

2020/2021 INITIATIVES GUIDE TO

# Fulton County, NY

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JOHNSTOWN, NEW YORK 12095

*Board of Supervisors*

*Telephone (518) 736-5540  
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Dear Readers:

On behalf of the Fulton County Board of Supervisors, I am pleased to introduce you to the *Initiatives Guide to Fulton County*. Fulton County is a great place to live and we have an excellent team of professionals that will help your business succeed.

Our location is a strategic one — beautiful Adirondack landscapes and exceptional outdoor recreation combined with access to markets and world-class technology. Local government here is pro-business and we have invested heavily to improve infrastructure and create financial incentives. Our Industrial Development Agency and Center for Regional Growth are a great partnership with resources for any new venture, whether it be start-up or expansion. The Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce is one of the best business networks in the northeast. Our communities are open to growth and have established a streamlined schedule to expedite any permitting and siting that may be necessary.

Many fantastic brands have prospered in our region. Taylor Made, Benjamin Moore Paints, Townsend Leather and FAGE Yogurt are just a few of the companies excelling here. Many smaller firms, like Century Linen, Antonucci's Produce, Brown's Ford, Ruby and Quiri Furniture and Lanzi Family restaurants were born here and have perfected their business models here.

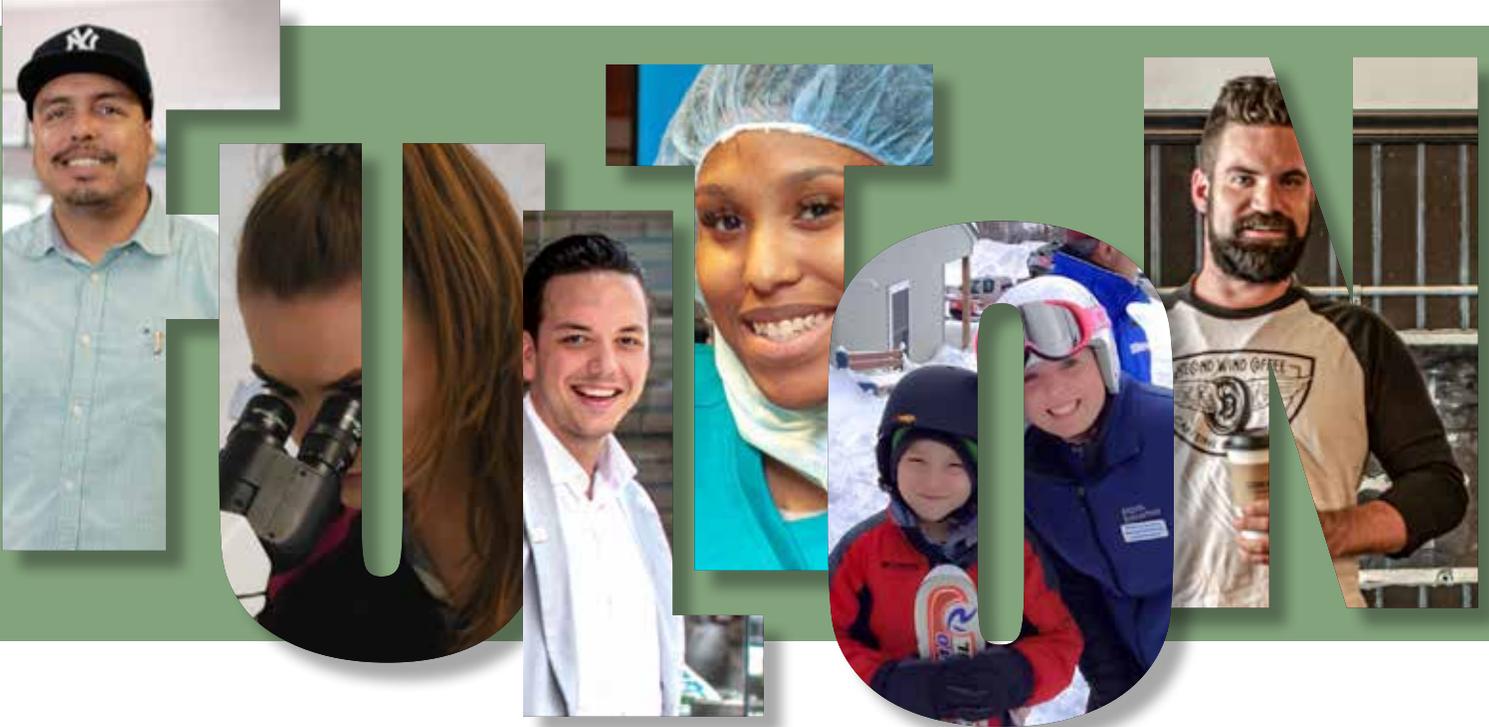
If you're looking for a way to balance work and play, but you don't want to travel back and forth on a "teeter-totter", check out Fulton County. It's a great place to call home.

Sincerely,

  
Warren Greene  
Chairman of the Board



# WELCOME TO FULTON COUNTY!



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# Initiatives Guide 2020/2021

The Center for Regional Growth should be the first stop for any business that's coming into the area and looking for economic development assistance.

– Ron Peters (page 6)

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# WELCOME!



**The most important thing I want you to know about the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth is that we want to be your partner. We want to help you succeed in your business venture.**

The Center for Regional Growth should be the first stop for any business that's coming into the area and looking for economic development assistance. We provide comprehensive solutions to meet all of a company's needs. The Center for Regional Growth has local, state, national and international reach, and our staff has a multitude of business-development resources coupled with a passion for economic growth. It's a winning combination that facilitates a company's entrée into Fulton County.

Our economic development specialists seek out local and federal grants for business startup and expansion. Recently, CRG assisted a local

company that applied for and won a \$2M grant toward expanding its manufacturing facilities. This is just one example of the millions of dollars of funding that CRG helps companies in Fulton County secure for their growth or initial startup. We specialize in finding any available funding that will meet a business's needs, helping to put together all the financial pieces for a company's project. Our staff works tirelessly to help companies find the buildings and properties that meet their current needs while taking future expansion into account.

Facilitating CRG's efforts are our strong working relationships with the elected officials who serve the county and state. These officials, with their pro-business attitudes, work with us to foster corporate growth in the area.

The creativity of CRG's staff has been a major part of our organization's success. Our top-notch employees have a can-do attitude when it comes to helping businesses. We bring together anything a corporation would need to bring its project to fruition.

Augmenting the tangible benefits offered by the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth is the dedication to growth that defines this organization. We want your business and are prepared to do what it takes to make your transition to the county a smooth and successful one. There's a certain passion that we have in Fulton County. I invite you to experience it for yourself. You'll be glad you did.

Ron Peters  
President and CEO  
Fulton County Center for Regional Growth

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The Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce is embracing its mission to promote economic growth in the Mohawk Valley through a variety of programs and initiatives designed to help businesses succeed.

Helping businesses find funding for startup and expansion is one of the ways that the chamber promotes growth. Through the Downtown Association for Business, the chamber has its own loan pool that helps to finance businesses in downtown Amsterdam, New York. It also administers the loan pool for the Gloversville Economic Development Corporation, facilitating the needs of businesses in this Fulton County city. Applications continue to come in, despite the pandemic.

“People right now aren’t being hindered by the coronavirus,” said president and CEO Mark Kilmer. “They are looking at expanding new businesses now,” he said.

