



# *2019 ANNUAL REPORT*

March 2019 - February 2020





# The Mission of NYSARH is to improve the health and well-being of rural New Yorkers and their communities.

## Letter from the President

BY HELEN EVANS



The past year has been a fulfilling and successful 12 months for the New York State Association for Rural Health. As a leader in rural health and wellness, NYSARH was established in 2001 as the voice for rural health, and today more than ever, we continue this mission. Our work to heighten awareness around rural health challenges, to educate those in power about the needs of their constituents, and working on behalf of you, our members, as an independent non-profit, is an honor and privilege. The events of 2019-2020 demonstrate the importance of our past, present, and especially our future.

NYSARH has witnessed an increase in members, enhanced its educational offerings, expanded its advocacy, and continues to build its infrastructure and capacity. Previously, NYSARH's sources of operational funding primarily consisted of revenues from membership dues and conference revenue, with 2019 opening the door to philanthropic support from individuals, state grants, federal funds, and foundations. A special thank you to NYS Senator Rachel May (D, WF- 53rd Senate District) for her contribution to rural in 2019 through her Legislative Appropriation in support of Rural Health Networks and Rural Access Hospitals.

Since then we have documented our origin story, recorded our rich twenty-year history, and are developing a 3-year plan for growth and capacity building. We are very grateful to Sara Wall Bollinger, NYSARH's Director of Strategic Development for leading this charge.

This process helps to advance NYSARH's mission as well as plan for vital improvements and programs necessary for us to be responsive to our members. NYSARH is also involved in building relationships with sister state-wide associations to strengthen our voice on common issues.

The challenges recently presented as a result of uncertain and often alarming economic conditions were felt in our rural communities and NYSARH's members were not spared. NYSARH has stood tall to represent those who depend on us for state and federal advocacy, low-cost or no-cost educational opportunities, and networking.

In early 2020, NYSARH embarked on a significant strategic planning initiative. NYSARH continues to offer greater access to critical information around rural health issues; including new website resources, increased presence and communication through social media, and hosting member forums, and producing monthly webinars and quarterly newsletters. You'll find articles in this Annual Report Edition detailing each of the subjects discussed briefly in this letter from the amazing leaders of our Committees and Board Members.

We are grateful to all of our members and supporters and every one of our very special staff members through Health Workforce New York: Karin Blackburn, Katie Rafferty, Christa Parish, Ashleigh McGowan, and their leader Richard Merchant. We are also grateful to our volunteer board of directors who devote their valuable time each year to help us fulfill our mission. We look to the future with hope and inspiration.

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## ***2019 -2020 NYSARH Board of Directors***

### **OFFICERS:**

**President: Helen Evans**, Ardent Solutions, Wellsville, NY

**Vice President: Jack Salo**, Rural Health Network of SCNY, Binghamton, NY

**Treasurer: Ann Abdella**, A2 Rural Health, LLC, Jamestown, NY

**Secretary: Jennifer Leszyk**, Hudson Headwaters Health Network, Queensbury, NY

### **DIRECTORS:**

**Tess Barker**, Planned Parenthood of the North Country, Watertown, NY

**Ann Battaglia**, Healthy Community Alliance, Gowanda, NY

**Barry Brogan**, North Country Behavioral Healthcare Network, Saranac Lake, NY

**Alison Coates**, Physician Assistant Studies, Clarkson University

**Charlotte Crawford**, Lake Plains Community Care Network, Batavia, NY

**Sylvia Getman**, Adirondack Health, Saranac Lake, NY

**Richard Kazel**, Syracuse VA Medical Center, Syracuse, NY

**Karen Madden**, Sen. Charles D. Cook Office of Rural Health, Albany, NY (Ex-Officio)

**Nancy McGraw**, Sullivan County Public Health Services

**Gertrude O'Sullivan**, Foundation of Community Health, Harlem Valley in New York and the Northern Litchfield Hills of Connecticut

