

Progress Chenango

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Section One

MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 2018

Success Story

Hospice & Palliative Care of Chenango County

Hospice & Palliative Care of Chenango County is your hometown Hospice. If you had six months to live, you'd want to spend that time with the people you love, doing the activities you enjoy, in the places where you're most comfortable. That's exactly what Hospice & Palliative Care of Chenango County has been providing for their community for over 25 years.

Started as a completely volunteer lead organization, Hospice is now fully staffed with highly skilled end of life specialists. Hospice has established themselves as the experts in end of life care by providing patient care in homes and nursing homes around the community, developing life improving programs, and keeping their doors open to anyone in need of grief services. They have also been able to maintain their original vision of providing compassionate care that emphasizes quality of life over length of life. Hospice of Chenango County offers support to people, allowing them to live their life to the fullest, from the minute they first receive a terminal or life limiting diagnosis through feeling at peace in their grief process, Hospice of Chenango County is there for you.

In 2017 the Hospice & Palliative Care of Chenango County's average census not only increased, it nearly doubled. With the death rate remaining static, this increase in numbers means that residents of Chenango County are embracing end of life care and a holistic approach to healthcare more now than ever before. Dying and grieving are personal, and the hometown touch and availability provided by Hospice of Chenango County is what has allowed them to flourish in this community over the last 3 decades. The heart of the organization has never strayed from the original mission, they have simply learned to do it better.

Everything Hospice has accomplished would not have been imaginable without the astonishing support from the Chenango County residents. Hospice is so grateful to be part of such a caring community. Without word of mouth referrals, participation in fundraisers or outstanding volunteers Hospice care in Chenango County would not be sustainable. Support from the community helps them maintain the provision of quality care despite the ever changing nature of healthcare. They are so grateful and indebted to you, their community!

Onward and upward!

Commerce Chenango, developing economic success



The third annual College and Community Job Fair on November 8, 2017. Presented by Commerce Chenango and Morrisville State College.

GRADY THOMPSON
The Evening Sun

CHENANGO COUNTY – As the leading business resource center in Chenango County, Commerce Chenango strives to promote economic and community development opportunities year-round within the county.

In 2017, the chamber was effective in its efforts, play-

ing roles in a number of local developments, including helping to secure the local GE/Unison's manufacturing and Research & Development expansion, said Commerce Chenango President and Chief Executive Officer Steve Craig.

"The Norwich site was competing with other GE plants literally around the world, to develop and build sen-

sors for use on aircraft," said Craig. "Commerce Chenango Economic Development advised the local leadership team to go after a grant through the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council's \$120 million Advanced Manufacturing Initiative."

Craig said the Advanced Manufacturing Initiative

was designed with transportation-related companies in mind— GE/Unison, a company which manufactures aviation related products, was found to be a choice recipient.

"At one point in the process, when it appeared the Unison application was hitting a dead end in the wrong state office, Commerce Chenango

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Golden Artist Colors, inspiration at a brushstroke

MELISSA DECORDOVA
The Evening Sun

NEW BERLIN – On a thawed, sun-lit morning last December, a dusty gray film covered the roadway and most of the cars were traveling along from the county's seat to Bell Road where the globally acclaimed paint manufacturer, Golden Artist Colors tops the valley.

Chenango County natives know everything always looks this way after the snow melts. But what one might not expect is what gleams on the left when driving up Golden Artist Colors' driveway: a good-sized test fence holding large paint drawdowns in multiple hues of red, yellow and blue. The unexpected sight is like a working

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A testing display bright with color shows how some Golden Artist Colors products stand up to the cold, outdoor weather.

Golden Artist Colors -

Continued from Page 1
rainbow, constantly creating and recreating itself to be the best and truest it can be.

The display, which serves to sample test the company's various paints for lightfastness and durability no matter the weather, is much like Golden Artist Colors itself. The manu-

facturer of acrylic, oil and watercolor paints is always looking to grow, evolve and expand to be the best paint manufacturer it can be. What Sam Golden and his family began in 1980 with just 5 people has evolved today into an over 200 person manufacturer whose paints are sought by artists

and painters from around the world.

Golden Artist Colors is committed to growing a sustainable company dedicated to creating and sharing the most imaginative and innovative tools of color, line and texture and for inspiring those who turn their vision into reality. Attention to employee training, manufacturing efficiencies and to creating what artists really want are the foundations of the company's vision.

Golden Artist Colors' employees continue to grow, evolve and expand on the job. In fact, the late Sam and his wife, Adele Golden's family motto has always been the belief that when people thrive, the company will, too. So it came as no surprise back in 2002 when Golden Artist Colors became one of only a few thousand U.S. companies to implement an Employee Stock Ownership Program.

Management regularly applies for education and training grant programs through New York State. Last year, a \$15,000 grant was used to incorporate LEAN manufacturing tools and techniques and KAIZEN events, a proactive approach to efficiency. As a result, specific inflow and outflow lines of production were analyzed every two months,



Golden Artist Formulator Ulysses Jackson works in the paint Lab.



New York State Senator James Seward visited Golden Artist last year to discuss manufacturing initiatives and projects.

resulting in more throughput production.

The ability to train all team members on the concepts of Continuous Improvement during each event is helping to develop employee owners who understand the process and are a voice in the changes and improvements on the factory floor.

Many great results have come out of each event and the involvement and ideas from each team member has been incredible. Team members involved so far have included Paint Makers, Fillers, Kitting Room Operators, Material Handlers, Equipment Mechanics, Quality Assurance Technicians, Safety personnel, Information Technology

employees, Supervisors, and Managers, among many others.

And for the third year in a row, Golden has partnered with SUNY Morrisville's Norwich Campus to offer continuing education courses at its facility to employees wanting to work toward or finish their higher education degrees.

President and Chief Operating Officer Barbara Schindler said top line sales grew by six percent in 2017. She anticipates \$35 million in top line sales for 2018.

Last year, Schindler focused intently on filling three key professional positions that became vacant: one in Manufacturing/Operations Management, one in Supply Chain Management and

one in Human Resources Management. She said she spent a lot of time preparing and making sure these new hires would have the support they needed to be effective. In the process, nine new positions in manufacturing were also created, she said.

One of the highlights of 2017 was a 20th Anniversary Celebration and Art Auction of The Sam and Adele Golden Foundation for the Arts (SAGF). The SAGF is a non-profit group founded by members of the Golden Family to commemorate their parents' legacy. There were three art auctions during the event: silent, live and an online auction that featured artwork from artists who have participated in the

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Foundation's Artists-In-Residence Program as well as a number of artists who are connected to Golden Artist Colors and the Golden family in one way or another.

"It was widely popular," said Schindler.

