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**DRAFT Solicitation to Members for Applications to the Board**

The New York State Association for Rural Health ([NYSARH](https://nysarh.org/)) is a statewide membership organization with a mission to **improve the health and well-being of New York State’s rural people and communities***.* NYSARH’s aim is to be the “voice for rural health,” representing a diverse group of rural stakeholders such as healthcare providers/practitioners, hospitals, clinics, rural health networks, policy and advocacy organizations, academia (faculty, staff and students), government, agriculture, economic development, and any other person or entity who shares an interest in the health of NY’s rural people and places.

NYSARH advances its mission through advocacy, education, engagement and networking. To increase our impact, over the past few years we have expanded our partnerships throughout the state. We now actively collaborate with the New York State Association of County Health Officials ([NYSACHO](https://www.nysacho.org/)), the New York State Public Health Association ([NYSPHA](https://www.nyspha.org/)), and the New England Rural Health Association ([NERHA](https://nerha.memberclicks.net/)), among others, to educate about and advocate for the programs, policies, funding opportunities, and other investments that will benefit rural New Yorkers.

The Associations’ policy platform, member services, and overall strategic direction are all driven by its governing body, the Board of Directors, which is elected by the Association’s membership. The annual nomination and election process is conducted every year during the summer, and **NOW IS THE TIME** for interested members to apply for nomination to the Board. Is that you? The following Q&A should be helpful to any member thinking about board service.

**Who can be a board member?**

Any member in good standing, including individual members, student members, and/or the designated representatives of an organizational member of NYSARH, is eligible to apply for a position on the Board of Directors for a three-year term starting in September 2021. If you are not a member, or uncertain about the status of your membership, please visit [this page](https://nysarh.org/membership/) for more info.

**What does being a board member entail?**

The Board meets virtually for approximately one and a half hours every other month, and has at least one in-person meeting per year.  Additionally, each board member is expected to serve on at least one committee of the board or corporation, which meet regularly, also virtually. Other responsibilities of the role are included in the attached NYSARH Board Member Job Description. If interested, please read this document carefully to understand the commitment of time and other resources that are required from each member of this working board.

**What is NYSARH looking for in a board member?**

The composition of NYSARH’s Board is meant to reflect the diversity of its members and rural stakeholders generally. We also aim to ensure that Board members are from different parts of the state’s geography, are at various points in their careers, and are representative of the rich diversity to be found in the population. The intent is to include voices from a variety of communities, state and local organizations, and rural health interests.

**I’m interested. How do I apply?**

Individuals interested in becoming a board member are encouraged to complete and submit the attached application to info@nysarh.org no later than **July 16, 2021.**

**What happens after I apply?**

To help ensure that NYSARH’s Board of Directors is comprised of individuals with as much diverse professional expertise/experience and geographical representation as possible, we will review all submissions and may choose to conduct interviews between 7/19 and 8/16. At the conclusion of this process, we will nominate a slate of candidates that best meets the current needs of the Association.  It should be noted that not all applicants should expect to be included in the slate of candidates. If your application is not advanced this year, we encourage you to apply again.

The slate of candidates will be sent electronically to Association members no later than 8/27, with a request to cast a virtual vote no later than 9/17. If there are more candidates than available seats, we may host a virtual “Meet the Candidates” event as an opportunity for members to engage with the candidates prior to casting their vote.

Finally, the results of the election will be announced at the Annual Meeting, scheduled for **September 27th** from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. Any candidates selected for the final vote are expected to participate in the Annual Meeting.

**Are there any other ways, besides board service, that I can get more involved in NYSARH?**

If you do not feel you are in a position to run for our board of directors but want to get involved with NYSARH, we are also seeking members (but not necessarily board members) for our committees. For instance, our Policy and Advocacy Committee promotes and advances our legislative agenda each year (click [here](https://nysarh.org/policy/) to learn more about its work) and our Education Committee identifies topics of interest and develops and promotes education and training opportunities.

**Who should I contact with questions?**

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to direct those to Governance Committee Chair, Claire Parde, who can be reached by email at cparde@columbiahealthnet.org or by phone at (518) 751-6509.

As one of one of the only statewide membership organizations that is explicitly focused on the health of rural people and places, NYSARH is an essential part of the NY landscape. We hope that you will consider deepening your involvement with and support of NYSARH’s vital work through board service!

Sincerely,

The NYSARH Governance Committee