

RURAL HEALTH NETWORK

Serving South Central New York

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

Rural Matters December 2024

A Message from our Executive Director



As we are preparing to see 2024 come to a close, it is hard not to reflect back and take a minute to celebrate all of the events that have occurred over the past year. I joined Rural Health Network in June 2024 and it has truly been an adventure. Meeting and getting to know the agency staff, local agency leaders and community members has been my main focus over the past six months.

In October, we had our annual event and recognized Rural Health Award Recipients which gave our agency a chance to celebrate not only the awardees, but the many community members who attended that we network and collaborate with. It was a great opportunity for me to meet and chat with you and plan for how we will work together in the upcoming year.

The 1115 Waiver has progressed a great deal in 2024 and our agency is excited to start this new opportunity with the Social Care Network - Care Compass Collaborative. Rural Health Network is hoping to engage and assist many more families in 2025. The 1115 waiver funds will be an opportunity for organizations in Broome, Tioga, Chenango, Delaware, and surrounding counties to network and provide well-rounded services to community members.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all - Rural Health Network staff, those we serve, our network partners, funders, donors, and volunteers - a very Happy Holiday and safe and healthy New Year.

Demetra Alberti
Executive Director

Happy Holidays

Our staff gathered last week for our monthly team meeting, training, and a pre holiday pot-luck lunch. We were able to get most of our team in a photo. So, from our team to all of you - Happy Holidays and best wishes for 2025!



Community Health Education - Upcoming Events

Start the new year off right by joining us for our upcoming 7-week Living Healthy workshop or our next round of Walk With Ease, a program designed by the Arthritis Foundation to help reduce pain and improve overall health. Click on the images below to download a copy of the flyer you can share with friends, coworkers, or clients.

Join us for the Living Healthy Self-Management Program

Support for **health conditions and symptoms.**

- Manage **pain** and **fatigue.**
- Set **goals** and make plans to improve your health and life.

• **Proven to improve health and lifestyle factors.**

All workshops are **Free**

Tuesdays 2:00PM-4:30PM

Jan 7- Feb 18 at George F. Johnson Memorial Library

1001 Park St, Endicott, NY 13760

Participants who complete the program will receive their choice of a \$20 fuel or grocery gift card!

**For more information or to register, contact:
Mary Maruscak at (607) 692-7669 Ext. 209 or
mmaruscak@rhnscny.org**

This program is supported by Bristol-Myers Squibb in coordination with the Self-Management Resource Center's Chronic Disease Self-Management certification guidelines. This program is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award with 100% funded by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

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Join our Walking Group

Experience the Walk With Ease Program

Arthritis Foundation Certified. Doctor Recommended

The Arthritis Foundation Walk With Ease Program is an exercise program that can reduce pain and improve overall health. If you can be on your feet for 10 minutes without increased pain, you can have success with Walk With Ease.

Benefits to You

Walk With Ease will help you:

- Motivate yourself to get in great shape
- Walk safely and comfortably
- Improve your flexibility, strength and stamina
- Reduce pain and feel great

Join our next Walk With Ease session:

Mon, Weds, Fri

1:00 PM

Jan 13th-Feb 21st 2025

Oakdale Commons

Meet at the central court

All who complete this program will earn their choice of \$20 gas or grocery gift card.

This is a **FREE** program, donations gladly accepted.



Registration Required by January 7th

Contact Julianne Lee

(607)788-6896 jlee@rhnscny.org



We previously shared that the [New York State Association for Rural Health](#) selected Food & Health Network as their 2024 Outstanding Rural Health Program of the Year. The whole FaHN team was excited to receive the beautiful award.

From left, Kieran Ward, Kate Miller-Corcoran, Kevin Davidson, Erin Summerlee, Caterina Marchione, and Hannah Rion.



Earlier this month, Erin Summerlee (left) and Kate Miller-Corcoran (right) attended a reception where the Tioga Downs Regional Community Foundation presented their 2024 grant awards. We were honored to be among the many organizations receiving support that will benefit the region. This generous grant will help fund Farm to Early Childhood, Farm to School, and Produce Prescription programs in Tioga County, making a lasting impact in the community.



Increase access to produce as a **Public Health AmeriCorps Produce Prescription Assistant**

675 Hour Position: 15-20 hrs/wk

Assisting with:

- ▶ Patient Outreach
- ▶ Creation of Educational Materials
- ▶ Increase Nutritional Literacy
- ▶ Grow Program Capacity & Sustainability



More info or to apply:
foodandhealthnetwork.org/employment-opportunities

Need a Treat? - Try Black Bean Brownies

Do you need a treat to serve at a holiday gathering? Want to make it a healthier option? Try our popular Farm to School Black Bean Brownies. We promise you won't know what the not-so-secret ingredient is. Or, for a colorful side-dish, [visit our website](#) and try the Rainbow Cabbage Slaw.