Also last year, in April, The Sam and Adele Golden Foundation for the Arts showcased its opening weekend of the Gallery display, 'Made in Paint'. The exhibition highlighted some of the works of the 2016 artists from the residency program. There are plans in 2018 for a "Made in Paint" show on February 17 from 4-6 pm at Golden will honor local and secondary art teachers who completed a Master Teacher painting professional development program offered by the company in partnership with three regional BOCES: DCMO, Madison-Oneida and Herkimer. Seventeen teachers attended eight weeks of classes with a professional artist and attained professional development credit for their participation. For two years in a row now, BOCES institutions have worked with Golden to offer the certification program.

Another initiative in arts education that Golden has been committed to for a number of years is supporting primary and secondary art

educators who are connected to the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers. For the last three years, Golden has offered art educators whose students have won Gold Key Awards in the Alliance's Scholastic Art & Writing Awards contest, a chance to participate in a 2-week long residency program at the SAGF in New Berlin. Last year well over 200 art educators from across the United States applied to the Residency Program. Golden Artist Colors has hosted nine Scholastic teachers in the past three years. They have traveled from Virginia, California, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, New York and Massachusetts to the Residence in New Berlin. Three new teachers are anticipated in July.

New for this year, Golden is also planning an exhibition of artwork by these educators at The Painting Center in New York City from September 4-29. The exhibition will showcase the talent of these artists who have also been recognized as mentors of their young students. This show will highlight some of the best of the best amongst these dedicated teachers.

Golden Artist Colors has raised Customer Service to an art form every bit as much as the paints and various mediums the company produces. Another original tenant espoused by company patriarch Sam Golden is to listen to the customer and to be the

best resource for artists in the world. The product line that began with just 36 colors and five mediums expanded by the needs of professional artists such as Helen Frankenthaler, Ken Noland and Roy Lichtenstein.

Today the company has developed thousands of custom paints for artists, conservators, and many individuals and businesses requiring the special services of custom coatings.

As for new products being introduced in 2018, all three company brands will launch new materials as well as its Paintworks Division, which is the commercial coatings division of Golden Artist Colors.

Seven new colors will be added to the company's Williamsburg Handmade Oils line: Transparent Yellow Iron Oxide, Transparent Red Iron Oxide, Pyrrole Red, Pyrrole Orange, Nickel Azo Yellow, Bismuth Vanadate Yellow and Titan Buff.

Other new products on the horizon for 2018 are seven new 'light value' colors for the Golden Acrylics brand. These are shades that artists would otherwise have to mix two colors to create, so the light value colors add bright and convenient blends to the product offering.

And new for QoR® Watercolor brand is the QoR mini, which is a travel pan watercolor set, which represents the first time Golden will be making watercolors



Golden Artist employee John Stevens walks down an aisle inside the company's Norwich warehouse.

available in pans rather than just in tubes.

In addition to support from New York State's economic investment programs, Chenango County's educational, business and governmental institutions have also benefited Golden Artist Colors. One of the biggest benefits to being in Chenango County, Schindler said, is that the business community - as a whole - is available for consultation.

"We are always able to communicate with our colleagues. It's an attractive piece, living in a place like Chenango County, where business leaders are always available to have a dialogue with one another about similar issues and how to help each other. Certainly our

Chamber has been very helpful with that," she said.

One of Golden Artist Colors' more visible collaborations upon the Chenango County landscape is Colorscape Chenango Arts Festival. The two-day festival takes place in early September every year in the county's seat of Norwich. Not only does Golden provide all supplies and materials as well as volunteers to oversee participants in the interactive Art Zone 2 Tent, it also donates each year a \$100 gift certificate to winners of the Francis K. Wilcox Emerging Young Artists Scholarship, the purpose of which is to put the region's young artists in touch with the professional art world. 2018 will be the 10th anni-

versary of this program.

"Golden Artist Colors has been our go-to for support and advice for all things ART for the past 23 years," said longtime former Colorscape Executive Director Peggy Finnegan. "They are incredibly enthusiastic, innovative and generous. We owe them a huge vote of thanks," she said.

Fifty percent of the company's 200 employees live in Chenango County. The remaining staff travel from places like New Hartford in Madison County and Oneonta in Onondaga County.

To learn more about Golden Artist Colors, visit the website at www.goldenpaints.com.

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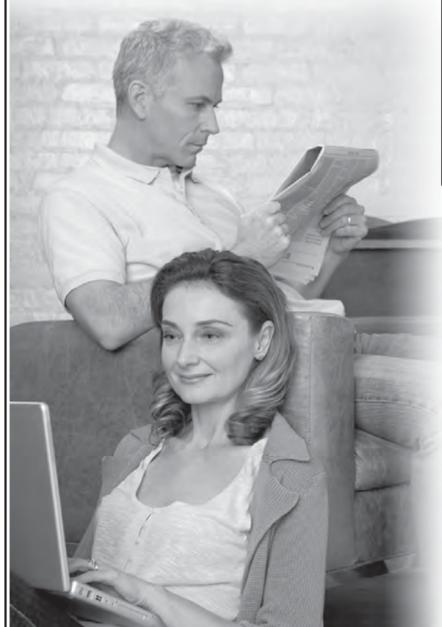
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Scott Clippinger

Success Story

Tobacco Free Zone: Finding Breathing Room Near You!

The Tobacco Free Zone/Reality Check program continues its pursuit in protecting young people from tobacco industry deceitful messaging, and protecting residents from harmful smoke exposure. Leading the way to engage community stakeholders to take action are dedicated youth involved in the Reality Check program. Last year, we highlighted the work of Rhett Genung and high school students in the Norwich City School District. Joining the effort this year is Pat Yaddow and students in the Bainbridge-Guilford Central School District.

Pat Yaddow, Student/Family Education Advocate Liberty Partnerships Program, is working closely with Tobacco Free Zone Chenango Coordinator, Rose Walsh, to enhance the Reality Check infrastructure in Chenango County. The students involved with Reality Check are passion-

ate about making a difference in their community. The students are developing skills and are poised to take action in meaningful ways to reduce the devastating impact of tobacco in the areas where they live and play.

Reality Check youth and residents continue to raise their concern about people and their pets ingesting dangerous chemicals from tobacco products, especially in shared public spaces. This has led to a growing trend of local municipalities adopting policies prohibiting tobacco use in parks, at public events, and other outdoor spaces. Businesses have also designated their entrances and grounds as tobacco-free. Furthermore, multi-unit housing owners are recognizing the multitude of benefits of smoke-free policies for their buildings.

"Tobacco use remains the number one preventable



In response to big tobacco companies being required to run corrective advertisements regarding the real harms of smoking as of November 26, 2017 Reality Check (RC) youth at Bainbridge-Guilford take part in an activity called "Airing Big Tobacco's Dirty Laundry," displaying lies told by big tobacco on a clothesline.

cause of death and disease locally so this is extremely important work," said Yaddow. "We are proud to be part of this effort to prevent youth smoking and create tobacco-free com-

munities where Chenango County residents live, work and play."

