

# PROGRESS CHENANGO

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## Alvogen: Making a difference one day at a time



Alvogen Vice President of Human Resources Ric Festarini, Vice President of General Operations Manager Brian Reid, and Human Resources Services Manager Luke J. Murphy at Norwich's Alvogen facility located in the Town of Norwich. (Photo by Zachary Meseck)

By ZACHARY MESECK  
The Evening Sun

NORWICH – As part of its annual effort to give back to its community, Norwich's Alvogen continues to dedicate manpower and financial resources to improving its area and inspiring future leaders.

The Alvogen manufacturing facility is located just north of Norwich on State Highway 12 and was constructed in the late 1970's. In recent years, there has been significant investment in the facility, bringing it into modern standards of pharmaceutical production. Alvogen is the lat-

est rebirth of Norwich Pharmaceuticals, having its origination in the town of Norwich in 1887.

According to Norwich Alvogen's Vice President of Human Resources Ric Festarini Alvogen's headquarters is in Reykjavik, Iceland.

"Alvogen has grown from

its Norwich employee base of 300 to a strong international team of just under 3000," he said. "Sales have followed suit and the 2007 sales target of \$35 Million are now exceeding \$1 billion globally."

Alvogen has sales in 35 countries and some of the fastest growing are those of Russia and the former Soviet bloc republics. Last year saw significant business agreements being reached in China and Japan as Asia became a strategic focus.

According to Norwich Alvogen Human Resources Services Manager Luke J. Murphy, the continued success of Alvogen stems in part from its commitment to the community.

Murphy said one example of an event that exemplifies the community oriented model is Alvogen Day.

On September 13, over 300 employees from the Norwich site took to the streets of the City of Norwich and surrounding communities to celebrate Alvogen Day by breaking into teams and performing community projects.

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## SUCCESS STORY

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Karen's accomplishments were acknowledged by Realty USA/Howard Hanna as follows: Top Producer Award in 2016 and 2017. The Gold Level Award in 2016 and 2018. The Platinum Level Award in 2017.

Also the National Sales Excellence Award in 2017 was awarded to the Top 5 percent of Real Estate Professionals across the Northeast, the Karen Cammarata Team among them.

Karen's business began growing significantly in 2017 and she needed assistance. Her husband John decided to get his real estate license and joined the team in June 2017. John has extensive knowledge and experience in construction, having been in that field for 40-plus years.

As Karen's business continued to grow, she enlisted a new agent to the team in February 2019, Dixie Cooper. Dixie is a Graduate of Binghamton University and has a rewarding career working with individuals with Intellectual Disabilities. Dixie has always had an interest in Real Estate. She has been a valuable asset to the team.

In August 2019 Karen enlisted another agent and past client, Pauline "Polly" Trottier to her team. Polly has a couple of years of prior real estate experience and was excited to join the Karen Cammarata Team. "She brought new ideas and ambition to our Team," said Cammarata.

The team's Administrative Assistant and marketing professional, Kathy Grandinetti is excited to be rejoining the Karen Cammarata Team. Kathy brings her technology expertise and experience with her. The team is very excited to have her back.

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## Chenango County Historical Society: Looking at the past to understand the present

By SHAWN MAGRATH  
The Evening Sun

NORWICH - There's an old proverb saying that to understand the present, look to the past.

That's the very thought which has helped shape present-day operations at the Chenango County Historical Society, where a 14-member board, alongside a band of 100-plus volunteers, strives daily to preserve the county's roots in industry, agriculture, and education.

Seated at the edge of the City of Norwich Museum District, the Chenango County Historical Society has long been a staple of the community. Its three-story museum, housed in Norwich's former second ward school, showcases exhibits that beat the drum for all things Chenango, past and present. And the CCHS campus has only expanded in recent years to include separate structural exhibits, including a boathouse for its life-size Chenango Canal boat replica, a functioning maple sugaring house, and a full-size barn once owned by the notorious Loomis fam-

ily. The organization even runs the paperback book exchange adjacent to the museum.

The group's aim, says CCHS Director Jessica Moquin, is to educate through a celebration of Chenango's unique culture and heritage. In short,

if it concerns any part of Chenango County, it concerns the Historical Society.

