



*Advancing the health and well-being of rural people and communities*

## *Rural Matters March 2023*

### Healthy Living Workshops

We are offering a series of Healthy Living Workshops at the Broome County Public Library. Participants can join us for the full series or for the sessions they are most interested in. For additional information, contact [Wendy Hitchcock](#). You can also [download and share](#) the flyer with others.

# Healthy Living Workshops

Join Rural Health Network for 90 minute workshops to learn valuable health and wellness skills.

Join us for the full series, or attend the sessions that interest you most.

## Available Workshops:

- Intro to Self-Advocacy
- Eating for Good Health
- Physical Activity for Every Body
- Mindfulness & Stress Management

All Workshops are free of charge. Donations are gratefully accepted.



### Contact:

Wendy Hitchcock  
Coordinator, Community  
Health Education  
whitchcock@rhnscny.org  
(607) 788-6897

### Upcoming Workshops:

**Location:** Broome County Public Library Decker Room  
**Time:** 2:00-4:00pm

March 20, 2023:  
Eating for Good Health

April 12, 2023:  
Mindfulness and Stress Management

April 17, 2023:  
Physical Activity for Every Body

May 10, 2023:  
Intro to Self Advocacy



RURAL HEALTH  
**NETWORK**  
Serving South Central New York

This program is supported by Bristol Myers Squibb.  
RHN is grateful to the Broome County Public Library for  
the use of the Decker room to host community workshops.



OF SOUTH CENTRAL NEW YORK

## Creating and Testing Tomato Sauce

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The Food and Health Network's Farm to School Program has partnered with Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego (DCMO) BOCES, 607 CSA, the Hospitality Management Department at SUNY Delhi, and Sidney Central School District to continue to provide students with fresh, local products. Minimally-processed or value-added products are often hard to come by or can be significantly expensive for small schools to purchase.

This project addresses these issues by working with a collaborative team to provide a monthly minimally-processed produce item from January to May 2023 as well as a local tomato sauce to be served monthly in school year 23-24. After staff from all participating organizations as well as volunteers processed 11,000 pounds of tomatoes, four SUNY Delhi students began creating two distinct tomato sauces. The sauces were tested with students at Sidney Elementary School and Walton High School in February. Sauce 'Y' was favored by the majority of students; making it the sauce that will be served next school year to eleven DCMO BOCES school districts.

Read more about the project in this [Daily Star article](#).

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## Sharing our Expertise



On March 2, three members of the Food and Health Network had the opportunity to present at the Adirondack Food Justice Summit at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake, NY. The session, "Food as Medicine: Food Access," discussed models that offer both greater nutritional security to members in rural communities, and also open new markets, with sufficient revenue, to local food producers.

Farm to School Coordinator Hannah Rion, Food as Medicine Coordinator Kate Miller-Corcoran, and Farm to School Public Health AmeriCorps Member Kevin Davidson each highlighted the rich collaborations that are happening throughout South Central New York in Farm to School and Food as Medicine sectors. They also spoke of the

importance of community partnerships in creating healthier, more inclusive institutions.

Pictured above are Hannah Rion, Kevin Davidson, Kate Miller-Corcoran and Theresa Krause, Food Council Coordinator with Food Bank of the Southern Tier.



## Public Health AmeriCorps Openings in Cortland

Our partners at Cortland Area Communities That Care (CACTC) have two AmeriCorps positions available! The first is a Literacy Coordinator position, which would involve building their Books to Grow on Program in both Cortland and Onondaga counties. The second is an Outreach Coordinator position, which would focus on youth alcohol and marijuana prevention, as well as opioid overdose prevention.



Both positions will run from March/April - November 2023 and involve 30-35 hours/week (for a total of 900 hours of service). AmeriCorps members receive a living allowance, education award, and give the opportunity for members to break into Public Health work at a local level.

For more information about these positions (and others, in Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Columbia, Delaware, Erie, and Steuben Counties), please visit our [website](#) or contact [Haley Desilet](#).

## Happy AmeriCorps Week!

Celebrating The Best Of America.