In addition, students from Bainbridge-Guilford and Norwich School Districts are meeting local-

ly and in Albany with state elected officials to educate them on how the tobacco industry lures them into using their products through deceptive marketing tactics – much of it

seen inside and outside of stores. "Tobacco companies cannot survive if kids don't smoke," said Walsh. "They know that stores are a vital channel to communicate with our young people. Kids don't necessarily see that tobacco use and vaping are harmful because of the way these products are advertised and accessible through their neighborhood stores." Many communities across New York State are looking at policies that restrict the number, location, and type of retailers that sell tobacco and vape products.

For more information, visit www.TFreeZone.net or contact Tobacco Free Zone staff: Rose Walsh (607) 758-5515 or rwalsh@cortland-co.org; Jennifer Hamilton (607) 758-5501 or jhamilton@cortland-co.org

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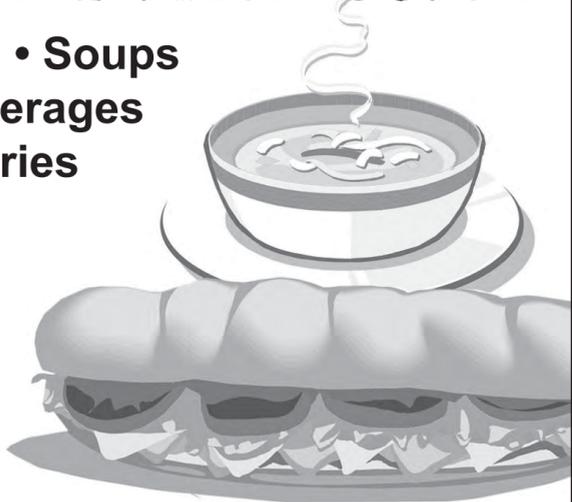
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In Your Own Words

Stoyana Petkova, Wild Owl Café

Norwich: Please be seated—I am going to praise a city with magical people, spirit and love all around.

Where to start? Had you asked me this a year ago, I would have laughed hysterically, not knowing the answer.

People, people, people are what attach me to this place. Why do I stay in Norwich, NY?—Because of the friends and family, and also because of all the interesting people I bump into on a daily basis.

Norwich: the place you want to live in! Small town charm and charisma, smiling faces, and a lot of friends pretty much describes my first year experience living in middle of Central New York.

Growing up in the big city, I was never really accustomed to a small town like Norwich, NY, until I moved here to begin my new life adventure.

I have been incredibly touched and inspired by the community that was always so welcoming and

supporting. Since I opened my restaurant a year ago, I have had met many, many friends and family.

Why do I say family? Because that's what they are...the community, the people, even the birds, they all are. They accepted me as a one of their own and they gave me a chance to create and build something that I love. Always caring and thinking about you and everybody around you. Trying to help or advise you in your need.

When we first starting out, everybody was curious where I was from (maybe because of my accent... who knows), why I was in Norwich, how did I end up here, and all of the 'why' questions.

They'll buy a coffee, or a cookie, something small just to support you and say, 'We care that you're here. You're adding value to the town.' And that's all we needed to hear—that they were appreciating us and our business. That's the feeling you get when you live here: all of the love

around you.

Some people thought I was crazy for moving to a small town like Norwich, NY but I know one thing for sure: you want to be in that place that everybody knows your name when you walk in the store. The safe place where you wave to 90 percent of the cars going out of the parking lot because you know them. The place where the waitresses knows your order before you even walk into the restaurant.

And then there's the small town love helping the community to connect with businesses through associations and mentorship. It encourages entrepreneurs, community leaders, and citizens to work together to improve the community and support each other.

Norwich: the hidden heaven where we complement each other rather than compete.

The happy place with that you can always come back to, no matter how long you have been gone, and call it home.



The Wild Owl Café in Norwich. (Tyler Murphy photo)



Co-owner of Wild Owl Café, Stoyana Petkova (Grady Thompson photo)

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Commerce Chenango –

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enlisted the help of Regional Council members, legislators, and the Governor's office to get the project back on track," said Craig.

Commerce Chenango and GE/Unison's efforts paid off: on October 18, New York State Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul visited GE/Unison to announce the addition of 76 new jobs, thanks to an expansion of the company's facilities, which is funded by the \$4.3 million award, along with GE's own investment of \$25 million, according to Craig.

After the Lieutenant Governor announced the project, General Manager of GE/Unison in Norwich Dan Ketchum said, "We like to say we're locally grown, and globally known," noting that 70 years ago, the company began with four people as General Laboratory Associates, and today, they employ almost 400 people. "We're global-

ly known in the sense that our products go on literally everything that flies, and that's something we're incredibly proud of here."



With support from Commerce Chenango, GE/Unison was selected in October 2017 to receive state funding for an expansion project that will create 76 jobs. (Grady Thompson photo)

Ensuring that there are good job opportunities locally is a focus of Commerce Chenango's

Ensuring that there are good job opportunities locally is a focus of Commerce Chenango's, said Craig, and one way the chamber aims to promote local opportunities is through its job fairs.

"As our job fairs have demonstrated, Chenango County's major employers are hiring. And not just a handful of people. Often, there are hundreds of jobs open at any given time," said Craig. "The challenge is finding

local residents who have the right mix of skills and experience. When good jobs are filled by people who live here, or who move here, our small businesses benefit, and the whole local economy grows."

Craig said the chamber is particularly excited about supporting a pioneer initiative being developed by Oxford and Unadilla Valley school districts that the chamber believes has enormous potential to be employed at other local districts.

"The Pathways program

will use creative scheduling to make room in the school day for industry-specific training modules leading to recognized skills certification and to academic credit," said Craig.

Also playing the role of the official Tourism Promotion Agency in Chenango County, Craig said the chamber is gearing-up to go live with a brand new, highly-functional website dedicated solely to the county's attractions and festivals in 2018.

Annual local attractions like Colorscape Chenango,

the Chenango Blues Festival, the Norwich Pumpkin Festival, the Gus Macker 3-on-3 basketball tournament – along with year-round local destinations like the Northeast Classic Car Museum, the Chenango County Historical Society Museum, and Rogers Environmental Education Conservation Center – will be highlighted on the chamber's new website.

"Furthermore, we'll be able to fund approximately 50 percent more out-of-market advertising thanks to an increase in our allocation from the I Love NY program," said Craig.

The initiatives will help Chenango's attractions be more prevalent in the community, said Craig.

