

## Rural Matters May 2023

### Leadership Message



Welcome to May's Edition of Rural Matters!

Did you know that approximately one-fifth of the US population live in a rural area, and about one-fifth of those living in rural areas, or about 6.5 million individuals, have a mental illness?

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. It is a time to raise awareness, reduce the stigma surrounding behavioral health issues, and highlight the ways mental illness can affect all of us - family, friends and our rural neighbors.

In 2022, Rural Health Network started offering Mental Health First Aid Training. Mental Health First Aid is a national program to teach the skills to respond to the signs of mental illness and substance use. Since February 2022, we have trained nearly 200 community members throughout our region in Mental Health First Aid.

In January 2023, thanks to funding from the Broome County Legislature and the County Executive, we were able to add training focused on veterans, military members and their families. Further down in the newsletter you can find information on our next trainings.

In last month's edition of Rural Matters, I shared with you our advocacy efforts around Healthy School Meals for All. I am pleased to announce that New York State took the first step and included \$134 million dollars in this year's budget to expand free meals through the Community Eligibility Provision. I applaud and thank our NYS Legislature and Governor for taking this first step. [Click here](#) to learn more about this funding.

Finally, I am thrilled to present to you our Annual Impact Report. This year's report is visually stunning and filled with lots of great stories highlighting the 2022 accomplishments by our entire Team. We also introduce you to our 23-25 Strategic Plan and our newly stated values. I want to thank Cindy Martin and the communications committee for doing such a wonderful job putting this year's report together. Below you will find the link to the full report.

*-Mark Bordeau*  
Executive Director

### 2022 Impact Report

We are pleased to present our 2022 Impact Report. Pour yourself a cup of coffee and spend a few minutes reviewing our recent highlights. [Click here](#) or on the image below.



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

IMPACT REPORT 2022

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## Rural Health Network has received an Administration for Community Living Grant

We are pleased to announce that Rural Health Network has been awarded a federal grant from the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL), a program of the Federal Office of Health and Human Services, to provide older adults with the resources and support needed for chronic disease self-management.

The 4-year project, which is supported by a \$599,844 grant from the ACL, will allow Rural Health Network to partner with programs serving Broome, Tioga, Chemung and Steuben counties, increasing capacity and reach to provide the Stanford University developed, evidence-based Chronic Disease and Chronic Pain Self-Management Programs and the Arthritis Association's Walk With Ease falls prevention program to rural adults over the age of 60.

This project is part of the ACL CDSME Grant Program funded by the Prevention and Public Health Fund. Rural Health Network is one of eight organizations nationwide to receive this year's grant.

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## South Central NY School Garden Grants Awarded

The Food and Health Network is excited to have announced the recipients of this year's South Central NY School Garden Grant! We received many amazing applications from all throughout the region. Applications were submitted by a variety of school garden stakeholders, including principals, custodial staff, teachers, and even a student. All grant recipients have been notified of their accomplishment and will use their funds to start or expand their school garden throughout the rest of the school year.

A total of 15 individual school buildings will receive funding to support their school garden program. Almost \$7,500 worth of funding will be distributed between the schools. Projects range from planting berry patches to building raised beds, and even establishing a Monarch butterfly garden. Throughout the summer and into the fall we will be highlighting grantees and showcase how they used the funds on the FAHN social media outlets. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

If you missed applying to this year's school garden grant, keep an eye out for the opportunity next spring and visit our [School Garden Resource Guide](#) for more information.



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### Visit to Windsor High School

Our AmeriCorps members recently visited Windsor High School to facilitate a lesson on germination. While there, they learned about the school's FFA (Future Farmers of America) program. Students gain agriculture experience through the Land Lab and various classroom activities. It is programs like these that inspire us, as well as the students that participate in them, to continue growing our local food system!

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**Thanks, Kevin!**

We'd like to thank Kevin Davidson for his service as a Public Health AmeriCorps member with the Food and



Health Network.

His service term is coming to an end this month. Kevin's contributions to our Farm to School program are much appreciated and we wish him well as he moves west for a season of farm work.

Pictured: Kevin Davidson with a recent NY Thursday's school lunch.

