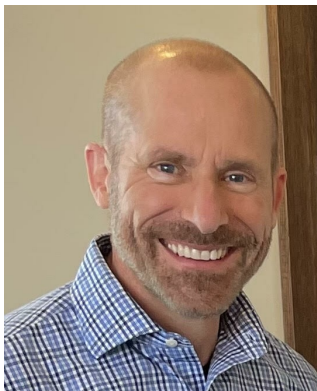




*Advancing the health and well-being of rural people and communities*

## **Rural Matters June 2023**

### **Leadership Message**



This month, I'm highlighting my thoughts about the invaluable contributions made by our local farms and the dairy industry which enrich our rural communities. It's time to celebrate as we honor National Dairy Month! National Dairy Month is a cherished tradition that has been celebrated since 1937, aiming to recognize the essential role dairy plays in our diets, economy, and way of life. In our rural region, dairy farms hold a special place as the backbone of our agricultural heritage and an important part of our community's foundation.

Let us take a moment to reflect on the positive impact that our local farms have on our lives. These dairy farms, with their picturesque landscapes, not only provide us with wholesome milk and dairy products but also play a vital role in shaping our local economy. They generate employment opportunities, stimulate business growth, and foster entrepreneurship in our rural areas.

Farms also contribute to the preservation of our environment and the sustainability of our region. Many dairy farmers adopt eco-friendly practices to keep our land and resources safe. They use techniques that help preserve the region's natural beauty and make sure we have a sustainable future.

Beyond their economic and environmental significance, farms foster a strong sense of community and cultural heritage. They bring neighbors together, create social connections, and instill a deep appreciation for the land and the animals that nourish us. They help us remember the importance of working together, being strong, and never giving up. We can learn so much from them!

During Dairy Month, let's show our support for our local dairy industry and farms. You can do this by buying dairy products directly from nearby farms or farmers' markets. By doing so, you're not only enjoying delicious food, but you are also contributing to the sustainability and success of our rural communities.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the dairy farmers who work tirelessly to provide us with nourishing and delicious dairy products. Your dedication to

your craft and your commitment to our rural communities deserve our highest praise.

Let's raise a glass of milk to Dairy Month and the incredible impact of our farms. They make our communities stronger, healthier, and happier.

Have a great June. Stay healthy and happy.

*-Mark Bordeau*  
Executive Director

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New York is one of the top five largest dairy industries in the country and dairy is the largest sector of New York's entire agricultural industry. There are more than 3,500 farms that support 183,000 dairy-related jobs across the state. Learn more or visit a farmer's market or grocery near you.

[Markets, CSA's, and Farm Stands](#) (Locations that accept Produce Rx Vouchers)  
[NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets](#) (search for farmers markets by county)  
[Supporting New York's Dairy Community](#)  
[Discover NY Dairy](#) (resources for teachers and parents, kid's activities, and recipes featuring dairy products)

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## 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge

This June, Rural Health Network's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (JEDI) is piloting a 21 Day Racial Equity Challenge for Rural Health Network staff. 16 staff members are participating in the pilot program. Each day for 4 weeks, participating staff will receive an email with daily resources to review. The brief resources (most should take 15 minutes or less to explore) center around topics of relevance to RHN's work, such as local and rural histories, racism in the medical field, food systems and race, and race in labor and economics. Each Friday, participating staff meet in teams to engage in discussion around the resources.

Members of the JEDI Committee used pre-existing 21 Day Racial Equity Challenges as the source material for this challenge, selecting resources most relevant to RHN's work and infusing additional resources relevant to our Southern Tier area. Participating staff have opportunities to provide feedback with each set of resources, as well as at the end of the challenge.

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Rural Health Network Offices are Closed  
in Observance of

# JUNETEENTH FREEDOM DAY

JUNE 19, 2023

## Need a Speaker? - We're Available



*Executive Director Mark Bordeau and Cathy Haas, Binghamton Sertoma Club*

Earlier this week, Mark was the featured speaker at the Binghamton Sertoma Club meeting. He presented an overview of Rural Health Network programs and our recent advocacy efforts for Healthy School Meals for All.

If you belong to a service or civic group that seeks to know more about issues impacting health and well-being, we are available to help fill your calendar.

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

We have three upcoming opportunities for Military, Veterans, and their families to participate in Mental Health First Aid. This training specifically addresses the relevance of mental health to military culture, information on risk factors, and how to break down stigma. All courses are free. Contact [Julianne Lee](#) to register: 607.788.6896.

Please share this information with any contacts you have in the Veterans/Military community. This workshop series is supported by funding from Broome County.