Black Bean Brownies

Servings: 16 (in 9x9 pan)

The Ingredients

- 1 16 oz. can black beans
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/3 cup white whole wheat flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup mini dark chocolate chips

The Steps

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F. Grease 9x9 baking pan.
2. Drain and rinse beans.
3. In a large bowl or mixer, add vegetable oil to drained beans. Then add the eggs, cocoa, sugar, and vanilla. Mix until smooth.
4. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. Add wet ingredients and mix until combined.
5. Stir in the chocolate chips.
6. Pour into the prepared pan and bake for about 15-20 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.
7. Let cool for at least 10 minutes before cutting and eating.
8. Enjoy!



AmeriCorps Member Wanted

Our partners at the Astor D. Rice Foundation (Binghamton, NY) are looking for a Program Coordinator. This is a 900 hour Public Health AmeriCorps position. It provides essential support to the Astor D. Rice Foundation's dedication to enhancing the lives of individuals and families and adding support into the communities where our underserved neighbors live, work and play.

PHA Position Details:

- Assist in coordinating and organizing meetings, events, programs and workshops by managing invitations and materials
- Provide administrative support, including file management data entry and documentation
- Collaborate with the Executive Director and team members to develop and implement community outreach programs and initiatives.
- Assist in organizing, promoting and participating in community programs and events.
- Collect and analyze feedback from community members to inform program improvements for the future
- Complete intake paperwork in the home or community where participants live.
- Oversee the day to day operations of programs and projects
- Transport participants in the company provided vehicles.
- Engage with community stakeholders, partners and volunteers to broaden the organizations reach and impact

The living allowance for this role is to \$11,375.00 and the education award is \$3,697.50. Total compensation is \$15,072.50. This position requires a personal vehicle and a driver's license. The member must have the ability to drive a 13 passenger van and must be available to work Wednesday 2:00 – 9:00 PM.

For more information about this and other AmeriCorps positions available with Rural Health Service Corps, please [visit our website](#) to learn more about the benefits that come with serving. You can also reach out to [Haley Desilet](#) or [Alexis Sankofa](#) with any questions you may have.



On November 21st Northern Broome CARES staff treated local health care providers to breakfast for National Rural Health Day. Weis Markets generously donated gift cards which staff used to purchase donuts and pastries to hand out to providers in the Whitney Point area. A local third grade class made personalized thank you cards to express their thanks to everyone who provides care in their community. We would like to thank Guthrie/Lourdes of Whitney Point, Whitney Point Physical Therapy, Whitney Point Wellness Center, Whitney Point Dental, and the nurses employed by the Whitney Point School District for their hard work and dedication to advancing the health and well being of our rural community.

Our friends from VISIONS stopped by last week and brought Santa and an elf with them to officially present a grant for our Northern Broome CARES Gifts for Seniors project. Thank you!



Our Wellness Committee organized a fun project at last week's staff meeting/holiday party. We made cards to include with the Gifts for Seniors that were delivered to Northern Broome CARES participants. Thank you to the Mary Wilcox Library and our staff who donated card kits and supplies.



