

Rural Matters July 2021

Message from Mark Bordeau



This is my inaugural article for Rural Matters as the new Executive Director of Rural Health Network. I recently retired from Broome Tioga BOCES after 22 years of employment. For the past 16 years I was the Senior Director of Food Services, overseeing the child nutrition programs of 15 school districts in Broome and Tioga County. As a community member and partner of Rural Health Network, I was aware of the accomplishments of the Network team and the positive impact of these accomplishments on our rural communities. But in my first 2 weeks as Executive Director, I have seen firsthand the passion and dedication of our team members in advancing the health and well-being of rural people and the communities we serve. It is inspiring, I feel so blessed to be working with this amazing group of individuals.

Jack Salo retired on June 30th following 16+ years of dedicated service to Rural Health Network. Under Jack's leadership the Network grew exponentially with programs like the Food and Health Network of South Central NY, Getthere and the expansion of Community Health Services and Education.

Jack also successfully spearheaded a capital campaign project which allowed the Network to purchase our current office building in February 2020 and remodel our office space. The location and size of this building enables us to serve our community more efficiently and will allow us to expand our services in the future. On behalf of the entire Rural Health Network family, thank you Jack on being such a visionary and for all you have accomplished in the advancement of the health and well-being of rural people and communities throughout South Central NY.

This issue of *Rural Matters* highlights some of the great things we have accomplished in the past month. For up to date information on all the happenings at the Network, I encourage you to follow us on [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#). Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at mbordeau@rhnseny.org if I can be of any assistance to you. Thank you for being part of the RHN Family.



**Join Our Getthere Team as a
Transportation to Employment
Associate**

Did you know that lack of transportation prevents many people from holding onto a job?

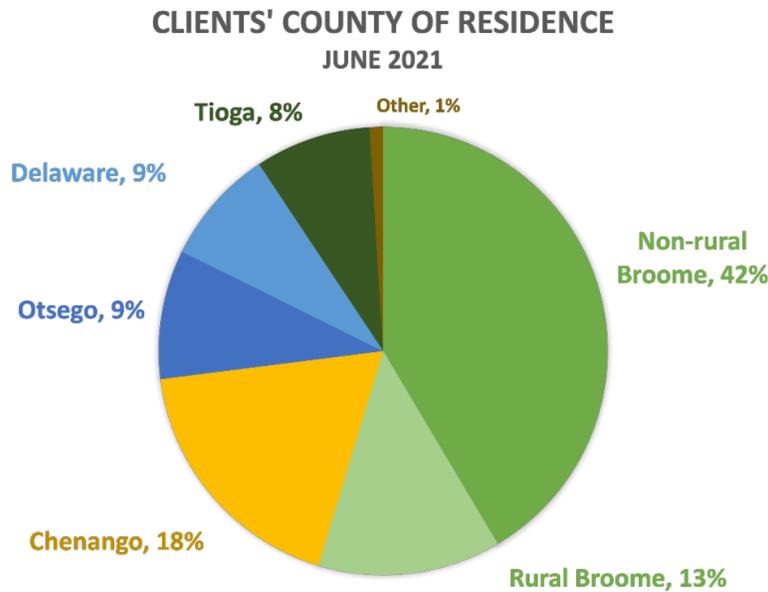
Getthere's Transportation to Employment Program (TEP) is helping community members obtain or maintain employment by providing transportation assistance, education, and support.

Getthere is looking for a Transportation Employment Associate (TEA) to join our growing team. The TEA is a hard-working self-starter that is empathetic and committed to making an immediate difference in the lives of community members through transportation to employment assistance. By removing transportation as a barrier to employment, job opportunities open up and help folks move towards financial stability.

[Click To apply](#)

June Services by County

In the month of June, Rural Health Network served over 300 people one-on-one through the Community Health Services, Northern Broome CARES, and Getthere programs. Clients range in age from just a few months old to over 99 years young.



Welcome to Our Northern Broome CARES Summer Crew



L to R: Savannah Wilbur, Julianna Humphrey, Alexandria Steele

At the end of June, we enrolled three new AmeriCorps members thanks to support and funding from the Roger Kresge Foundation to provide home maintenance and outdoor repairs. This project will improve the well-being and safety of our aging population (over age sixty) living in the towns of Lisle, Triangle, Barker and Nanticoke. Our Summer Crew, Savannah, Julianna, and Alexandria, are all recent graduates from Whitney Point High School. Two of them also successfully completed Broome Tioga BOCES vocational education programs in automobile body repair and health sciences. When Crew Leader, Mindy Alexander, asked them why they decided to apply for these 300-hour service positions, they shared their perspectives.

