



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

John O'Connell, III | NYRWA President

I recently returned from the NRWA WaterPro Conference in Fort Worth, TX. As usual, the training events, meetings, vendor exhibits and all the various events went smoothly. If you have never attended the WaterPro National Conference, I encourage you to consider the opportunity in 2019, joining our group from New York as we travel to Nashville, TN, September 9 - 11, 2019.

At this year's conference, I had the opportunity to meet the new Acting Rural Development Assistant Director, Ann Hazleton. The State Association National Directors who make up the Executive Board of NRWA were able to have lunch with her, and our message was well received. I also learned that the very next day she was traveling to NY to meet with Congresswoman Tenney, who has strongly supported our efforts and initiatives while in office. She stated that in the future she would like to visit a few systems in the upstate NY area, and I assured her we would be more than happy to accommodate her trip.

There also was an important announcement at the conference regarding the funding of a new apprenticeship program. This will be a cooperative effort between National Rural Water and Rural

Development. For those that are aware of this program, there were sixteen states asked to participate in an earlier study to see if there would be any interest in this program. New York was one of the states, and NY will now have the opportunity to have some form of financial program assistance. The program will aid utilities that are having difficulty in maintaining staffing levels. Although the details are incomplete, it appears some level of funding may be available to help offset the expenses of the apprentice. I'm sure our CEO, Jamie Herman will have more on this in the near future.

To wrap things up, it also looks like the funding levels for the budget year 2019 are stable, which is great news moving forward. In closing, I also want to thank my fellow national board members for voting me in as Vice President of National Rural Water Association. This is a great honor and I will do my best to achieve the goals we have for continued success of the organization in the future. Please remember to support our association by planning to attend our 40th Annual Technical Training Workshop & Exhibition to be held May 20 - 22, 2019, at the Turning Stone Resort and Conference Center in Verona, NY. 💧💧💧