THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL HEALTH

NOVEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Celebrating National Rural Health Day: Honoring Rural Health Champions

National Rural Health Day is almost here! On November 19, the New York State Association for Rural Health joins communities nationwide in recognizing the individuals, organizations, and programs making a lasting difference in rural healthcare.

This year, we will celebrate outstanding rural health champions during our **2026 Rural Health Awards Ceremony at 12:00 PM, followed by a special National Rural Health Day Webinar at 1:00 PM.**

We are proud to recognize our 2026 award recipients:



Dr. Gary Ogden Practitioner of the Year Award: Ellen Hey, FNP: Recognizing exceptional dedication to patient care and rural communities.

Outstanding Rural Health Program Award: Community Garden: Honoring an innovative community program making a meaningful impact on rural health.



Senator Patricia McGee Rural Health Worker Award: Kevin Kerwin: Celebrating outstanding service and advocacy for rural New Yorkers.

National Rural Health Day Webinar: Strengthening Rural Clinical Education



Holly Andrilla, MS

Deputy Director, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center
University of Washington

November 19, 2026 | 1:00 PM

Join NYSARH for a special webinar exploring rural clinical training trends, workforce challenges, and strategies to expand healthcare education opportunities in rural communities.

Learn about challenges facing rural clinical education and practical solutions to strengthen the future rural healthcare workforce.

Register for the Awards & Webinar



Natalia Oster, PhD

Research Scientist, WWAMI Rural Health Research Center
University of Washington

THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL HEALTH



NEW! OARS Resource Guide

Explore the free OARS Resource Guide, part of our Advocacy & Education Toolkit! This resource provides community members, students, and professionals with information on healthy aging, mental health, health career development, and more.

Explore the Resource Guide

November 18, 2026 | 8:30 AM–5:00 PM
Diamond Point, NY
Hosted by NY FarmNet and Hillview Free Library.
Registration Deadline: November 4, 2026.
Register Here

These trainings provide valuable opportunities to build mental health awareness and strengthen support within rural communities.





OARS Online Learning Platform: Access FREE self-paced, on-demand training in rural health, aging, and mental wellbeing topics at https://nysarh.org/oars. CEUs available for select health professions through most training modules. Questions? Contact info@nysarh.org.

THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL HEALTH

Supporting Older Adult Care in Rural Communities

NYSARH's OARS program is partnering with Northern Area Health Education Center (NAHEC) for a Dinner and Roundtable for Older Adult Care on November 9, 2026, from 5:30–7:30 PM at Heartwood Hall in Potsdam, NY.

This free event will feature Greg Olsen, Director of the NYS Office for the Aging; Becky Preve, Executive Director of the Association on Aging in NY; Susan Schrader, Program Director at Community Health Center of the North Country; and Jayme Smith, Senior Director of Operations at Rochester Regional Health.

Attendees will join local providers and community partners to discuss challenges facing older adults in rural communities, including social isolation, transportation, technology, workforce needs, and mental health stigma. Together, participants will explore ways to strengthen services and support for older adults across the North Country.

Space is limited, registration is required!

View Event Flyer & Registration Details

NYSARH RaP Fellowship Accepting Applications

Apply now for the NYSARH Research and Policy (RaP) Fellowship, focused on improving older adult rural health in New York.

This virtual program offers mentorship, a $500/month stipend, and hands-on advocacy experience for graduate students and early-career professionals. Don't miss your chance to make a difference, click the button below to register!

Apply Here!

Executive Director's Corner by Jennifer Muthig

As we celebrate National Rural Health Day, I thank NYSARH's members and partners for their dedication to rural health. Congratulations to our award winners, and thank you to everyone who submitted nominations!

We are preparing for the 2027 legislative session and educating Congress about the impacts of H.R. 1 on rural communities. I also encourage everyone to make their voices heard this Election Day.

I am honored to join the Rural Health Transformation External Advisory Workgroup, where I will help ensure rural perspectives are represented. Please continue sharing your questions and ideas as we move forward. Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to rural New York!

THE NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION FOR RURAL HEALTH

Meet NYSARH's New Board Members

NYSARH is pleased to welcome four new members to its Board of Directors! Each brings valuable expertise in healthcare leadership, public health, behavioral health, and community engagement. Their experience will help advance NYSARH's mission to improve the health and well-being of rural New Yorkers.

Steven J. Harvey, Ph.D.



Integrity Partners for Behavioral Health IPA

Dr. Harvey brings over 30 years of experience in behavioral health and nonprofit leadership. His expertise in partnerships, data analytics, and integrated care will help strengthen rural behavioral health services.

Elizabeth L. Phillips, MPH, MCHES®



Sun River Health

Elizabeth brings over 26 years of experience in community health and patient engagement. Her leadership in prevention, health education, and improving access to care will help strengthen rural communities.

Annette Marshall



UVM Health–Alice Hyde Medical Center

Annette brings over 20 years of experience in rural healthcare and community health improvement. Her leadership in strategic planning and organizational sustainability will help strengthen healthcare services across rural communities.

Allison Roselle



Jefferson County Public Health Service

Allison brings experience in population health, maternal and child health, and community-based programs. Her leadership in collaboration, health equity, and strengthening local health systems will help improve rural health outcomes.

Funding Opportunity

NYS Licensed Social Worker Loan Forgiveness Program

New York State is offering student loan forgiveness to eligible licensed social workers who provide critical services in underserved communities, including rural areas.

The program helps reduce student loan debt while encouraging social workers to continue serving communities with significant mental and behavioral health needs.

Application Deadline: November 13, 2026

Learn More