Craig said that Commerce Chenango is also a partner in a major-place making initiative to create a Museum District in the City of Norwich complete with signage and flagging. The district will be based on Rexford Street in Norwich, which is home to the Northeast Classic Car Museum, Bullthistle Model Railroad Museum, the

Chenango County Historical Society Museum and its Loomis Barn and Flanagan Research Center.

"The goal is to create a unified Museum District with streetscape improvements and other amenities," said Craig.

The chamber is gearing-up to go live with a brand new, highly-functional website dedicated solely to the county's attractions and festivals in 2018.

Craig said other initiatives the chamber will be working on in 2018 include working on incentives for a new corporate hangar at the Warren Eaton Airport, the hotel project spearheaded by Principle

Design & Engineering, PLLC., a major agricultural project in conjunction with Cornell Cooperative Extension, and a community solar project.

Craig said the community solar project, if implemented, has the potential to power 3,000 homes for 30 years at an average annual savings of 10 percent.

"And of course with the completion of the crossing signals next summer, we'll assist New York Susquehanna & Western in marketing our restored Utica Main Line," said Craig, referring to the

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Following the completion of the crossing signals throughout the county next summer, Commerce Chenango will assist New York Susquehanna & Western in marketing the restored Utica Main Line. (Grady Thompson photo)

progress of renovating the railroad that runs through Chenango County.

Asked about challenges the area faces that could hinder the previously mentioned initiatives, Craig said, "We need a larger supply of inexpensive natural gas so that large commercial users don't have to switch to far costlier alternative fuels during times of peak demand, mainly when it's really cold. And we need natural gas distributed

to the large employers, and potential industrial sites, where it can have the most impact on our economy."

Craig also said the area shows room for improvement in terms of its aging electric grid, spotty cell phone coverage, and a lack of availability of high-speed internet outside of the most-populated areas.

Craig acknowledged that some of these challenges come with being based in New York.

"Upstate New York, is, for one thing, New York. The governor says he's trying but we're still ranked at or near the bottom when it comes to business climate. Here in Chenango County in particular, the average age of our residents is increasing, while the population overall is slowly declining," said Craig.

That being said, Craig said there are also perks to being based in Chenango County. Asked the biggest

perk of being in Chenango, Craig said, "Authenticity. The character of Chenango County's downtowns and neighborhoods is what millions of Americans long for, but cannot find, in outer-ring suburbs of larger cities."

He added that the area also offers natural beauty, outdoor recreation, access to clean air, water, and locally-grown healthful foods.

Looking ahead to 2019, Craig said the chamber will continue to do its best to improve the profitability and the overall prosperity of the community.

"As a non-profit, we are mission-driven," said Craig. "As I often say, 'We seek to increase the size and number of paychecks that are earned, cashed, spent, and invested in Chenango County.' We do that by attracting investment; by building bridges between various segments of the community; and by supporting quality-of life-amenities that help attract talent,

which is the real wealth of any community.

"Once upon a time, many businesses joined the Chamber because it was their only way to get affordable health insurance. They weren't much interested in our mission. Now, with Chamber insurance a thing of the past, communicating the value of our mission is one challenge we must meet."

'We seek to increase the size and number of paychecks that are earned, cashed, spent, and invested in Chenango County.'



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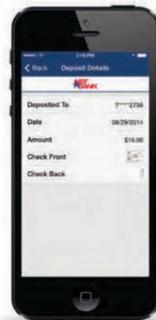
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3. COUNTY OF CHENANGO IDA 4. TOURISM PROMOTION & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT 5. CHENANGO FOUNDATION

The reason you might be a member of the Chamber or are thinking of being a member is probably a different scenario for everyone. It could be the access to savings from industry leaders, an enhanced listing on our website, networking with other business leaders, Entrepreneurial help, or maybe you just want to be a part of a bigger association for advocacy purposes. We are not a 'cookie cutter' type of organization (lacking individuality; mass-produced). We prefer to know what each individual member needs and work to support and help with that need.



The Chenango Foundation is responsible for aiding research and development contributing to the community development of the Chenango County area. The Foundation also provides continued oversight and development of the Leadership Chenango education program aimed at enhancing the development and skills of individuals to become future community and civic leaders.



You may qualify for a discounted membership if you are you a 501c3, individual or sole proprietor, if you have more than one business or are currently a member of another Chamber.

Commerce Chenango's business development division works closely with state and local development organizations to enhance business and industry, and to create and retain jobs in the area. Development Chenango can offer excellent economic development packages to qualifying businesses. With a goal of providing long-term benefits for the community and business, incentive programs have assisted with both successful business attraction and retention projects.

The County of Chenango IDA considers potential projects and determines benefits utilizing an eligibility application and cost benefits analysis. It works closely with current and prospective Chenango County businesses encourage investment and job creation that will have a significant positive impact on the surrounding area.



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advocate for a quality of life that assists in attracting businesses and contributing to the economy. Our offices are a distribution point for visitors and residents alike looking for tourism information.

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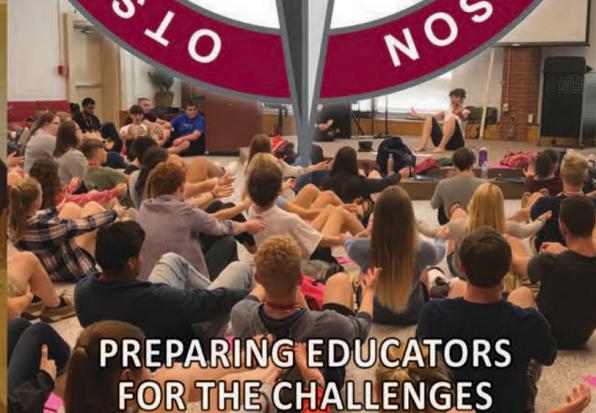
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Progress Chenango

Published by The Evening Sun 2018

Section Two

MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 2018

Success Story

Preferred Mutual Insurance Company

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We like to look at success not only through bottom-line business results, but also through less obvious, but no less important, measures such as customer satisfaction, community outreach, and employee engagement.

ant, measures such as customer satisfaction, community outreach, and employee engagement.

