

# PROGRESS CHENANGO

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## BOCES celebrates 50 years of leading technical education



DCMO BOCES Superintendent Perry Dewey. (Photo by Zachary Meseck)

By ZACHARY MESECK  
The Evening Sun

NORWICH — DCMO BOCES crossed another historic milestone in 2019, with 50 years of leading in technical education throughout Chenango County, and the surrounding communities.

According to DCMO BOCES Superintendent Perry Dewey, what began as a small educational supervi-

sory district, has expanded, and now serves over 12,000 students in the region. DCMO BOCES impacts the lives of students with work-based learning experiences and career and technical educational opportunities and works to deliver high-quality educational programs and services that are diverse, innovative, and cost-effective.

“The pivotal point

towards regional workforce development began with the 2019-22 Strategic Planning process,” said Dewey. “The organization’s vision of propelling regional growth as a premier provider of educational services became the compass to launch the Career Destinations initiative.”

“A team of legislators, educators, and business leaders are now a part of

this effort; we’ve developed a strategy to connect students to local career opportunities.”

DCMO BOCES employs almost 400 full time staff of which 175 work at their Chenango Campus and Support Services facilities. According to Dewey, the staff at BOCES support volunteer services for many organizations including the American Cancer Society, Red Cross with blood bank donations, and United Way.

“Almost every staff member proudly volunteers to impact the lives of the students,” said Dewey. Another way BOCES gave back in 2019 was through a task group that was introduced to lead The Level Reading Campaign. “This movement aims to inspire and prepare children to read at grade level by 4th grade,” said Dewey. “The initiative earned the support of local libraries, educators, and non-profit organizations.”

“Together, this task group is connecting the puzzle pieces to introduce creative reading strategies to children at an earlier stage.”

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## In Your Own Words

### Assemblyman Cliff Crouch

(R-Bainbridge)



Making A  
Difference  
In Your  
Community

Serving the Southern Tier has been a passion of mine for over 34 years. Whether it be representing you in the state Assembly in Albany, or attending a Bainbridge Lion’s Club meeting, I have enjoyed my time being active in the community.

All over New York there are organizations that assist our communities that need your help. At a time when we are experiencing services and the needs of our communities expanding, we are seeing fewer and fewer volunteers. Organizations like the local fire department, homeless shelter and food pantries are in dire need of volunteers, and I strongly encourage you to pursue these opportunities if you are interested. Serving a few days at a food pantry or volunteering for your local fire department will go a long way and will be a fulfilling experience. You can learn life skills that will always be valuable.

Volunteering is not only a good way to give back to your neighbors but also a launching point to public service and political office if you have those aspirations. Local governments and county Legislatures are always seeking active members of the community who are willing to work on our behalf. Serving the public is an honor and privilege. Local governments and representation on that level are crucial to our everyday lives. Many of the laws and ordinances that affect you directly are handled on this level, and it is important to have diligent and dedicated representation working on our behalf.

Running for state office is a bit more complex. During the legislative session, each week state assemblymen and senators travel to Albany to vote on statewide legislation. The number of constituents you represent is much larger and much more time is dedicated to serving the people you represent. Whether it is helping a constituent with a problem with a government agency, or attending events, rallies and forums around the state, your work never stops. Representing your communities at the state level is a full-time job, and you would have to make some serious sacrifices in your personal life to do so.

Whatever you decide to do to serve your community, I encourage you to do it with all the passion and excitement in your heart. From personal experience I can tell you it will be one of the highest honors of your life.

There are many opportunities and organizations across the Southern Tier that need your help, and nothing feels better than helping a neighbor in need. If you would like the names of some organizations that might need your help, feel free to contact me or stop into my office at 1 Kattelville Rd., Suite 1, Binghamton, NY, call my office at 607-648-6080, or email me at crouchc@nyassembly.gov. My door is always open.

## Chenango Arts Council aspires to integrate art into the community

By CATHERINE SASSO  
The Evening Sun

The Chenango Arts Council is one of the leading advocates for integrating arts into the community in Chenango County. From art exhibits to live performances, from movie nights to art classes, the arts council is reworking its strategic plan to do more Chenango County focused.

“The mission of the strategic plan is to explore, enlighten, and inspire all things art,” said Chenango Arts Council Executive Director Alecia O’Neill.

In the coming year, the arts council is working to harmonize with local artists to assist them in reaching their full potential, as well as inspire others who are interested in the arts to take the first step in mastering their craft of choice.

The arts council offers a variety of artistic outlets for people to explore. O’Neill explains how the arts council can aid anyone interested in

a certain artistic field in getting connected to the right groups..

“If they’re more interested in acting, we hook them up with the Norwich Theater Company. If they’re shy, but are electrical wizards, or are interested in scene painting, we can also hook them up with Norwich Theater Company. If they’re into filing and book keeping, we can always use that here,” said O’Neill.

