Safety First
The job site can be a dangerous place, especially when welders are working. Learn how you can protect yourself while on the job.

On the Road with Bob: Los Angeles
Bob’s heads to the City of Angels, and traditional Yucatan cuisine is on the menu.

Training for Tomorrow
How ORC’s Jr. Agent Training Program Provides Value to our Clients

ORC® REAL ESTATE SOLUTIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
The Acquirer is a publication of O. R. Colan Associates, LLC and its affiliate ORC Utility & Infrastructure Land Services, LLC.
Finding qualified workers in today’s workforce is a critical concern facing employers throughout the nation. Recent surveys and industry experts are touting eminent worker shortages for available jobs. ORC has long recognized that quality employees are an invaluable commodity and that we can play an active role in their development and availability. In 2005 ORC began its Junior Agent training program in a proactive response to market conditions which indicated a looming shortage of qualified workers in the right of way profession. With a vision for growth and a passion for quality, we committed to recruit and train college graduates for a career in right of way and to equip them with the skills necessary to become industry leaders. Now, over a decade later, our Junior Agent training program remains a hallmark of our strategic staffing and recruiting plan and provides ORC with an unrivaled competitive advantage in staffing.

The investment has been sizable and there are always risks associated with training and retention; however, the successes have greatly outpaced the challenges. With more than 20% of our agents having been enrolled through the Junior Agent training program and 22% of our Project Managers having emerged from its ranks, we are convinced that the investment has been sound. This year we are announcing our first internship program, with a goal of hiring junior/senior level college students to intern with us over the summer. We believe that targeting key individuals with an early introduction to our business will only enhance our future talent pool.

About the Program
ORC offers a structured training program that has a clearly detailed schedule, time frame, outline of activities, and assignment of responsibilities. It has well defined goals and consequences and offers

Continued on page 3
ADAPTABILITY

noun
the quality of being able to adjust to new conditions.

In nature, it can save a life. In business, it can save a project.

No two projects are the same, and each one requires a unique approach. Which is why we built ORC Parcel Suite® - a fully customizable web-based right-of-way database solution from O.R. Colan Associates, LLC. Our agents and project managers can add tabs on the fly, build reports quickly, and change fields to custom specs, from any standard web browser. The result? Improved efficiency and performance, and an increase in overall client satisfaction. ADAPT, STREAMLINE, AND IMPROVE, with ORC Parcel Suite®.
a clear career path. Having a structured training program typically leads to more success and employee development and engagement than an informal or unstructured one. Without clear structure, some companies cut corners or fail to complete training processes thoroughly.

Without a structured training program, employees have little awareness of training goals and strategies to accomplish them. Subsequently, your training may come across as less important to new hires or employees. In a structured program, expected training outcomes and strategies are heavily emphasized. These are important to the program and employee success, as they provide direction for specific steps taken and methods used by trainers to develop the skills of employees.

The structure of our training program increases our ability to provide a consistent and high-quality training experience for our employees. Our clearly outlined training curriculum offers a framework that managers can consistently implement with each employee. This ensures that each of our agents starts with a similar opportunity to learn the key facets of their job. This gives our employees an equally good start, and in team-oriented environments, colleagues will appreciate that they all received a similar training experience.

Structured internal training offers employers and employees advantages that are not found when you send an employee to an external training program or seminar. On-the-job training that enhances an employee's skills and ensures their readiness for the next promotion, is generally far superior to a public seminar.

Internal training reflects a solid knowledge of the organization's culture. Our training program incorporates real-life examples, problems, and challenges that our agents will encounter every day at work. Our successful internal training program promotes the primary skills and knowledge that our agents will need to succeed in their jobs. It also prepares our employees for success in their next job.

Internal training is presented in the language and terminology that our agents understand and can relate to. Internal training develops the skills of our employees and cements their own knowledge of the right of way topics being taught.