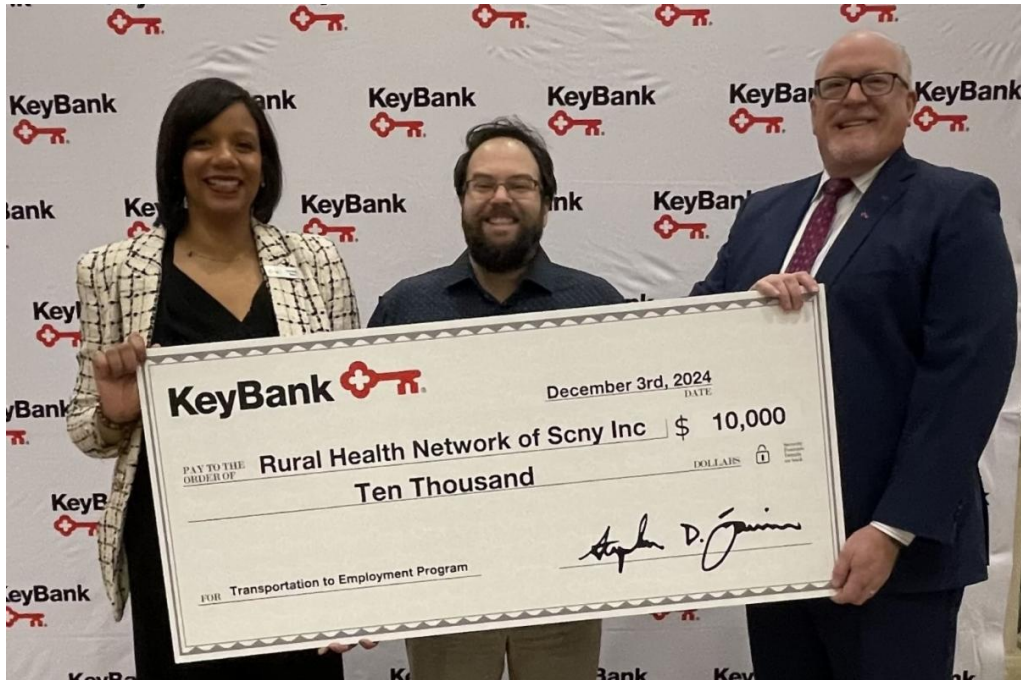
Getthere 2024 Year in Review

It has been a very busy and productive year here at Getthere.

- Fourteen individuals were assisted with the Travel Training program.
- 102 individuals received short term assistance with the Transportation to Employment program.
- The average number of cases per month was 293 assisted by our talented

- Mobility and Transportation Advocates.
- 553 unique individuals were helped with financial assistance from Connection to Care.
- 4,438 origin to destination trips by Connection to Care.
- 8,634 inbound calls to the Getthere Call Center which averages to 36 calls per day.
- In total 110,525 miles were funded through Connection to Care funding.

Getthere looks forward to assisting individuals in Broome, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego and Tioga counties in 2025. If you or someone you know needs transportation assistance give us a call at 1-855-373-4040 Monday through Friday 7am-5:30pm.



Getthere Director Nick Ceconi attended Key Bank's Grantee Reception where they presented a grant to support our Transportation to Employment Program. [Learn more](#) about the program.

Advocacy Alert - Healthy School Meals for All

New York has made historic investments to expand free school meals, but hundreds of thousands of children are still left without access. It's time to fully fund statewide universal free school meals.

Including full funding for statewide universal free school meals would make New York more affordable for families, support students' learning and mental health, and alleviate hunger. While the majority of schools in Rural Health Network's region already offer universal free school meals; in other regions of the state, many families do not qualify for free meals but struggle to make ends meet.

Add your support by sending a letter directly to Governor Hochul and your representatives in the legislature urging them to fund free, healthy meals for all New York students. Use this tool to send a message with just one click: schoolmealsforallny.org/tell-lawmaker-action

Risk Less Do More

Rural Health Network, in partnership with the New York State Association for Rural

Health, is sharing the US Department of Health and Human Services Risk Less, Do More campaign to increase awareness of, and confidence in, vaccines that reduce severe illness from flu, COVID-19, and RSV in at-risk populations.

Respiratory viruses like flu, COVID-19, and RSV can spread quickly in your community, especially during the fall and winter seasons. Some people are at higher risk of getting seriously sick or ending up in the hospital if they get infected with one of these viruses. The good news is that flu, COVID-19, and RSV vaccines boost your protection against severe illness and hospitalization.

Who's at high risk for a severe case of flu or COVID-19? People 65 years and older, people with certain medical conditions, and people with weakened immune systems.

Who's at high risk for a severe case of RSV? People 75 years and older, people 60 and older who live in nursing homes, and people 60 and older with certain medical conditions.

For more information, visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) or [download a flyer](#).

Check "get vaccinated" off your to-do list with this season's vaccines for flu, COVID-19, and RSV.

RISK LESS. DO MORE.
Get this season's vaccines

News, Articles of Interest, and Resources

Appalachian Regional Commission Capacity Building Survey

The ARC is seeking input from organizations throughout Appalachia to help inform their community capacity building strategy for the next five years. The survey closes in February. [Access the survey](#).

10 Tips for Managing Mental Health Challenges During the Holidays

The holidays can be a joyful time of celebrating with family and friends. But they can also bring additional responsibilities and expectations, such as planning and attending social gatherings, buying gifts, and organizing family events. These added pressures can increase stress levels and be particularly overwhelming for individuals struggling with mental health challenges. Rural Minds has provided [tips for managing challenges](#) that often accompany the holiday season.

[2023 Impact Report](#)

[DONATE](#)

Did you know that you can schedule recurring gifts via our online donation form? Many people find it more convenient to spread their donation out over time. The default setting online is "one-time". By selecting the drop down arrow next to Frequency, you can schedule monthly, quarterly, semiannually, or annual gifts. If you are making year-end donations or planning your philanthropy budget for 2025, we invite you to support our mission in ways that work best for you.

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www.rhnsncy.org

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