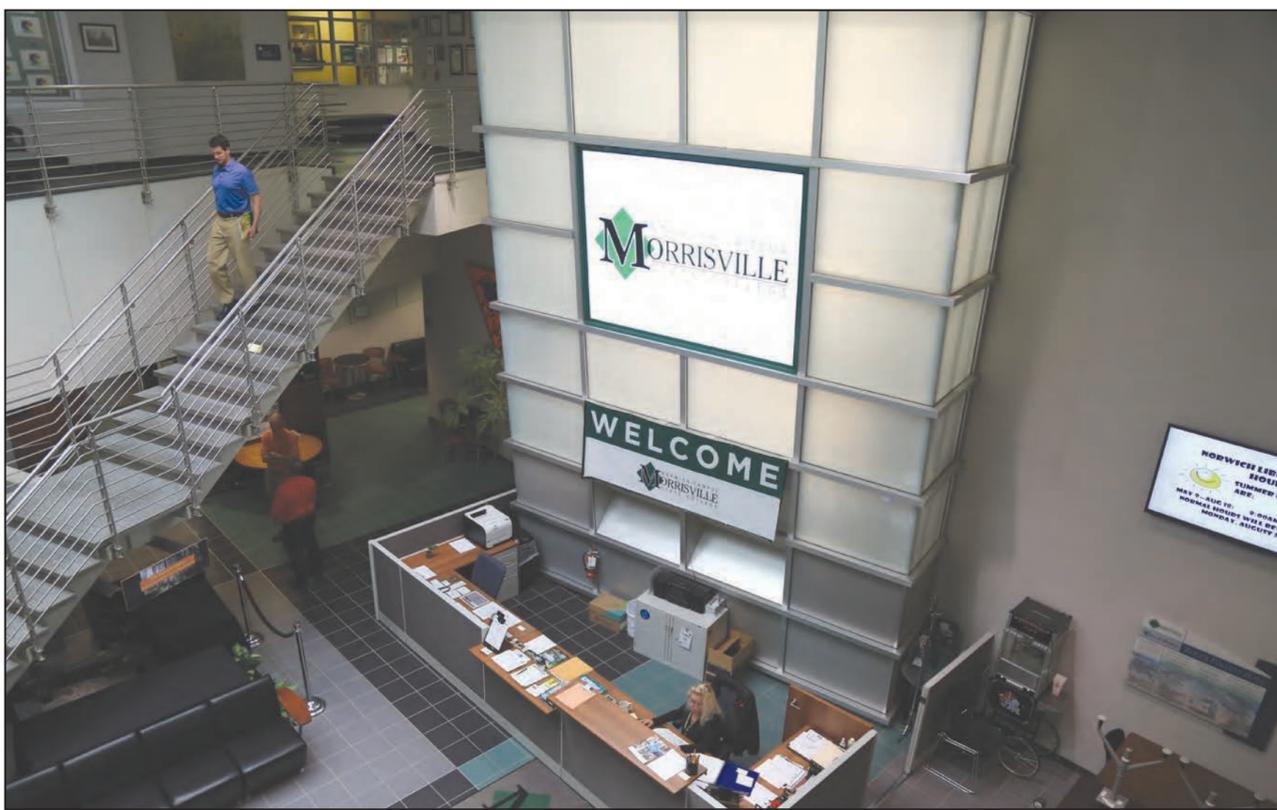
Successes such as: We thrive on giving back to the community! Preferred Mutual proudly supported many events and charities in Chenango County in 2017: Relay for Life, Chenango United Way, local food banks, the initiatives of local hospitals, the New Berlin Art Forum, the Chenango County Blues Fest, the Earlville Opera

House, Chenango Council of Arts, Colorscape Chenango Arts Fest, Chase Memorial Nursing Home, The Spirit of Christmas in New Berlin and many more. We also sponsored local school events, including providing elementary students with fire safety materials, and awarding college scholarships to 4 local high school seniors.

Our policyholders were fortunate enough to fall outside the direct path of the main hurricanes this past season; however, we're in the Northeast so weather always comes in to play. Being able to respond quickly, efficiently and with compassion is important to us. During the extreme wind event this past March, we were able to quickly assess the impact and proactively reach out to areas that were hardest hit to offer assistance. Our staff worked 24/7 to ensure that we were contacting policyholders and providing claims support. It is just one example of how seriously we take our

Continued on Page 10

A state university offers opportunity in Chenango



The main lobby inside SUNY Morrisville's Roger W. Follett Hall in Norwich.

MELISSA DECORDOVA
Evening Sun

NORWICH - On a snowy, mid-December morning, the doorways, stairs and hallways at the Norwich Campus of SUNY Morrisville were bustling with activity. Students and faculty moved to and from Roger W. Follett Hall's administration offices and between their classrooms as final exams for 2017 were soon to begin.

The college, now in its 48th year in Norwich and its

12th year located adjacent to the Eaton Center on Conkey Avenue, continues to play an important role as Chenango County's only higher education institution granting associate degree programs for transfer or job placement.

Just a month before, a day-long job, career and college fair resulted in about 270 prospective students and community members walking through the expansive and inviting glass front entrance. Attendees were

free to pick up pamphlets and inquire about opportunities from the 23 businesses and 14 colleges that were represented.

About half of those attending the fair were high school-aged students, from Chenango County School Districts, interested in getting a head start on college opportunities. SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus Executive Director Jason Zbock said the college's enrollment for fall 2017 is 306. The student enrollment will increase

over 400 students this coming spring 2018 semester when high school students taking SUNY Morrisville college courses at their high schools and at the campus are counted.

The strong number of high school students that enroll in classes each spring are the result of the Morrisville Early College Program, started in fall 2016, and College in the high school concurrent enrollment courses, a collaborative effort - begun

Continued on Page 12

Bassett Healthcare takes aim at drug epidemic

BY GRADY THOMPSON
The Evening Sun

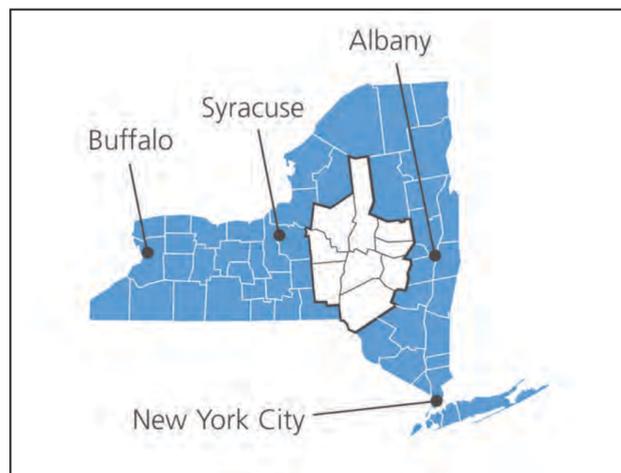
CHENANGO COUNTY - In 2017, Bassett Healthcare Network and its locations within and surrounding Chenango County made headway fighting the opioid epidemic, received national designation for its school-based health centers, and earned the Gold Seal of Approval for its Home Care Accreditation.

Bassett Healthcare Network Public & Media Relations Director Karen Huxtable-Hooker said Leatherstocking Collaborative Health Partners

- of which Bassett Healthcare Network is a part - in collaboration with Senator James Seward (R-Oneonta) held a Heroin and Opioid Summit in 2017, taking aim at the drug epidemic.