**Claire Parde**, Columbia County Community Healthcare Consortium, Inc., Hudson, NY

**Michael Pease**, The Chautauqua Center, Jamestown, NY

**Paul Pettit**, Genesee & Orleans County Health Department, Albion, NY

**Mandy Qualls**, Central NY Area Health Education Center, Cortland, NY

**Carrie Roseamelia**, Rural Medical Scholars Program at Upstate Medical University, Syracuse, NY

**Mary Zelazny**, Finger Lakes Community Health, Penn Yan, NY

### **Staff:**

**Karin Blackburn**, Director for Administrative Services

**Sara Wall Bollinger**, Director for Strategic Development

**Katie Rafferty**, Finance Manager

**Christa Parish**, Administrative Assistant



## Policy Committee

The NYSARH Policy Committee members and staff had another active year in 2019-20 with no shortage of state and federal budget and policy issues for the association to focus on. We continued to build bridges to other advocacy groups and leverage NYSARH resources in a way that allows us to expand our voice exponentially.

As an example, NYSARH partnered with the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and many other organizations to support legislation to ban flavored vaping and tobacco products. This initiative was largely successful. NY's flavored e-cigarette ban took effect May 18th.

NYSARH was active in going on the record regarding rural health issues, submitted several letters, public comments and testimony to both federal and state leaders. We have created a new member-facing [Policy page](#) on the website where these items are available for reference.



Prior to the COVID shut-down NYSARH members continued to build important relationships with state and federal policymakers. The NYSARH delegation to the National Rural Health Policy Institute included Ann Abdella, Barry Brogan, Helen Evans, Claire Parde, Liz Urbanski-Farrell, Susan Williams, Rob Wingate and Sara Wall Bollinger. This year the delegation visited every NYS congressional office.



At our Albany Advocacy Day in February, Assembly member Santabarbara, Co-chair of the Commission on Rural Resources was among several speakers that addressed NYSARH members during our morning briefing. More than twenty NYSARH members attended this year's event.



NYSARH presented Testimony to the NYS Assembly Health Committee at their Public Hearing on Rural Health May 31st, 2019. We emphasized several issues including funding cuts to member agencies, rural health disparities, access to healthcare, behavioral healthcare and addiction services, economic development, EMS transportation and workforce recruitment.







## ***Governance***

The role of the Governance Committee is to ensure the NYSARH Board's effectiveness and continuing development. It does this in a variety of ways: coordinating the annual nomination and election process for board members and officers; reviewing and updating bylaws and ensuring bylaws compliance; promoting good board practice; and, enhancing the board member experience. This year, the Governance Committee's focus has been on board member engagement, training, succession planning, and a new project--developing standard operating procedures for each committee to ensure continuity of function through leader and member changes.



"NYSARH's board members are deeply committed to the mission of the Association and directly engaged in advancing that mission; simply stated, the board is where the works get done and the board members do the work. Therefore, it is critical that the board itself works well. The Governance Committee focuses on the board's structure, composition, policies and function to ensure that the board is efficient, effective, and rewarding to its members."

***Claire Parde, Chair of the Governance Committee***

"During 2019, NYSARH continued the important work of supporting and advocating for those that provide community health and healthcare services to rural New Yorkers. NYSARH continues to grow and change to better serve our members in their efforts to provide essential health services and to address the health disparities that impact rural New York State. I continue to be actively involved in NYSARH because I believe in the mission and want to see rural New York State thrive with healthy people, communities and economies."

Jack Salo, Vice-President





## 2019 Conference Overview September 25 – 27, 2019 Niagara Falls, NY

2019 Conference Book - [click here](#)

### 2019 NYSARH Conference Session and Workshop Presentations

#### Rural Workforce Future in New York State: Challenges and Opportunities

Dr. Robert Martiniano, Senior Program Manager at the Center for Healthcare Workforce Studies (CHWS)

#### Comparative Review and Update on Rural Health Systems Models

David Beauregard, Scott Carroll

#### Genessee-Orleans-Wyoming Opioid Task Force: A Rural Tri-County Collaboration to End the Opioid Crisis Collaborative Strategies for Addressing the Opioid Crisis in a Rural Community

