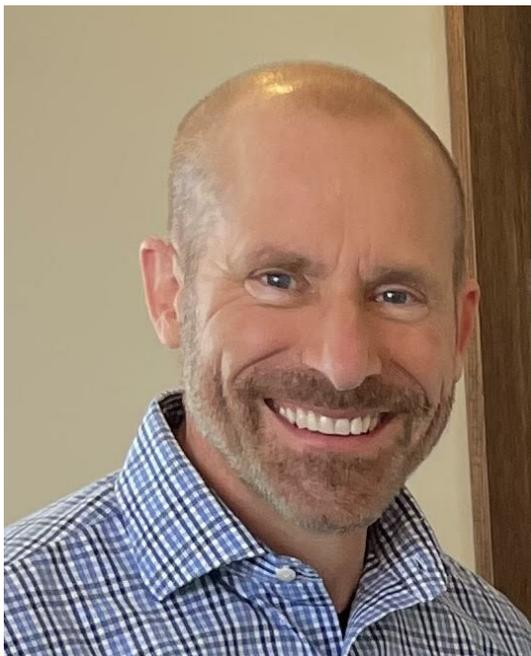


Rural Matters November 2021



Message from Mark Bordeau



November is here and this month is the time to recognize and thank a few groups and individuals who are very important to the Rural Health Network of SCNY.

First of all, Happy (belated) Veteran's Day to all of our veterans. On behalf of the Rural Health Network, thank you for your service. 4.7 million veterans live in rural communities throughout the United States. Rural veterans face numerous barriers to health care access including long travel distances to community and US Department of Veteran's Affairs Services facilities, limited provider choices, and a lack of specialty services. As a result, rural veterans suffer higher rates of depression, chronic disease, and physical health problems compared to other rural residents. At the Rural Health Network, we advocate for all rural residents including veterans to have equal access to

adequate healthcare, transportation, and nutritious food.

Also, on November 18th we will celebrate National Rural Health Day. National Rural Health Day is celebrated on the 3rd Thursday of November and was created to showcase rural America as well as to increase awareness of rural health-related issues. This year marks the 11th anniversary of this special day as it was first established in 2010. You will read more about National Rural Health Day in this issue of Rural Matters.

Kudos to Jack Salo, previous Executive Director of the Rural Health Network, who is this year's recipient of the Senator McGee Rural Health Award from the New York State Association for Rural Health (NYSARH). As a rural health advocate, he has worked with a wide range of partners to address the root causes of health issues and health disparities. Jack has been recognized with this award for devoting his career to the

needs of rural communities. [Click here](#) to learn more about this award. Congratulations to Jack for this well-deserved award and thank you for all you have done for our rural communities.

Also, in this issue of Rural Matters you will read about our annual Rural Awards Winners. This is the second year of our recognition program to honor individuals and/or organizations that have made significant contributions to “improving the health and well-being of rural people and communities.”

We at the Rural Health Network of SCNY would like to thank William (Bill) Wagner, Director of our Getthere Mobility Management programs, for nearly 6 years of service. Bill joined our team in February 2016, overseeing transportation services. During his tenure the mobility management team has doubled in size and funding has increased fivefold from \$200,000 to over \$1 million, which resulted in the increase of access to transportation services for residents across the region and the development of numerous innovative programs. Bill’s collaborative leadership approach has propelled Rural Health Network of SCNY and Getthere into the role of a state and national model for mobility management, especially how mobility management can work with healthcare and community organizations to address the transportation needs of a region. Bill will be leaving us at the end of the month to become the Deputy Director for the National Center for Mobility Management, based out of Virginia. In this role, Bill will further his work started in the Southern Tier and extend his sphere of influence to the national level.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving. This Thanksgiving I am very thankful to be part of an organization that is having such a positive impact on the health and well being of our rural communities.

Mark Bordeau
Executive Director

11th Annual National Rural Health Day

By Pamela Guth, Director of Community Health Services

Community Health Workers, Getthere Mobility Transportation Advocates, Community Health Education team, AmeriCorps/VISTA/Public Health Service Corps Program Leaders/Site Supervisors/Service Members, and Food & Health Network staff address the unique health access, social care, and infrastructure challenges facing our upstate NY rural residents face during a public health pandemic and into the future. On Rural Health Day , November 18, 2021 we thank them for embodying the Power of Rural theme through four key attributes.

