us a little bit about your background, how you got your start in the industry, and your current role at Seminole Electric?

I graduated from the University of South Florida (USF), Go Bulls! with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering. I started as an entry-level Transmission Planning Engineer at Seminole Electric Cooperative straight out of school. I worked in Transmission Planning for eight (8) years modeling and analyzing Seminole and Member transmission systems as well as ensuring compliance with NERC Reliability Standards. In 2021, I accepted a new role as Senior Engineer in the Transmission Services department where I coordinate Member projects, oversee Seminole's generation and transmission interconnection process, evaluate distributed solar opportunities, and assist with the transmission rate process.

Seminole Electric Cooperative serves approximately 1.9 million consumers in 42 of Florida's 67 counties and included in your role is coordinating member projects, can you share some information about some of the current projects you are excited about?

Seminole's nine (9) distribution cooperatives range from service territories outside Tallahassee to as far south as Lake Okeechobee. Our Members, by nature, serve many of the rural communities in Florida and as the larger cities in Florida reach a point of saturation in regards to growth, our Member communities are beginning to see and have seen rapid growth in recent years. Our Members are increasing in new residential communities as well as commercial/industrial such as health complexes, retirement communities, indoor agriculture, and data mining, just to name a few! It's exciting (and a little scary) to be involved in a large volume of projects. Projects include new substations, new transmission lines, and significant upgrades to the existing infrastructure all of which are required to provide safe, reliable, and affordable service to our Member consumers.

The industry is rapidly changing and will continue to shift during our careers, what do you find challenging with the constant evolution of technology?

The most challenging for me, and I'm assuming most have this problem, is having the time to stay abreast of the ever-changing energy landscape, including new reforms and technology. I, just like many of the readers, have increasing responsibilities at work, children, a partner, friends, house chores, you name it, and adding time to read and understand the changes in industry on top of it all is a huge challenge. It's not just the technologies that are changing the work like the newest solar technology or introductions of microgrids and battery storage but it's also the technologies that change the way we work such as new and improved software, processes, procedures, etc. It's a lot of information but thankfully there are great tools and resources out there to assist in the information overload. Question 5 below talks about one of the best resources for engineers and there are also plenty of podcasts and books. Also, utilize the peers around you with a wealth of knowledge just waiting to be passed down!



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Seminole Electric Cooperative was impacted by multiple storms this past hurricane season, as a cooperative what is most important during storm response and what lessons have you learned?

For Cooperatives during storm response, the most important factor is mutual aid. Because of our business model, and the cooperative principle "cooperation amongst Cooperatives" whenever Florida is impacted, we typically receive hundreds of cooperative crews from out of state that help restore power. In turn we send cooperative crews to other areas when they have ice storms, tornadoes, etc. Seminole has found a place helping coordinate the fuel and other logistics for these out of state crews when they come to help our Members. The most important lesson we have learned is that there is strength in numbers, and that local communities can band together to solve big problems. Even though we might not be as big as other utilities, because we are a cooperative, and because we are not for profit, we can draw on other cooperative resources from across the country to ensure that we can get our folks lights back on as safely, and as quickly, as possible.

You are a member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers Women in Engineering Group. Can you tell us about that organization?

The Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) is the world's largest technical professional organization dedicated to advancing technology for the benefit of humanity. IEEE develops standards and provides excellent educational resources for professionals to stay technically current in their industry. I'm a member of the IEEE Women in Engineer (WIE) Chapter and I'm also the secretary for the IEEE Power and Energy Society (PES)/Industry Applications Society (IAS) Chapter of the Florida West Coast Section. WIE is dedicated to promoting women engineers and scientists as well as inspiring girls around the world to follow their academic interests in a career in engineering and science. PES provides the world's largest forum for sharing the latest in technological developments in the electric power industry, for developing standards that guide the development and construction of equipment and systems, and for educating members of the industry and the public.

These societies are excellent resources for continuing education and provide plenty of local networking opportunities. I highly recommend anyone interested in either group to consider a membership (or renew an existing membership!). You can see the information in the link below or simply reach out to me on LinkedIn for questions!

[IEEE - Learn About IEEE Membership](#)

As a female engineer what challenges have you faced in your career? What more can we be doing to attract women to the engineering and STEM related professions?

I think my biggest challenge as a female engineer is myself and removing this preconceived notion I have that everyone is judging my abilities due to being a female engineer. When in reality, that is probably far from the truth and thankfully no one in my career has given me an actual reason to think that. I work for a great company that supports women in their careers. Seminole has a female CEO, CFO, VP, and multiple directors/managers; having that representation in our leadership team is very inspiring. My immediate supervisor also champions for me any chance he gets. I'm fortunate to have a great support system here (I didn't get paid to say that either)!(cont.)



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I think that the more women (myself included), that are in STEM professions, mentor and support younger women/girls from middle school to college and beyond with give many women the motivation and inspiration to continue with a STEM-related career. Short story: In my junior year of college, I had a tough year and was ready to throw in the towel, do something easy. My parents thankfully talked me off the ledge and I continued my degree which ultimately led me to where I am today! There are women/girls out there with these same doubts that may not have that support system at home or don't voice their doubts/feelings. Having someone that has experienced the exact same struggles and can cheer you on, answer questions, talk you off that ledge will make a huge difference. The work that Lila and Sarah do with FWELF and similarly the work of the IEEE WIE group are exactly the support systems we need to help each other grow and thrive! I hope we can increase participation in both groups to expand this great network of Florida Women in energy and STEM!

As you know, FWELF was started to inform, inspire, and motivate the next generation of female workforce talent. Knowing what you know now from your accomplishments in this career, what advice would you give to the 2d year college student looking to pursue a job in energy?

Don't be intimidated entering the industry and feeling as if you don't know enough or that you don't belong (hello, imposter syndrome). Your only job entering the energy industry is to ask all the questions and be a sponge, and that's all your employer will expect at that stage in your career. A female colleague (with 40 years of experience in the energy industry!) recently said something in an interview for an entry-level position that I feel applies to this advice, and I paraphrase ...you dictate your trajectory in the energy industry within those first few years; you can be that sponge and soak in everything you can learn about your company and the industry, or you can sit and just do as your told. That was excellent advice that I will continue to share with others starting out their careers.