



2026 SGA Awards Finalists: Community Service

Entry: InSpired girls: A day of learning with Spire and Girls in the Know

Company: Spire

What challenge was this project or initiative created to solve?

The workforce of the future depends on the relationships we build today, so we're always looking for opportunities to inspire youth to explore careers in energy. And often, community nonprofits can help us achieve that goal.

In this case, Girls in the Know was searching for a partner to give a group of girls from the Ferguson-Florissant School District in north St. Louis County a chance to explore careers in the skilled trades. Inspired by their mission of empowering girls to embrace a strong sense of self, Spire Field Operations Supervisor Samantha (Sam) Wenzelburger knew this was a great opportunity to spotlight careers at Spire and teach girls that they, too, can work in the trades.

What approach or solution did your team implement?

In April 2025, more than a dozen girls ages 9 to 13 from an underserved St. Louis community visited a Spire training center for a day of hands-on learning in partnership with the nonprofit Girls in the Know.

It was a chance for the young women to learn from female professionals and get inspired about career paths they might not have known of otherwise.

During the event, students explored a variety of roles and visited interactive stations, including pipefitting, natural gas meter building, simulators and truck and equipment showcases.

What was the result or measurable outcome?

This hands-on event empowered the girls to embrace an even stronger sense of self.

"This immersive visit reinforces our commitment to empowering young girls with knowledge, confidence and exposure to new opportunities that inspire their futures," said Lori Lander, Girls in the Know founder.

How does this work reflect SGA's mission to Share, Grow, and Advance the natural gas industry?

By sharing the fun and excitement of what it's like to work in the natural gas industry, we're growing the potential natural gas industry workforce of tomorrow. When young girls can gain exposure to the skilled trades, especially from women currently working in those fields, we're advancing the industry and encouraging this as a valuable path for anyone to pursue.



Contributors: Samantha (Sam) Wenzelburger, Emma Boker, Kristin Wahl, Brittney Brown, Alyssa Blom, Emily Adkins, Pamela Bunk, Kelly Hardie, Clara Kelley, TeOnna Blackmon, Theresa Payne, Shannon Miller, Eric McAllister, Alex Dixon

Entry: Book Vending Machines: Expanding Access to Literacy

Company: Atmos Energy

What challenge was this project or initiative created to solve?

Many students face limited access to age-appropriate books at home, creating barriers to literacy development and engagement. This presents an opportunity to provide an accessible, motivating solution that encourages reading, supports educators, and reinforces positive academic behaviors.

What approach or solution did your team implement?

The Book Vending Machine initiative is designed to provide an innovative, sustainable solution to childhood literacy challenges. Installed directly within schools, the machines allow students to select books of their choice using tokens earned through reading achievements, positive behavior, and academic milestones.

This approach empowers students by giving them ownership over their reading journey while removing financial barriers that may limit access to books. The program is simple, engaging, and easily integrated into school systems, allowing educators to incorporate it into their literacy strategies and incentive programs.

Similar to other successful initiatives, the program relies on consistency, accessibility, and strong communication. Schools are equipped with a straightforward process for distributing tokens and maintaining the machines, maintaining long-term success. Atmos Energy and its partners continue to support the effort by replenishing the machines with new books and promoting ongoing engagement, creating a sustainable model that can be replicated in any community.

What was the result or measurable outcome?

The Book Vending Machine initiative has created meaningful and measurable impacts within participating schools and communities. Students have shown increased enthusiasm for reading, with teachers reporting higher participation in literacy activities and greater engagement in the classroom. By providing direct access to books, the program helps students build personal libraries and encourages reading at home, which extends learning beyond school hours.

The initiative has donated books to thousands of students, many of whom may not have otherwise had access to age-appropriate reading materials. In addition to supporting literacy, the token-based system reinforces positive behaviors and academic achievement, contributing to an improved school environment.

Feedback from educators and families highlights the program's success in making reading both accessible and exciting. Much like other Atmos Energy initiatives, the strength of the program lies in its ability to create lasting change through collaboration and proactive community engagement.

As Atmos Energy continues to expand this effort, the focus remains on increasing access, strengthening partnerships, and inspiring future generations. By investing in education and literacy today, Atmos Energy is helping build stronger, safer, and more connected communities for tomorrow.

How does this work reflect SGA's mission to Share, Grow, and Advance the natural gas industry?

Atmos Energy's Fueling Safe and Thriving Communities initiative focuses on fueling bright minds and healthy futures for our kids, fueling honor and thanks for our community heroes, and fueling hope and growth for our neighbors. In doing so, one of our many projects is the donation of book vending machines to local schools. This project brings together educators and community partners to address childhood literacy in a tangible and engaging way. By collaborating with local schools, we identified campuses where their students face barriers to enjoying age-appropriate books at home. The concept of book vending machines – where students earn tokens for positive behavior and academic achievement – was introduced as an innovative solution to make reading both rewarding and accessible.



Entry: Feeding Families, Strengthening Communities: Summit Utilities and The Watershed Organization

Company: Summit Utilities, Inc.

What challenge was this project or initiative created to solve?

Arkansas ranks first in the nation for food insecurity, underscoring a critical and ongoing need across the communities we serve. For many families, especially during the holiday season, access to consistent meals is not guaranteed. This challenge created a clear opportunity for Summit Utilities to take action through community partnership and direct support.

