Orange-Ulster BOCES Records Management Program Garners Statewide Recognition

The Orange-Ulster BOCES Office of Records Management was recently honored with the 2013 Cheryl Steinbach Annual Archives Award for Excellence in Local Government Records Management. The award is presented each year to a local agency in New York State that has demonstrated exemplary leadership in managing records "economically and effectively." The award was presented by the New York State Archives and Archives Partnership Trust.

Sheila Almond, OU BOCES Information Processing Manager, and her team were cited for efficiently operating the Records Management Service for Orange-Ulster BOCES as well as for eighteen component school districts in the Orange-Ulster Supervisory Region. The award acknowledges [OU BOCES'] "outstanding records management program... and the effectiveness of the e-Doc [electronic document management] system to improve access to documents and provide safe and secure storage for electronic records, saving school districts $40,000 a year in staff time, paper and copying costs, and space."

Initiated in 1990, the Records Management Service has been proactive in providing record inventories, organization of inactive records storage sites, purging of obsolete records and training of school district staff for comprehensive records management. The Records Management Service has also facilitated school districts in their development of timely policies and procedures for records keeping.

The e-Doc program, initiated in 2004, provides secure, internet-accessible storage for documents that have been converted by the Records Management Service into digital formats. E-Doc allows meetings to be "paperless" through the use of computers, laptops and iPads to access agendas, minutes and any other supporting documentation.

The operations for the Record Management Service have recently moved to the Regional Education Center at Arden Hill into an area specifically designed to accommodate inactive records storage space which will be shared by school districts. This expanded service for OU BOCES and school districts will continue to support efficient and cost-effective records management.

Bhargav Vyas, OU BOCES Director of Technology, is thrilled with the statewide recognition, but not surprised. He says: "Our Records Management Service has continuously been at the forefront of innovation in records management in the region, spearheading and implementing many crucial records management initiatives that have saved substantial money, time and resources, not only for Orange-Ulster BOCES, but also for our school districts and local government agencies."