

## *Rural Matters December 2022*

### Leadership Message



We're saying goodbye to a member of our team this month. Pamela Guth will retire at the end of next week. Pam has been instrumental in guiding Rural Health Network through the opportunities presented through Medicaid redesign. Her vision of how Community Health Workers could add benefit to the health care continuum and, most importantly, add benefit to the people we serve, has been so valuable to our impact.

We had the opportunity to celebrate with Pam, her family, and former co-workers from Rural Health Network and other places Pam has worked.

Please see the next article for how we will move forward, building on the strong foundation Pam helped create.

As 2022 wraps up, we have been engaged in a strategic planning process that will help guide Rural Health Network into the next three years. I look forward to sharing more details soon.

I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season. My plans for the next couple of weeks also include a family wedding and the birth of our first grandchild. To say that I'm excited is an understatement.

-Mark Bordeau  
Executive Director

### Departments Merge to Best Serve the Community

**Mary Maruscak**, current Director of Community Health Education at RHN, is looking forward to taking on her new title, Director of Community Health, upon Pamela Guth's retirement later this month. Mary echoes Mark's sentiments that Pam's work over the past 9.5 years at Rural Health Network, and certainly over her career in the Southern Tier, have set the groundwork for continued growth for a long time to come.

The most immediate growth to take place is the merger of the Community Health Services and the Community Health Education teams at Rural Health Network, creating a department to be titled "Community Health." The Community Health program will encompass several existing projects and services, including the ongoing funding and collaborative partnerships supporting our Community Health Worker team within Lourdes

Primary Care Practices; the delivery of evidence-based health education programming and Rural Health Network-created professional development opportunities; the Northern Broome Cares project; and countless community partnerships across several sectors.

Mary's new title takes effect December 19th. In addition, three RHN staff have been promoted to new roles: [Emma Nalin](#), former SDoH Project Coordinator became the Assistant Director of Community Health on December 5th. [Stacy Sbarra](#), Community Health Worker II, will be the Coordinator of Community Health Services and [Wendy Hitchcock](#), Community Health Educator, will be the Coordinator of Community Health Education, both on December 19th.

The entire team is looking forward to building stronger opportunities for internal collaboration across departments and across roles, improving workflows and referral systems all with the goal of providing more holistic services to our clients and communities.

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### Celebrating Pamela Guth's Retirement



Director of Community Health Services, Pamela Guth, retires this month after 43 years of dedication to public service and education. Her longest terms were served at SUNY Broome Early Childhood and Teacher Education, Broome County Public Health Department and finally at Rural Health Network.

Pam said: *"I am counting my blessings this year which include the opportunity to develop and implement innovative programs throughout my career alongside the amazing people who honored me at a recent celebration at Beer Tree Farm in Port Crane."*

Additional photographs from the evening can be found on the Rural Health Network [Facebook page](#).



FaHN is excited to share our year in review with you! The continued support of our community partners, collaborators, and donors plays a key role in sustaining our programs. Our December newsletter will share the results of all the hard work that YOU

made possible! If you haven't yet, please sign up for our newsletter at the link below:

Subscribe Now



From left to right: Taj Robinson, Rachel Lamond, Kelsey Cherevko, Grant Russell, Kevin Davidson

Last month, Rural Health Service Corps members participated in a day of service at CHOW. This was one of our first in-person service events since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic! Throughout the day, members sorted and packaged food to be sent to CHOW's network of food pantries throughout Broome County.

Are you interested in getting involved with CHOW? We are currently looking for someone passionate about food systems to serve as a Food Security Advocate at CHOW! [Learn more here.](#)

### Welcome Natalie Lowin

Natalie Lowin is an AmeriCorps VISTA member who joined our team earlier this month as a Communications & Development Associate. She attended Hammondsport Central School from Kindergarten through 12th grade. She has volunteered at various organizations including Catholic Charities in Bath and The Bowery Mission of Manhattan. She attended college at The King's College in Manhattan, New York. Here she earned a Bachelor's degree in Journalism, Culture and Society.



Natalie moved back to the Southern Tier following her college graduation and did some freelance writing before accepting her AmeriCorps VISTA position with Rural Health Network. Natalie has familiarity with rural and urban poverty from growing up in Steuben County and attending college in New York City. She is excited to see how she can utilize her college education and volunteer background to help the mission of Rural Health Network.

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### *BingUNews* features former AmeriCorps Member

Binghamton University recently featured Valerie Palmeri in [an article](#) highlighting three students in the Masters of Public Health program. Valerie recently completed an AmeriCorps term with the Broome County Health Department where she focused on efforts to bring the COVID-19 vaccine to rural areas.



### **Community Rides**

**GREAT NEWS!** Volunteer Driver Stipends have been extended through February 2023! Help neighbors get to the store, appointments, pharmacy, and other locations around your community. Mileage will be reimbursed at \$.625/mile. We offer stipends of \$100 after completing driver training and \$200 after the first 5 rides.

# We need volunteers!

Help neighbors get to the store,  
appointments, pharmacy, etc.



Mileage reimbursed at \$.625/mile  
\$100 after Driver Training\*  
\$200 after first 5 Rides\*

\*Thru 02/28/23

Call 855-373-4040

RURAL HEALTH  
NETWORK  
*Serving South Central New York*

Getthere

## Thank You Tioga Downs Regional Community Foundation

Getthere was one of fifty-four local non-profits across the Southern Tier to receive funding from the Tioga Downs Regional Community Foundation. The foundation awarded \$1.1 million to organizations from from Broome, Tioga, Chemung, and Bradford counties.

[Read more here](#)





Community Health Worker Karli and Program Coordinator Megan passed out cookie trays and thank you cards to local health care facilities to celebrate National Rural Health Day. Each year the third Thursday of November is dedicated to showcasing the efforts of Rural Healthcare providers, organizations and cooperatives. National Rural Health Day is a day to "celebrate the power of rural".

Baked goods for the trays were provided by Northern Broome CARES staff, family, and friends. six-year old Whitney Point Elementary student Maria made thank you cards.

Staff at Lourdes Primary Care, Whitney Point Wellness Center, Whitney Point Physical Therapy, Walgreens, Dr. Mary Ann Carissimo's Dental Office and the nurses' offices at all three schools in Whitney Point received treats.

Jenette Henninge, a pharmacy technician at Walgreens says: *"Thank you to the Rural Health Network for the delicious cookies and wonderful card. We truly appreciate the work that they all do."*

Learn more about [Northern Broome CARES](#)



## News and Resources

### Veteran Suicide in New York State: The Latest Trends

A new [NYHealth brief](#) examines the latest data from the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs and other sources to explore the state of veteran suicide in New York State and nationally.

### **Educational Resources on Naloxone and Opioid Overdose Prevention**

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has released two new brochures on Naloxone, the life-saving medication that can reverse opioid overdose, for people who are pregnant, people who recently gave birth, and their support persons. Naloxone is available without a prescription at most pharmacies in New York State. One of the brochures was developed for patients, and it communicates a plan to prevent opioid overdose. The second brochure was developed for the purpose of educating families on how to recognize an overdose and use Naloxone.

[Patient Education Brochure](#)  
[Family Education Brochure](#)

### **Delaware County Transportation Survey**

The Delaware County Chamber of Commerce is exploring the possibility of offering public transportation service. Please help us by telling us about your transportation needs! [Your input](#) will shape what public transit could look like in the County.

### **Free At-Home COVID Tests**

Every US household is eligible to receive four at-home COVID-19 tests this winter. Order your tests [here](#).

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