Here are some of the benefits that our agents receive by participating in our Junior Agent Training Program:

- **Increased job satisfaction and morale**
- **Increased employee motivation and engagement**
- Increased efficiencies in processes, resulting in financial gain
- Increased capacity to adopt new technologies and methods
- Increased innovation in strategies and products
- Reduced employee turnover
- Enhanced company image (branding)
- Risk management, e.g., training about sexual harassment, diversity training

The ORC Training Division creates customized right of way content for our agents and they can supplement the suggested first-year coursework with courses that may be required by the client. What is unique about our program is the number of courses – 208 hours of classroom instruction in the first year. Other companies that offer courses may only require 40 hours or less per year. Agents are exposed to a wide variety of information about the right of way industry, ensuring that they become well-rounded in their education. Additionally, it is highly encouraged that at the end of their first year, that
Junior Agents become members and take leadership roles in organizations. Examples include IRWA Officer, ASHE, IREM, other Real Estate and Engineering Organizations, NHI, FHWA, County Engineer Association, Planning Associations, AASHTO, State Level Chamber of Commerce, ASCE, WTS, ITE or MPO quarterly meetings, to name a few.

Here are the benefits of our ongoing employee development program:

- **Keep up with industry changes**
  The right of way industry is constantly changing which makes it important for ORC to develop relevant training material to comply with industry regulations and make sure that employee skills and knowledge are current.

- **Keep in touch with the latest technology developments**
  Regular training is offered to ensure that staff are using all the latest technology competently and to its full potential.

- **Stay ahead of the competition**
  By making sure our staff is constantly advancing, we continue to move forward and remain competitive within the market place.

- **Identify weaknesses and skill gaps**
  Our training program allows us to more easily identify any gaps in the market and skill gaps within the existing workforce. By identifying these gaps early, there is time to train employees in these required areas so they can fulfill the role effectively.

- **Maintain knowledge and skill**
  ORC implements training schemes to help develop the skills of our agents throughout their job. To retain knowledge, skills need to be practiced and refreshed on a regular basis so elements aren’t forgotten.

- **Advance employee skills**
  Once basic level skills have been taught, these can easily be built upon and improved to provide much more benefit to our organization. Staff that are more knowledgeable can offer more value to our clients, and our clients’ businesses will realize the rewards.

- **Provide an incentive to learn**
  Our training is provided as part of a longer development pathway, so employees will have much more incentive to learn, participate in the session and put their new skills into practice.

- **Increase job satisfaction levels**
  Through ORC’s investment in training, our employees have a much higher sense of job satisfaction, which can improve their motivation toward their work. This reduces employee turnover and increases productivity, which directly improves our business performance. It can also mitigate efforts from competitors to poach key employees by offering them training incentives.

- **Provide internal promotion opportunities and a career path**
  Employing new staff involves high recruitment costs and hiring fees. However, with ongoing training, our existing staff can become more eligible for internal promotions (22% of our Project Managers successfully advanced through the Junior Agent Training Program). Unlike new staff, promoted employees have a complete knowledge of our business, the correct skill set and are people that we know and trust.

- **Attract new talent**
  ORC strives to have the best employees. With ongoing training, this will not only mean better staff retention, but our business may also attract better talent from the market place, as our reputation for training gives our business a positive image and is a key feature many people look for within their job search.

As outlined above, ongoing training is important not just to employee development, but it also affects the success of our business.

We hear companies in our industry say all the time that all the right of way companies are “fishing from the same pool to find agents.” We counter that by saying, “We are creating our own pond!”
ORC WELCOMES RANDY FRIEDLAND, JD

ORC is pleased to announce Randy Friedland has joined the team as a new Project Manager in our Frederick, Maryland office.

As a Project Manager, Randy will be responsible for managing complex Right of Way services such as acquisitions and relocations. He will also work alongside the Regional Vice President in new business development, proposals and regional growth.