Another way that the chamber fosters economic growth in the region is through its tourism promotion. It markets both counties through the “I Love NY” program. One of the highlights of this promotion is the annual Walleye Challenge on the Great Sacandaga Lake, an event that attracts fishermen from about 17 states around the country. According to Kilmer, the event brings about 5,000 people to Fulton County along with over half a million dollars of revenue. In 2020, organizers expanded the event to include the “Walleye Awakening” on the night before the main event, where people braved cold temperatures to listen to bands and watch fireworks.



The chamber successfully lured a crew from the TV show “Fishing University” to the area to film three episodes. “Fishing University” airs on the Outdoor Channel Plus. The producer was pleased with the fishing and the beauty of the region’s 44 lakes, but he was particularly impressed with the people, Kilmer said.

The chamber’s tourism promotion has a positive economic impact. “When people walk away from those events, they have a good feeling about Fulton County,” Kilmer said, noting that they might consider moving their families or businesses to the area.

“Everything that we do promotes economic development one way or the other. Our mission is to promote economic development—to be the voice of business and tourism development for the growth of the community and the region,” Kilmer said.

[www.fultonmontgomeryny.org](http://www.fultonmontgomeryny.org)



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## Fulton County, Then and Now

**T**here was a time when you couldn't walk around Gloversville or Johnstown without knowing that the major industry there was the crafting of gloves and mittens. In fact, in the 1800s, glove manufacturing grew so rapidly that it overshadowed all other industries in Fulton County, and Johnstown became a leather tanning center.

Dozens of glove manufacturing companies as well as leather tanners and finishers fueled the county's economy, employing thousands of workers. Many of these workers were Italian and Jewish immigrants who made gloves in their countries of origin and came to Fulton County when they heard about the available jobs.

Women sewed gloves together at home after men cut them out in the factories. When manufacturers switched to electric sewing machines, women went to work in the factories. By the turn of the 20th century, 57 percent of all gloves manufactured in the United States were produced in Fulton County. In 1912, Gloversville High School added courses to train students to work in the glove manufacturing industry, since Johnstown and Gloversville, given the sobriquet "Glove Cities," had become the glove-making capital of the world.

Ancillary businesses sprung up around the glove-making industry, including box manufacturers, thread dealers, sewing machine repairmen, and chemical companies.

Johnstown resident Charles Knox took advantage of a by-product of the tanning industry by forming Knox Gelatine in 1890. He soon became known for his discovery of how to make a granulated form of gelatin.

World War II was a boon for the glove-making industry, as most of the black military gloves worn by servicemen were produced in Fulton County. However, after this time, the industry began to decline, as manufacturers, lured by lower wages, moved their operations overseas. Environmental regulations, as well as changes in tariffs, taxes, and fashion also contributed to the waning of the industry.



The decline was a slow one. In 1986, New York was still the leading tanning and glove-making state, and the industry employed two-thirds of Fulton County's workforce.



Unless otherwise noted all images are from the collection of the Fulton County Historical Society, Gloversville, NY.

Today, several leather companies that have distinguished themselves in niche markets remain; however, the leather industry no longer defines Fulton County. This has given the residents and businesses in the county a grand opportunity to effect a renaissance of the places where they live and work while maintaining the close-knit, connected community culture that thrives on cooperation and sets the county apart from other communities.

“We’re reinventing ourselves, because we can’t go back to being a glove-making town, just like Troy is not going to be ‘Collar City’ again,” said Samantha Hall-Saladino, executive director of the Fulton County Historical Society.

History is a springboard for the revitalization that is now taking place in the county, driven by its citizenry. “People saw something in Fulton County when they came here, and we can harness that,” Hall-Saladino said.

That is exactly what has been taking place in the county. No longer defined by the leather and glove industry, the county is now a multi-industry cluster county with major national and international companies like Walmart, Crystal Geyser Alpine Spring Water, Fage USA, Benjamin Moore, Taylor Made, Pioneer Windows, and Townsend Leather, to name a few. “We have a multi-disciplined corporate base which has evolved from the history of the glove industry,” said Ron Peters, president and CEO of the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth.

The county’s history is a great benefit for today’s industry. “What that history produced was a great work ethic, and that has carried forward,” he said.

Hall-Saladino would agree. “We’re using that history to propel us forward, bringing in new business while still recognizing that heritage we have here in Fulton County,” she said.

The county’s history is a great benefit for today’s industry. “What that history produced was a great work ethic, and that has carried forward.”



Photo restoration by Janene Bouck, [www.silentjanesalvage.com](http://www.silentjanesalvage.com)



## Building a Future on the Past: *Niche Market Fits Townsend Leather Like a Glove*

When the leather industry in Fulton County faltered, Townsend Leather was the exception. It thrived and continues to do so.

Through its innovation and commitment to the community where the Kucel family founded the company over half a century ago, Townsend Leather has distinguished itself in the global market for custom, high-end, innovative leather products for a variety of industries. As it did throughout its history, the company continues to expand and reinvest in the local community while taking its place as an industry innovator.

Townsend's success is due largely to the company's ability to adapt to the changing marketplace. When it was founded in 1969, the company's initial production dealt with finishing Argentine crust leathers for the garment industry. The process expanded to add tanning and coloring in addition to finishing all types of leathers for the garment industry including, cowhide, sheepskin, goatskin, deerskin, pigskin, and stingray. When the garment industry moved to Asia, Townsend shifted its focus to leathers for the shoe industry. This industry moved to Asia as well, so the company transitioned to coloring and finishing of leather for the aviation, architecture and design, and home furnishings industries. Currently, Townsend focuses their efforts on customization for these industries as well as other niche markets.

When Townsend was seeking to expand once again a few years ago, company executives made the decision to improve the community and set an example for other companies about what is



**“We could have looked outside of the county, but we wanted to help revitalize and reinvest into our area.”**



possible, while meeting its own needs for additional space. “We could have looked outside of the county, but we wanted to help revitalize and reinvest into our area,” said Tim Beckett, senior vice president at Townsend.

Instead of constructing a new facility, Townsend's staff searched throughout Fulton County until they found a building that could serve this dual purpose: provide the space the company needed

while making a significant contribution to rebuilding the community. “We wanted to help, to be a part of the story of downtown revitalization, to make it a better place to live for everybody,” Beckett said.

Townsend’s search led them to the former Diana Knitting Mill, an industrial structure built in 1900 that had been vacant for 17 years. As an added benefit, the property was already near Townsend’s manufacturing building.

During a 13-month construction process, Townsend brought the former Diana Knitting Mill back to life, closely following historical site guidelines and reusing as many materials as possible, including reclaimed doors, wall tiles, and sinks. When they had to replace items, used items were the company’s first choice, and if not available, it purchased environmentally friendly products. During the renovation, which cost over \$3 million, the building was outfitted with a new roof, electrical system, windows, HVAC system, and interior finishes. The City of Johnstown and the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth, working with Townsend, acquired a \$1M grant from Empire State Development for the project.

Townsend transformed the 62,000 square feet of space into warehouse and office space for the growing company. It currently occupies 45,000 square feet and leases 4,000 square feet to a tenant. They are also looking at the possibility of bringing a restaurant into the building. “We decided that it’s beautiful and needed a little bit of love and charm, but it was definitely worth



Part of the reason that the construction was completed so quickly was the comity between Townsend and local and state government. Beckett found government officials straightforward and quick to respond to questions. He also said that obtaining permits in Johnstown is an easy process. “It’s not done like this anywhere else,” he said. “We can have a conversation with all the governmental entities almost immediately,” he said.

