



The Section's February Spotlight Member is Joe Aldighieri! Joe is employed by the Passaic Valley Water Commission as a Project Coordinator of Construction and Safety Coordinator for the Alan C. Levine Water Treatment Plant at Little Falls. Joe coordinates between PVWC personnel and outside contractors to keep projects running smoothly. If there are construction projects going on at the Little Falls Treatment Plant from demolishing a chemical containment pad to updating the Commission's SCADA infrastructure, Joe will be there hands on. Joe has been a member of AWWA since 2010.

Joe is serving as the Chair of the Safety and Security Committee. Under his leadership the committee has brought us several educational seminars including; Confined Space for Water/Wastewater (*Alternate Entry*), OSHA 10 Hr. Construction and this year's Security Seminar. Joe has served on the Safety and Security Committee and its preceding Operational Risk Committee for about 5 years.

Joe is an OSHA Outreach Trainer for Construction, General Industry and Disaster Site Worker, and an accredited AHERA Inspector for asbestos.

*Why did you decide to go into the field of water?*

I didn't decide to go into the field of water, it's more like the field chose me. I was a carpenter, coordinating projects for smaller residential construction companies, and I heard there were a few carpenters being hired at the Passaic Valley Water Commission, so I applied. I essentially came here as a carpenter, my boss however, Michael Marotta is a forward thinking General Foreman of Maintenance. Marotta recognized potential in me and pushed me to learn what it takes to run and maintain a water treatment plant. He inspired me, he seemed to believe I could figure out anything and that made me start to believe I could too.

*How did you become a volunteer for AWWA? What motivates you to be active in the Section?*

The genesis of how I became a volunteer for AWWA is due to our Executive Director, Joe Bella, and Mike Marotta. They allowed me to take the Introduction to Water/Wastewater class. We believed the best way to create intuitive maintenance personnel would be to have them understand the plant operations. This course opened up a lot of opportunity for me, I learned in the class and began coming in early to gauge the temperature of the plant in the mornings. Networking in the class and now "speaking the language" made other AWWA members embrace me and try to get me on a Committee, Andrea McElroy did some due diligence and eventually turned me on to the Operational Risk Committee.

What motivates me to be active is the same thing that keeps me interested in the Passaic Valley Water Commission, being valued and empowered. Since I took over the Safety and Security Committee the NJ Section of the AWWA has empowered our Committee and myself to be successful. That's what makes me and our Committee do our best to actively provide pointed training seminars for the Section membership.

*How long have you been an AWWA member and what have you gotten from your membership?*

I have been a Utility Member since 2010, but have only been active since 2014, so about four years of active membership. The AWWA has shined a light into the water industry for me, it isn't necessary that a carpenter know much about operations. So getting involved with the AWWA enlightened me in that

regard, it showed me the operational side which was essentially the missing component. I understand construction and safety, but once the AWWA provided that vital element I fully understood what it takes to make the plant work, and I was able to go back to coordinating projects.

*Do you have any hobbies and outside interests?*

Along with his work with AWWA NJ, Joe also volunteers for the following organizations: Cornerstone-Cares a NJ Non-Profit Corporation, The Stanley M. Levine Memorial Foundation, The Boys and Girls Club of Paterson and Passaic, State Troopers Fraternal Association NCO Foundation, and others.

*What legacy would you like to leave behind?*

Short term, I would love to build our Safety and Security Committee into the vanguard for the safety and security of our entire industry. Our Committee has spoken about, and intend to roll out some references and training that could be utilized by other Sections, I'd love to see that bear fruit while I'm here.

Long range, if there were something I could change to better the industry it would be to implement a crossover training and integration program between engineering, safety, operations and maintenance. They need to be in sync for an operation to run to its full potential, so there needs to be some communication between the groups. Engineering should consult maintenance when designing a plant so that what they ultimately design is maintenance friendly, operations needs to consult with engineering so they understand the proper use and the limits of the design, and maintenance should consult with operations for direction on what parts of the process are priority for operations.

The safety professional is usually the last one anyone wants to see on the job; the person who says no, and scuttles all the plans. I have a final thought for consideration. Adding maintenance and operational safety considerations into the design phase of a project, can build safety right into your workplace. This way you can avoid those safety professional/OSHA visits altogether.

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