Prior to joining ORC, Randy was the Southeast Regional Manager and Assistant Division Administrator of the Right of Way and Utilities Division at Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), where he led the Southeast Region. He oversaw the acquisition of State and Federal highway road projects and executed process improvements for negotiations, appraisals, property rights acquisitions and plan development.

Randy has over 20 years of experience in real estate and development, with expertise in acquisitions, planning, zoning, land use, environmental law, roadway planning and commercial real estate and leases. Randy has a Masters of Law (LLM) in Environmental Law – Real Estate from the George Washington University National Law Center, in Washington, D.C. He also has his Juris Doctorate (JD) from Nova Southeastern University Law School in Davie, FL and a Bachelor’s degree in International Business and Finance from The American University in Washington, D.C.

Please join us in welcoming Randy to ORC and wishing him all the best in his new role!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR’S AAAC RECIPIENT

Since 2007, ORC has sponsored the annual Academic Awards Banquet at Collins Elementary School in Dania Beach, Florida. In honor of our ongoing support the school established the Catherine Muth Award for Academic Achievement and Citizenship. This year’s award went to Kevin Simms, pictured here with Catherine Muth.
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- Course 521 - Nonresidential Fixed Payments
- The Business Move Process (Coming Soon!)

Please visit irwauniversity.org for more information.
Recent Wins

ORC Utility Sector: ORC U&I – Louisville Gas & Electric 5-Year Master Service Contract - Kentucky

ORC U&I Division ended 2017 with the announcement of a 5-Year Master Service Contract with Louisville Gas & Electric Company and Kentucky Utilities Company. These entities are part of the PPL Corporation, which is a regulated utility that serve a total of 1.2 million customers. Louisville Gas and Electric serves 321,000 natural gas and 397,000 electric customers in Louisville and 16 surrounding counties. Kentucky Utilities Company serves 543,000 customers in 77 Kentucky counties and five counties in Virginia.

ORC U&I was recently awarded Rogers Gap distribution project in Scott County, KY. ORC U&I’s scope includes all title and existing easement due diligence, negotiations and closings with all impacted landowners along the 13-mile existing distribution line. The distribution reconductor project is scheduled to commence in June of 2018.

ORC PUBLIC Sector: ODOT North Expressway Viaduct Bridge - Ohio

In March 2017, ODOT selected O. R. Colan Associates (ORC), through a statewide qualification selection, to perform turnkey right-of-way acquisition and relocation services for the replacement of this crucial North Expressway Viaduct bridge on the Akron Expressway. The proposed project will replace the existing 1,500-foot-long bridge with two individual northbound and southbound bridges. Each new bridge will have four dedicated lanes, improving the traffic flow of the current bridge’s three lanes in each direction.

ORC’s efforts on this project are expected to extend 2+ years and include the acquisition of 49 parcels, including the relocation of 17 displaced residences and businesses. The project will also include the acquisition of property in and around the Little Cuyahoga Valley, allowing for the completion of the final phase of the Freedom Trail – an eight-mile combined use hike/bike path as part of the Summit County Metroparks. ORC will work with the City of Akron, Metro Regional Transit Authority (RTA), multiple railroads – active and inactive – and private ownerships, to certify this project for the planned 2021 construction.

Please read the accompanying article - American Progress - 64 Years Apart - on page 9.

ORC Training: Right of Way Manual Revisions
Massachusetts Department of Transportation – Division of Highways
Arkansas Department of Transportation

O. R. Colan Associates has been selected to revise and update the Right of Way Manuals for the Departments of Transportation in Massachusetts and Arkansas. The staff of ORC Training, with extensive experience in technical writing for federal regulations, agency guidelines, and State DOT procedures, is reviewing both manuals and making recommendations for revisions required by statutory or regulatory changes. Our team begins each manual revision with interviews of DOT subject matter experts to obtain technical information and background about existing procedures, and request input about current procedures or processes. The ORC team will also work closely with ARDOT staff to develop a ROW User Guide that will provide supplemental guidance and information for manual users. Much of the “how to” currently contained in the manual will reside in this more user-friendly guide.