Another reason why Townsend remained in Johnstown, even though only one percent of its market is in New York State and much of the leather business went abroad, is due to the workforce. “There’s manufacturing knowledge base here where people can work, and they understand and produce things,” Beckett said. “We have a very low turnover rate, and people like to work,” he said, noting that the company focuses heavily on employees and company culture.

Townsend has also taken advantage of offerings from the Advanced Institute for Manufacturing (AIM) at nearby Mohawk Valley Community College. They have used AIM’s programs for leadership training, lean manufacturing, cyber security, and AS9100 certification training for companies that design and manufacture products for the aerospace industry.

Fulton County’s community-oriented atmosphere helps to create a high quality of living for Townsend’s employees, and Townsend embraces that community spirit. “We pride ourselves in the quality of our facility, of people, of products,” Beckett said. “We’re a part of the fabric of the local community, of making positive change, and that’s nice.”

[www.townsendleather.com](http://www.townsendleather.com)

*photos courtesy of Townsend Leather*



it,” Beckett said. They gave the building the name “The Stitch” because of its history of stitching and knitting and because it symbolizes how the company has stitched together its past and its future.



# DRINK **GOOD** BEER WITH **GOOD** FRIENDS!

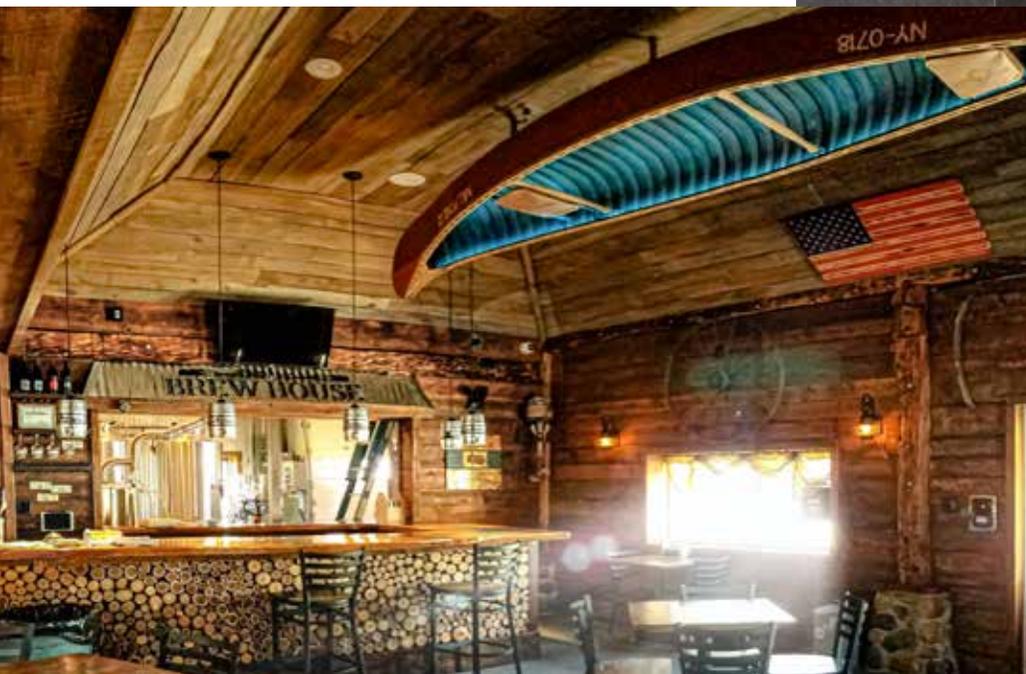
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hen the United States Army stationed him in Germany in the 1980s, Erik Stevens had the opportunity to taste some great German beer. When he returned to the states, he found himself disappointed with the offerings here. “It was not easy to get good beer over here at the time, and craft beer wasn’t readily available,” Stevens said.

That prompted him to start brewing his own beer in 1988. When he retired from the Army after two combat tours in Iraq, he returned to his hometown of Broadalbin and decided to create a place where people could gather, relax, and enjoy a variety of fine craft beers. Stevens founded the Great Sacandaga Brewing

Company and plans to open its taproom by the end of 2020.

Stevens found local, county, and state government extremely receptive to his plan. “They’ve been very helpful and cooperative throughout the process,” Stevens said. The Fulton County Center for Regional Growth (FCCRG) assisted Stevens in acquiring a \$25,000 microenterprise grant from the New York State Community Development Block Grant Program. In addition, the FCCRG worked with Stevens to procure two small business loans.



He was able to purchase an older building in Broadalbin and completely renovate it, stripping it down to the studs. Stevens, an electrician by trade, was no stranger to this type of work. “We wanted to raise the ceilings to get a little bit more space and an Adirondack lodge-type of feel,” he said.

The décor furthers the feel. Stevens found an elk’s head at a local antique



shop, and he designed the fireplace around that piece. A carving of a northern pike that hangs on the wall came from a local seller. Rounding out the Adirondack vibe is the front of the bar, which is covered with tree-trunk rounds that came from trees he took down on the property.

“We want to have a comfortable space for people to just gather together,” Stevens said. “Hopefully, businesses will be able to hold their meetings here, or we can do events, but it will just be a community gathering place to enjoy some decent beer.”

Stevens plans on a beer selection with something to suit everybody, all made from New York State grains and hops. He has some IPA’s in the works, as well as the sour beers that have become popular with the younger generation, and English-style beers that he enjoys. The selection wouldn’t be complete without beers made from the traditional recipes like the ones he sampled in Germany that sparked the whole idea of brewing beer at home and now at the Great Sacandaga Brewing Co. In addition to standard recipes, Stevens also plans to offer



“We want to have a comfortable space for people to just gather together,” Stevens said.

some of his seasonal beers to keep his menu fresh, such as an Oktoberfest beer for fall and a spruce ale for the winter. “We want to have a little bit of everything for everybody to enjoy,” he said.

Stevens’ wife, Jerrienne, will be working alongside him, running the brewery’s taproom, planning events, and scheduling entertainment. The brewery doesn’t have a kitchen, so Stevens plans to bring in food trucks and perhaps have some prepared finger foods and

appetizers available to go with the brew.

He hopes that the brewery will become an area landmark. “People can come in and taste our beers in the tasting room and then walk out with a couple of growlers or crows,” Stevens said. Eventually, he plans to distribute his beers to local bars and restaurants.

[www.greatsacandagabrewing.com](http://www.greatsacandagabrewing.com)



# CAROGA ARTS COLLECTIVE WELCOMES THE WORLD

Each summer, over one hundred world-class musicians from around the globe flock to the shores of Caroga Lake for one purpose: to share music with the community.

They come from places like Brazil, Korea, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Finland, Portugal, and Canada, as well as from 22 states. They play with such well-known organizations as the Seattle Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble. Over the course of a summer, they'll present 40 performances, drawing over 6,500 audience members to enjoy an eclectic mix of genres including classical, bluegrass, jazz, and pop.

The Caroga Lake Music Festival had simple beginnings. Kyle Barrett Price, who grew up visiting his grandmother's home on the lake, made a casual invitation to eight of his musician friends. He asked them to travel to Caroga Lake to play free concerts for a week. Encouraged by the community's responsiveness, Price, a professional cellist who founded the KASA Quartet and tours around the world, grew these initial efforts



**“It’s our way of reaching out to the community and coming to them.”**



into the summer-long festival and founded the nonprofit organization, the Caroga Arts Collective (CAC). While the CAC's hub is Caroga Lake, performances take place throughout New York's Capital District and Mohawk Valley Region. Musicians literally take music out into the community to a diverse mix of venues, including unconventional spaces such as a floating pontoon behind a store on the lake. "People sit on the beach or pull up their boats and listen to us play," said Price, who serves as the CAC's executive and artistic director, "We go to anything from concert halls to churches to bars



to barges. It's a huge mix, and it's our way of reaching out to the community and coming to them," said Price, noting that the concerts have connected people from different cities and towns, creating a larger sense of community overall.

