

# CONGRATULATIONS TO JOHN D. O'CONNELL, III, ON HIS ELECTION AS NRWA PRESIDENT

By Jamie Herman

Most of our members know John in one way or another, either from his 25 years of service on our Board of Directors, as a water and wastewater Operation Specialist, or in his role as a representative for Koester Associates, Inc. It is with great pleasure that we share that John was recently elected as the President of the National Rural Water Association (NRWA), the culmination of an amazing career!

In 1976, John started his career in farming, working the family farm with his brother and father in Weedsport, NY. The family farm began as a 50-acre parcel, but John quickly developed his joy and passion for farming. Today, he and his brother still manage and work the farm which has grown to be a 1,000-acre corn and soybean farm. A beautiful farm in central NY. John lives on the farm with his wife Jackie, and they enjoy visits with their daughters Erin and Danielle, as well as their two grandchildren Ava and Darby.

In 1988, John was encouraged to apply for a position with the Village of Weedsport, to become their water and wastewater operation specialist. John accepted the challenge, and as is typical with him, he quickly rose through the ranks and was appointed as Superintendent of Public Works in 1989. It was at this point that John realized his passion for wastewater treatment. A passion that remains today!

In 1998, John was approached with another opportunity... to serve on the Board of Directors for the New York Rural Water Association (NYRWA). Again, in typical fashion, John stepped up and accepted the responsibility. Once on the Board, John was asked to serve as the National Director. Each state rural water association is provided one seat on the Board of Directors of the NRWA. And yet again, John accepted this task and began his service to NRWA. Since 1998, John has served as a Director, Secretary/Treasurer, Vice-President and as President of the NYRWA. John also rose through the ranks on the NRWA Board of Directors. For NRWA, John has served as a Director, Treasurer, Vice-President, Senior Vice-President, and now as President of the association.

In 2001, John was recruited by the largest representative company in NYS, Koester Associates, Inc., as their parts/service and retro fit manager. This new role provided John with a different point of view for our industry and helped him develop relationships with water and wastewater professionals from across the state. John remains a representative for this company to this day.

In 2003, John was again recruited to assist a small water system as their operation specialist as the system was improved. John began his career with the Town of Throop as their water operation specialist, a position he still serves in today.

On September 27, 2022, the National Rural Water Association Board of Directors unanimously elected our very own John D. O'Connell, III, as their new President at a meeting of the entire Board of Directors.



On September 28, 2022, the NYRWA hosted a reception for John at the NRWA WaterPro Conference. Representatives from all 50 states and NRWA, as well as friends and family were invited to attend to celebrate this career milestone achievement.



A ceremony for the "passing of the gavel" was conducted on Thursday, September 29, 2022, in National Harbor, MD. Outgoing President, Mr. David Baird, from the great state of Delaware, passed the gavel to John and provided his support for John as he enters this new role. NYRWA also wishes to congratulate Mr. Baird for a job very well done! John begins his two-year term as NRWA President immediately, and will serve through September 2024. Please join us in congratulating John and his family on this amazing accomplishment!



**Here's to you John on an amazing career! We look forward to your leadership and friendship in the coming years! 💧💧**

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