Allison Parry-Gurak, Steven Kelley, Ashima Butler

#### Overcoming Rural Competitive Disadvantage

John C. Salo, Emma Nalin

#### The Future's So Bright, I Gotta Wear Shades

Sean Ossont, Christopher Harris

#### Using Social Media to Tell Your Story

Mandy Qualls

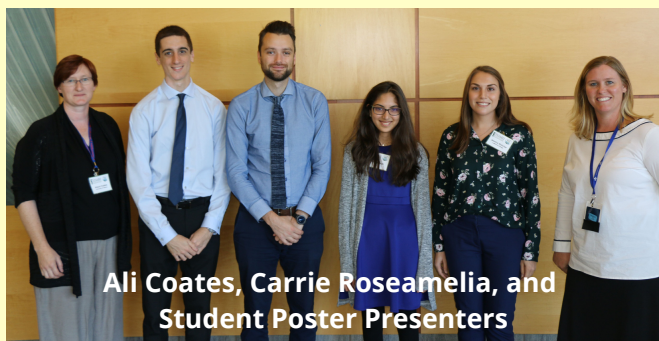
#### Recruiting Medical Students to Rural Health on a Shoestring Budget

Gertrude O'Sullivan, Rob Wingate

#### Panel: Rural Veterans' Services

Sponsored by National Rural Health Association

Carolyn Turvey, PhD., Derek Coy, MA., Nicole Costa, LCSW, Richard Kazel, FACHE



Ali Coates, Carrie Roseamelia, and  
Student Poster Presenters

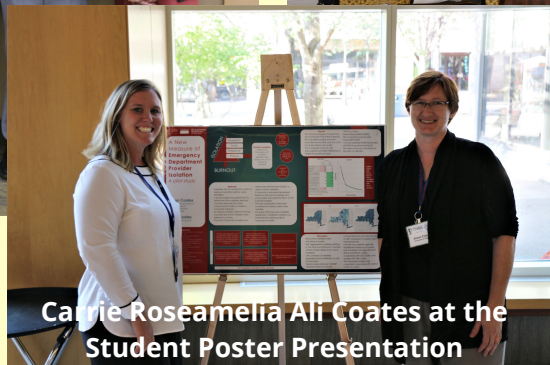


Whitney Hall and Kate Finn  
New York State Association  
of Licensed Midwives

Dr. Robert  
Dweck,  
Rural  
Health  
Practioner  
Award  
Winner



Bill Auxier, PhD  
Keynote Speaker



Carrie Roseamelia Ali Coates at the  
Student Poster Presentation



Exhibitors Hall



## 2019 Rural Health Awards

Dr. Richard Terry [left], Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine at Elmira received the Rural Health Service Award.

The Genesee-Orleans-Wyoming Opioid Task Force [Allison Parry-Gurak, center] was recognized as the Outstanding Rural Health Program of the Year.