#AmeriCorpsWeek | #UnitedWeServe

March 12-18

AmeriCorps Week is here and we are thrilled to recognize AmeriCorps members who choose to make a difference through service. Join us in thanking all the current and former members serving our communities.

Rural Health Network has been enrolling and placing AmeriCorps members since 2008 and are about to enroll our 500th member. Since 2008, we have worked with 47 partner host sites, and members have provided more than 456,232 hours of service. We are also an employer of national service. Seven of our current staff members are



Northern Broome CARES partners with Stephanie Champney (pictured), Librarian at the Mary Wilcox Library in Whitney Point, to provide digital literacy classes. Program coordinator Megan Arenas-Cardoso recently had a chance to sit down with Stephanie and ask her a few questions about the classes.



***What is Digital Literacy?***

"Digital Literacy is using information and communication technology to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information and requires both cognitive and technology skills."

***Why is a digital literacy class needed in the Whitney Point area?***

"With the advent of the pandemic more and more services began to require digital information. This put many seniors in a bind, as they did not know how to provide this information online."

***What do you like about teaching the class?***

"I enjoy seeing the attendees' feeling of accomplishment when they understand something they've been struggling with."

Digital literacy classes are offered the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month from 9-10am in the Northern Broome CARES office.

# NORTHERN BROOME SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY INITIATIVE

## CLASSES TO BE HELD

2nd & 4th Thursdays  
9 am to 10 am  
In the  
Northern Broome  
CARES Office

Bring your own device or use  
one of the available  
Chromebooks

Limit of 3 participants per class

Signups can be done through  
Northern Broome CARES

(607) 352-4681

When signing up please let us  
know what skills you are inter-  
ested in learning.



## NORTHERN BROOME SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY INITIATIVE

### Mary Wilcox Memorial Library and

### Northern Broome CARES

partner together to provide training to individuals  
interested in becoming more digitally literate.

#### Interesting fact:

The American Library Association defines Digital Literacy as:  
The ability to use information and communication  
technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information,  
requiring both cognitive and technical skills.

#### Why is digital literacy important for seniors?

1. Access to information
2. Connect with society
3. Safety and health management

#### Examples of what can be covered in our classes:

- Computer Basics (turning it on, using a mouse, where to locate programs and how to use them.)
- How to use MS Word, Excel, and Publisher
- Internet Basics (how to use web browsers, search engines, email)
- Internet Safety (how to protect your information, how to evaluate online resources for accuracy/trustworthiness of information)



[www.marywilcoxlibrary.com](http://www.marywilcoxlibrary.com)

<https://rhnsncy.org/programs/northern-broome-cares/>

## Advocacy Alert



**If you support healthy school meals for all,  
raise your hand.**

RURAL HEALTH  
**NETWORK**  
Serving South Central New York

 American Heart Association.  
You're the Cure

Earlier this week, the Press and Sun Bulletin published an Associated Press [article](#) highlighting the reasons for supporting free meals for all school students. Another [article](#) from the Lockport Union-Sun & Journal highlights the Healthy School Meals For All initiative. On Tuesday, the NYS Senate and Assembly included funding for HSMFA in both of their one house budgets. While this is great news, we are not done yet. We still need to convince Governor Kathy Hochul that HSMFA is a game changer for NYS students. [Learn more and take action.](#)

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## News and Resources

### NYS Office for Aging Survey

New York State is developing a Master Plan for Aging (MPA) and seeks input from local government officials, including local Offices for the Aging, community-based providers, county public health officials, New York State Department of Health regional office staff, as well as their system partners and networks. Please answer [this survey](#) no later than March 30th and share it with your staff and partners who support the work you do so they can provide input as well.

### Revealing Medical Debt Disparities Across New York State

A [new analysis](#) from the Urban Institute, funded by [NYHealth](#), digs deeper into localized patterns of medical debt across New York State and finds that communities of color and communities with lower incomes experience the highest rates of medical debt. This examination of medical debt across communities within each region has revealed racial and ethnic disparities that go overlooked when focusing only on statewide patterns.

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