Most of the concerts are free, and when the festival brings in a big name, such as Sawyer Fredericks, 2015 winner of NBC's "The Voice," organizers keep ticket prices as low as possible. In addition to the concerts, the CAC hosts the MyHil Film Series, gallery openings, and collaborative events with dance companies.

The CAC is also the home of the National Summer Cello Institute, where professors from The Julliard School, Eastman School of Music and University of Wisconsin at Madison instruct 25 top cellists from around the country.

Expanding beyond music, the CAC hosts the InterArts Symposium where 10 artists, some from as far as

California, come together to collaborate with other visiting artists and community members. They share their film, visual art, poetry, and music through special events.

"We really thrive on the support of the community through donations and for getting their interest of what

continued

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they like and essentially just creating a really accessible experience that goes along with the intimate backdrop of the Adirondacks,” Price said.

There is only growth on the horizon for the CAC, with the donation of two historic properties to the organization. The most recent is the former Sherman’s Amusement Park that opened in 1921 and became an icon of the lake’s western shore, with its Ferris wheel, carousel, and concerts in the pavilion.

The CAC is bringing Sherman’s back to its roots as it turns the park into a first-rate performance venue for music, using the old bumper-car arcade on the water’s edge. An adjacent building will be converted into a space for presentations, classrooms, and community use. The organization plans to have the carousel, with its camels, zebras, roosters, and other animals, up and running again soon. It is still housed in its original 12-sided structure. Stained-glass windows, crafted by Don Dwyer of Adirondack Stained

business, and life to the area,” he said, noting that the CAC has created a great deal of momentum and excitement around the concept of “reigniting the Caroga experience.” The organization plans to build on that momentum in 2021 when Sherman’s Amusement Park celebrates its centennial and the CAC its tenth year.

The second parcel of historic property donated to the organization is MyHil, the former 10-acre estate of the Schine theater-magnate family. The Schines hosted Hollywood stars for private screenings of new movies. Price reimagines the property as a campus with housing



**“We’re breathing new life into a gem of the area.”**

Glass in Gloversville, were installed in the 1980’s, adding to its vintage charm.

Price sees the CAC’s potential as an economic and cultural catalyst for the area. “I think Sherman’s is a central factor to that,” Price said. “By creating world-class attractions and events there, we were able to put it back on the map and to attract that culture,

for resident artists, rehearsal spaces, and a small performance venue. Currently, local residents house guest artists.

“We’re breathing new life into a gem of the area,” said CAC’s general manager, Torrance Fish. “I’m excited to be able to be a part of not only helping something that’s historically significant, but adding to the culture of the area,” he said.

[www.carogaarts.org](http://www.carogaarts.org)

# THE HEART OF THE NANO-TECH TRIANGLE

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## Albany - SUNY Polytechnic



# LIVE • WORK • PLAY ADK

Fulton County abounds in history, the arts, recreational opportunities, great places to be active, and affordable, housing. Here is just a small sample of what the county has to offer.

## RELAX AND HAVE FUN

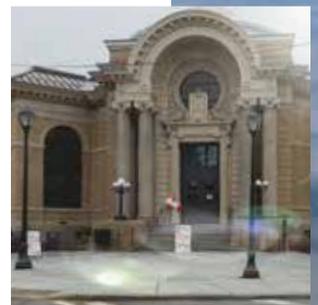
**Lanzi's on the Lake Restaurant & Marina** - A five-generation, family-owned restaurant serving homemade Italian cuisine, steak, and seafood, Lanzi's patrons enjoy waterfront dining with a spectacular view of the Great Sacandaga Lake. Even in colder weather, Lanzi's is a gathering place, with its warm stone fireplace, providing a relaxing setting to warm up after a day of skiing, ice fishing, or snowmobiling on the lake. [www.lanzisonthelake.com](http://www.lanzisonthelake.com)

Customers enjoy everything from casual fare to fine dining and Tuesday "theme nights" in the 1798 **Union Hall Inn** in Johnstown. The post-Revolutionary War tavern is on the Register of Historic Places.

Broadalbin is home to **Ozoner 29 Drive-In Theatre**. Nestled in a wooded area, two screens are host to an assortment of films that draw locals and vacationers alike for an outdoor cinema experience. Ozoner 29 also hosts concerts and its own rock 'n' roll Ozoner Band. October brings the Halloween Scare-a-Thon: a triple feature of horror flicks. [www.ozoner29elranchodriveins.com](http://www.ozoner29elranchodriveins.com)

**Adirondack Animal Land** is an 80-acre, family-owned wildlife park that is home to over 500 animals from across the globe, from the common to the exotic. Visitors can take a safari ride in a 45-acre area where animals roam free, interact with animals in a petting zoo, walk through an aviary, and have some fun in various play areas. When they get hungry, visitors can enjoy a homemade picnic, or have a meal at the Country Café.

On weekends at **Caroga Creek Racepark** in Ephratah, spectators can watch go-kart races on a 1/8-mile clay track. Under new ownership in 2020, the park offers Slingshot, Excel 600 Modified, and Kart Racing every Saturday afternoon.



## THE ARTS

**The Gloversville Civic Band and Johnstown Civic Band** are groups of locals who come together to perform free outdoor concerts during the summer in their respective city, offering a creative outlet and entertainment for residents.

**The Perrella Art Gallery & Sculpture Garden** at Fulton Montgomery Community College features rotating art exhibits by students as well as local, national, and international artists.

**The Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts** in Gloversville hosts art exhibitions, including the New York State Summer Art Show featuring work from artists across the state. The center also provides instruction in visual, performing, and culinary arts.

**The Colonial Little Theatre** in Johnstown is one of the oldest community theaters in New York State. Residents share their talents with the community in a variety of musical theater shows.

**The ShoeLeather Express** in Gloversville is a center for modern western square and rounding dancing, hosting dances, workshops, lessons, and parties for dance enthusiasts.

**The Fulton Montgomery Quilt Barn Trail** is part of a national movement and features 158 locations that display quilt squares crafted from wood and paint, mounted on the outside of local buildings. While driving the trail, there are opportunities to visit historic sites and sample local cuisine.

## GET ACTIVE

**The Fulton County YMCA** offers an Olympic sized swimming pool, tennis courts, a wellness center, childcare, and more. The facility is located in a newly renovated



factory and was funded largely through a community-driven capital campaign.

**Bike Thru History.** If you're looking to combine some exercise with a history lesson, the Mohawk Valley Region Path Through History website is a great place to find an itinerary. It details bike routes that lead from one historic place to another, searchable by county. For example, Fulton County rides include a route from the **Caroga Historical Association and Museum** to the **Paul Bradt Museum in Northville**, another from the **Fulton County Museum** to **Johnson Hall**, and an out and back ride originating from **Peck's Lake School House** and traversing the shorelines of the lake. Montgomery County rides include a **Canajoharie Loop** that goes by the **Arkell Museum** and the **Van Alstyne Homestead Society**, another from Canajoharie to Fort Plain that passes by several historic sites, and a route from the **Schoharie Crossing Historic Site** to the **Kateri Tekakwitha Shrine**. All listings have distance and difficulty information.