What approach or solution did your team implement?

Summit Utilities partnered with local nonprofit, The Watershed, to address this need through direct action, employee engagement, and financial support. Team members volunteered on-site to assemble Thanksgiving meal boxes for families across Central Arkansas, while Summit contributed an \$8,000 donation to fund essential food items.

This effort reflects Summit's broader commitment to community investment through volunteerism and structured programs like paid Volunteer Time Off, which provides employees with up to 20 hours annually to serve. By combining hands-on service, financial contributions, and nonprofit partnership, Summit created a meaningful and scalable model for impact.

What was the result or measurable outcome?

The initiative directly supported approximately 500 families by providing complete Thanksgiving meal boxes filled with essential holiday staples.

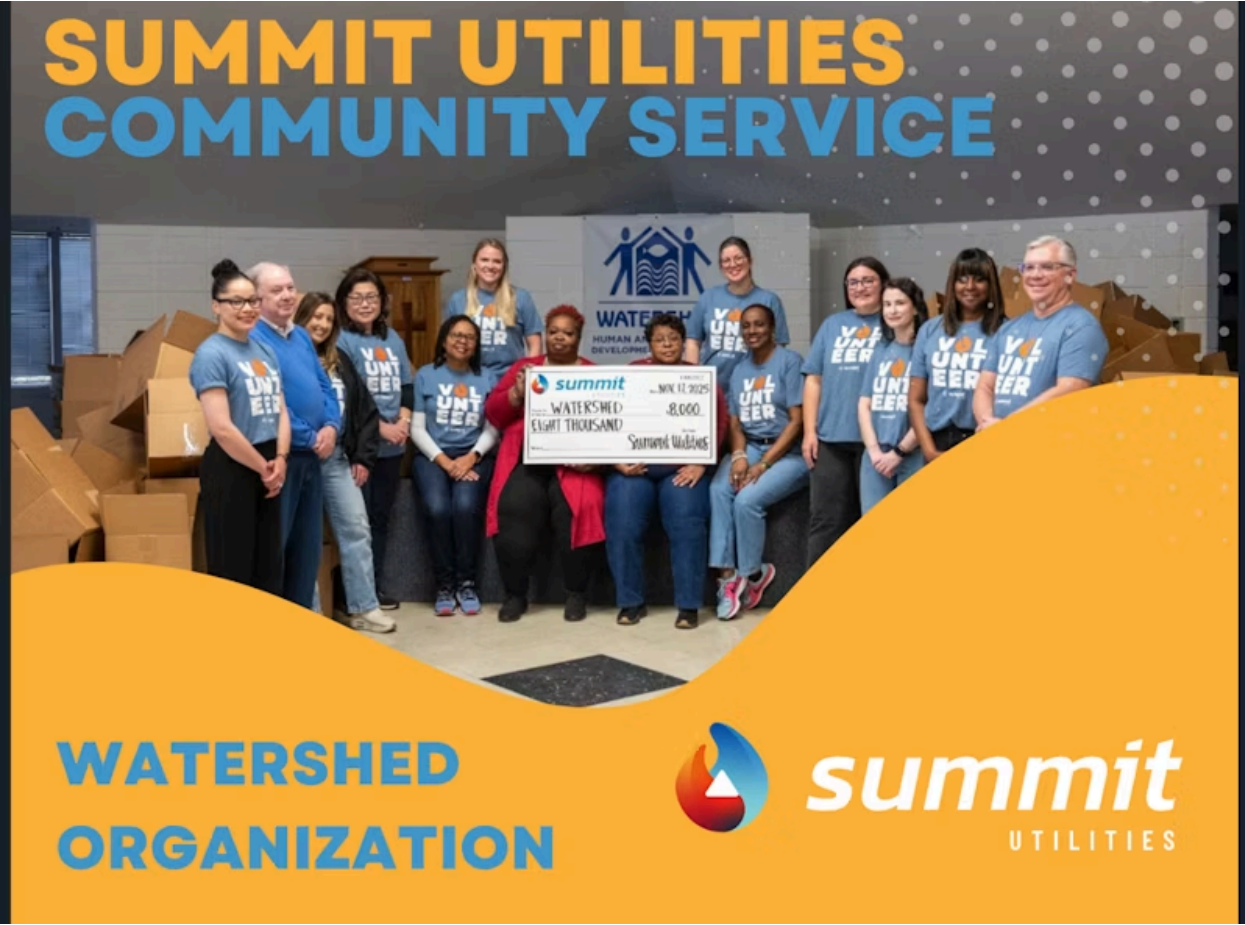
Beyond immediate impact, the effort strengthened Summit's ongoing partnership with The Watershed and deepened employee engagement through volunteerism. The combination of financial support, team member participation, and community collaboration helped expand access to food resources and reinforced a sustainable approach to addressing hunger at the local level.

How does this work reflect SGA's mission to Share, Grow, and Advance the natural gas industry?

This initiative reflects Summit Utilities' commitment to sharing resources and compassion, growing meaningful community partnerships, and advancing the role of the natural gas industry as a trusted community partner.

By mobilizing employees, collaborating with The Watershed, and investing in the well-being of the communities we serve, Summit demonstrates that our impact extends beyond delivering

natural gas. These efforts strengthen relationships, build trust, and reinforce our responsibility to support our neighbors in meaningful, lasting ways.



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