The arts council can also set up classes for groups of people interested in learning a new artistic outlet. O’Neill says that if people are interested in learning a new skill, they just need to simply reach out and the arts council will aid them in either setting up a class or finding a preexisting one.

“People have the passion, and when you have the passion everything else falls into place,” remarked administrative assistant Mary Beth Miller.

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The Chenango Arts Council runs with just four staff members. Pictured are the Executive Director Alecia O’Neill and administrative assistant Mary Beth Miller. In the coming year, the arts council is working to harmonize with local artists to assist them in reaching their full potential, as well as inspire others who are interested in the arts to take the first step in mastering their craft of choice. (Photo by Catherine Sasso)



## Arts Council aspires to integrate art in Chenango County —

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The arts council also looks to help artists expand their professional capabilities by giving them the knowledge and capacity to show art on their own.

"We want to help [local artists] with technical support, professional development, how to write a resume and prepare a portfolio, also how to prepare work for a show," said O'Neill.

These benefits plus many others are available to members of the arts council. Memberships for local artists also includes a marketing campaign complete with an online art-

ist profile and free mailers and posters, as well as access to exclusive events and discounts on performances.

Memberships are not only open to local artists and community members. O'Neill and staff are working to reintroduce the arts council to businesses in Chenango County.

"We're trying to figure out how the arts council can not only better serve the local arts and organizations in Chenango county but also businesses," said O'Neill.

O'Neill stresses the importance of having a creative outlet after a long day sitting at a desk. "If your a gizmo maker or a

widget worker from nine to five and your behind a desk, we are very happy to be able to provide art classes, performances, gallery openings, movies, anything just to help the medicine go down. Quality of life is very important to us in our community."

Business memberships also benefit the continuation of the arts council in many ways. Not only does the membership provide funding to the council, but also provides connections to resources they'd other wise be paying out of pocket for.

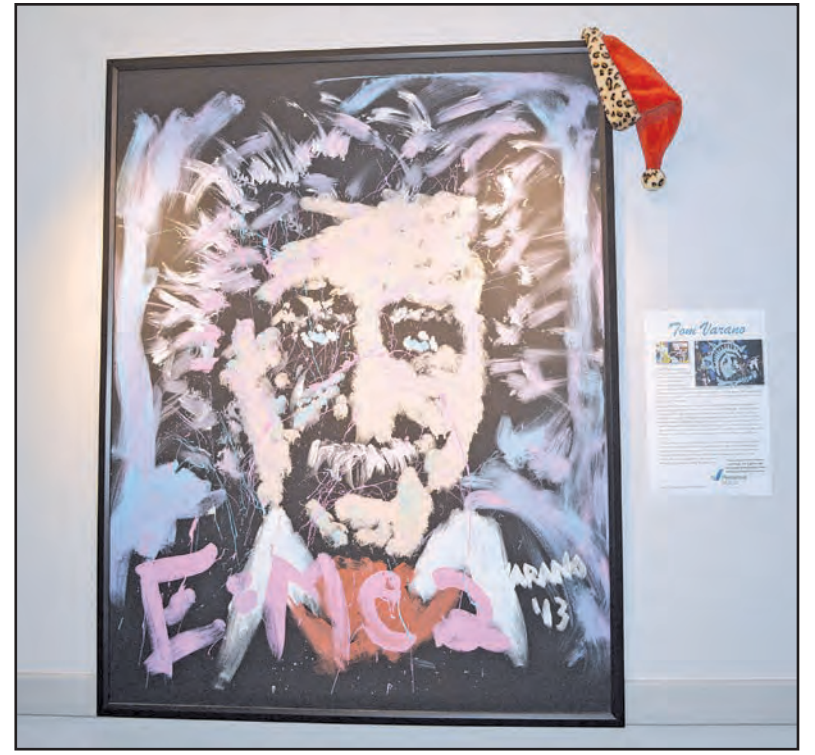
"We get a lot of in-kind support. We barter with places like the Splendor Inn and Super 8 for hos-

pitality and lodging and things like that. Which really helps us keep our pocket books closed," said O'Neill. "Our goal for next year will be getting local people and local businesses more involved so that were not tasked with providing resources on our own."

The arts council plans on throwing a business arts reception in April or May of 2020 where they will re-introduce themselves to the business community and talk with them to figure out how they can support each other in the upcoming year.

O'Neill said that one of the biggest successes they've had in supporting the community is the Grants for Teachers program, which is a grant that gives teachers funds to incorporate art in the classroom. O'Neill contributes much of its success to Mark Golden, CEO and founder of Golden Artist Colors.