[www.mohawkvalleyhistory.com/bike-thru-history](http://www.mohawkvalleyhistory.com/bike-thru-history)

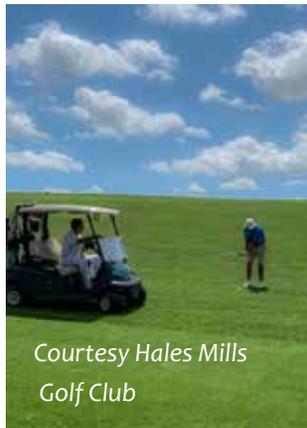
**Fonda, Johnstown, & Gloversville Rail Trail (FJ & G Rail Trail).** This is an asphalt trail for foot or bicycle, built on the former roadbed of the Fonda, Johnstown & Gloversville Railroad, which once served communities from Schenectady northwest and north to the lower Adirondacks. There are two sections of the trail. The main, eight-mile section runs from Johnstown to Mayfield via Gloversville along parts of the Cayadutta Creek. The other two-mile segment of the trail goes from the Fulton County Visitors Center at the intersection of State Routes 29 and 30 east to S. 2nd

continued

Street, with another short segment that heads west from the visitors center. Information about the trail can be found at [www.44lakes.com/things-to-do/fj-g-rail-trail/](http://www.44lakes.com/things-to-do/fj-g-rail-trail/).

**Willie Wildlife Marsh.** Three years ago, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation completed a \$390,000 upgrade to the Willie Wildlife Marsh Interpretive Trail in Peck Hill State Forest in Johnstown. This is a great family-friendly place to get out and explore wildlife and native plant life. The project included replacing three of the boardwalks that allow visitors the opportunity to walk across the marsh to observe wildlife, including great blue herons, painted turtles, frogs, and dragonflies. A 1.5-mile foot trail through the marsh also received a makeover, and the state added a 0.4-mile accessible trail leading to a viewing platform and picnic area. Visitors can download a map of the marsh at [www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions\\_pdf/mapwilliemarsh.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/regions_pdf/mapwilliemarsh.pdf).

**The Adirondack Park.** Fifty-nine percent of New York State's famed Adirondack Park is located in Fulton County, offering visitors 533 square miles to explore. There are numerous places to take part in outdoor activities year-round on its trails and water features. Just one example is the family-friendly **Kane Mountain**, in the town of Caroga. There are two options for hiking to the summit of this 600-foot mountain, which features a fire tower built in 1925 and restored in 2003. One is a 2.3-mile loop trail, and the other is an out-and-back 1.6-mile trail. On wetter days, the trail abounds with orange salamanders. At the summit, the old fire observer's cabin sits at the base of the 60-foot fire tower. From the top of the



Courtesy Hales Mills Golf Club



tower, visitors can see spectacular views of the Canada Lake region, Silver Lake Wilderness, and Peck and Caroga lakes, as well as the Mohawk Valley on clear days. Cross-country skiers also enjoy the trail during the winter.

**Royal Mountain Ski Area.** This resort offers visitors great recreational opportunities. Royal Mountain operates a motocross track in warmer months. When the mercury drops, it transforms into a downhill ski facility with a ski lift and 13 trails for all ability levels. [www.royalmountain.com](http://www.royalmountain.com)

**Snowmobiling** is huge in Fulton County. Between Fulton and neighboring Montgomery County, there are over 400 miles of snowmobile trails and numerous clubs for snowmobile enthusiasts. [www.44lakes.com/things-to-do/?cat=Winter+Activities&subcat=Snowmobiling](http://www.44lakes.com/things-to-do/?cat=Winter+Activities&subcat=Snowmobiling)

## GET CULTURED

**Johnson Hall State Historic Site** in Johnstown was the former 1763 Georgian-style home of Sir William Johnson, the Irish immigrant for which the city was named, and his wife, Molly Brant of the Mohawk Tribe, and their eight children. Johnson (1715-1774) was influential in helping the British triumph over France for control of North America. Johnson Hall is just one of many early American historical sites in Fulton County. <https://parks.ny.gov/historic-sites/10/details.aspx>

**The Fulton County Museum** hosts exhibits and events to showcase the county's rich history in Native American and colonial life and its roots in agriculture, industry, and leather-making.

Highlights include exhibits of local history in sports, military, schools, technology, the FJ&G Railroad, public service, business, and more. Open May through October. [www.fultoncountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.fultoncountyhistoricalsociety.org)

**The Elizabeth Cady Stanton Women’s Consortium** and the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Hometown Association highlight the role of this Johnstown native in the Women’s Suffrage movement. The consortium is dedicated to providing a forum for discussion of women and community issues. The organization supports women’s education, history, culture, leadership, and equity through a variety of activities. Centered in the home of Stanton’s birthplace, the association honors Stanton’s life and legacy through community service, educational activities, and by fostering charitable outreach on behalf of women of all ages. [www.ecswc.org](http://www.ecswc.org) and [www.ecstantonhometown.org](http://www.ecstantonhometown.org)

## HOUSING

Fulton County is an affordable place to live. “There’s definitely an affordability index that makes it more worth your while,” said RJ Long, managing partner of Coldwell Banker Prime Properties in Upstate New York. “There’s about a 20 percent difference, sometimes, 25 percent difference in the cost of homes,” he said. The average sales price for a home in the Greater Capital Region is \$190,000 to the \$210,000s, but just to the west in Fulton County, the average price of a home is under \$150,000. New construction is on the rise in all markets, including Fulton County. Houses and apartments from one to three bedrooms rent anywhere from \$750 to \$1,400 per month.



## HEALTHCARE

Two major healthcare systems serve Fulton County. **Nathan Littauer Hospital** has 74 acute care beds and a skilled nursing facility that houses 84 residents. Over its 126 year history, the hospital has expanded its services to include satellite centers in 11 communities throughout the region, expanded its emergency departments, added a surgery center in Johnstown, opened a sleep disorders center, and built a new MRI building and dialysis center. As a small community hospital, Nathan Littauer focuses heavily on the doctor-patient relationship. [www.nlh.org](http://www.nlh.org)

*“Nathan Littauer has a track record of providing safe, high-quality health and wellness services to its community.”*

President & CEO Sean M. Fadale.

**St. Mary’s Healthcare**, founded in 1903, is a 149-bed hospital with 11 other facilities in Fulton and Montgomery Counties. These include four urgent care centers, six health centers, a family healthy center, two pediatric health centers, and a cancer medicine center. St. Mary’s also offers laboratory service, medical imaging, and a host of rehabilitation services. In addition, St. Mary’s Healthcare operates a 160-bed long-term care facility. [www.smha.org](http://www.smha.org)



# Johnstown Opens A Window of Growth For Pioneer



When you're walking amidst New York City's high-rise buildings and skyscrapers, there's a good chance that you're looking at windows that were manufactured in Johnstown, New York by Pioneer Window Manufacturing Corporation.

When Vincent Amato, Jr., who worked in window installation in New York City, decided that he wanted to start his own company in 1994, a colleague suggested he investigate Fulton County. Johnstown turned out to be an ideal location. It was less than four miles from his colleague's aluminum company, which subsequently became one of Pioneer's main suppliers. In addition, the Johnstown Industrial Park is only five miles from the New York State Thruway. Proximity to the interstate makes it easy for Pioneer to receive materials from suppliers in Rochester and New Jersey, as well as to ship its windows to New York City and other major metropolitan areas.