Resiliency

Our rural workforce strives to thrive and possesses unique endurance as ambassadors promoting health and well- being in our smallest towns from the youngest to the oldest residents.

Relationships

Behind the stories of our staff are heroes who are extraordinary people, collaborating and transforming systems of care to make the quality of rural life better and preserve respect and human dignity through every stage of life.

Resolve

Although rural resources are limited and inequitable, Rural Health Network of SCNY staff are highly skilled at securing innovative solutions. We overcome most barriers and view possibilities from multiple perspectives. We are catalysts for human, workforce, community, and economic development.

Readiness

Our organizational leadership and commitment from our Board of Directors supports rural recovery and vitality. We meet individual and systemic challenges head on and with persistence, perseverance and self- determination. We prepare people for life transitions,

natural disasters and public health emergencies. We provide tools and skills to rural people so they can self-manage better while navigating complex systems of care and everyday life stressors. We are ready to serve the communities we live in as trusted neighbors and resources.

Happy National Rural Health Day to our dedicated staff, Leadership Team, Board of Directors and community partners!

Last year we began an annual tradition of honoring individuals or organizations that also embody our mission of “improving the health and well-being of rural people and communities”. We are pleased to announce the 2021 honorees.



2021 Rural Health Practitioner: Rachel Mischler, RD, CDN, is an outpatient dietitian with Lourdes Hospital. Ms. Mischler has been a champion for RHN's Fruit & Vegetable Prescription (FVRx) Program since it was first piloted in 2017. Since then, she has worked closely with Erin Summerlee, Food and Health Network Director, and numerous community partners to both offer the FVRx program to her patients and help support the program's growth and expansion. In addition to the FVRx program, Ms. Mischler has also been instrumental in helping to connect patients to a variety of other local food resources, including the VINES Farm Share program. She is truly an advocate for addressing the barriers that individuals encounter when trying to meet their nutrition goals and improve their overall health, and is always willing to try new approaches in order to support her patients and the

community.

Ms. Mischler said *“Working with the Fruit and Vegetable Rx program has been one of the most meaningful experiences in my career. Witnessing the dedication of the Rural Health Network of SCNY to increase access to healthful foods among all gives me great hope that we will come out of these challenging times. I am so honored to receive this recognition and thank you for allowing me to be a part of this remarkable program for our community.”*

2021 Rural Health Leader: Lenore Boris, PhD, JD, RN is the immediate past President of the Rural Health Network of SCNY, Inc. Board of Directors. She served two terms as President, providing leadership through an unprecedented time of growth for the agency. Dr. Boris is also a strategic advisor to Care Compass Network, having been involved at the formative stages of the region's work to address Medicaid Redesign. She serves as Chair of Care Compass Network's Partner Advisory Council/Executive Council and Workforce Committee. She has continued her involvement despite a recent career change.

In September, Dr. Boris was named Dean of St. Joseph's College of Nursing where she oversees the daily operations of the College, faculty development, curriculum design, research, and clinical services.



Dr. Boris spent more than 15 years as an associate dean at the Binghamton Campus of SUNY Update Medical University's College of Medicine. Her responsibilities included oversight of daily operations and managing the budget. She also played an active role in the school's community relations including supervising a free clinic that provided primary health care to uninsured adults at no cost to the patient. Dr. Boris began her nursing

career as a nurse in the U.S. Air Force. She served as a clinical nurse on active duty and later as a flight nurse and eventually administrator of a clinic. In 2007, Dr. Boris retired as a colonel after 28 years of service. She earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from California State University in Hayward, her master's degree in nursing from Syracuse University, and PhD in nursing from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Dr. Boris also holds a law degree from University of Wisconsin.

