



Newsletter

VIRGINIA CHAPTER



ICONS

Young Professional Awards



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Hispanics in Energy VA shines at the ICONS Young Professionals Awards

On Thursday, October 9th, the Hispanics in Energy Virginia Chapter (HIE-VA) was honored as one of the top five finalists for Nonprofit Organization of the Year. The ICONS Awards celebrate the outstanding contributions of young professionals who are driving innovation and positive change across the region.

The event also recognizes companies that are committed to supporting and nurturing emerging talent, helping to build a thriving environment for the next generation of leaders. Organized by ChamberRVA, the awards span seven categories: Community Champion, Maverick Sponsorship, Trailblazing Trendsetter, Young Professional of the Year, Nonprofit of the Year, Small Business of the Year, and Large Business of the Year. *"This award was a tremendous reflection of our team's dedication and impact,"* said Genesis Alvarez, President of HIE-VA. *"Being included in such a distinguished group is a win in itself, and we can't wait to come back even stronger next year."*



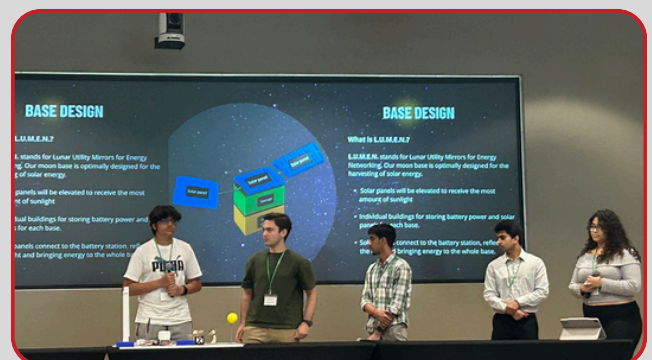
HIE-VA PARTNERS WITH GMU LUNAR MICROGRIDS: ENGINEERING POWER BEYOND EARTH



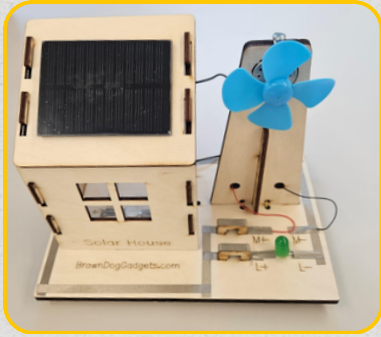
HIE-VA was proud to once again participate in GMU's annual high school summer camp in August of 2025 - an inspiring experience dedicated to nurturing the next generation of STEM innovators. Students engaged in hands-on workshops, showcased their creativity through poster presentations, and connected with industry professionals.

This year, HIE-VA awarded two outstanding students with \$2,000 scholarships each after poster session judging from members Marvin Morataya and Gaston Araos. The two students will embark on a research opportunity at GMU and be supported by ongoing mentorship with Marvin. With additional contributions from NOVEC and Google, a total of \$4,000 in scholarships were awarded.

Beyond scholarships, HIE-VA actively engaged with students and parents through an industry panel, where Executive Board Member Luis Rosa shared insights into the energy sector, and at the industry expo with an interactive booth. We look forward to continuing our support to future summer camps and students.



PATHWAYS TO SCIENCE



This year, we were excited to partner with the Pathway to Science summer program to deliver an engaging STEM experience for students. The program is designed to introduce underrepresented youth to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics through interactive projects, mentorship, and real-world applications.



During the event, participants constructed miniature houses equipped with small solar panels that powered LED lights and a motorized fan, an activity that showcased renewable energy concepts in a practical and fun way. The day also featured inspiring guest speakers who presented on renewable energy topics and a dynamic Women in STEM panel discussion.

As part of our commitment to support future STEM leaders, HIE-VA awarded two laptops to high school senior Latina girls. The event brought together 20 Latina high school students, providing them with mentorship, resources, and exposure to STEM career pathways.

HIE-VA Student Member at IEEE Power and Energy Society (PES)

Gordon Elgin North Piegan participated in a working group focused on the electrification of Tribal Lands, addressing the challenges Native American communities face with limited access to electricity during IEEE PES in July of 2025. Gordon contributed valuable insights as one of the few published authors on Tribal Energy. The experience was both humbling and empowering, reinforcing their role as a leader committed to driving change in communities impacted by generations of hardship. Inspired by the belief that even small actions can create ripples of hope, Gordon left the event motivated to continue advocating for energy equity and progress.



Mid-Atlantic **SUBREGIONAL RETREAT**

The Mid-Atlantic Subregional Retreat event was a great success, thanks to the incredible support of our volunteers and partners. We had 12 dedicated volunteers and 50 students registered from universities including Virginia Tech, George Mason University, George Washington University, and the University of Maryland. Sponsors of the event included HIE-VA, Dominion Energy, Gordon and SHPE DC.