The company started off with just a couple of contracts and 9,000 square feet of space. Today, it occupies three buildings in close proximity to one another, for a total of 265,000 square feet of space for manufacturing, offices, and warehousing.

Johnstown proved to be the perfect place for Pioneer's growth. The company has distinguished itself as a leader in the window manufacturing industry, especially in the highly competitive and specialized New York City market.

Staff at Pioneer design, engineer, manufacture, and deliver all the company's products. While New York City is a major market, Pioneer has constructed windows

for structures in Virginia and Massachusetts, as well as government buildings throughout the United States. Pioneer's windows are found in high-rise buildings, schools, housing authority projects, colleges and universities, hospitals, and libraries.

One of Pioneer's first projects in New York City was the Element, a sleek 35-floor condominium on the Upper West Side. "That's what really put us into the high-rise market," said Eric Miller, Pioneer's vice president of manufacturing. "When you go into New York City and you see all these glass buildings, we've done a fair amount of them in the five boroughs and Long Island," he said. Pioneer also manufactured the windows for Trump Plaza in New Rochelle, among numerous other prominent buildings.

Miller admits that the NYC market is a tough one, but Pioneer has mastered it. "The codes and the requirements of a window and how it's tested and how stringent the testing is--there's no other place in the country, to my knowledge, that is as tough as New York City because of the tight confines of all these buildings and also the heights of them," Miller said.

Pioneer expanded into the school construction market and is now a certified manufacturer for the NYC School Construction Authority, boosting Pioneer's business significantly.



After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the U.S. Department of Defense required government buildings to have windows with a certain blast-protection level. Pioneer rose to the challenge and struck up a partnership with a company experienced in blast mitigation. The company designed its own blast windows, and these windows are now installed in government buildings throughout the country. “We’ve done everything from a high-level blast to a very low-level,” Miller said.

Location is not the only benefit of doing business in Fulton County. The ease of business is a significant factor. “We’ve made a lot of friends here in the county,” Miller said. “They’ve always been willing to work with us. They’re all excited to see the growth.”

Miller cites the example of the deepened recession after the 9/11 attacks. “There were a lot of companies in the 9/11 era that couldn’t pay rents in this park,” he remembered. “They were having a tough time, and we were one of them.”

The Fulton County Economic Development Team stepped in to see how they could help. “They worked out an amortization plan for a six-month period,” said Miller, adding that the team also worked to find local projects for which Pioneer could supply windows. “They took care of us when we had bad times, and when we had good times, they were here to pat us on the back and say, ‘Congratulations,’” he said.

Pioneer is prospering now, with a \$12 million expansion project in the works as demand for its products increases. In December 2018, the company received a \$2 million grant from New York State for the project, which includes the construction of a 140,000-square-foot building that will allow the company to meet its current and future production needs.

[www.pioneerwindows.com](http://www.pioneerwindows.com)



## GROWTH AT A GLANCE

- 1994: Pioneer leased its first Johnstown facility of 9,000 square feet.
- 1996: The company moved to a leased, 50,000 square-foot, built-to-suit facility. Soon thereafter, 10,000 more square feet were added.
- 1999: Pioneer did \$50 million in sales, largely due to a boom in the school construction industry in New York City. This precipitated the lease of an additional built-to-suit facility providing 115,000 square feet of production space.
- 2001: 50,000 more square feet were added to this building for a total of 165,000 square feet. Pioneer purchased this building in 2018.
- 2019: Pioneer purchased a second building of 42,000 square feet and the property in between this structure and the space it purchased in 2018. Eventually, the property in between will house a building of 75,000 square feet that will connect the two facilities.
- 2020: Pioneer purchased another building of 50,000 square feet to house finished product and serve as the company’s shipping hub. The \$12 million planned expansion project is funded partly by a \$2 million grant through New York State’s Regional Economic Development Council Initiative.

# Why Choose AIM?

Fulton County manufacturers who want to develop new products, reduce costs, and increase efficiency and profits have vast resources across New York State available to them.

The **Advanced Institute for Manufacturing (AIM)** at Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) in Utica, just an hour from Fulton County, is part of the 11-center statewide network of the New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). The goal of this Empire State Development (ESD) program is to provide growth and innovation services to businesses, and AIM's staff stands ready to boost the growth of manufacturing companies.

"We have a mission to provide manufacturing, consulting, training, and technology development services to the small- to medium-sized manufacturers in the six-county Mohawk Valley region," said Cory Albrecht, AIM's director. In addition to Fulton County, AIM serves Herkimer, Oneida, Montgomery, Otsego, and Schoharie counties.

AIM's staff seeks to connect with the region's 600-plus manufacturers to learn the needs of their specific businesses and how AIM's offerings can help them to meet those needs to promote growth. "Our role is very hands-on as far as what we do when we bring our resources," said Jeff Grimshaw, AIM's business development manager. "We approach the organization from their level, meeting people where they're at and really investigating what they do, how they do it, and what the time-saving opportunities are," he said. He cited the example of AIM staff working with one company for two hours a week over a six-week period, and at the end, they had come up with 26 strategies for cost savings and process improvements.



"We work with the organization—actually become embedded in the organization, going there on a regular basis," Grimshaw said.



# Why Choose AIM?

“We work with the organization—actually become embedded in the organization, going there on a regular basis,” Grimshaw said.

AIM offers business services that include strategic, sales, succession, and disaster recovery planning. It offers a wide range of courses for company’s employees, such as Lean Six Sigma Certification, Website Development, CNC Training/Shop Math, Safe Quality Food, OSHA Safety



Training and Environmental Compliancy. AIM provides training and other services that address process improvement and quality. In addition, AIM also does customized workforce development training.

Partnering with local community colleges in the region, including MVCC and Fulton County Community College, AIM provides additional classes and other resources for employers. For example, AIM’s clients have access to MVCC’s FABLab, where they can use design engineering and prototyping equipment, including 3D printing in metal.

Another of AIM’s services is apprenticeship programs in advanced manufacturing, information technology, healthcare, and other sectors, with \$11,000,000 in funding available. The apprenticeships are designed to increase workforce skills and productivity and lower turnover rates. Up to \$5,000 per apprentice is available for related instruction and up to \$500 per person for a pre-apprenticeship program.

Each MEP center has its own “priority industry cluster.” AIM’s is Manufacturing Cybersecurity & IP Protection. “Small and mid-sized manufacturers, depending on the

report you’re reading, are either number two or three on the most targeted list for some type of malicious attack,” Albrecht said, noting that most manufacturers this size are not prepared for a cyberattack, many of which come from internal sources. “We do have a full suite of programs and services which we can implement,” he said. AIM helps companies assess risk and vulnerabilities, test system penetration, educate and train employees in cybersecurity, and review security policies. In 2019, ESD awarded AIM a Department of Defense (DoD) Cybersecurity Assistance Grant. With these funds, AIM assisted 32 DoD manufacturers with cybersecurity issues.

As part of a statewide network, AIM has access to the resources of the other nine regional MEP centers as well as the statewide MEP center, which translates



into a wealth of expertise, programs, and services for companies. When a business has a unique need, AIM works with its sister centers to identify the available resources and bring those to the region. “It allows me to leverage a tremendous amount of expertise to support a manufacturer’s business objectives,” Albrecht said.

