

Owego Apalachin

BUDGET VOTE

Election Day is Tuesday, May 19

2009-10

2009-10 budget would establish a Cisco Academy at OFA

One additional program Owego Apalachin proposes to add to the 2009-2010 budget comes at the high school level, and would introduce several new technology certification courses through the establishment of a Cisco Academy.

According to Bob Farrell, OA chief information officer, through the Cisco Academy, students receive training at various levels, from micro-computer specialist all the way up to a full-blown network specialist.

"They'll leave the program as certified Cisco and Microsoft specialists, with training and credentials to immediately gain entry to good-paying jobs in the IT industry," Farrell said.

"If students want to begin work right away, this training will lay an outstanding foundation.

"And for those going on to college, it will be a strong basis for subsequent work in engineering, computer science, and any technology-related career.

"Our technology and business teachers are very enthusiastic about it, and we're



certain students will share in that excitement."

Cisco, one of the largest computer networking companies in the world, is recognized as a leader network infrastructure technology, said Farrell.

"They created a program a handful of years ago called Cisco Networking Academy, and what it's designed to do is to provide training in education and industry to individuals who seek recognized certification in the area of information technology, specializing in networking," Farrell said.

"So, Cisco creates what are known as regional academies all over the world. They'll

do them in a K-12 environment, in a university setting, or at a privately owned institution," he said.

"A K-12 set-up can be established within a school district, and there are organizational requirements."

They are:

- ◆A dedicated classroom
- ◆A PC for every student
- ◆Sufficient Internet connectivity
- ◆Local server to download and deliver course content
- ◆To budget for lab bundle and training
- ◆A certified instructor

"We would make the following commitment to such a

"(Students) will leave the program as certified Cisco and Microsoft specialists, with training and credentials to immediately gain entry to good-paying jobs in the IT industry."

- Bob Farrell
OA Chief Info. Officer

After a student completes this course, Farrell said, they can sit for an exam, after which they earn Cisco Networking certification. They put that on their resume and they immediately have industry-recognized, employable skills walking out of high school.

"Why would we consider doing this? The answer is simple," Farrell said.

"The industries that are growing anywhere in the world are technology-based, so there's a vast need for those professionals, and what we'd be doing is preparing them, with a solid base, to take those jobs.

"Now, while the goal is to arm students with a base foundation to enter a college to further these skills," Farrell added, "they would also already be armed with skills for a large range of jobs that are available to students.

"Small to medium-sized businesses are demanding networking skills from employees today," Farrell said, "and before or during college, how can students develop those skills?"

"Through Cisco, and, we hope, right here at Owego Apalachin."