

## MARCH 2026 NEWSLETTER

### Partner with NYSARH and NY FarmNet to Provide Mental Health First Aid Training to Rural Communities Throughout NYS!

Now through December 2026, the New York State Association for Rural Health (NYSARH) and NY FarmNet are partnering to provide Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training to rural communities across NYS as part of our Older Adult Rural Support (OARS) Program.

Just as CPR prepares you to help someone having a heart attack, MHFA teaches you how to assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge or crisis. This is a free, full-day training for adults that certifies participants in MHFA, building confidence in recognizing the signs of a challenge or crisis and offering meaningful support.



**NYSARH & FarmNet seek rural-serving organizations located in any county throughout NYS to host a full-day, in-person MHFA training for groups of 5-30 people per training.**

We will provide:

- MHFA Instructors
- Training materials and registration management
- Support for event coordination, marketing and promotion
- Reimbursements to host sites for the costs of training venues and refreshments

We need host organizations as partners who can help us secure training venues, source refreshments, and assist in promoting the event to local communities. We have a limited number of training sessions available this year for interested organizations.

Want to learn more? Contact Amanda Horner, OARS Project Coordinator ([amanda@nysarh.org](mailto:amanda@nysarh.org)), for more information or to request a training in your community.

### Share Your Story With Us!

We know you're doing amazing things! Do you have an article you want us to post on our website? Tell us all about the wonderful activities your organization is up to and share photos of you in the community. We're excited to feature you and celebrate your success.

[Submit Here](#)

## 2026 PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

NOMINATION  
DEADLINE:  
MARCH 13, 2026



[Nominate Today!](#)

[Award Categories](#)

[Register for Conference](#)

Sponsored by  PatagoniaHealth

Let's celebrate the amazing local governmental workforce in New York State! Please consider nominating a colleague, yourself, or your department for a Public Health Partnership Conference award in 2026! This year, the application process has been somewhat streamlined and simplified, so it is easier than ever to put an application together. Consider nominating your public health heroes!

These awards will be presented at the 2026 Public Health Partnership Conference, taking place **April 23rd - 24th in Lake Placid, NY. The deadline for nominations is Friday, March 13th, 2026.**

Please click the button for a list of award categories for this year. Please contact Sarah Ravenhall, Executive Director, NYSACHO at [sravenhall@nysacho.org](mailto:sravenhall@nysacho.org) if you have any questions.

CHES Credits  
Offered!

### Upcoming Webinar

#### Healthcare Workforce Preparation Webinar

#### Speakers



**Valerie Grey**

Senior Vice Chancellor of  
Health and Hospital Affairs



**Christopher White**

Vice Chancellor for  
Workforce Development  
and Upward Mobility

Join this webinar to explore how SUNY is leading efforts and playing a key role to prepare the next generation of healthcare professionals and equipping today's workforce to adapt to rapid advancements in technology, automation, and artificial intelligence.

SUNY leaders will discuss a wide range of workforce initiatives from entry-level training pathways and free community college programs for adult learners to the expansion of nursing simulation capacity to strengthen clinical readiness.

**February 19th, 2026 1pm EST on Zoom**

[Register Now!](#)

## 2026 Rural Resources Fair



The 4th Annual Rural Resources Fair, hosted by Senator May and the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources is an annual event brings together more than 60 rural organizations from across New York State to connect directly with legislators and staff and advocate for issues impacting rural communities.

The Fair will be held **March 25, 2026** in the Well of the Legislative Office Building (198 State St.) in Albany. The event is free and open to the public, it is primarily designed for rural stakeholders, legislators, and legislative staff. NYSARH is excited attend this impactful event.

Attendees will have the opportunity to learn more about the unique needs, challenges, and strengths of rural communities and help ensure they receive the recognition and support they deserve.

## NYSARH Member Benefits Update

### New Member Benefit: Policy Resources!

We're excited to introduce an impactful new member benefit, the NYSARH Policy Resources Page, designed to strengthen your advocacy efforts and keep you informed on key rural health priorities.

capacity: purchase new or replacement medical equipment and enhance the use of technology.

NYSARH respectfully requests a Legislative Add-on provide a 5% additional investment of \$470,500 in the final enacted budget.

janiya@nysarh.org | 518-524-3298 | For more info visit nysarh.org

### Advocacy Toolkit

- [NYSARH Meeting Request Template](#)
- [NYSARH Policy Priorities Training Recording](#)

### Access:

- Budget & Legislative Priorities
- Issue Briefs
- Advocacy Toolkit & training recordings
- NYS Government 101 Series
- 2024 & 2025 Policy Forum recordings

**Reminder:** You must be logged into your Wild Apricot account to view these exclusive resources!

### New York State Government 101 Series

- [NYS Policy & Advocacy: Understanding Policy & Advocacy Recording](#)
- [New York State Budget Process Recording](#)
- [Policy Design 1 Recording](#)
- [Policy Design 2 Recording](#)
- [New York State Policy Advocacy Pathways \(Part I\) Recording](#)
- [New York State Policy Advocacy Pathways \(Part II\) Recording](#)



### Problem, Path, Policy Ask

How to craft your story, click on each issue area to download

- [Rural Health Transformation Program](#)
- [Hold Harmless: Article 6 Funding](#)
- [Support for First Responders](#)
- [Address Healthcare Workforce Shortage](#)

## NYSARH POLICY FORUMS

Not a member? [Join Today!](#)

If you have trouble logging in your Wild Apricot account please email [janiya@nysarh.org](mailto:janiya@nysarh.org).

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**2026 RURAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM**

**SEPT 17** & **SEPT 18**

Join us in Clayton, NY at the Thousand Island Harbor Hotel

*mark your calendar!*

The NYSARH Annual Symposium is a premier gathering for healthcare, public health, and key stakeholders interested in rural health innovations.

**NYS ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL HEALTH**  
Advocate • Support • Grow



NYSARH.ORG

## Executive Director's Corner by Jennifer Muthig



This month I spent time in Albany meeting with legislators and staff to talk about the importance of rural health programs across New York. NYSARH is grateful for such wonderful partners such as my Assemblymember Carrie Woerner, Chair of the Assembly Racing & Wagering Committee. It was a great opportunity to share how the Rural Health Network Development and Rural Health Care Access Development Programs make a real difference in the communities we serve.

Across the state, 31 Rural Health Networks and 44 Rural Health Care Access Hospitals, funded through the NYS Department of Health's Charles D. Cook Office of Rural Health, are delivering locally designed, community-driven solutions.

These programs help connect residents to transportation, healthy food, health education, care navigation, and other supports that improve health outcomes in rural communities. They are also powerful economic drivers. Last year, \$6 million in Rural Health Network funding leveraged more than \$80 million in additional grants and supported over 325 jobs statewide.

Despite their impact, funding for these programs has declined significantly over the past decade. Our conversations collectively with our elected officials should focus on ensuring policymakers understand both the value of these programs and the growing need for investment in rural health. As our budget call to action for NYSARH, please call your Assemblymember and State Senator and ask them to preserve funding for Rural Health Network Development and Rural Health Care Access Development Programs.

Advocating for rural communities is always energizing, and I'm grateful for the partners and leaders who continue to champion this work.