The broad industry experience of AIM’s staff, combined with its access to extensive resources for promoting business growth, make AIM an extremely valuable asset to area manufacturers. “Our mission is to connect with manufacturers, provide manufacturing consulting, workforce development, and technology services so that we can help them grow their businesses, develop new products, become more efficient, reduce their costs, and drive revenue and growth,” Albrecht said. [www.aim-mep.org](http://www.aim-mep.org)

# Childcare Reimagined: Giving Your Child a Bright Future



Fulton County resident and teacher Cheryl Curtis saw a gap in early childhood education in her community, so she decided to fill it. “My vision was to provide a service that didn’t exist in this area—an educational daycare,” said Curtis, who serves as director. In June 2016, after meeting the rigorous state requirements for childcare facilities, Curtis opened Bright Futures Learning Center in Gloversville, serving children from six weeks to five years old.

“I never wanted to babysit children—I wanted to educate them,” Curtis said. “That’s the difference coming here. “My motto is ‘setting the stage for academic success,’ because I want kids to fly into kindergarten.”

*“My motto is ‘setting the stage for academic success,’ because I want kids to fly into kindergarten.”*



She accomplishes this in part through her teaching staff. All classroom teachers have degrees in education; some have bachelor’s degrees, and some have master’s degrees. Curtis starts her teachers out at the going salary for a new teacher. “I am walking a very fine line with the salaries and the costs of my daycare,” she said. “We’re trying to provide everything we can and still make it work and yet make it affordable to parents.”

Bright Futures weaves the hands-on learning and collaborative play of the Montessori method of education with the skills that children will need to enter public school in Fulton County. “We blend Montessori with public school needs in order to give the children the best-rounded fit for the start of their education,” said Curtis, noting that Bright Futures is Montessori-certified.

All age-level classrooms, including infant, 18-36 months, three-year-old, and four- and five-year-old, have the same academic calendar that teachers follow according to their students' developmental needs. For example, in a science lesson, children might take a walk on one of the two nature trails and collect cicada shells. The four- and five-year-olds might watch a video about cicadas, while the children in the 18-month to 3-year-old class might learn the sound a cicada makes. "Our two- to three-year-olds can count 10 items, and by the time they



get to our four-year-old room, they can read, and if not read, they can recognize sight words," Curtis said.

Play is important, too, and children go outside in the morning and after 3 p.m. to the playground that Curtis was able to build with assistance from a grant from the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth. A second grant provided funding to acquire the Montessori curriculum and five classroom computers.

**Bright Futures serves catered lunches. "We have healthy meals," Curtis said. "We don't serve sandwiches; we serve meals."**

The daycare is medication-certified, so staff can administer medications where required. Speech, occupational, and physical therapists come on-site to work with children who benefit from these services.

Bright Future's 15 teachers currently serve an average of 75 full- and part-time students per week. In January 2020, Curtis expanded the center to add a classroom for infants and a second classroom for three-year-olds.

<http://www.brightfuturesllc.net/>



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# The Johnstown Trifecta:

## Community, Cooperation, and Quality Living

Forty-two years ago, Vern Jackson's employer offered him a job promotion, provided he agreed to move to Johnstown, New York. His supervisor promised to bring him back to his hometown in a year.

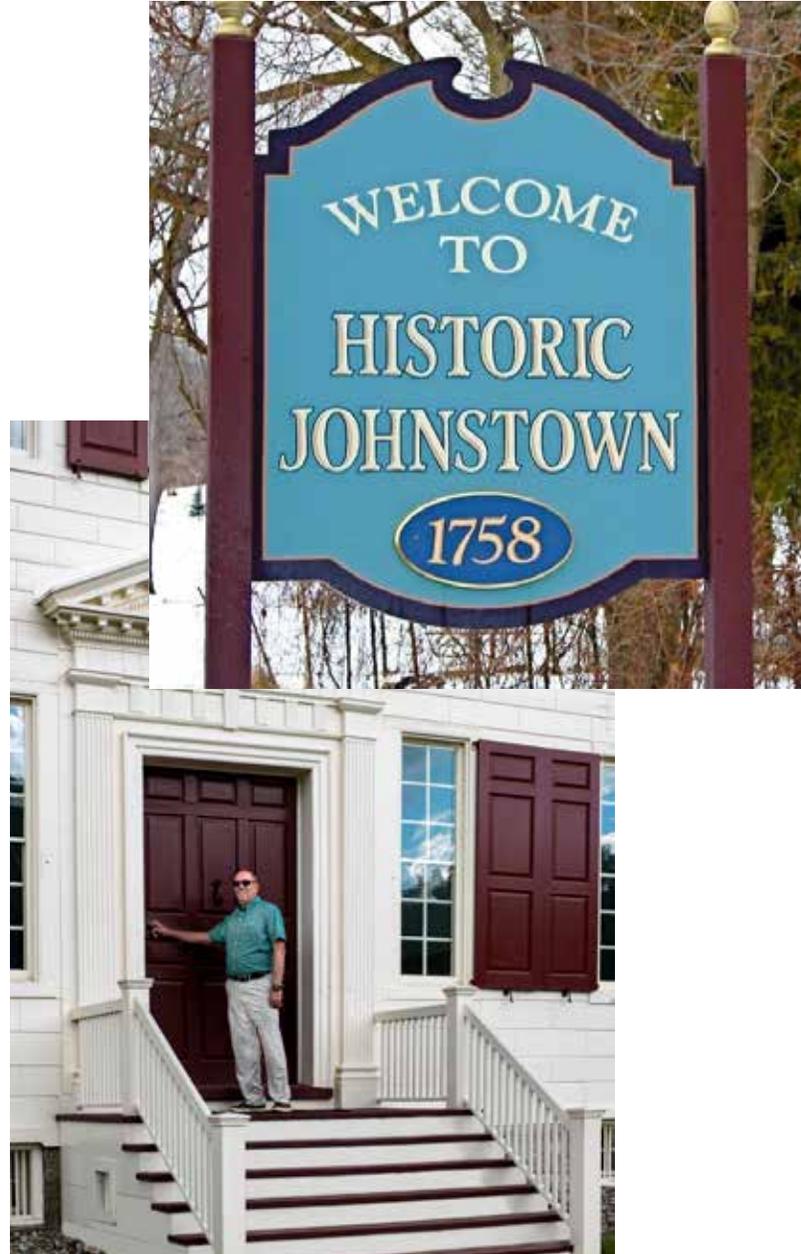
Jackson, now Johnstown's mayor, never went back. "I love this community," he said.

If you asked Jackson why a business should locate in Fulton County, the answer would be simple: It's affordable, local government is cooperative, economic development agencies are eager to help businesses attain grants and other financial assistance, people are ready and willing to work, and the quality of life is outstanding.

Johnstown has a well-balanced combination of a business-friendly climate, affordable commercial and residential properties, cultural and entertainment offerings that make it an ideal place to live and thrive in business, and a community of citizens that care about one another.

The city has been the choice for some major corporations, like paint manufacturer Benjamin Moore, which opened a manufacturing facility in the city in 1991. There is also Greek yogurt manufacturer Fage USA, which chose Johnstown for its U.S. operations headquarters, as well as Euphrates, the largest feta cheese manufacturer on the East Coast, which built a state-of-the-art, German-engineered manufacturing facility here. Pioneer Windows, a leading supplier of windows to commercial builders in New York City, manufactures its products in Johnstown and has been in a steady state of expansion since setting up shop here.

Johnstown is a fertile area for small business as well. Local entrepreneurs are bringing establishments with



upscale urban vibes to the city. For example, Shawn Beebie opened Second Wind Coffee Shop where customers can enjoy gourmet coffee made from beans that he roasts himself. Beebie's success has led him to open another niche business in the city. There is also Toying Around, a family-owned store with toys, comics, trading cards, collectibles, and video games, that livens

up Main Street with occasional block parties featuring comic book characters and pro-wrestlers.