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## We're Hiring

Food and Health Network is seeking applicants for a Farm to Early Care & Education Coordinator (ECE) to support the successful development and implementation of a new farm to early care and education initiative in a multi-county region. The Farm to ECE Coordinator will work closely with Rural Health Network's farm to school team and community partners to build capacity to implement high quality farm to ECE initiatives; increase access to nutrient-dense local foods through procurement, gardening, and food education in pilot farm to ECE projects; and develop new market opportunities for regional farm and food businesses.

[Learn more](#) and [apply](#).

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# Getthere



United Way of Mid-Rural New York held a campaign wrap up event in Chenango County earlier this week. Rural Health Network staff were pleased to help celebrate with this long-time partner. Pictured (L to R): Mobility and Transportation Advocates Roz DeRensis, Maggie McGoff and Meg Blenis, Executive Director Mark Bordeau, United Way Mid-Rural New York Executive Director Elizabeth Monaco, and Getthere Director Nick Cecconi.

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# Northern Broome CARE S

The Northern Broome CARES team had a busy April with two tabling events that brought the opportunity to connect with 90 members of the Whitney Point community. First, the team held an animal adoption event during breakfast at the Northern Broome Senior Center to aid in the distribution of animatronic pets. During the event, 20 animatronic animals found their "forever" homes.

Community Health Worker Karli McGrath said, "It was so nice to see people's smiling faces when they left with their pet."



Towards the end of the month, the team attended The Celebration of the Young Child, held at the elementary school in Whitney Point. This was a unique opportunity to connect with grandparents raising their grandchildren as well as adults who have aging parents living in the school district. Program Coordinator Megan Arenas-Cardoso said, "The event at the school was a great opportunity for us to connect with individuals we may not have connected with otherwise. It's important for the sandwich generation to know that there are services out there to help their aging parents, and that they are not alone."

Finally, we wish a heartfelt farewell to our Masters of Social Work intern, Tova Wilensky. As Tova's academic year comes to an end, sadly that means so does her internship here at Northern Broome CARES. Tova said, "I have greatly enjoyed my experience as a MSW Intern at Northern Broome CARES. I met so many people who made me smile, shared their stories, and taught me important lessons about life. I love seeing everyone come together at the Northern Broome Senior Center for lunch, celebratory events, the Book Club, and of course friendly conversations. Thank you to Northern Broome CARES, The Rural Health Network, and the Northern Broome Senior Center for welcoming me into your team! I will miss everyone so much!"

Northern Broome CARES serves adults 60+ who live in the towns of Barker, Lisle, Nanticoke, or Triangle including the village of Whitney Point. The program works to find tailored solutions that meet each individual's needs to support their continued independence.

Learn more about supporting the sandwich generation in [this article](#) from the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.



## AmeriCorps RHSC Members Spend the Day in Albany!

Eight Rural Health Service Corps AmeriCorps members and three staff journeyed to Albany on May 3rd for the Annual AmeriCorps Summit, which brings together members

from all across New York State. The day was filled with member testimonials, panels, a service project, a keynote speech from the President of the Fund for the City of New York, Lisette Nieves, and more! We were thrilled to be able to bring our members to such an important event, so that they could see the scope of AmeriCorps service throughout the state and say their AmeriCorps oath with hundreds of other members.

For more information about our Public Health AmeriCorps program, please visit [our website](#). Our new term will be starting in September 2023, so if you or someone you know is interested in serving (and hopefully joining us at the next Annual Summit), check out our website or contact [Haley Desilet](#).



## May is Mental Health Month

During the month of May, Mental Health America encourages us to take some time to look around and look within. This is an invitation to notice and examine the factors that impact our mental health, from genetics, to environment, to our culture. Do the cultural spaces you occupy promote mental wellness, or negatively impact it? If you're lucky, you may have a social, family, or work environment that promotes discussion and support of mental health. Unfortunately, for many of us, this is not the case. Stigma against mental health challenges is the norm, coloring everything from how we talk about mental health to the assumptions we make about others who may be struggling. Stigma prevents the sharing of good, accurate information about mental health challenges and is a barrier to treatment and recovery for many people. This Mental Health Month, #bethedifference and combat stigma in the spaces you occupy by becoming a Mental Health First Aider.