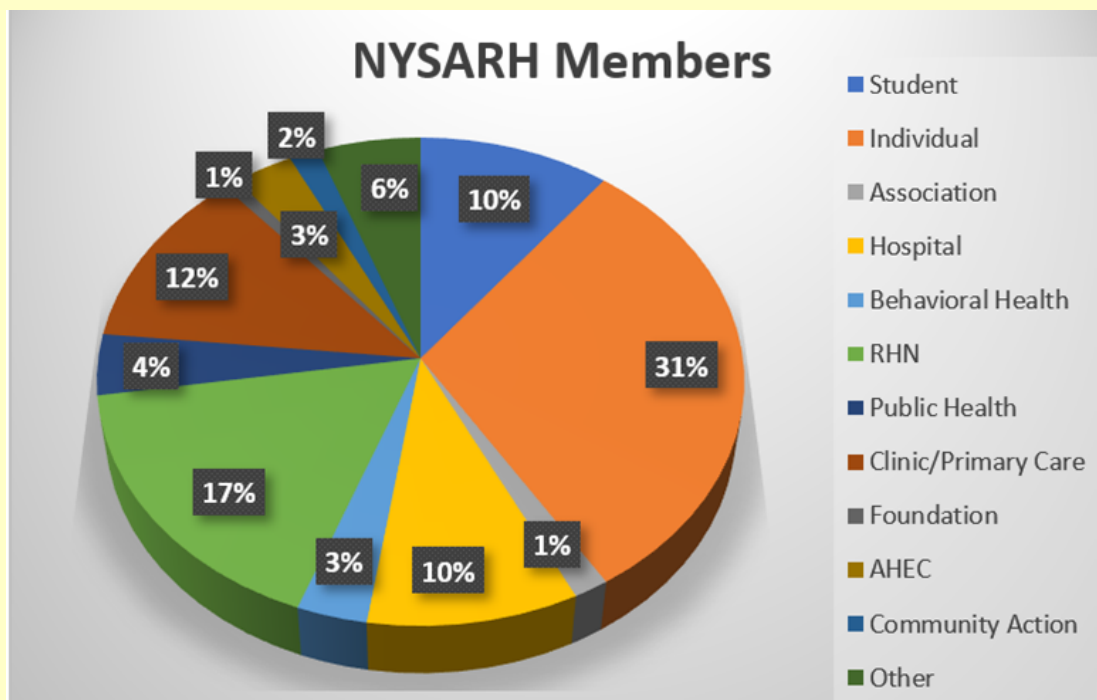
Dr. Robert Dweck, long-time family practitioner, currently with Hudson River Health Care and a volunteer for several programs for the underserved was given the Rural Health Practitioner Award.



## NYSARH Members

NYSARH's membership continues to grow as more organizations and individuals realize the benefit and value of belonging to this wonderfully diverse organization. Membership in NYSARH expands one's network of collaborative opportunities with other like-minded organizations, providing a venue to share and learn from each other. When you think that your organization is too small to make an impact or be heard by the policy makers in the State, NYSARH provides the ability to have representation that matters, permitting your voice to be heard.

The benefits of membership are too numerous to mention, however if you ask a member, they will all tell you what membership has meant to them.





## ***NYSARH Priorities***

### ***Telehealth***



NYSARH works with the North Country Telehealth Partnership and the Northeast Telehealth Resource Center to share information about and advocate for more and better access to telehealth services in rural New York. NYSARH submitted comment at the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Public Hearing on Rural Broadband.

### ***Rural EMS***

NYSARH has advocated strongly for Rural EMS. We support increased Medicaid reimbursement, insurance process reform so that private insurance companies can pay EMS providers directly and the expansion of Scope of Service regulations to permit Community Paramedicine and Mobile Medicine.



**2020 NYSARH Conference Policy Panel**

[L - R]: Steve Kroll, Doug Wildermuth, Ann Smith, Dan Batsie, Ryan Greenburg, NYS Department of Health EMS Bureau, Helen Evans, Sara Wall Bollinger, Rob Wingate, Barry Brogan, Jason Haag

## ***Measuring Value***

NYSARH was honored to partner with the Rural Health Network of South-Central New York to share information regarding their project to measure for programs targeting Social Determinants of Health.

NYSARH participated in a dissemination subcontract with the National Institutes of Health and the National Rural Health Association to recruit rural residents to participate in the All of Us research program. Through our efforts **460,435** people were informed of this opportunity.



"NYSARH's continued efforts over this last year remain evident as we work to achieve our mission in improving the health and well-being of rural New Yorkers & their communities. It's rewarding for me to have the opportunity to impact change, have a voice, and support the important work being done across the state."

Jennifer Leszyk, Secretary



## ***NRHA Grant***

NYSARH received a grant to develop stronger relationships with college and university students preparing for health-related careers. We partnered with CNYAHEC and faculty members from Binghamton University, SUNY Upstate and Ithaca College to host focus groups just before the pandemic required a pause in the planning process.

## ***New Administrative Services Contract***

NYSARH entered into a new Administrative Services contract effective July 1, 2019, with Northern Area Health Education Center (NAHEC).

