

Mohawk Valley News

Clark Energy Center

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER • WINTER 2006–2007

SUNY ESC: FOR SOME, A ROAD MAP

It seemed a natural fit. When the Power Authority's Andy Cline received his associate's degree in criminal justice from Canton College in 1982, he chose a security guard position with NYPA over applying to the State Police. His dad had worked at the Power Authority's massive St. Lawrence-FDR hydroelectric project at Massena for many years.

Less than two years later, he switched to a transmission lineman position, advancing to high-voltage hotstick lineman and then, in 2002, into management as transmission supervisor at NYPA's Clark Energy Center, north of Utica. Clark is at the heart of the state's major transmission crossroads, where high-power lines converge from NYPA's Western and Northern New York State power generators, for distribution of electricity to key downstate markets.

That natural fit no longer was, said Cline.

"Moving into management is a serious career move for anyone. I had set my long-term goal on a B.S. degree, and had taken some classes at Utica College," said Cline. "But I quickly realized two conflicting facts: first, management expects you'll raise your awareness of the organization's full statewide dimensions, the technologies and economics driving the electricity markets, and broad utility industry and state/national political issues. I didn't have to be told: a bachelor's degree was a virtual necessity."

The second fact, and the problem, was based on the nature of his job. Cline and other members of Transmission management staff spent perhaps 30 or more weeks a year on the road. "Our job is to inspect and provide preventive and reactive main-



Cline, right, with NYPA transmission supervisors Ken Ward, left, and Wayne Currier.

tenance along more than 1,400 transmission miles across Northern and Western New York, through the Adirondacks and upstate farmlands, right to the Canadian border."

The answer: the State University of New York's Empire State College (ESC), accredited and specifically structured since 1969 to provide college educations for working adults. "They're based in Saratoga Springs, with 35 teaching locations statewide." What appealed to Cline was diversity: "They offered small group seminars, online courses through electronic classrooms, internships, even the opportunity to enroll at other SUNY colleges. But the key, for me, was the option of independent study."

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Assemblywoman Destito Tours Clark Energy Center

Assemblywoman RoAnn Destito toured the Power Authority's Clark Energy Center in Marcy on Jan. 19, accompanied by senior officials from the facility's Energy Control Center and Transmission operations.



Operators at computers inside NYPA's Energy Control Center in Marcy control power flows from the Power Authority's generating plants around the clock. Inspecting control room procedures are, from left: Niko Ladopoulos, legislative liaison; Mike Malek, senior security guard; Assemblywoman RoAnn Destito; Ben Wiles of the Public Utility Law Project; and Gerry LaRose, director of power system operations.

As a state legislator whose district includes the Town of Marcy, the Assemblywoman has been a frequent visitor to Clark. This January, however, was her first opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at the nerve center of NYPA's transmission operations.

"A wide range of energy-related issues concern my constituents. So, I thought it would be especially useful to learn more about the role played by NYPA in meeting our state's energy challenges," the Assemblywoman said.

Destito represents the 116th Assembly District, encompassing the cities of Rome and Utica and the towns of Floyd, Marcy and Whitestown in Oneida County. She chairs the Assembly Governmental Operations committee and was a member of the Conference Committee that created the Power for Jobs program in 1997.

"As the hub of the Power Authority's 1,400 circuit-miles of high voltage transmission lines, the Clark Energy Center is a great place to showcase the ways NYPA serves the Empire State," said Steve DeCarlo, vice president of transmission, who hosted the tour.

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MVN NOTES

Did You Know...

- Since 1980, the hub of NYPA's power transmission facilities, coordinating electricity flow from 18 power projects and from outside sources, including Canada, has been the Clark Energy Center.
- At Clark, located in Marcy, N.Y., NYPA's Energy Control Center monitors the Power Authority's facilities statewide and dispatches electricity from our generating projects, 24/7.
- The 85-acre substation also located here serves as the terminus for the state's highest-voltage transmission line, NYPA's 765-kilovolt line from the Canadian border. It carries low-cost hydropower 155 miles from Quebec to Central New York, where it's routed to where it's needed most.
- Clark provides rigorous training for NYPA's corps of linemen. Suspend high above ground, they make expert use of "hotsticks"—fiberglass poles close to 30 feet long—to repair live power lines without disrupting service.
- The substation is home to NYPA's Convertible Static Compensator, a device which increases capacity on heavily used transmission lines. ♦



New York Power Authority

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 New York Power Authority



CALENDAR OF AREA EVENTS

Tentative list of events sponsored or co-sponsored by the Power Authority:

SATURDAY, MARCH 3

Heart Run and Walk, Utica

THURSDAY, MARCH 8

SUNYIT Technology Education and Pre-engineering Showcase

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2

New York State Envirothon
 Verona Beach State Park

JULY-AUGUST

Utica Monday Nites

SUNDAY, JULY 8

Boilermaker Road Race, Utica

Andy Cline

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That meant, simply, that he could bypass online courses at assigned times, do his homework and study on his own time, at motels, say, between Potsdam and Watertown, with a minimum of distractions.

“But many who’ve taken this route agree with me,” said Cline, “that the key factor in disciplining the whole program are the faculty mentors. They are defined as guides or facilitators in helping students reach educational goals. Mine, Roz Dow, was that and much more.” Students, he explained, meet regularly with mentors to receive course advice, develop degree plans and share their own expertise.

In 2003 Cline selected a course of degree study in ESC’s Business, Management and Economics curriculum. He arranged a study



Andy Cline, with Roz Dow, his ESC mentor, at college facilities in Utica.

schedule around “Macro Economics”—corporate finance, human resource management, business ethics—and “Organizational Behavior”—strategic management, the legal environment, public administration—that would occupy his spare time, year-round, until he completed his studies in the spring of 2005.

“Some ESC professors preferred to send and receive materials and tests by e-mail—thank the Good Lord for laptop computers—and others by ‘snail mail.’ Either way, the ‘final exam’ would normally consist of an extended paper of 15 or more pages.”

Cline was able to balance NYPA responsibilities and academic assignments successfully. In fact, he was named the Power Authority’s transmission superintendent in August of last year.

“From the people that I met and dealt with, whether faculty or support staff, to the excellent variety of courses offered, I really can’t say enough to emphasize what a positive experience it has been.”

Information: www.esc.edu. ♦



North Utica Senior Citizens Community Center serves all ages. The nearby Clark Energy Center’s Dave Finn, left, and Carol Rodino, right, this year again delivered employee-gift-wrapped hats, mittens, scarves, toys and coloring books to the Center’s Linda Kiley and Yvonne McClusky to further brighten the holiday. ♦

Tour

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Destito received an overview of NYPA’s statewide generation and transmission operations, a tour of the 85-acre substation, the Convertible Static Compensator and the Energy Control Center.

Power Authority officials also briefed the Assemblywoman on several regional NYPA activities, including energy-saving measures installed at an array of Oneida County govern-

ment buildings and NYPA support for revitalization of the former Griffiss Air Force Base with allocations of low-cost electricity and energy technology projects to promote economic development efforts at the Griffiss Business and Technology Park.

“I am proud to represent the hard-working men and women of NYPA’s Clark Energy Center and pleased to have the opportunity to learn more about the vital role they play in New York’s electric system and overall energy plan,” Assemblywoman Destito noted. ♦

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If you have comments or suggestions, please contact Carol Rodino, community relations manager, at 315-792-8511, or by email at carol.rodino@nypa.gov.

To our readers: We occasionally receive requests for tours of the Clark Energy Center. While we would like to comply, security concerns prevent us from allowing members of the public to tour our facilities. Thank you for your understanding. ♦