



Carrying on a Family Legacy

by Guy Benson

At a very young age, Blake Jedlicka of East Bernard, Texas, knew he wanted to do something that was outdoors rather than be stuck in an office.

Some of that desire came from Blake's now-deceased maternal grandfather, Billy ("Pappy") Klopsteck, who built a 40-year legacy as a head lineman with CenterPoint Energy.



Blake remembered seeing Pappy in the "big trucks," as Blake used to call them, and thinking "Man, I'd like to do that." Blake's dad, Rodney, said Pappy set the example for him by helping other people get their power back on.

In his journey to become a lineman, Blake was told he needed schooling. His "aha" moment occurred when he and his parents visited the TEEX Lineworker Academy. After taking the Academy tour with Administrative Associate Lorrie Ramsey and Utilities Instructor Will Stokes, Blake chose TEEX before he and his parents left Texas A&M-RELLIS that day.

(continued on page 2)

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Legacy (cont.)

Blake had found what he was looking for to continue Pappy's legacy. It was important to Blake that the TEEEX Lineworker Academy wasn't just sitting in the classroom learning things mentally but being outside doing them physically.

"We're outside in the heat, in the cold, in the weather," Blake explained, "The atmosphere that we're going to be in doing this type of work. So, why not learn it in the atmosphere that we would be doing it in."

At one point, Blake revealed that he had his grandfather's old climbing hooks, worn and weathered from decades of climbing wood poles. In a conversation with Will Stokes, Will suggested to Blake that, on graduation day, Blake should do his final TEEEX climb in his Pappy's hooks.

Voice full of emotion, Blake's dad said regarding the day Blake wore Pappy's hooks ". . . that's 40 years of hard work on your feet . . . 40 years of dedication to people. Pappy is smiling down and happy that his grandson has chosen that path of life."

Instructor Will Stokes, echoed that sentiment, "You know, seeing a student carry on their family's legacy by becoming a lineman brings back a word that has followed all of us throughout our careers, and that's 'pride'. It's a very proud trade. It's a very proud industry."

[Watch Blake's story on YouTube](#)



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