Adult Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour course that teaches community members to recognize and respond to the signs and symptoms of a mental health challenge. By becoming a Mental Health First Aider, you can help shift the conversation about mental health in your community away from stigma and towards support.

In addition to offering Adult Mental Health First Aid, Rural Health Network is happy to announce that with the support of Broome County, we are now able to offer Mental Health First Aid for Military, Veterans, and their Families. This course has all the substance of the original Mental Health First Aid curriculum, but is tailored to better fit the experience of the military community. With over 10,000 veterans living in Broome County, we invite you to imagine the potential impact just a few trained Mental Health First Aiders could make in our local military community.

To register, host a course, or to be notified of future courses, contact Julianne Lee at

## **Upcoming Mental Health First Aid Courses:**

### **Mental Health First Aid for Military, Veterans, and Their Families**

Monday and Tuesday **May 22nd and 23rd**  
**11:30 AM-4:00 PM**  
Taste NY, 840 Front St. Binghamton, NY

Monday and Tuesday **June 12th and 13th**  
**9:00 AM-1:30PM**  
Rural Health Network, 455 Court St.  
Binghamton, NY

Wednesday and Friday **June 28th and 30th**  
**11:30 AM-4:00 PM**  
Rural Health Network, 455 Court St.  
Binghamton, NY

All courses are FREE to community members

To register, host a course, or to be notified of future courses, contact Julianne Lee: (607)788-6896  
[jlee@rhnscny.org](mailto:jlee@rhnscny.org)

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## **News, Articles of Interest, and Resources**

### **NYSARH Research and Policy Fellowship**

The New York State Association for Rural Health (NYSARH) welcomes applicants for its Research and Policy (RaP) Fellowship program. This program introduces graduate students and early professionals to rural health issues and engages them in advocacy activities. The deadline for application to participate in the 2023-2024 Fellows cohort is July 1, 2023. [Learn more](#).

### **National Rural Health Day Photo Campaign**

To kick off National Rural Health Day (NRHD) 2023, NOSORH is asking all rural health collaborators, innovators, providers, and community stakeholders to share their pictures of rural! We want to showcase happy faces and great places where healthy is happening in rural communities across America. [Learn more](#) and submit photos by May 26, 2023.

### **A Month of Professional Development**

The Institute for Human Services, Inc. is hosting professional development opportunities throughout the entire month of June. Topics include Leading Across Cultures & Generations, Try Mindfulness, Financial Leadership & Budgeting, Effective Delegation Skills and many more. Most sessions are virtual and free. [Learn more](#).

### **Rural Assembly Everywhere: Toward Safer, More Connected Communities**

The Rural Assembly is hosting [a virtual conference](#) on June 28th from 1-3 PM. The

gathering designed by and for rural leaders and their allies will explore the ways rural people are pushing back against harmful policies and narratives and the steps they are taking to create safer, more connected communities.

### Stroke Awareness Month

Strokes can happen to anyone, at any age. Having a stroke puts you at higher risk for a second one. This stroke month, [learn how to act F.A.S.T.](#)

### Seeding Power Fellowship Accepting Applications

The newly redesigned [Seeding Power Fellowship](#) is a nine-month cohort-based food justice fellowship program for experienced leaders working across sectors to build equitable food systems. For this relaunch year (2023-2024), it will accept applications from movement leaders and philanthropic partners in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Apply by June 16, 2023.

### In My Mind Conference - Call for Abstracts

The In My Mind (IMM23) LGBTQIA+ Black and People of Color Mental Health Conference focuses on "Embracing Differences" - uplifting LGBTQIA+ Black and People of Color Disability Communities. This one-day Conference will be held as a hybrid (in-person and online) forum on Thursday, Oct 12, 2023 from 9:00am to 5:30pm at Hofstra University, located at Hempstead, NY. Abstract submissions are open until May 31st. [Click on this link](#) for details.



IN MY MIND   
CONFERENCE

Embracing Differences – Uplifting LGBTQIA  
Black & POC Disability Communities

**Call for Abstracts**  
**SUBMISSION DATE: April 1 - May 31, 2023**

[bit.ly/IMM23\\_AbSubmit](https://bit.ly/IMM23_AbSubmit)



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