"My vision has always been that the Chenango County Historical Society would be the hub of a wheel, with all the spokes being the town historical societies," said CCHS board member

Joyce Zummo. "I think that's one of the things we've been trying to do better: to reach out to other towns and town historical societies. We want people to know that we're the Chenango County Historical Society, not the Norwich Historical Society."

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Chenango County Historical Society Board members Gail Merian, John Antonowicz, and Joyce Zummo help CCHS Director Jessica Moquin restock the shelves of the museum gift shop. (Photo by Shawn Magrath)



# Alvogen: Making a difference one day at a time —



On September 13, over 300 employees from Norwich's Alvogen site, and took to the streets of the City of Norwich and surrounding communities to celebrate Alvogen Day by breaking into teams and performing community projects. (Photo by Frank Speziale)

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Employees performed Alvogen Quality-Value to 25 charitable organizations by taking part in community service clean-up activities.

Murphy said projects generally consist of working at the animal shelter, performing trail maintenance at an environmental center, performing maintenance

projects at a local center for school age children, assisting fire department organizations with painting projects and pouring concrete, working in community parks,

landscaping, planting and decorating the city of Norwich with cornstalks and bows for the fall season.

Employees wrapped the day up by going to

the Canasawacta Country Club in Norwich for lunch, entertainment, gifts, prizes and activities.

Murphy said the event was assisted by orga-

nizations like Tuller's Catering and Northern Safety.

"Alvogen Day is probably the largest event

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# Alvogen: Making a difference one day at a time —

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that we do as a company, and it has the largest impact within the community," said Murphy. "We're not doing it to get anything in return, we're doing it so our employees and patients have a positive place to live."

He said the event has continued to grow each year, and has been an annual occurrence since 2013.

"We've grown it from basically working in a few parks to now we're working with 26 different organizations," he added. "The community aspect was added in 2013, we actually started in 2000, but we did everything in-house at that point."

According to Murphy, the success of this event and the recognizable impact that it has had on the community has inspired other branches of Alvogen to begin to do the same in their communities as well.

"Every year at the beginning of the year our company has a global kickoff meeting where our leaders come to recap what took place

in the prior year, and what the goals or strategies will be for the new year," said Murphy. "Ric was there, and at that time he received the award through Alvogen called the, "Better Planet Award," in terms of culture based on what we do with Alvogen Day."

"When you think about it, that's pretty significant because we're in 35 countries, and we were selected out of all of them to receive that award."

Festarini also spoke on the award and the impact Alvogen Day can have on a global level.

"Benefits that we achieve there included that other parts of the organization, in other countries, are starting to mimic this," he said. "Previously Alvogen Day was focused on being a member of the company, and so in many countries it would be a party or picnic, but it would be very internally focused."

"Following our lead now, many countries are contributing back to their communities in the same way that we've formatted our day."

Murphy said Alvogen



Norwich's Alvogen received the, "Better Planet Award" in early 2019 after inspiring other Alvogen branches around the world to make a difference in their communities. (Photo by Zachary Meseck)

continues to invest in the community with Alvogen Day, but also with continuing educational opportunities by sending employees to the Leadership Chenango program.

Festarini said the program sends participants to the biannual training with high expectations of program graduates within the business.

"Two things, firstly having employees attend Leadership Chenango

supports our philosophy of helping the communities in which we draw our employees," said Festarini. "Secondly we're looking to develop leadership within our organization as well, and we're always looking to try to develop and promote people into positions of greater responsibility."

"This program helps us do that, and clearly we put people into the program who volunteer

so it's also a mechanism of identification for people who want to grow their career or get more experience."

Also new this year is Norwich Alvogen's Vice President of General Operations Manager Brian Reid.

"Being a leader and as people want to progress their career, the thing people often forget about is being an active community leader," said Reid. "Every good busi-

ness leader has that as part of their repertoire."

"They understand the part that they and their company plays in their communities, and I think it's supremely important that as we continue to develop leaders we inspire them to continue to give back."

He said Alvogen's community investment doesn't just revolve around monetary donations, but also includes the allocation of resources and hiring local personnel.

"Reintroducing leaders, helping people grow, understanding what community service means - it's not just serving here or there, it's being an active member of the community," he added.

With strong leadership, Alvogen continues to evolve its business model and has every expectation to continue to celebrate major anniversary milestones as a regional employer.

