



Winter Issue | 2016

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OC United celebrates all aspects of Oneida County government to unite and instill pride in the great work we achieve together.



From the County Executive

On March 4, 2016, I was honored to deliver the 2016 State of the County Address, which outlined the progress of this past year and our vision moving forward. This edition of OC United features the information that I shared that day about our County workers, as well as highlights of some of the programs mentioned.

I cannot say it often enough – the commitment and dedication of all our County government workers is unbelievable. You carry out our mission with professionalism and skill every single day. You are the best government workforce in the state.

Thank you.

Anthony J. Picente Jr.
County Executive – Oneida County

COMMUNITY SPIRIT



Mohawk Valley Anti-Poverty Initiative Making an Impact

In 2015, County Executive Picente, Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi, the United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica Area and The Community Foundation announced the Mohawk Valley Anti-Poverty Initiative.

The Mohawk Valley Anti-Poverty Initiative creates a new way for our community to address

poverty. With a steering committee of more than 50 members, this group is charged with highlighting and supporting existing efforts, and creating new endeavors to combat poverty throughout the Mohawk Valley Region.

This Initiative also recently sponsored a Poverty Simulation with more than 120 participants. Many, including some County employees, spent a simulated week in poverty. The goal was to leave everyone with a better understanding of what people in poverty experience. Participants were left with the knowledge that it is important that this initiative succeed.



United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica Area





PRIDE IN GOVERNMENT

Oneida County Sewer District Educates on Private Property Impacts to Mohawk River

The Oneida County Sewer District’s (OCSD) Operation Ripple Effect® is a consumer-focused initiative that acts as a guide to provide simple steps to help keep the Mohawk River clean.

Recent survey results show that the program’s outreach efforts are making a big impact. More than 65% of residents surveyed were aware that sanitary sewer overflows occur during heavy rainfalls and snowmelts. In addition, more than

half knew that they could help reduce overflows by disconnecting private property sump pump and roof leaders connections to the sanitary sewer.

It is critical that residents understand their role in helping to reduce sanitary sewer overflows into the Mohawk River. This survey shows that there is significant awareness of the problem, and a growing recognition of ways to help.

Overall Awareness



COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Oneida County to Establish Veterans Advisory Council

Oneida County’s Department of Veterans Services continues to link thousands of veterans to benefits every single year. In 2015, Oneida County, along with the Veterans Outreach Center and Syracuse University, created a legal clinic that is assisting veterans in Oneida County.

In 2016, the Department of Veterans Services will create a Veterans Advisory Council. This council will advise on how to best assist veterans in our community. This newly created Council is charged with conducting an exhaustive comprehensive needs assessment that will look at housing, employment and health for our veterans. The group will identify where the gaps exist and Oneida County will create a plan to fill them.



Veterans are the backbone of a free society. Their commitment must be honored.

GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCIES

UAS Testing at Oneida County Airport Leads the Nation

Oneida County continues to be the national leader for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) testing at our airport.

Since its inception, Oneida County has seen more than 100 tests completed. As the only UAS Test Site in the northeast, we have installed a \$4 million range instrumentation system – the first of its kind in the United States. We have become a contracted partner with NASA,

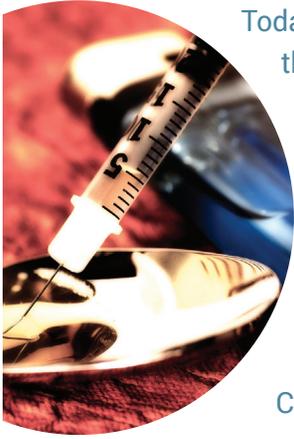
sharing test data to ensure the safety for everyone in our national airspace.

In addition, through Start-Up NY and Mohawk Valley Community College, Oneida County has seen a new company begin UAS operations in Rome. All of this has happened while air traffic has increased by 15% and airport redevelopment has continued, including taxiway reconstruction, nose dock rehabilitation, and upgrades to the main buildings at the Airport.



PRIDE IN GOVERNMENT

Oneida County Creates Opiate Task Force



Today, we are faced with an epidemic that is ravaging neighborhoods – including urban, suburban and rural communities across the state and nation. Heroin use must be stopped. Our office of Mental Health is on the front lines of this epidemic with the creation of the Oneida County Opiate Task Force.

In 2016, the Task Force will host three public education forums.

1. The first was held and featured a panel on Families in Recovery, including those who have lost loved ones due to overdose.
2. The second will detail heroin/opiate abuse in our communities.
3. A third forum aims to start the conversation about drug use with your family and your medical providers.

Oneida County has partnered with the Center for Family Life and Recovery to bring educational programs to our young people. Students will be given the information they need to help them make the right choices if confronted with the temptation to use drugs.



Oneida County is also working with the state of New York to establish an opiate treatment facility here in Oneida County. This is a piece of the puzzle not previously available for our families dealing with and fighting addiction. Areas with these facilities have a proven track record of reducing the use of heroin in their communities.



Did You Know?

Currently, three department heads are leaders of their respective statewide organizations?