The NYSARH Team includes Karin Blackburn, Director of Administrative Services; Sara Wall Bollinger, Director of Strategic Development; Katie Rafferty, Finance Manager; and Christa Parish, Office Assistant.



**Northern**  
New York AHEC

The Administrative Team has been supporting the Board of Directors and the work of the NYSARH committees.



**Senator Rachel May**

## ***Legislative Appropriation***

In August 2019 NYSARH was informed that we would administer a legislative appropriation of \$1.1 million pass-through funds to Rural Access Hospitals and Rural Health Networks. The Administrative team worked closely with the NYS Office of Rural Health to administer this funding. There are no expenses shown during 2019 because all the claims were paid in 2020.

## ***NYSARH Webinars***

Webinars are offered on the third Thursday of most months at 1PM. Webinars offered during the timeframe of this report included the following topics:

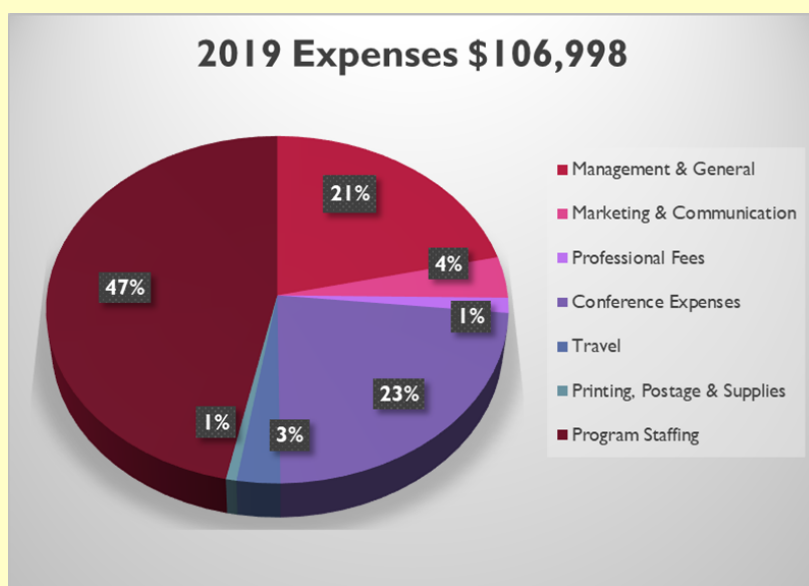
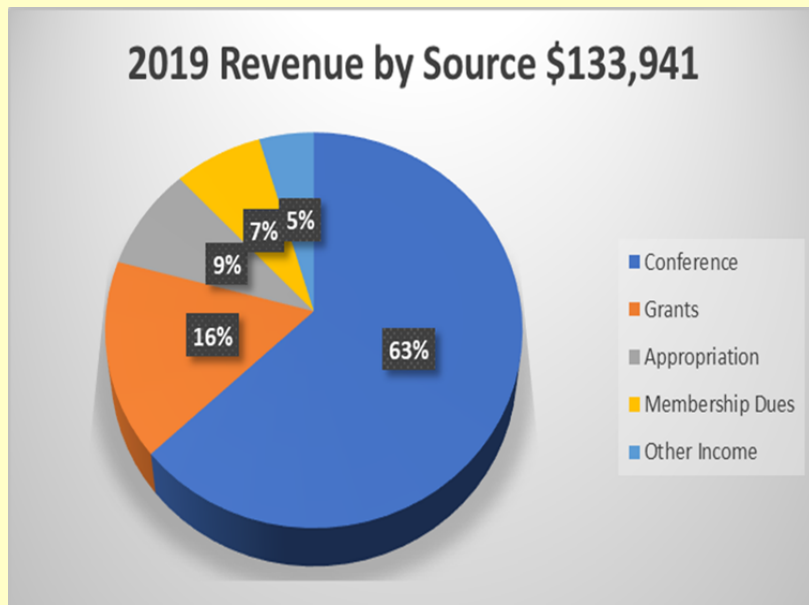
- Update on Federal Policies Impacting Rural Health
- How the New York Health Act will Improve the Health of Rural New Yorkers
- Network Cybersecurity: How Most Compliance Efforts Leave Rural Providers Vulnerable
- Clinical Resources for Rural Healthcare Providers
- Core Concepts in Cultural Experience





## NYSARH Finances

The NYSARH 2019 financials were professionally audited this year. We are pleased to report that the organization received an unqualified opinion.