## Upcoming Courses:

**June 12 & 13**  
9 AM - 1:30 PM

**June 28 & 30**  
12:30 PM - 5 PM

**July 20 & 21**  
9 AM - 1:30 PM

**August 8 & 10**  
10 AM - 3 PM\*

All courses are **FREE**  
For details, questions, and to register, contact Julianne Lee:  
(607)788-6896  
[jlee@rhncny.org](mailto:jlee@rhncny.org)

\*dates marked with an asterisk do not require use of the online portal

## WHY MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

Mental Health First Aid for Military, Veterans, and their Families is an evidence-based and early intervention training program developed for adults to learn how to assist and support members of their community who may be experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.

This training specifically addresses the relevance of mental health to military culture, information on risk factors such as mental and physical trauma faced by many service members and their families, how to break down stigma and how to reach out to those who suffer in silence and are reluctant to seek help.

Nearly  
**1 in 4\***  
active duty members showed signs of a mental health condition.

The suicide rate for veterans is  
**57% GREATER\***  
than non-veterans.

**88%\***  
of veterans' caregivers report increased stress or anxiety.

\*the original research for the displayed statistic is linked

## WHAT IT COVERS

- The relevance of mental health to the community of military, veterans and their families.
- Risk factors and protective factors specific to the community of military, veterans and their families.
- Applying the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) in scenarios designed specifically for military, veterans and their families.
- National, regional and community mental health resources for service members, veterans and their families.

## WHO SHOULD TAKE IT

- Individuals who are a part of or support the military community, including service members, veterans and military families.

## The course will teach you how to apply the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE):

- **A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
- **L**isten nonjudgmentally.
- **G**ive reassurance and information.
- **E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
- **E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.



This program is supported by funding from Broome County

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

It's a busy time of year for the Food & Health Network team. The school year is winding down with the final NY Thursday meals and taste tests to inform future school menus.

In Broome and Tioga counties our Farm to School program is a collaboration between Broome-Tioga BOCES Rock on Café School Nutrition Services, nutrition education from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County, and technical support and education from the Food and Health Network. Take a look at the [June 2023 issue of the Farm to School Newsletter](#). Which berry recipe will you try first?

Meanwhile, AmeriCorps VISTA member Cat Marchione has been preparing vouchers for the more than 600 people enrolled in the Produce Prescription program. Cat has coordinated teams of volunteers to assist with the project. We are especially grateful to United Way of Broome County for coordinating annual Day of Caring projects. We had over 30 volunteers visit last Friday. We appreciate Care Compass Network, Idea Kraft, Visions Federal Credit Union, Vestal United Methodist Church, and all the volunteers who helped.



## Planting Fest at the Tiger Farm

On June 2nd Food and Health Network had the pleasure of attending Planting Fest, hosted by Tioga Central School District. Tioga CSD is unique in that it has a farm on site, known as Tiger Farm, that features raised beds, a small orchard, and hoop house. The district has put on both Harvest Festivals and Planting Festivals for their students for many years.

Food and Health Network (FaHN) members facilitated an engaging activity for students ranging in grades from Pre-K to fourth grade. Pre-K through second grade students participated in a relay race game where they were asked to identify what produce items were fruits and which were vegetables. The lesson here was that fruits have seeds in them and that even something like a bell pepper is actually a fruit. Third and fourth grade students also participated in a relay race game, and were asked to identify which produce items could be grown in New York State, and which items could not be grown in New York State. To the surprise of many of the students, all of the produce was able to

be grown in New York. Students of all ages left the activities knowing how to correctly identify fruits and vegetables as well as know how diverse New York State agriculture is.

FaHN is once again extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to attend this event. Thank you Tioga CSD and to all of the individuals who made the day possible!



## Stress Management and Mindfulness



Last week, Care Compass Network hosted a lunch and learn for Open Network members. Wendy Hitchcock, Rural Health Network's Coordinator of Community Health Education, presented on "Stress Management and Mindfulness." This is just one of the workshops we offer in addition to multi-session evidence-based health education courses. Follow our [Facebook page](#) for future sessions open to the public.

# Getthere

## Getthere Goes to OK!

Getthere staff members Julie Feheley, lead travel trainer, and Maegan Berliner,

Assistant Director, attended the Community Transportation Association of America Expo 2023 from May 21-25, 2023 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The CTAA EXPO 2023 kicked off with a day-long session with the National Center on Mobility Management (NCMM). NCMM focused on the importance of partnerships and collaboration to meet community needs, especially transportation. Capt. David Wong, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Lead Community Health Worker Sustainability, HHS Office of Minority Health, spoke about the use of Community Health workers as a link to services including transportation and how community health workers are a natural fit. Maegan Berliner and Capt. Wong discussed the natural collaboration of community health workers and transportation advocates at the Rural Health Network. Capt. Wong later used the Rural Health Network example in his presentation. Additionally, NCMM highlighted transportation stories and updates from Oklahoma statewide mobility management and touched on how to decipher and flex funding. The afternoon breakout sessions featured a presentation on "Performance Measures for Mobility Management" which Maegan Berliner attended.