Additionally, we held sessions on crafting a strong elevator pitch and provided guidance on professional attire for the convention. All the sponsors had booths at the event to connect directly with students and share opportunities.

During the event, our partner Dominion Energy delivered an engaging presentation highlighting the positions they will be promoting at the upcoming SHPE National Convention. We held a resume workshop, where students received personalized feedback to help them strengthen their applications. Following that, participants took part in mock interviews to practice their communication skills before the convention.

Overall, the retreat was a meaningful experience, students enjoyed themselves, learned valuable professional development skills, and appreciated the delicious food that was provided. A huge thank-you to everyone who helped make this event possible!





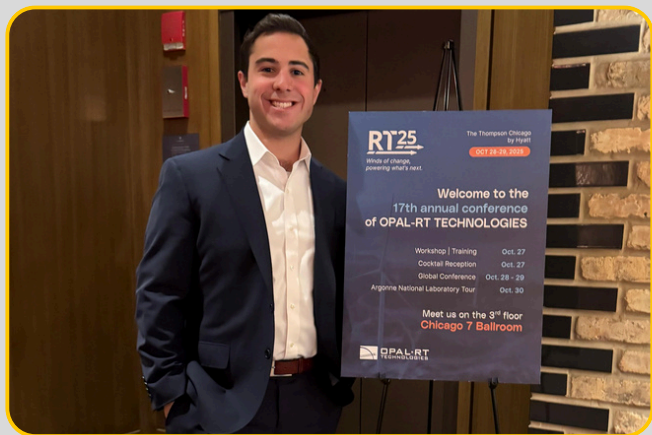
Member Spotlight

David Perez

Members and board members of HIE-VA are the backbone of our organization, and we proudly celebrate their contributions both in and outside of our community. David Perez was recently promoted to Supervisor at Dominion Energy. A native of Puerto Rico, David joined the company in 2012 after graduating from the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez. He has led numerous relay protection projects, including post-Hurricane Maria restoration efforts. A champion for inclusion, David has served on the boards of HOLA! and HIE-VA. Outside of work, he coaches his son's baseball team, maintains a saltwater fish tank, and enjoys road trips with his family.



HIE-VA SHINES AT GLOBAL CONFERENCE RT25



Board Member Carlos Velez recently represented Dominion Energy at the RT25 Winds of Change Conference in Chicago, hosted by OPAL-RT Technologies. Global innovators and engineers gathered to explore advancements in real-time simulation for power systems, aerospace, automotive, and more. Carlos presented how Dominion Energy uses OPAL-RT's simulation equipment to enhance its Substation Technician Training Program, providing realistic, risk-free scenarios without live substations. This opportunity allowed him to share best practices and gain insights from other industry leaders leveraging these powerful technologies.

POWERING CONNECTIONS: A FALL FUSION OF CULTURE & ENERGY

On October 23, HIE-VA Executive Board Member, Jose Santos represented HIE-VA at our Fall Networking Event in Vienna, VA. In collaboration with the Virginia Hispanic Chamber and SHPE DC, the evening brought together young professionals across the energy sector to connect, collaborate, and celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. The event was filled with meaningful conversations, cultural pride, and the spirit of community.



Introducing

OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER

CARLOS VELEZ

*Associate Engineer at
Dominion Energy*



Carlos is currently an Associate Engineer supporting the Electric Distribution Protection and Coordination team for Dominion Energy. He joined Dominion Energy in 2024 after obtaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Virginia Tech. Carlos is of Puerto Rican and Cuban descent and enjoys playing soccer, video games, and hanging out with friends in his free time. Welcome to the team, Carlos!

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



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UPCOMING EVENTS



**NOV
14**

Pathways to Success

6:00 PM – 8:30 PM
Johnson Center, Room F
GMU Fairfax Campus

**NOV
20**

HIE-VA End of Year Event

6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
1000 Westover Rd. Richmond, VA
To attend, register [here](#)

*To add your upcoming HIE-VA event, please
email Natalia.Giraud@DominionEnergy.com*

The Gift of Growth

ENERGY FELLOWS PROGRAM LAUNCHES IN 2026

Still searching for the perfect gift for a driven young professional? In 2026, HIE-VA will launch the Energy Fellows Program—a dynamic initiative designed to connect young professionals and support their career development.

To participate, applicants must be HIE-VA members, currently enrolled in a college, university, or trade school, and at least 18 years old. The program will include three, one hour engaging meetings throughout the first quarter.

For more details, email:
info@hispanicsinenergyvirginia.org