ORC is currently working with the West Virginia ROW Division to revise and update its manual, and has previously worked with the State DOTs in Virginia, Montana, Maine, Utah and New Jersey to produce comprehensive and professional right of way manuals. All State DOTs must prepare and submit for approval by FHWA an up-to-date ROW manual by no later than August 23, 2018. These updated manuals will reflect new provisions in the FHWA Final Rule for 23 CFR Parts 635, 710 and 810, Right of Way and Real Estate, effective September 22, 2016.
American Progress – 64 Years Apart

by Benjamen Zera, Project Manager, ORC

On August 6th, 1954, The Akron Expressway held a ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate Akron’s first “super road.” With over 50,000 attending the event, hopeful onlookers witnessed American Progress in Akron, OH. The monumental project was more than nine years in the making and displaced over 500 families. The construction of the highway’s North Expressway Viaduct, a 1,500-foot-long bridge over the Little Cuyahoga Valley, accounted for approximately one-third of the overall $9 million project budget (about $80 million today).

“Each of us is realizing more every day how important fast transportation to our destinations has become,” then Ohio Governor, Frank Lausche, told the crowd that afternoon. “We’ll spend $275 million a year for the next eight years to make it easier and safer to travel in this state.”

Fast forward 64 years: Despite significant change in the nature of transportation in America, the bridge remains a vital link for commuters and commerce to government, medical, university, and other commercial facilities in downtown Akron and the surrounding region.

Continued on page 10 ▶
Introducing ORC Metrics Connector
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For more information, please contact Steve Toth at stoth@orcolan.com.
The past six decades have seen 12 U.S. Presidents, the passing of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act (1970), and the slow deterioration of significant American infrastructure constructed during the post-World War II era. As such, the bridge that once attracted 50,000 people to the groundbreaking ceremony now carries over 115,000 vehicles daily, leading to The Ohio Department of Transportation’s (ODOT’s) recent determination to replace the bridge after years of continued maintenance.

Among the more dramatic infrastructure changes in the last 64 years is the considerable increase in infrastructure costs. Governor Lausche noted in 1954 that the State of Ohio planned to spend $275 million on transportation initiatives each year, over eight years. Today, the construction of these two new bridges alone is expected to cost $121 million, as a part of ODOT’s annual budget for transportation that now operates well into the billions.

At ORC, our vision is “inspiring confidence in progress.” This vision is clearly illustrated by our role on the North Expressway Viaduct bridge replacement project.
A Safety Tip from the Firing Line
Safety glasses aren’t enough (even if they’re shaded)

by Steve Chastain, VP East Region, ORC

Working on a pipeline project during the construction phase requires constant vigilance. Employees are surrounded by safety hazards ranging from open ditches and overhead powerline contacts to being aware of the movement of heavy equipment on the line. There are crush hazards, trip hazards, fall hazards and even venomous snake hazards just to name a few. The requirement for personal protective equipment (PPE) and daily safety reminders is not only practical it is lifesaving.

A commonly overlooked component on both sides of the operation is the hazard associated with staring at a welding arc. Welders wear visual protection (built into their helmets) designed to protect their eyes from damage that can be caused by even momentary exposure to the intense light generated by a welding arc. Polarized lenses on their helmets protect them from both UV and IR light impacts while allowing them to stare into the arc to complete a successful weld. What is often missing is from the safety equation is the welder’s screen.

The crackle of the welder and the bright arc generated is a natural attraction for spectators. We are drawn to it like a moth to the flame. That attraction is the problem. Staring at a welder’s arc, even from a good distance away and even with your shaded safety glasses can cause eye damage. Like staring at the sun during an eclipse, staring at a welder’s arc can cause the cornea in the eye to become inflamed. The condition, sometimes called “arc eye” is painful and can require days to recover. Even worse, you won’t know you have the condition until sometime later when you notice an irritation which feels like you have sand in your eyes. You can’t flush it out and only time will heal the damage. Prolonged exposure can result in permanent, irreparable damage to both the cornea and retina of the eye.

