

# OCC adds green to curriculum

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**By Charley Hannagan**  
**Staff writer**

Onondaga Community College plans to use a \$700,000 state grant to train workers for "green-collar" jobs.

The college will announce the grant from the New York State Foundation for Science, Technology and Innovation (NYSTAR) at a news conference this morning.

OCC's Sustainability Institute will offer two-year degrees, certificates and online courses to develop a work force trained to work with green technologies. Dave Wall, the college's director of work force development, will head the institute.

"When we were having conversations about how we would utilize this funding for our local work force, we very quickly went to the green technologies area because this is becoming an area of strength for our region," said OCC President Debbie L. Sydow.

"We're at that important junction of being able to recruit these kinds of industries to our community, but we also have industries in our community who are employing these workers. We would be training people for existing jobs," she said.

For example, the college trains people to install photovoltaic cells as part of a contract it has with the State University College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Sydow said.

Companies such as Entherm's GreenHomes America, Carrier Corp. and C&S

Cos. employ green-collar workers, she said.

"We want to play a key role in preparing the work force for green-collar jobs," Sydow said.

The college will use the first \$250,000 of the grant to begin creating a curriculum and courses for the institute. It plans gradually to offer courses and certificates, and expects to have the entire institute running within two years, Sydow said.

The grant was made possible through a member-item placed in the state budget by Sen. John DeFrancisco, R-Syracuse. It's one of three \$700,000 grants being made by NYSTAR. Monroe Community College, in Rochester, and Hudson Valley Community College, in Troy, will receive similar grants. All three have up to five years to use their grants.

"We basically had them focus on doing work force development, training people for the new innovation economy," said Jannette Rondo, speaking for the foundation.

The grants represent a shift for NYSTAR, whose mission is technology development, innovation and commercialization. In the past it has dealt more with four-year colleges rather than with two-year community colleges, she said.

Community colleges are vital to the economy, Rondo said. People look at universities as a four-

year training field, while two-year community colleges can train people rather quickly.

OCC plans to build on some green technology training programs it already has in place in its architecture and automotive technology courses.

It plans to offer a program in energy and environmental systems that, when completed, would award an associate's degree in applied science. It would be designed to help students develop knowledge and skills needed in the renewable-alternative energy and sustainable development.

Students would learn the principles of sustainable construction, land resources, energy and atmosphere. They could specialize in at least three areas: architectural-construction, energy technology and geoscience.

The college also plans to offer a program in energy and environmental systems that, when completed, would award an associate's degree in science. Students in this option would take many of the same courses as those pursuing an AAS degree, as well as additional math and science courses.

OCC plans to redesign its automotive technology-emissions monitoring and testing associate's degree in applied science to train people to work on vehicles that use alternative fuels.

It also plans to adapt courses for the Internet.

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