Dr. Boris said, *"Thank you for the honor of being recognized as a Rural Health Leader. Unfortunately, too often in conversations about health care access, quality, cost and other factors we overlook the needs of the rural population. The work of Rural Health Network is critical as an agency dedicated to ensuring the health of rural New Yorkers and as the voice for our rural neighbors. The Network has a very dedicated staff and it was my professional pleasure to work with them and facilitate their activities on behalf of people living/working in rural areas in our region."*



2021 Rural Health Partner: Gerould's Health Care Center. As part of Care Compass Network's Cohort Management Program, Rural Health Network's Community Health Workers had the privilege of working with Gerould's Health Care Center on two projects both focused on chronic disease management. Pamela Guth, Director of Community Health Services said that *"in my view, one of Gerould's*

many strengths is their innovative, integrated, and inclusive approach to clinical and community based partnerships designed to provide holistic wrap-around services to their clients in order to improve individual and population health outcomes." Cheryl Henninger and her team of respiratory therapists know how to communicate effectively with collaborative care team members and patients. Their patient engagement skills from virtual care within a new TAP cloud application to in person during home visits and chronic disease self-management workshops is compassionate, respectful and meaningful."

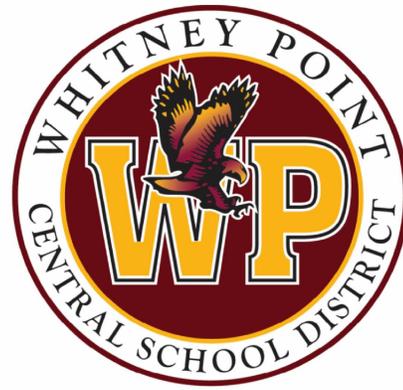
Cheryl Henninger, RRT CEAC is the Clinical Director of Gerould's Health Care Center and Community Cares Health Solutions. Cheryl said, *"Thank you very much for the recognition! We are honored to work with you and your team to support our communities! We truly value our partnership as we are stronger together."*



Gerould's Health Care Respiratory Team

2021 Rural Health Champion: Whitney Point Central School District. For many years, Rural Health Network's primary office was based in Whitney Point where we developed relationships with others who provide services in Northern Broome County. We have long admired Whitney Point Central School District's commitment to meeting the needs of their students both in and out

of the classroom. Former Superintendent Pat Follette served on the Advisory Boards for our Rural Broome Counts project and our Northern Broome CARES program serving seniors 60+.



For their integrated, community schools model, emphasis on trauma informed care, and for their commitment to the entire community, we recognize Whitney Point Central Schools as a Rural Health Champion.

In accepting the award, Jo-Ann Sexton, Superintendent said, *"We are honored to be recognized. Working to build partnerships to support the health and well-being of the people in our district's rural communities is a foundational philosophical priority and commitment in our district."*

Full-Time AmeriCorps Position Available with Broome County Office for Aging

Broome County Office for Aging is looking for a Social Isolation Prevention Coordinator, a full-time AmeriCorps position that will run from December 2021 - November 2022. Throughout the duration of the project, this member's main focus will be to conduct outreach to older adults and engage in a variety of tasks that aim to address social isolation issues. The Social Isolation Program Coordinator will make phone and home visits to socially isolated clients including those who receive Meals on Wheels, work with clients in person or over the phone to help them with accessing virtual senior center programming, and provide weekly respite to families identified with companion needs or complete other respite assignments. For more information about this position or other AmeriCorps positions available with Rural Health Service Corps, please visit our [website](#) or contact Haley Desilet at hdesilet@rhnseny.org.



This month, we're welcoming two new members of the Getthere team and saying goodbye to Getthere Director Bill Wagner.

Catrina Baez was hired as a Getthere Mobility



and Transportation Advocate (MTA) in mid-October. She's passionate about social justice and enjoys advocating for vulnerable and marginalized populations. Catrina has found that she's most motivated when making a difference in the lives of those in need! Catrina was initially attracted to the Rural Health Network because of its diligent work to improve the life of residents in struggling rural areas that transcends a nicely worded mission statement.

Catrina graduated from Capella University as a health care administration major and is a certified medical biller. She's held various positions that involved locating resources for uninsured or underinsured patients and secured payments for health care providers. Catrina was born and raised in New York City and moved to Binghamton three years ago. She's a huge Prince fan and is an excellent cook!

Getthere welcomed Vincent Longobardi as the latest Mobility and Transportation Advocate (MTA) at the end of October. Vincent is a Binghamton University graduate that majored in biology. He's originally from Long Island but decided to stick around the Binghamton area after finding a fulfilling full-time job.



Vincent felt that his experience working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities at Prime Care Coordination and Community Options would be a good fit for the MTA position. He's excited to continue working to directly help people in need.