"Mark Golden has stepped up to champion our grants for teachers program. Which is a program where we provide up to \$500 to teachers for art related projects in the classroom that aren't provided by the school. Mark has rallied his colleges, clients, and business associates to donate



The Arts Council features art from local artists in the area. This original painting was done by Tom Varano, who is based out of Rome New York. The painting was donated by Preferred Mutual. (Photo by Catherine Sasso)



The Chenango Arts Council has many services, including the use of their space. The 500-plus seat theater has been rented for weddings, music video shoots, movie screenings, and much more. (Photo by Catherine Sasso)

to the grant program and then he will match up to \$5,000. We've reached \$3,000 in contributions already," said O'Neill. "It's been proven that having the arts in a classroom setting helps kids not only remember things and retain them but want to comeback for more."

The Chenango Arts Council has many services they can offer the community, including the use of their space. The 500-plus seat theater has been rented for weddings, music video shoots, movie screenings, and much more. There is also a two story gallery, class rooms,

and conference rooms available.

The councils next show, Ballet with a Twist: Another Round, is coming in April of 2020. The show is described as a pop-infused production that brings timeless American spirits to life, launching the Mai Tai, Martini, Manhattan and more off the menu and onto the stage.

"We want to know what Chenango wants to see. Send us suggestions, and come and see us," said O'Neill. "It will pay off to invest in the arts council, people take pride in a vibrant community."



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## Success Story

## Staffworks

Decades ago Central New York native and Staffworks Founder/President, Anita A. Vitullo, drove into the heart of Norwich and felt at home. Shortly thereafter she opened a staffing services office in Dick Snyder's Pennysaver building.

Forty years ago Vitullo began her staffing career with Kelly Services. In that 15-year span, Vitullo received the highest company awards for profit achievement in her Central New York offices, developed national accounts and traveled the U.S. as a troubleshooter.

It was during her Kelly career that Vitullo recognized the need for customized service to meet client demands and developed a regional business model. In 1994, Vitullo opened

a staffing services office in Utica and what was to become Staffworks.

In the last 25 years, Staffworks has grown to become Central New York's largest independently owned regional staffing services company with nine locations: New Hartford, Rome, Herkimer, Syracuse, Norwich, Binghamton, Cortland, Oneida and Oneonta.

Staffworks provides a full range of business, manufacturing and health care skill areas from career entry to professional levels. Hundreds of Central New York and national clients utilize Staffworks for temporary, temp to hire and direct placement services.

In 2019, Staffworks employed over 5,500

Central New York residents. In 25 years of operation, they have employed over 100,000.

The Staffworks team allows client partners to focus on their core mission by sourcing evolving talent requirements. Investments in tech solutions and staff training ensures a continuous flow of qualified candidates to serve client requirements.

Staffworks has received scores of notable awards for business achievements, community service and philanthropy. Most recently the company was recognized as 2019 Observer-Dispatch's Best of the Best Employment Agency, 2019 CNY Business Journal Best Place to Work, and a 2019 Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year Finalist. While they

are proud of these honors, the Staffworks team recognizes that there are always new goals to achieve and that drives them to be "The Best."

Staffworks is a company that gives back!

Staffworks profits support the Staffworks Fund that was established in 2005 at the Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties. The \$14 million Staffworks Fund supports organizations that provide direct care and services for at-risk animals in Central New York. To date, \$2 million has been donated. Staffworks is a major donor for the Chenango SPCA providing \$115,515.

In 2014, the Staffworks Fund Save A Life Campaign was established. This regional fundraising effort

provides matching levels for community donations made to animal welfare organizations located in Central New York during the month of December. In 2019, 29 organizations in 13 counties participated in the Campaign raising a record-breaking \$1,844,350 in 29 days! The Campaign has raised more than \$3.1 million for non-profit organizations caring for at-risk animals in our regional community. The Chenango SPCA has received \$186,717 from the Save A Life Campaign.

Whether you're looking for the flexibility of temporary staffing or direct placement, Staffworks can provide the help you need. Contact their Norwich office at 24 Conkey Ave., (607) 334-5055 or [www.staffworkscny.com](http://www.staffworkscny.com).

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This is a huge resource for our community. Our new space will allow us to better provide this, as well as the many other valuable services we offer.

We have recently undergone a "brand refresh", which includes a modern update on our old logo. This refresh is part of a larger marketing project we have been working on, the goal being to increase our accessibility and knowledge of services in our community. We have been providing support, empowerment, education and relief to patients, families and our community as a whole since 1991. And we will continue to be the only CMS certified Hospice, and in home Palliative care, provider in Chenango County.

