

# Advancing the clean energy workforce with new talent

## Case Study

Company Name:  
Fred F. Collis & Sons

Training Category:  
On-the-Job Training for  
Energy Efficiency and  
Clean Technology Program

Location:  
Yorkville, New York

New Workers Hired to Date:  
16

Priority Populations Hired to Date:  
7

Total NYSERDA Incentives:  
\$124,000

Average Incentive Per Worker:  
\$7,750

## Background

NYSERDA's On-the-Job Training (OJT) program is designed to help energy efficiency and clean technology businesses, like Fred F. Collis & Sons—a heating, cooling, and air quality contractor—find skilled job candidates and reduce the financial risk of onboarding new employees. In addition, the OJT program assists companies to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic with wage subsidies that help businesses stay in operation through this unprecedented and very difficult time.

## About Fred F. Collis & Sons

Fred F. Collis & Sons has provided heating, cooling, and air solutions for homes and businesses in Central New York and the Mohawk Valley for more than 84 years. The company offers a wide range of high-quality products such as furnaces, central air conditioners, heat pumps, ductless systems, indoor air quality products, and more. All services are completed by highly trained technicians who pride themselves on treating customers as though they were family. Their work is 100% guaranteed with the goal of building trust that all needs will be met, ensuring a comfortable, safe, and healthy environment for every client.

## Easing the Hiring Process

Participating in the OJT program gave Fred Collis the opportunity to take a holistic approach to hiring. His HR team considers past work experience, hobbies, and personality as key indicators to predicting an applicant's ability to be successful in their new role. While Mr. Collis has always strived to hire this way, it hasn't been without financial risk. Training takes time and there is the chance the new employee will not work out. The OJT program is instrumental in reducing some of these risks by providing wage subsidies for new hires for the first four to six months.



“It can be difficult to find candidates that are already fully trained in our field, but the OJT program allows us to identify individuals with great potential and many transferable skills, that we are then able to get trained in our specific industry. As our business grows, our team must grow with it.”

— Alley Priore, Marketing and Recruitment Manger

## Building a Skilled Workforce

Despite the challenges caused by the pandemic, the company was able to hire 10 new employees to fill various positions for HVAC installers, service technicians, and insulation team members. The new hires who recently joined Collis & Sons have since become vital employees, with many quickly advancing within the company.

## Proving Success

Colton Cihocki, hired in August 2020, has thrived on the insulation team and already proven to be self-motivated and a quick learner. His supervisors are incredibly impressed with his precision and craftsmanship when installing spray foam for clients. Colton is being fast-tracked for promotion to a crew leader after only a few months with the company—and he is not the only one. Brandon Corso, Jason Cook, and Michael Palmieri are all examples of successful OJT hires on their way to being promoted to crew leaders in the near future.

## Learn more about clean energy workforce development opportunities with NYSERDA

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