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The Herald News

**GREEN TECHNOLOGY**

## JJC official: Time to save energy

By **Cindy Wojdyla Cain**  
 STAFF WRITER

JOLIET — Americans have to be willing to embrace change if they want to cut energy costs at home and in the workplace. "The technology is out there," said Glen Mazur, chairman of the Joliet Junior College Technical Department. "But we have to make ourselves a little bit wiser on saving energy. ... Saving energy is a mindset."  
 Mazur was blunt Tuesday as he addressed members of the Will County Transportation and Logistics Council at the Three Rivers Safety Center. (The council is an offshoot of the Will County Center for Economic Development.)

American consumers are spoiled and they're used to instant gratification, he said. The technology to save energy and improve the environment has been around for decades, but most people were unwilling to try new technologies because they involved change or higher initial costs.

**Reducing energy costs**

Now that energy prices are increasing and concern is rising for the environment, Americans are more willing to try new things, Mazur said. Large corporations are com-



JOHN PATSCH/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Crescent Electric Supply workers (from left) Brian Waldron, branch manager; Terence Smith, account manager; Dave Ballentine, warehouse manager; and Tim Brehn, warehouse supervisor, show off the new energy-saving light system Tuesday in Crescent's warehouse in Rockdale. The lights sense activity and turn off and on...

ing up with innovative ways to reduce energy costs. UPS, for instance, is trying to eliminate left turns as much as possible for drivers delivering packages. That reduces the time the trucks are idling in traffic. American Airlines is removing

onboard telephones from its airplanes to reduce weight, Mazur added.

Locally, Crescent Electric Supply Co. of Rockdale has set up demonstration units to help customers pick the most energy-saving lighting systems for

businesses and warehouses. The displays help company executives figure out which system is most cost efficient.

"Handing them a brochure just isn't doing it," said Terence Smith, account manager. "We've designed this place to

put in the latest technology to show customers what it will do."

**Offering advice**

JJC's Mazur had a mixture of energy-saving advice for companies and consumers:

- Switch to fluorescent bulbs. They may cost more up front, but they will save money in the long run.
- Reward employees for saving energy. Give them prizes.
- Install motion detectors for lights so they're not burning when no one is in a room.
- Empty your trunk of heavy objects that make your car burn more fuel.

"(Burning) gasoline because you have to carry something in your trunk that you haven't used in two years is just plain wasteful," Mazur said. "And I don't think we can afford to do it anymore."

Mazur apologized to the group for some of his comments, but he said he had a reason for being so blunt.

"Sometimes we have to fend people to get them to start thinking in a new way," said.

Reporter Cindy Wojdyla Cain may be reached at (815) 729-6044 or at [ccain@scn1.com](mailto:ccain@scn1.com).

## Local woman has designs on fashion

### Creates clothing for Web site and sister's wedding

By **Anna Tesauero**  
 SUN-TIMES NEWS GROUP

It's a day some young girls dream about: choosing flowers and shopping for the perfect wedding dress.

For Sophia Reyes, 24, of Homer Glen, her sister's wedding was a dream come true in a different way.

Reyes is a recent graduate of Parsons School of Design in New York, and she had the privilege of designing eight bridesmaid dresses, her mother's dress and, yes, her sister Patricia's wedding gown.

"With weddings, it's a different design process. You want something they'll be comfortable in and able to wear again," Sophia Reyes said. "And also for the bride, I didn't want my sister looking at her pictures 10 years from now and hating the dress."

Sophia designed her sister's wedding dress by piecing together styles from various dresses. She created her sister's dream gown while adding some flair of her own.

Sophia began designing and sewing the bridesmaid dresses in July, each gown requiring a month for measurements and fittings. In October, she got an unexpected request.

"My sister couldn't find a dress at any of the stores and

asked me to design her one," Sophia said.

Sophia, and her family, were proud of the result.

**Education in design**

Sophia went to Lockport High School, then studied finance at Loyola University.

But when graduation neared, Sophia knew she had to choose between a career in finance or pursue her dream of working in fashion.

"I realized how much more I liked fashion and wanted to get more training," Sophia said. "I've always known I wanted to start my own line."

**Clothing line**

Sophia went to New York for a two-year program that she condensed to a year by taking the fast-track program. After working an internship with designer labels such as Kenneth Cole, Cynthia Rowley, Liz Claiborne and Laundry by Design, Sophia was ready to come home and make her dream a reality. She put together 12 pieces for a spring/summer 2008 line, which is sold at [www.studio808.com](http://www.studio808.com).

Sophia's line was runner-up at Macy's "distinction and design" competition in 2007. Her fall line will be available at [studio808.com](http://studio808.com), Tangerine in Chicago's Wicker Park community, Totem in Hinsdale and Gray in Chicago's Old Town community. Her Web site is [www.sophiareyes.com](http://www.sophiareyes.com).

Despite being new to the industry, Sophia says she is ready for business growth.

"It was intimidating at first,



Sophia Reyes (right), Homer Glen, designed eight bridesmaids' dresses and a wedding gown (below) for her sister, Patricia Reyes. Sophia is a graduate of Parsons School of Design in New York. She has a clothing line for sale at [www.studio808.com](http://www.studio808.com) and her own Web site, [www.sophiareyes.com](http://www.sophiareyes.com).

PHOTO BY JASON HAN/SUN-TIMES NEWS GROUP



but you learn to be persistent and to not be afraid of being rejected, and to not take it personally. It's definitely a learning experience," she said.

Sophia fell in love with sewing when she was 12, when her grandmother taught her the basics. It became a hobby, with Sophia making dresses and

dreaming of having her own line.

"I used to hang out in Jo-Ann Fabrics and experiment with patterns. They never had what I was looking for, and I always wanted to design my own clothing and patterns," Reyes said.

While designing wedding and bridesmaid dresses is not

her first choice, Sophia is glad to have given this gift to her sister. "Brides always want their wedding to be perfect. I'm just happy I could do something for my sister," she said.

Does she dream of designing her own wedding gown someday? Without hesitation, she said, "of course."