"The event brought together individuals, organizations, agencies and others with the ability to influence positive change in regard to the public health impacts of the heroin and opioid crisis; these stakeholders continue to work together to tackle the region's opioid crisis," said Huxtable-Hooker.

Continued on Page 10



Bassett Healthcare Network is based in eight counties, including Chenango, Madison, Oneida, Herkimer, Montgomery, Otsego, Schoharie, and Delaware.

Success Story

Continued from Page 1

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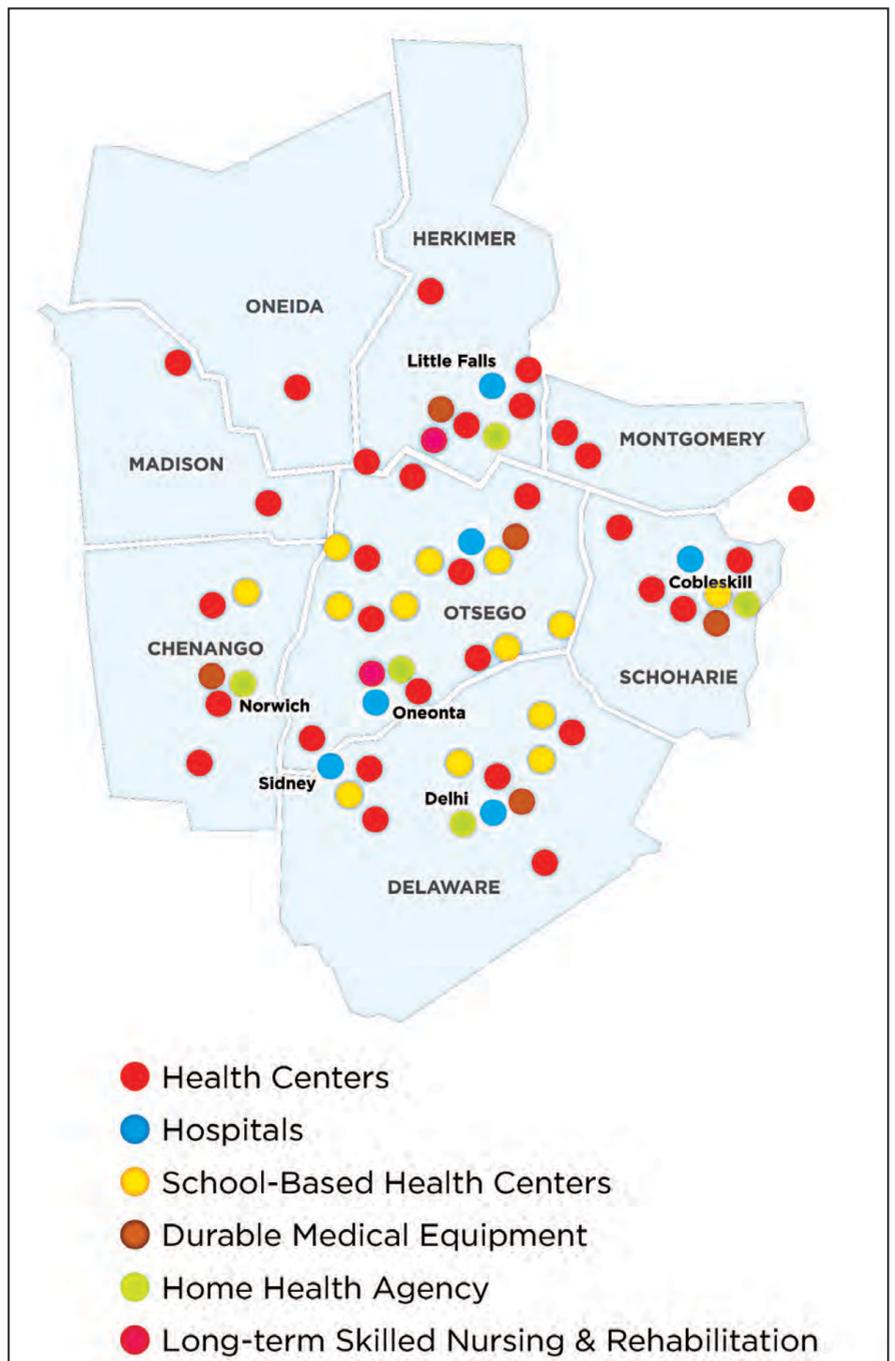
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Bassett Healthcare -



Continued from Page 1

She added, "Bassett Healthcare Network has several initiatives underway to try to address the opioid epidemic, including improved substance abuse identification and treatment (MAT program), the integration of behavioral health into the primary care setting, practitioner and patient pain management education, revisions to pain medication prescribing practices, and expanded availability of [Narcan] for patients at risk for an overdose."

Practitioners at Bassett Healthcare in Norwich are among over two dozen providers at five locations in the network, according to

Huxtable-Hooker, using the medication-assisted treatment (MAT) and counseling to help patients in withdrawal.

"The MAT program is available to any established primary care patient within the network's eight-county region," said Huxtable-Hooker. "So far, more than 25 practitioners in the Bassett Healthcare Network have received special training and gotten their "x-license", which allows them to provide this proven treatment using suboxone for medication-assisted withdrawal."

Another initiative of Bassett Healthcare Network's

is its school-based health centers (SBHCs), located in the county at Sherburne-Earlville and Unadilla Valley school districts. Huxtable-Hooker said the two local school districts are among 20 SBHCs in the network that was accredited in 2017 as level three patient-centered medical homes by the National Committee for Quality Assurance—one of only a handful of programs nationwide to receive the designation.

"The decision to pursue National Committee for Quality Assurance patient-centered medical home accreditation was driv-

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en by our belief that the necessary changes would help us provide better care to students, increase both patient and staff satisfaction and ultimately ensure our sustainability," said co-director of Bassett Healthcare's SBHCs program Kerri LeBlanc, MD, FAAP.

Bassett Healthcare also received The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for its At Home Care in 2017, making it the only Joint Commission-accredited home health agency in the region.

Huxtable-Hooker said the recognition is a reflection of the network's commitment to providing safe and effective care to the patients it serves in 2017, and that At Home Care serves patients in Chenango, Otsego, Schoharie, Delaware, and Herkimer counties.

Asked what major plans



were in store for 2018, Huxtable-Hooker said Bassett Healthcare's orthopedic program will be a major focus in the year ahead after the hiring of orthopedic and spine surgeon F. Todd Wetzel, MD as Chief of the Department of Orthopedics in 2017.

Wetzel said, "We need

to evolve to a point where all the centers in the network are complementary and provide all necessary services without being redundant. It is key to look at orthopedics from a network perspective so we can provide state-of-the-art care for as many people as possible."

