

Member Spotlight – Seth Walburger



The Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA) is responsible for providing Central New York with its most vital life source. In order to keep taps flowing, roughly 100 employees with various skill sets and knowledge work together to provide palatable and potable drinking water. Seth Walburger, 27, of OCWA's Operations Department, views it as a puzzle; each employee, or puzzle piece, is essential to a successful big picture affair. "I like the fact that our goal is to provide people with necessities. It's our duty to supply good quality water to help them go about their lives," says Walburger.

After graduating with a degree in residential construction from Morrisville State College in 2008, Walburger did pipeline construction for four years. He was then hired by OCWA in 2011 to do district water maintenance, which he did for two years until being hired as a water operator. "I never really paid attention to all of the water facilities until I started working here...it's amazing how something you don't notice is so important," says Walburger. Now that he is informed about the complexities of the water industry, Walburger is amazed by how many people are unaware of where their water comes from, just as he once was.

Throughout Walburger's four and a half years at OCWA he has come to understand himself to be a jack of all trades, as no two work days are exactly alike. "From building maintenance, to tank maintenance, to making sure the water is satisfactorily cleaned, there's a lot involved," he says. "It all depends on what's needed."

As one of several young professionals in the water industry, Walburger appreciates the value of this type of public service in a field that many young people do not even register as a potential career. "It's something you can feel good about," he says. "It's a stable job, it's not going anywhere, and it's something you can do for the rest of your life."