

Since becoming the Custodian Engineer for the Grace Dodge Career and Technical Education High School (X660) in the Bronx in 2003, Ottavio made it his goal to improve the heating and electrical systems in his building, while also addressing the lack of a deferred maintenance plan. Along with his team, they cleaned and tuned up all of the school's HVAC equipment, repaired air leaks in the building and, tested steam traps and replaced elements. In addition, he started implementing an effective preventative maintenance program, which reduced down time on HVAC equipment and also decreased the facility's utility costs.

Ottavio's daily job duties include, but are not limited to, supervising staff; ensuring that daily tasks are completed; provide heat for the building by using low steam pressure boilers; maintain and perform minor repairs to boiler plant, HVAC equipment, electrical equipment, plumbing, structure, glazing and furniture; supervise cleaning of the building and grounds; maintain the building and grounds; conduct inspections of building to determine needed repairs; consult with and advise supervisors on problems of operation, maintenance and repairs; set up custodial work schedules to ensure maximum efficiency and minimum interference with classroom activities; requisition and account for custodial and maintenance materials, tools and supplies; maintain records and prepare required reports of plant operations.

In 2009 Ottavio worked closely with the Division of School Facilities (DSF) to do a walkthrough audit of his building, leading to a complete lighting retrofit. These types of retrofit projects not only save energy, but also directly impact the students in the building by creating a more welcoming atmosphere. He is involved in identifying low cost and no costs measures to optimize plant operations, verifying equipment and lighting schedules, verifying proper sequence and modes of operation and facility requirements to support occupant's comfort. The custodial staff at X660 considers Ottavio not only a boss, but also a mentor, with experience in various aspects of the facilities field. By leveraging his expertise, staff are able to maximize the results seen throughout the building. Ottavio is a problem solver who enjoys the technical aspects of the position and strives to highlight the work done by his staff. By running the school's HVAC equipment and lighting systems effectively and efficiently, X660 currently holds an Energy Star Score of 84.

Finally, when the DSF sponsored High School for Energy and Technology opened in 2012, Ottavio became much more involved with student engagement. This is accomplished by organizing periodic tours of his boiler plant, answering student queries on assignments related to the work of a custodial engineer and being readily available for hands on demonstrations. During visits, he provides students with training on boilers and energy management and awareness. He talks to them about the job skills necessary for future employment in the facilities industry, including the importance of safety and a positive attitude. These types of activities are one aspect that makes students aware of engineering related educational opportunities available through the Department of Education.