Welders are required by OSHA standards to screen welding operations to protect onlookers from this hazard but there is often no screening provided. In this case knowledge is your best PPE. Don’t stare at a welder’s arc. Turn away to avoid eye damage. On most projects, every employee is a safety officer. Notify your chief inspector when you see unsafe operations or safety shortcuts. Safety is everyone’s responsibility!

Standard 29 CFR 1910.252(e) (2)(iii) states: Protection from arc welding rays. ... Workers or other persons adjacent to the welding areas shall be protected from the rays by noncombustible or flameproof screens or shield or shall be required to wear appropriate goggles.
I was recently in Los Angeles with Ron Fannin instructing the National Transit Institute (NTI) course FTA Real Estate Requirements. The course presents the basics of real estate acquisition for federally-funded FTA projects. It is intended for FTA grantees of all experience levels. The course is offered 3-4 times per year by NTI at various locations around the country.

Of course, Los Angeles is a huge city with lots of places to eat. I spent a few minutes on the internet looking for an unusual spot. The next step is to ask around among the “locals” in the class. I did locate a unique restaurant that also had good feedback. But first a little background and history would be helpful.

Chichen Itza is a well-known archeological site consisting of the remains of a Mayan city built about AD 600 located in the Mexican Yucatan peninsula. The archeological site is a couple hours’ drive from Cancun or Playa del Carmen. The site has several intact Mayan pyramids and other structures. But Chichen Itza is also a restaurant located

Continued on next page
in Los Angeles. It is family owned and carries on the traditional cooking of the native people of the Yucatan area.

The Chichen Itza Restaurant has been crowned in the local press as “one of the five essential Mexican restaurants in Los Angeles” (LA Weekly); one of “fourteen best Mexican restaurants in Southern California” and “the most serious Yucatan restaurant in town” (Los Angeles Times). So how could I not give it a try?

The first surprise is that this restaurant is in a community cooperative market center, in south Los Angeles. The Co-op hosts several restaurants and other vendors, all offering counter service with delivery to your table, provided you display your order number prominently. Chichen Itza is located to the rear of the Mercado la Paloma and seating is in a common area used by all the vendors.

Ordering is interesting as there was an initial language barrier; the order-taker did not speak much English and neither of us spoke much Spanish. However, we quickly overcame that hurdle, and placed our orders.

I ordered a Vaporcito which is a banana-leaf wrapped chicken tamale. The tamale was moist, not spicy hot, made of corn meal with a delicious light tomato sauce. The purpose of the banana leaf is to keep the tamale moist and at proper serving temperature. The tamale was outstanding; simple and tasty. I just wish I had ordered two!

As a side dish, we both ordered fried bananas, called Platano Frito. The cooking of the banana causes them to be sweet, and as a side dish, they were a perfect accompaniment to the tamale. Now what to drink?

I did not recognize any of the listed beverages but after being provided a sample of one called “Guanabana,” I ordered a full serving. I was not sure what Guanabana actually was, but it tasted good, slightly sweet, and milky white, about the consistency of skim milk. Later after some discussion with the restaurant staff, it turns out that Guanabana is a tropical fruit with a white pulp that is smashed to create the drink. It is also known as “custard apple” and it did have a slight apple flavor. It supposedly also has medicinal qualities. It was good, and I would order it again without hesitation, but not sure it cured anything.

For dessert I opted for something simple. I ordered the Queso Napolitano. This is described as a dense vanilla flan with a caramel topping. It was very dense, almost like New York style cheesecake, and the sauce was just slightly sweet. Overall, it was delicious.

As we waited for our Uber ride to take us back to the hotel, we both commented the Chichen Itza Restaurant was deserving of the praise given to it. It was delicious. I just wish we had an opportunity to try it a second time before we departed Los Angeles.