Savannah told us, "At first, I was unsure about joining AmeriCorps, but after learning of not only the wonderful help we'd be providing to the elderly, but how we'd be able to gain experience and knowledge on home improvement, I was sold. Not to mention my crew leader has been very welcoming and understanding, taking any anxieties about starting the job away. I am a hands on learner, and always up for learning new things. I had enjoyed my experience in a collision repair class, and thought this work would suit me well. I enjoy improving the homes so far, and my favorite labor thing to do typically includes either a paintbrush or a roller! As for non- labor, I really enjoy the hospitality and stories the clients provide."

Julianna replied, "I joined AmeriCorps for an opportunity to be a part of the community. The leader makes work fun and enjoyable. We have become a big family. Other than the in- person experience, AmeriCorps helps me pursue college. Overall it makes me a better community member and person all together."

Alexandria responded, "My crew leader makes the work we do serious but fun and that's what I love about doing this job. Not only helping fix homes for the senior citizens, but also to feel like a family when we work together as a team. I personally joined to pay for my truck and to support my family. Another reason I joined is to help pay for my college education. Thank you for having me be a part of AmeriCorps."

A special thank you to the semi-retired Jack Salo for his vision, inspiration, grant writing skills and timely supply/equipment delivery service!

Next month we will share photos of the Crew working on the 16-20 homes during this summer of unexpected weather!

IMPORTANT REMINDERS IF YOU ARE UNVACCINATED OR NOT FULLY VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19

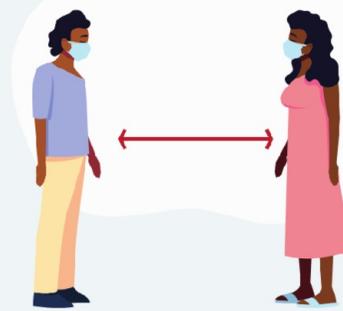


INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE OR GETTING VACCINATED?
DIAL 2-1-1 REGIONWIDE, OR IN BROOME,
TOLL FREE 1-800-901-2180

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN PROTECT YOURSELF IF UNVACCINATED:



SCAN ME



1

Avoid crowds and stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from anyone who is not traveling with you / is not fully vaccinated.

2

Wash your hands with soap and water often or use hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol).

3

Cover your cough and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

4

Wear a mask over your nose and mouth in indoor public spaces, and in crowded outdoor settings and activities with close contact with others who are not fully vaccinated.

Communities with low vaccination rates are experiencing the highest rates of COVID infections. With new and potentially dangerous strains, such as the Delta variant, it's more important than ever for eligible adults and children to get vaccinated. Let's make our communities in Broome County safer and healthier, one vaccine at a time. If you've been vaccinated and know neighbors, colleagues, or loved ones who aren't, encourage them to get vaccinated as soon as they can to help protect themselves and our community.

RURAL HEALTH
NETWORK
Serving South Central New York

Applications Now Open for the 2021-2022 AmeriCorps Term

The start of the 2021 - 2022 term for AmeriCorps is quickly approaching! Rural Health Service Corps has opened up applications for those interested in joining us in improving the lives of rural people and communities through health access and education, food systems and food security, and general public health ventures. Full and part-time positions of various term lengths will start as early as September, so be sure to keep an eye on our [website](#) as we add more position descriptions and host sites that will be taking on members. For general information about AmeriCorps, please visit [AmeriCorps.gov](#).

For specific inquiries about the AmeriCorps program in the Southern Tier, please contact Haley Desilet at hdesilet@rhnsncy.org

Care Compass Network Lunch and Learn - How COVID-19 Impacted Efforts to Provide Transportation to Healthcare

Join Care Compass Network on Friday, July 23rd, from 12 to 1pm for a lively panel discussion about how COVID-19 has greatly impacted efforts to provide transportation to healthcare. The conversation will explore the changes the panelists made during the pandemic, the modifications they have maintained, the challenges they are still facing, as well as how we can avoid a transportation to healthcare crisis.

The Moderator for this session will be Bill Wagner, Director for Getthere Mobility Management. Panelists include LeslieAnn Regan, Medicaid Field Liaison (MAS); Ryan Tichenor, Partner, HTM Med Transport; Julie Feheley, Getthere Mobility and Transportation Advocate, Rural Health Network; and Amber Simmons, Regional Transportation Coordinator, Move Together NY.