Vincent is an online gamer, specializing in Dungeons and Dragons. You can find Vincent reading a book or watching a documentary in his spare time. He recommends the *Origin and Evolution of the Universe: From Big Bang to Exobiology* by Matthew Malkan.

Vincent does not have a pet chicken – he's pictured holding one of the chickens that lived on a previous client's mini farm!



Bill Wagner didn't know much about mobility management before taking the Getthere Director position in early February 2016, he just knew he wanted to make a difference in the lives of individuals and families across the region. He's done just that.

It's undeniable that Getthere has benefited from Bill's leadership. The program has expanded in size, scope, staff, and nearly every other conceivable way. While its mission remains the same: deliver comprehensive mobility management services to residents of South Central New York, expansion has allowed the program to traverse the transportation barrier to assist those that are unable to access health care, prescriptions, food, and employment.

Lack of transportation is often concealed from those that grab a key and hop in their car each morning. Many people without access to safe, reliable transportation forego important medical procedures, have difficulty keeping their pantries stocked, and are unable to hold onto a job. Getthere is the antidote, and its impact cannot be overstated. It is the difference between medical care and financial stability for individuals and their families across our community.

Bill's efforts have been replicated across the state, and Getthere has been recognized at

the vanguard of mobility management on a national level. Bill is an innovator that takes action when he sees opportunities to help. For instance, in the early days of the pandemic, Bill recognized that the individuals most threatened by COVID-19 may have the most difficulty getting to testing sites and vaccine appointments. Bill went to work securing funding to provide transportation services that provided hope to hundreds of individuals.

Bill, along with his staff at Getthere, have crafted comprehensive mobility management programs that provide education, tools, and resources that empower individuals and encourage sustainable transportation solutions that support the health and wellness of our community. The contributions that Bill has made to South Central New York will endure long after he has taken the helm at NCMM.

Bill is quick to point out that none of this would have been possible without the Getthere staff, who are excited to see him make a splash as the Deputy Director for the National Center for Mobility Management. We will miss his quick wit, friendly demeanor, and desire to see those around him thrive.

Job Openings - Join our Team

Director, Getthere Mobility Management Programs. Rural Health Network of SCNY, Inc. is seeking an entrepreneurial and innovative leader to become the next full-time director of our Getthere Mobility Management Program. Getthere improves the health and wellbeing of our region by improving access to affordable and efficient transportation options. Safe, reliable transportation to health care, food, and employment has the power to transform the lives of individuals, families, and the community. Most importantly, Getthere educates and empowers those we serve by encouraging independence that supports their long-term transportation needs. View the position description [here](#).

Mobility & Transportation Advocate (MTA). The MTA will serve with the Getthere team of transportation professionals to improve access to health care, employment and other essential services to those that face transportation barriers, with a primary focus on the elderly, people with disabilities, and the rural population. Candidate must be empathetic and understanding to the needs of individuals, practice analytical and problem-solving skills, understand the health and human services sector, and desire an integral role in the success of a dynamic and growing collaborative community initiative. View the position description [here](#).

Food as Medicine Coordinator. The Food as Medicine Coordinator will play a key role supporting the implementation, growth, and sustainability of the Fruit & Vegetable Prescription (FVRx) program and other emerging food as medicine initiatives in a multi-county region. The Coordinator will expand the capacity and impact of programs through planning, coordination, resource development, communication, monitoring and evaluation, and regional technical assistance. The Coordinator will work closely with the FaHN Director, health care providers, hospital systems, local food retailers, program participants, and partner organizations. View the complete position description [here](#).

[Apply Here](#)

COVID info line is open!

*Tuesdays and Thursdays
9 AM - 12 PM*

Do you, your loved ones, or your clients have questions about COVID, the delta variant, vaccines, or testing?

Do you need to register for a vaccination or booster appointment?

We're here to help!



Call Alex
(607) 692-7669

[Click Here to view a COVID-19 Testing, Vaccination, and Insurance Guide for the southern tier region.](#)



OF SOUTH CENTRAL NEW YORK

Financing Rural Food Retail Business: The second webinar in the series "A Fresh Outlook on Rural Food Retail" was hosted on Oct 28th.

The webinar answered questions and provided best practices on financing food retail businesses. This includes finding financial backing for a new business or attaining sustainability for current businesses. For those who missed it you can [view the recording](#).

Stay Connected

www.rhnsncy.org

Subscribe to this Newsletter

