

Q&A: Sal Balbi, 2017 Technician of the Year

Every day is different in the field, and that's what fuels Sal Balbi, a technician from O'Connell Electric Co. in Victor, NY.

The ever-changing electrical industry requires technicians to constantly learn and grow professionally to stay ahead of the curve. Balbi's dedication to continuing to develop as a professional helped him become TEGG's 2017 Technician of the Year.

Balbi grew up in the Hamlin section of Brockport, NY, where he still lives today with his wife and four children.

Balbi has been with O'Connell Electric Co. for 18 years, and has been working in its testing division as a technician for eight years.

Prior to his current position, he worked as a foreman for O'Connell's construction services division.

When he's not working, Balbi enjoys spending his time coaching youth soccer and spending as much time as possible with his family.

Q: *What made you interested in working in the field as a Technician?*

A: "I always wanted to be more than just an electrician.

"Being a Technical Services Technician challenges me every day beyond my comfort zone. It is more than just running pipe and pulling wires – I am required to trouble shoot and understand how the entire system works, from the substation all the way to our end users."

Q: *Technology is always changing and evolving. As a Technician, how do you stay ahead of the technological curve?*

A: "To stay ahead of the rapid evolution of technology, I devote a lot of time to reading about new products and advancements throughout the industry.

"O'Connell supplies employees with regular updates on new technology in the field. I am the geeky guy that actually reads all of the email updates. If I want to learn about new stuff, I will take the time to do it."



Sal Balbi of O'Connell Electric Company in Victor, NY, won the 2017 TEGG Technician of the Year Award.

Q: *What is the most challenging part of your job and how do you overcome it?*

A: “Technicians are faced with a variety of different tasks every day and every electrical system is different.

“The most challenging part of the job is how unpredictable each situation is. Every project or job site is different, which makes the job exciting and scary at the same time. Many times, I am required to enter a situation I’ve never laid eyes on before.

“To overcome the unknown, I use the resources around me. Utilizing O’Connell’s education and training, and maintaining a strong emphasis on situational awareness, I am able to help solve many problems, and in the end, help the client.”

Q: *What is the most rewarding part of your job?*

A: “The most rewarding aspect of being a technician is making a client happy.

“Many times I walk into situations where there is an unresolved issue or problem on site. Being able to step up to the plate and resolve any loose ends is critical, and leaving a project knowing that you met or exceeded the clients’ expectations or needs is very rewarding.”

Q: *What advice would you offer other Technicians to also be successful in their companies?*

A: “I would advise everyone to learn something new every day because there is always something to be learned. This piece of advice is something that I would offer to everyone, not just technicians.”

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