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## Success Story

## S&S Appliances

### S&S TV and Appliances Receives Dealer of the Year Award at BrandSource 2019 Convention Honored for commitment to excellence in the retail industry



S&S TV and Appliances of Norwich, N.Y., was named the 2019 BrandSource Dealer of the Year for the North Atlantic Region on August 25 at the BrandSource National Convention & Expo at the Gaylord Texan in Dallas. Co-owners Tom and Joan Brauer were honored at the buying group's annual awards ceremony, which was held amid the hoopla of its four-day convention.

With showrooms in Norwich and Hamilton, N.Y., S&S serves the greater Madison and Chenango County communities with a wide selection of home appliances from such premium brands as Amana, Danby, Electrolux, Maytag, Monogram, Samsung and Whirlpool. The company also carries TVs and assorted A/V gear and accessories, and its specially trained, in-house technicians are prepared to service all that S&S sells.

The BrandSource Dealer of the Year awards are presented annually to a member who has shown continued support of BrandSource

and its direct suppliers. The Dealer of the Year must support the group by attending regional meetings as well as national events such as the Convention and Summit.

The 14 winners, which were selected by each region's membership, demonstrate a continued commitment to excellence in the retail industry and to their fellow BrandSource dealers.

BrandSource is the leading merchandising organization for independent appliance, home furnishings and consumer tech dealers. Its parent company, AVB, is a \$19.5 billion member-driven co-op that provides merchandising, financing and digital marketing services to nearly 5,000 independent dealers in the U.S. and Canada. BrandSource's sister divisions and affiliates include ProSource (consumer tech and custom integration); TRIB Group (rent-to-own); Mega Group (Canada); and HFA Buying Source, serving home furnishings dealers nationwide.

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# BOCES celebrates 50 years of leading technical education —

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In 2019 DCMO BOCES built new partnerships with UHS Chenango Memorial Hospital and with Morrisville Norwich Campus to host a "Hospital 101" program intended to educate the public on the many careers and job opportunities available at our local medical facilities.

To meet its ambitious goals, DCMO BOCES depends on the commitment and support from local employers and small businesses. In 2020, the organization seeks to enroll as many businesses in the program to offer work-based learning opportunities, internships, tours, and classroom presentations.

According to Dewey, collaborative efforts have the power to reverse the loss of population trend and prepare young people to become productive members of Chenango County. 2020 also brings the expansion of the Career Destinations program.

Dewey said a Destinations Team was formed to connect schools, counselors, and students to local jobs and careers. Excellent examples of collaboration took place in 2019, including a partnership with Raymond Corporation that now has a permanent presence in the welding classroom.

"Through training, demonstrations, and competitions, the team at Raymond's is connecting students to future jobs," said Dewey. "In October of 2019 Raymond welcome over 400 students to their facility for a day of career exploration and to learn about the many opportunities available in the field of Advanced Manufacturing."

"Likewise organizations including GE Unison, NYCM, NBT Bank, and Visions Credit Union, sent staff members to present to over 450 students at Career Exploration Events."

He said these 9th-grade exploration

programs introduced students to local jobs and college opportunities. He added that the state's declining population, a factor affecting all schools, is a concern.

"As communities lose their members, funding to fuel educational resources are diminished," said Dewey. "Because operational costs such as facilities and staffing remain the same, serving a smaller population of students affects state funding allocations putting additional demands from the local tax pool."

Dewey said DCMO BOCES, at their workforce task group meeting, addressed this issue with local stakeholders and received positive feedback on alternatives to reverse this trend.

Connecting students to local jobs and careers provide a proactive alternative to retaining young people building active lives in Chenango County. BOCES provides other support services



More than 12,000 students in the region are educated thanks to the efforts of DCMO BOCES and its staff. (Photo by Zachary Meseck)

to schools such as subs for teachers, cooperative purchasing options for cafeteria food, supplies, printed goods and more.

The central office services at BOCES supports local schools by handling their accounting and bookkeeping tasks.

"When school districts join these services, they access efficiencies that deliver quality services in most cases at a lower cost," said Dewey. "When schools use the BOCES services, they are incentivized the follow-

ing year with State Aid to use towards future expenses."

"On average, Chenango County schools receive 70 percent back in State Aid for services provided by BOCES."

For adults without a career degree or high school diploma, BOCES offer free of charge educational services not only to secure their high school equivalency diploma but to also prepare them with career preparation in fourteen Career and

Technical Educational Fields. Fields include Culinary Arts, Computer Technology, Automotive Technology, Health Occupations and more.

Commenting about their progress, Perry said, "As a proud employer and supporter of our component schools, we are grateful for the many partners who joined our efforts. Together, we will move forward to inspire our young to build careers and grow their new families right here in our community."



Students at DCMO BOCES have the opportunity to get hands on experience in 14 different career and technical education fields including Culinary Arts, Computer Technology, Automotive Technology, Health Occupations. (Photo by Zachary Meseck)

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