[Register Here](#)



On June 10th, Food and Health Network had the pleasure of attending the Planting Fest, hosted by Tioga Central School District. Tioga school is unique in that it has a farm on site, known as Tiger Farm, that features raised beds, a small orchard, and hoop house. In the past, Tiger Farm ran an event in the fall known as “Harvest Fest”. Due to Covid-19 restrictions in place this past fall, the school was forced to postpone the event until spring.

FaHN members conducted an array of engaging activities for students, ranging in grades from Pre-K to sixth grade. These activities included a corn relay race, nature bracelet making craft, as well as an interactive photo frame with fruit and vegetable props. The students also received stickers that had various fruits and vegetables on

them which highlighted their' curiosity, causing them to ask many questions on the types of produce pictured and how each tasted. Each child left the FaHN table with a seed packet of their choice to plant at home. The seeds included bush beans, peas, carrots, various lettuces, and even microgreens. The bush beans, peas, and microgreen seeds were graciously donated by Stamford Farmers' Cooperative as soon as they were told the seeds would be given to students.

The festival featured a variety of vendors and activities for students to participate in. There were several different farm animals in attendance including goats, miniature ponies, and a Brown Swiss cow. Students had the opportunity to learn about apple production from Mike Russell of Russell Farms, an integral partner in our farm to school work. Additionally, students planted pumpkins and various other seeds in their raised beds at the farm. The attendees were all-encompassing in the topics they addressed; showcasing lessons such as the importance of soil health, maple syrup production, and even how to milk a cow.

This event was a product of hard work and dedication on behalf of students, school faculty and staff, many community partners, and the Tiger Farm planning committee. After such a trying year for everyone, especially schools, this event was the perfect celebration of the school year coming to a close, the planting season, and farm to school practices at Tioga CSD. FaHN is extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to attend this event and to Tioga CSD's dedication to the farm to school program.



Liveable Rural Communities

Submitted by Pamela Guth, Director of Community Health Services

A livable rural community is one that is physically and psychosocially safe and secure. It offers viable choices of where to live and how to get around. It equitably serves rural residents of all ages, ability levels, incomes, education or training levels, races, ethnicities, sexual orientation, religious or spiritual beliefs, and other diverse backgrounds.

Liveable Rural Communities also:

- enhance personal and household independence;
- allow rural residents to remain in their homes and communities as they age in place with dignity and respect for their holistic quality of life;
- provide opportunities for all residents to engage fully in civic, economic, and social life in a just, equitable, diverse and inclusive manner

- include access to essential goods and services in or nearby that promote individual and community health and well-being beyond surviving and through striving and thriving cycles of human, family and community development
- build upon rural assets, strengths and resiliency
- embrace principles of rural competency, health/digital literacy, person/family centered care and self-efficacy/sufficiency/advocacy

Rural Health Network's Northern Broome CARES program is working to address liveable communities and uses these bullet points along with the NYS Prevention Agenda, Healthy People 2030, and County Health Assessments and Improvement Plans to guide our work.

As we approach the other side of this pandemic, the need to advocate, synergize, collaborate and communicate clearly is critical to maximize the resources allocated to the health, well-being and viability of our rural communities and people. We all deserve the right to thrive in a Liveable Rural Community!

Adapted from [AARP Policy Book, Chapter 13: Livable Communities](#)



Featured Programs July 2021

Transportation to Employment

Transportation shouldn't stand in the way of a new job!

Getthere offers **short-term transportation assistance** in the form of bus passes, taxi rides, a network of volunteer drivers, and fuel cards.

Plus, we'll help you create a **long-term transportation strategy** to cover your transportation costs and keep working.

Let us help you get to work!

Call: 855-373-4040

Click: [TEP Referral Form](#)



Items of Interest

Rural Health Survey for Healthy People 2030 : This survey is designed to help us better understand what rural stakeholders think are the most important Healthy People 2030 priorities for rural America.

TEDx Talk: I've Had COVID-19 for a Year. Like millions of people around the world, epidemiologist Dr. Margot Gage Witvliet got COVID-19 in March 2020 and began to document her recovery. The only thing is, she never got better. In this jaw-dropping talk, Dr. Gage Witvliet explains what doctors and nurses can learn from long COVID-19 patients ("long-haulers") now and for the future. Dr. Gage Witvliet is an epidemiology

professor with Chronic COVID-19 Syndrome, also called “Long-Haul COVID”. During her convalescent period from COVID-19, Dr. Gage Witvliet experienced medical sexism, which she outlines in this video.

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