- **John Talerico**, Commissioner of Personnel, is the President of the New York State Public Employer Labor Relations Association;
- **Anthony Carvelli**, Commissioner of Finance, is the President of the New York State County Treasurers and Finance Officers Association;
- **Mike Romano**, Director of the Office for Aging and Continuing Care, is the President of the Board of Directors of the Association of Aging in New York.

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

Agri-tourism Plan Calls for Incubator Creation

In 2015, Oneida County announced a five-year Agritourism plan, with the goal of being the best in the state. Preliminary recommendations include a signature event that will bring together every sector of agriculture, from produce to craft beverages.

Plans also call for the creation of an agricultural trail of breweries, wineries, orchards, farm stands and farmers markets. Also in the coming year, Oneida County will work to create an agri-business/tourism incubator with the goal of assisting farmers in the addition of a tourism component to increase local offerings from breweries, cideries and wineries.

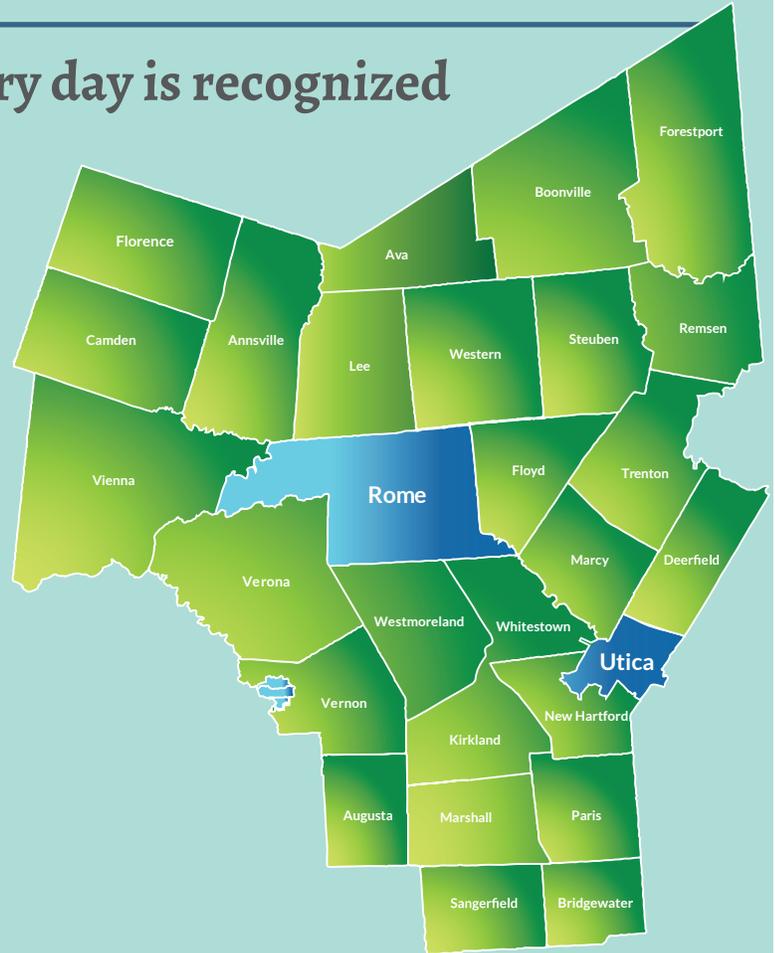
This is the start of a plan that will put us on the cutting edge of this booming industry in New York State.



Did You Know?

The hard work you all do every day is recognized across the state and nation!

- In 2015, Oneida County was recognized as one of the Top Digital Counties in the United States.
- The American Association of Airport Executives presented Griffiss International Airport with an Excellence in Airport Training award.
- Our Intergenerational Clean-Up Program was named a best practice for replication in New York State by the Albany Guardian Society's Innovations in Aging Awards.
- The Oneida County Public Market at Union Station was rated one of the top 100 farmer's markets in the entire country for the third year in a row.
- The National Weather Service recognized our County as StormReady®, which is a national community preparedness program.
- The Oneida County Department of Probation has been selected as one of only three departments in the state to participate in the Department of Criminal Justice pilot program for Ignition Interlock Device (IID) Installation. This will make our County safer for our residents by keeping repeat and high-risk DWI offenders off the road.



PRIDE IN GOVERNMENT

STOP DWI Program Makes Big Strides

STOP DWI has had a busy year:

- The STOP DWI team has developed a mock crash program that is educating young drivers in 10 local school districts.
- The STOP DWI Baseball Classic drew nearly 10,000 spectators who were presented with educational materials on the consequences of making destructive decisions.
- In 2015, STOP DWI educational presentations were given in Spanish, Burmese, Karen, Bosnian, and Nepali.



DPW Keeps More Than Just Roads Running Smoothly

The Oneida County Department of Public Works is not only tasked with the maintenance and upkeep of County roads, bridges and facilities, which is no minor task. The DPW also manages all of Oneida County's ongoing capital projects, including the \$33 million Mohawk Valley Community College Rome Campus Plumley Complex, continued renovations to the REA wing at Union Station, parking projects around the County office building, the Rome Family Court facility and the Rome Social Services building.