Related to the focus on orthopedics will be a new procedure offered by Bassett surgeons: robot-guided partial knee replacement surgeries.

"Partial knee replacement allows surgeons to treat only the damaged portion of the knee," said Bassett Healthcare Dr. James Scott, who sees patients at Cobleskill Regional Hospital for orthopedic consults, as well as at other locations throughout the Bassett network. "This procedure allows us to spare healthy cartilage and bone, and preserve more natural knee function. NAVIO aids surgeons in providing precise and accurate implant placement to hopefully improve long term outcomes and indefinitely delay total knee replacement."

Huxtable-Hooker said the new procedure will be a good option for individuals living with the swelling, stiffness and pain caused by osteoarthritis.

Currently, Bassett Healthcare consists of six hospitals, more than three dozen community-based



Bassett Healthcare staff from the Sherburne-Earlville School Based Health Clinic. (Submitted photo)

health centers, and 20 school-based health centers. Employing 4,000 people, Huxtable-Hooker said Bassett offers a wide variety of job opportunities for people in the area.

"...from inpatient and outpatient clinical care, to outpatient procedural care, education, research, school based health centers, and information technology the opportunities are wide open," said Huxtable-Hooker. "There are positions available in our regional clinics, billing department, materials management, human resources, organizational development and learning and so much more."

Huxtable-Hooker said

Bassett Healthcare considers itself a learning organization and offers opportunities for staff to advance their professional growth through the Bassett Institute for Learning, as well as through other programs.

Asked about challenged Bassett Healthcare may foresee in 2018, Huxtable-Hooker said the network will continue to address the opioid epidemic and hopes to develop and implement further strategies to combat the epidemic.

Other challenges, Huxtable-Hooker said, include shrinking reimbursements for medical care.

"Our network serves

some of the state's most vulnerable individuals and families living in rural upstate and CNY," said Huxtable-Hooker. "The majority of our families are on Medicaid and Medicare; reimbursements tied to these federal programs range from 40 percent to over 60 percent for the six hospitals in our network and yet Medicaid only pays 73 cents for each dollar of care and Medicare pays only 95 cents."

"Last year, the hub of Bassett Healthcare Network, Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown, provided over \$4 million in charity care and absorbed nearly \$13 million in bad debt."

Asked how Bassett Healthcare network is preparing to meet those challenges, Huxtable-Hooker said, "The focus first is always on providing the best possible care to patients, producing the best possible outcomes and providing a good patient experience. Our goal is to excel in quality, safety and the patient experience. We continue to make upgrades and enhance our system-wide electronic health record platform and business intelligence capabilities to support these efforts as well as explore strategic partnerships to benefit population health management."



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Morrisville State College - Norwich Campus



SUNY Morrisville's Roger W. Follett Hall in Norwich.

Continued from Page 1

in fall 2012 –with five Chenango County school districts and DCMO BOCES New Vision Program. In the Morrisville Early College program, students can earn up to 14 college credits and take courses in psychology, criminal justice, composition, sociology, and business.

The job, career and college fair – now in its third year - is in conjunction with Commerce Chenango and

is just one of multiple collaborative efforts between SUNY Morrisville-Norwich Campus and the local community it serves.

“Seventy-five percent of what we do is offering academic courses and degrees toward associates programs, 10 to 15 percent for continuing education programs and the remaining is community events,” said Zbock.

Last year's fall semester counted 23 students in Business Administration (A.A.S.), 56 in Nursing,

38 in Human Services (A.A.S.), the three most popular academic programs. Other programs of study are Accounting (A.A.S. and A.S.), Business Administration (A.S.), Office Technology (A.A.S.), Criminal Justice (A.A.S.); Liberal Arts and Sciences: Humanities and Social Sciences (A.A.) and Individual Studies (A.S., A.A. and A.A.S.). Criminal Justice and Early Childhood majors are only available

at Morrisville State College Norwich Campus.

Two enrollment igniters in 2017 were a full two-year Nursing (A.A.S.) degree and a new student interest in Human Services. In fact, the number of students enrolled in Human Resources increased from 28 in the fall of 2016 to 38 in the fall of 2017.

2017 building projects were the completion of the Norwich Campus Microbiology Lab and a Nursing Lab to support the

new Nursing A.A.S. program.

One of the crowning achievements this past year was winning \$200,000, to be used over two years, from SUNY System Administration grant in November 2017 for workforce micro-credentialing programs in manufacturing and human services.

Perhaps one of the most exciting projects undertaken within the past year is an effort to rehabilitate a Craftsman-style house on 80 S. Broad Street in Norwich into a working child care center. The hope is two-fold: that working parents will have a child care center to rely on and that Morrisville's Early Childhood Education students would be able train and do internships. Total cost of the project is estimated to be approximately \$1.7 million. Good news on the project came in a letter in October from the Southern Tier East Regional Planning Development Board attesting to its support. Regional Development Analyst Anne E. Redmond said the project is “one of the region's priority projects to be advanced for review in Albany.” Zbock said an application for a FY2018 ARC for \$150,000 is pending.

Sixty percent of SUNY Morrisville's Norwich cam-

pus courses are offered in the evening, enabling people who work in industry (many of whom are corporate executives or industry leaders in the area) to share their talents as adjunct professors. Zbock said there is a strong workforce of executives in the region who are willing to share their expertise.

The college plans to move toward offering non-credit and certificate in the manufacturing, health and humans services fields.

“One of the college's main roles is bringing community stakeholders together to support existing partnerships and grow existing programs that sustain the workforce,” he said.

The grand total of community events and trainings held in Follett Hall numbers nearly 180 a year.

In conjunction with Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP), Morrisville State College has provided services and support to both middle and high school students, encouraging high school completion and access to higher education. LPP enhances relationships with Unadilla Valley Central School, Otselic Valley Central School, Bainbridge-Guilford Central School and Norwich City Schools. Students who participated in LPP and enroll

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at Morrisville State College upon high school graduation are eligible to apply for a \$500 one-time award.

Examples of Morrisville's Continuing Education courses are a K-12 educator training in science that is held at Rogers Environmental Education Center in Sherburne and Power Point, Excel Spreadsheet, and Microsoft Word programs held for NBT Bank in Norwich.

Morrisville Stage College's off-site course offerings include partnering with Golden Artist Colors, Inc. of New Berlin. Since fall 2015, Golden Artist Colors' employees are offered one to two classes a semester, or four classes a year, in business, psychology, math or statistics. Courses are designed to promote degree completion while enhancing career skills for employees within the company.

And with generous support from local foundations, new and continuing students have access to numerous scholarship opportunities. Each year, Morrisville Stage College awards more than \$1 million, including both the Morrisville and Norwich Campus, to help make higher education an affordable and smart option for local high school graduates and members of the surrounding community.