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# Chenango County Historical Society: Looking at the past to understand the present —

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With a goal of growing community participation in 2020, CCHS is trying a mix of old and new tactics. The organization has developed a broader presence on social media to reach a 21st century audience, and it's reaching out to historians in every Chenango County township in an ongoing effort to make their mission more inclusive.

But perhaps CCHS's shining star in attracting visitors, says Moquin, has been its effort to reignite youth programming at the museum.

"Following a year of dormancy, we are once again hosting school field experiences, with approximately 400 school children visiting us," said Moquin. "The unprecedented growth of this program means that we need to generate sustainable annual support which can be used to offset costs related to these offerings."

In order to fund its youth programs (and other programming), CCHS set up a monthly giving society in 2019. Dubbed "The Legacy," the initiative was met with "overwhelming support" from the community and from philanthropic organizations, said Moquin. Those include a matching gift from the William G.

Pomeroy Foundation.

"Funding is at the foundation of a lot of what we do," Zummo said, pointing to a number of charitable organizations that kicked-in dollars which have helped support CCHS over the last year. "We have some benefactors from some very generous foundations; but many of them are very specific in what they choose to fund. Some of them like to see bricks and mortar [projects], but almost none of it goes towards operations."

"Like all nonprofits, it's essential for CCHS to secure funding from outside sources to ensure continuation of our mission. Every year, we have a similar challenge, in part because we rely on the generosity of private businesses, foundations, and individuals to sustain CCHS," Moquin said. "It is imperative that we identify and implement ways for our organization to remain relevant so that our programs and exhibits achieve our goals in the most effective ways possible."

Despite all-too-familiar challenge of obtaining financial backing for its day-to-day operations, that hasn't stopped CCHS from expanding programming where it can. Last year was the first



The Chenango County Historical Society is run by 14-member board along with 100-plus volunteers, who work to preserve the county's history in industry, agriculture and education. The museum is located at 45 Rexford St. in Norwich. (Photo by Tyler Murphy)

CCHS offered its "Third Thursday" program to the community, thus allowing the organization to spotlight the county's very best. CCHS also gave visitors a glimpse into other local organizations which offer opportunities for further historical exploration, such as The Farmer's Museum, Guernsey Memorial Library, and the

Cazenovia Public Library. Museum goers may have also noticed a fresh new look in the museum's lobby in the last year. In early 2019, CCHS ventured into a renovation project that brought about improvements to the museum lobby, staircase, and upper exhibit room. Though the project gave the building a

minor interior facelift of sorts, the task didn't come easy, explained CCHS Board member John Antonowicz.

"We did a lot of projects. I think staying on deadline was tricky because we had so much going on," Antonowicz said. "Things fall into place when you don't realize it's going to. It's always a struggle just to keep up with projects like that because there's so much happening."

Looking into 2020, the CCHS board says it's well aware of the challenges that lie ahead. Of course, visitors can expect great new exhibits (many of which will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment and the historical impact it had on the women of Chenango County); however, CCHS board members say they're also turning attention to the task of volunteer recruitment, and placing committed volunteers in roles where they would be most effective.

"I think a lot of the challenges we have are getting committed volunteers," said board member Gail Merian, adding that part of CCHS's developing two-year strategic plan will incorporate ideas to recruit more helping hands. "It's a struggle,"

she said. "We want to be as cohesive as we possibly can be and put volunteers in the right places," Moquin said. "From financing operations to creating new exhibits; from staffing the Paperback Exchange to managing our collection; from greeting visitors to developing educational programs; from running the gift shop to maintaining our campus; from coordinating special events to preparing books for publication — and many other essential tasks — volunteers are vital to CCHS being able to accomplish our mission."

For now, the Historical Society is continuing a series of exhibits it started in 2019, including one that spotlights businesses that originated in Chenango County, as well as its "Chenango County in Fifty Stories" exhibit which tells the tales of 50 renowned local names through a display of 50 separate artifacts.

The Chenango County Historical Society is located at 45 Rexford St. in Norwich. More information, including current and upcoming exhibits and events, can be found on the organization's website, [chenangohistorical.org](http://chenangohistorical.org), or by finding it on Facebook. Or call 334-9227 to learn more.



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Photos by Frank Speziale

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