

Student to aid villages' project

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A Colgate University student will be helping Canastota and Chittenango officials figure out the lay of the land this year.

Village officials are partnering with a geography student to help them comply with a federal mandate, an arrangement that will save the villages thousands of dollars. GASB 34, an order from the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, requires state and local governments to report on the value of their infrastructure.

"The point of GASB 34 is to get governments to really know what their assets are, especially the ones you don't usually see," said Canastota Mayor Todd Rouse.

Computerized data and blueprints will give village leaders a better idea of what they have to work with and "will give us up-to-date, real-time scenarios," he said. Using advanced mapping technology, such as Geographic Information Systems and Global Positioning Systems, the student will document things such as the location of manholes, the size of sewer and water pipes and when they were installed.

The Colgate student, who has not yet been named, will earn \$400 a week for about eight weeks, a salary that will be paid for by Colgate's Upstate Institute. The institute, a research group that creates collaborations between students and communities, accepted the joint project March 6.

"The institute pairs faculty expertise and knowledge with student research and talent to solve community-based problems," said Marnie Terhune, who sits on the advisory board for the institute.

Peter Scull, an assistant professor in the geography department and an Upstate Institute fellow, will oversee the student's work in both villages, which is expected to begin this summer.

"This is an opportunity to get students involved in a real-world project," Scull said. "Using GPS technology, the student will determine the precise location of storm drains and water infrastructure and build a network."

Former Canastota Village Administrator Bryan Gazda approached Scull about the partnership after the village got a price quote "in the thousands to tens of thousands" from a consulting firm, Scull said.

The village side of the project in Canastota will be overseen by Mike Adsit, the village's code enforcement officer.