Our mission and financial commitments go hand in hand. NYSARH remained committed to its responsibility to ensure that the organization focused its finite resources on our core goals and strategic activities of improve the health and well-being of rural New Yorkers and their communities.

"Simply said, NYSARH had a good year! As the organization has started to mature, we have been able to stabilize our financial position and provide resources to continue to develop, organize, and sustain the organizational infrastructure. During this year, NYSARH successfully transitioned its accounting operations to the Northern Area Health Education Center. As part of that process, we developed a new Financial Policies and Procedures Manual to formalize our financial operations for staff and moved to a new auditing firm that completed NYSARH's first audit. We have also been able to begin building some cash reserves which will allow NYSARH some flexibility to invest in future growth opportunities."

Ann Abdella, Treasurer

# ***NYSARH Members***

## ***April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020***

### **Organizational Memberships**

- Adirondack Health
- Alice Hyde Medical Center/University of Vermont Health Network
- Ardent Solutions
- Avalon Behavioral Health Solutions
- Brooks-TLC Hospital System, Inc.
- Canton-Potsdam Hospital
- Central New York Area Health Education Center
- Chautauqua County Government
- Citizen Advocates, Inc.
- Common Ground Health
- Elizabethtown Community Hospital
- Ellenville Regional Hospital
- Finger Lakes Community Health
- Foundation for Community Health
- Healthy Community Alliance
- Health WorkForce New York
- Hudson Headwaters Health Network
- Hudson River Health Care
- Human Service Development
- Human Service Coalition of Tompkins County
- Jones Memorial Hospital
- Lake Plains Community Care Network
- M.S. Hall & Associates, LLC
- New York Association of Licensed Midwives
- North Country Behavioral Health Network
- North Country Prenatal Perinatal Council, Inc.
- Northern Area Health Education Center, Inc.
- Oak Orchard Health
- Onondaga Council on Alcoholism & Addictions, Inc. d.b.a. Prevention Network
- Orleans Community Health
- Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York
- Planned Parenthood of the North Country
- River Hospital, Inc.
- rprt, LLC
- Rural Health Network of SCNY
- Rural Medical Scholars Program
- Seven Valleys Health Coalition
- S2AY Rural Health Network
- Southern Tier Health Care System, Inc.
- Sullivan County Public Health Services
- Syracuse University

### **Organizational Memberships (continued)**

- The Healthcare Consortium
- The Resource Center
- Tioga Opportunities, Inc.
- Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood
- Upstate Family Health Center, Inc.
- UR/St. James Hospital
- Wyoming County Health Department

### **Individual Memberships**

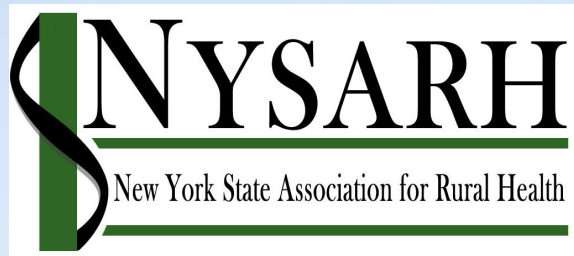
- Amy Carman, MSSW
- Andrew Majka
- Brian Coleman
- Li Dimance
- Richard Kazel
- Rajiv Pant
- Karen Roach
- Nicole Rouhana
- Richard Terry
- Christine Veschusio
- Julie Vieth
- Sara Wall Bollinger
- Elizabeth Weir
- Daniel Yens

### **Student Memberships**

- Lucas Freshman
- Daniel Monahan
- Nalessa Powls
- Jessica Welcher







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