This coming year, Zbock said a Norwich Morrisville Campus Advisory Council would continue to advise the Executive Director as he looks for state grants for manufacturing, human ser-

vices and other technical training programs that support the existing industry in the region.

The Norwich Morrisville Campus Advisory Council acts as the bridge between the college and the community assuring that the programs offered in Norwich meet the needs of area residents and businesses.

According to Council member and Chenango County Workforce and Industrial Development Liaison Steven Palmatier, an "excellent example" of the results of this particular collaboration is the micro-credentialing program.

"It addresses the need of our manufacturing employers to have entry-level employees have an understanding of basic manufacturing skills while also allowing their current employees to enhance their skills," said Palmatier.

"We are truly fortunate in Chenango County to have an Executive Director at the Norwich Campus who has engaged not only other educators but business and residents in crafting a long term vision of for the College."

Zbock understands that proximity and cost are two main drivers toward attracting students to the Norwich branch campus, but the institution aims to be the local college that draws students in for the quality and variety of our programs as well.

"A full-time Business and Composition faculty would be a goal for us to support growing degree programs and service program needs.



Morrisville is now in its 48th year in Norwich and its 12th year located adjacent to the Eaton Center on Conkey Avenue in Norwich.

We have to have vision to grow with expanded full-time faculty to improve student retention and success," he said.

Zbock is particularly proud of the number of traditional-aged students enrolled at SUNY Morrisville. When he arrived on the job in 2014, the median age of students was 34 versus 28 today.

"We want to be the place where students of all ages feel comfortable acquiring higher level job skills and accreditation and where students starting out maybe not knowing at all what they want to do have a variety of courses and degrees to choose from," he said.

Some of the major challenges the college faces

looking ahead are expanding into new markets for student recruitment into degree and workforce training programs and strengthening student success programs to improve retention, completion, transfer and job placement.

In addition, DCMO BOCES data points to a declining secondary student population in Chenango County which leads to a recruiting and enrollment challenge that is specific to this area. And while qualified staff is available, the challenge is finding the funding to increase full-time faculty lines from part-time

or adjunct, he said.

To meet those challenges, Zbock said the Norwich Campus has expanded student support systems with part-time mental health counseling, grant-funded C-STEP program and professional/peer tutoring. He said he could count on the Norwich Campus Advisory Council to also help advise to meet these challenges and more.

"There is a strong ecosystem of business partners and industry sectors that align with the Norwich Campus certificate and degree programs," Zbock said

The majority of staff – teachers, trainers and support - resides in the Southern Tier and Chenango County, he said. And the number of community non-profits the campus supports are too many to list, but include, the Liberty Partnership Program, Commerce Chenango, Chenango County, the City of Norwich, the Chenango County Council of the Arts, and the Norwich Family YMCA (college students receive free memberships while taking six or more credits).



An Instructor at Morrisville State College in Norwich aids a nursing student in her work.



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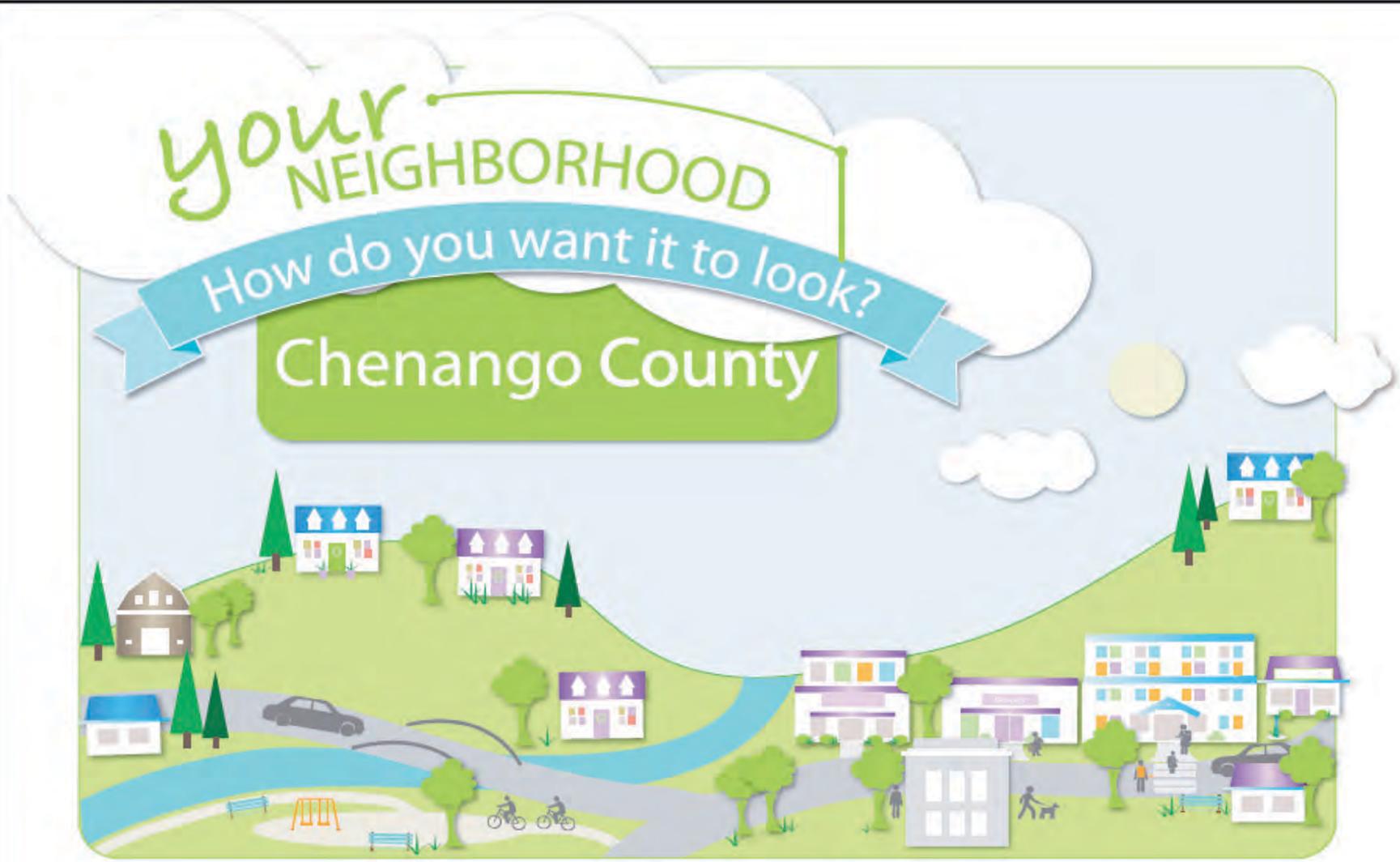
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