Since Getthere provides non-emergency medical transportation and transportation to older adults and persons with disabilities, Julie and Maegan attended the following sessions: "A Modern Look at Effectively Serving Older Adults," "DOT Collaboration with State Human Services Agencies: Lessons Learned from Mobility Ohio Coordination," "Public Transit and Non-Emergency Medical Transportation: Building Effective Partnerships with Managed Care," and "Everyone at the Table- Inclusion of Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities."

Maegan and Julie had a great experience attending the CTAA 2023 Expo. The Getthere staff is excited for next year's conference and the chance to present the mobility programs at the Rural Health Network!

*"It's very informative and enriching to hear how other organizations in the country are handling the same issues we face. I always come back inspired and invigorated, ready to put some of these new ideas into practice. I also really enjoy networking and building relationships with other mobility managers and transit providers from New York State. We've been able to refer people back and forth and continue to build bridges." - Julie Fehelley, Lead Travel Trainer and MTA*



The Northern Broome CARES team recently had a chance to meet with staff from Senator Lea Webb's office. Northern Broome CARES staff teamed up with representatives from the Whitney Point Central School district as well as the St. Patrick's Church to discuss important issues that the Whitney Point community faces. The discussion included the lack of transportation in the Whitney Point area, the lack of affordable housing, and lack of food access. The lack of rights for grandparents raising their grandchildren was also discussed. Program Coordinator Megan Arenas-Cardoso said, "I really feel like they took their time to listen to what we had to say and will bring our concerns back to the Senator."



*Pictured are Northern Broome CARES staff Megan Arenas-Cardoso and Karli McGrath, Stephanie Champney, Librarian at the Mary Wilcox Library, and members of Lea Webb's staff, William Scott and Joshua Boyce.*

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.



## Applications for Public Health AmeriCorps Now Open!

Are you looking to make a difference in your community? AmeriCorps members fill gaps in service at our local not-for-profits and allow for greater coverage in the public health sector. A service term with AmeriCorps is a great gateway to work in areas such as food justice, community health, health education, elder care, and more! New Public Health AmeriCorps positions will begin in September 2023 and involve either 900 hours or 1200 hours of service within one year (or less); additionally, there is flexibility in terms of end date and hours per week.



We are looking for passionate and dedicated members, and no previous experience in public health is required for any of our positions. If you or someone you know is interested in a unique and temporary position at a not-for-profit in the Southern Tier (and beyond!) please visit [our website](#) to learn more about benefits, requirements, and the different positions we have available.

## Introducing Vandya Kamagere

Hello, my name is Vandya Kamagere. I am a Public Health AmeriCorps Member here at Rural Health Network, joining the Community Health team. I am a senior undergraduate student at SUNY Brockport, majoring in Public Health. I joined Rural Health Network as an AmeriCorps Member because I want to help make a difference in rural communities and the lives of others.



I have always had a passion for increasing health equity in rural communities and promoting healthy lifestyles. My main activities as an AmeriCorps member will be to work with the Community Health team to promote and deliver evidence-based health education workshops, design and implement data collection processes and to educate the community on local, national and federal approaches to health concerns.

I am really looking forward to working at Rural Health Network as a Public Health AmeriCorps Member and using the experiences I gain here to achieve my passion and goals.

**Save the Date - We're Celebrating 25 Years!**



*Save the Date*

Monday, October 16th  
5-7 PM

Celebrate 25 Years of Advancing  
Health and Well-Being

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel  
Binghamton, NY  
Details available soon



# News, Articles of Interest, and Resources

## NYS Clean Energy Educators Institute

Two four-day programs will be offered in July for NYS educators teaching grades 4-12 who are bringing clean energy education into their classrooms. [Learn more](#).

## Share Your Input to help Shape Local Priorities

[Broome Age-Friendly Project Survey of Adults 55+](#) (respond in June)

Broome County Department of Planning and Economic Development [Housing Needs Assessment](#) (respond by June 22)

## Exploring Rural Health Podcast

Listen to [this interview](#) with Dr. Timothy Callaghan, PhD, an associate professor in the Boston University School of Public Health, and Morgan Kassabian, who contributed to the Rural Healthy People 2030 project while working with the Southwest Rural Health Research center.

## NY Health Foundation Webinar - Strengthening the Future of Mental Health Care in New York State.

Please join NYHealth for a conversation about the current state of mental health policies and programs and how we can capitalize on this momentum to advance sustainable changes in mental health care in New York State. Wednesday, June 28, from 3 PM - 4 PM. [Learn more and Register](#)



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