Workforce development programs at local high schools and colleges prepare students to enter a variety of careers in a wide range of industries, equipping them with the skills that make them highly desirable employees upon graduation. “We have a workforce that’s ready, willing, and able to work,” Jackson said.

# Johnstown

Business owners and corporations find the local and county governments extremely receptive to new businesses as well as the expansion of established businesses. All parties work together to reduce or eliminate the usual bureaucratic red tape and facilitate growth whenever possible. “We go out of our way to make them welcome and do what we can to meet their needs,” Jackson said. Town officials are readily available to the business community and place high value on cooperative relationships. In fact, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Jackson decided not to raise taxes. “We were not expecting a pandemic and a shutdown,” said Jackson, noting that he kept both commercial and residential property taxes at \$12.88 per thousand.

The city is known for its sense of community. Townsend Leather is one of many businesses actively involved in community service. The company sent a group of employees to Partner’s Park to refurbish the gazebo, plant flowers, and clean up the basketball court. Other businesses sponsor community events for the public to enjoy. Main Street’s Vintage Café sponsors an annual car show that draws classic-car enthusiasts, and Second Wind Coffee plans to revive the city’s annual motorcycle show. Toying Around toy store hosts a Comic-Con event, complete with comic book characters and displays. Mysteries on Main Street and McLemon’s Shop throw a Harry Potter birthday celebration, including Diagon Alley, people dressed up as book characters, and children’s activities. At the block party that Partner’s Pub puts



on, revelers enjoy good music, food, and connection. Events like these draw people to Johnstown’s business district and increase the likelihood that those people will patronize these local business in the future.

Johnstown is poised for even more growth as it adapts to the rapidly changing 21st-century economic, cultural, and social landscapes, and Jackson invites people to understand what the city is all about during this dynamic time of transformation.

“It’s a small-town atmosphere, but a city that can do things,” Jackson said.

# Tryon Technology Park



## Buildings and Shovel Ready Sites Are Waiting For You!

The former juvenile detention center, where a young Mike Tyson learned to box, has been transformed into a ready-to-go, reasonably-priced, quiet, and sized-to-suit place for businesses to thrive, with plenty of room for expansion.

When Governor Andrew Cuomo decided to close a host of juvenile facilities across the state in 2011—including the Tryon Residential Center - it turned out to be a bounty for Fulton County. The county's Industrial Development Agency (IDA) acquired the over-500-acre property at no charge, and in partnership with Fulton County, upgraded the site's infrastructure and readied it for occupancy.

Aided by a \$2 million Regional Economic Development Council grant from New York State, the IDA and county built a new access road that turns into a primary loop around the park, reconfigured the sewer system, and constructed a new water pumping station. One recent project was the repair and upgrade of the electrical system to provide three-phase power and multiple points of connection. The IDA also removed some of the derelict buildings that were constructed in 1966 when the state opened the campus and created a separate sewer district for the area. The result of these improvements is over

240 acres of shovel-ready sites and two structures—one a former maintenance building and the other a facility that once housed automotive classes—that are waiting for companies to set up shop. “We’ve made the necessary repairs to keep everything working well,” said David D’Amore, the IDA’s board president.

The most striking aspect of Tryon Technology Park is the flexibility that it has to offer incoming businesses. The IDA is open to entertaining offers on various-sized parcels of land as well as bids on any of the buildings that remain, such as the former administration, maintenance, and tech class buildings. “We’re largely

**Companies looking for affordable, shovel-ready sites in any configuration need look no further than Fulton County’s Tryon Technology Park.**

looking at this mostly as empty land,” D’Amore said. “We are willing to reconfigure the lot size as needed, and we’re more than willing to adjust appropriately based on the needs of the companies that are coming in,” he said, noting that the land is listed at \$27,000 per acre. “The cost of land is advantageous.”



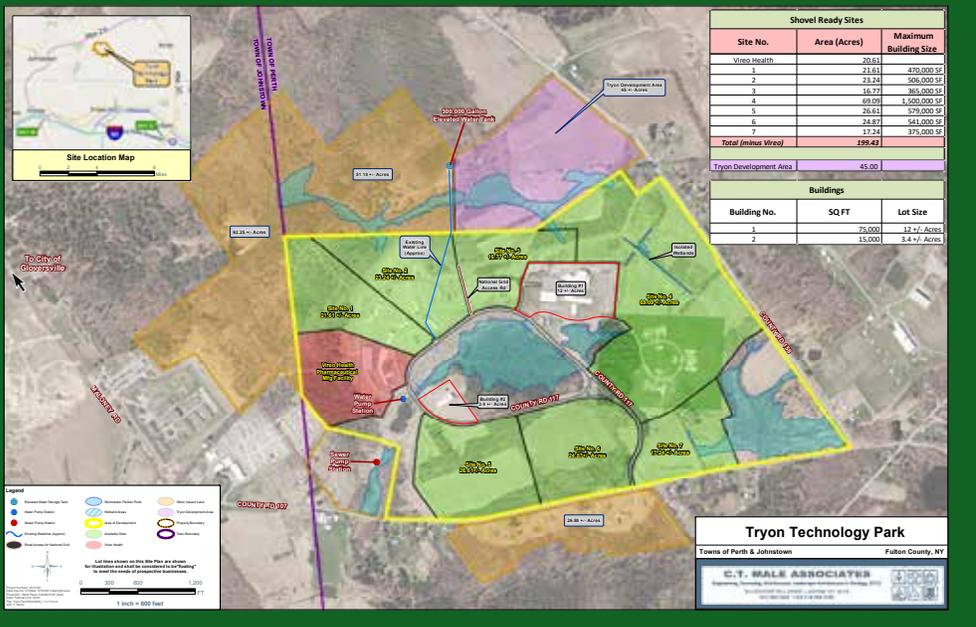
Vireo Health, Inc., which built its facilities at Tryon in 2015 and is now expanding them, found Tryon to be a desirable place for growth for several reasons. “Specifically, where the park is located, it provides manufacturing companies with access to affordable space, to state-of-the-art infrastructure, and most importantly, access to the talent that comes from both Fulton County and the adjacent region,” said Ari Hoffnung, the company’s chief strategy officer and the CEO of Vireo Health of New York. “Being in Fulton County where the land is affordable and where the infrastructure—water, power, and broadband is available—that is something that was very attractive to us,” he said.

Hoffnung pointed out that local government is extremely business-friendly. “It’s not a place with a lot of red tape,” he said. “It’s a place that truly supports businesses and their desire to grow,” he said.

Other expansion in Tryon Technology Park is the leasing of a 29-acre parcel of land to Canada-based Nexus Renewables, a renewable energy developer that plans to build a \$10.5 million solar farm and storage facility.

On part of the Tryon site, the IDA anticipates creating a residential development that would include higher-end housing as well as apartment-style living, along with some retail and office space. “We could probably fit 25 to 50 residential homes, depending on density,” D’Amore said, noting that the IDA is looking for a developer to take on the job.

With the pandemic causing some to rethink where they want to live and work, Fulton County offers a quieter, more spacious opportunity. “If you don’t want to deal with a rat race, you don’t want to deal with a 40-minute commute to work, this is the place to come,” D’Amore said. “You can work hard and play hard, because there’s ample opportunities for outdoor recreation in the county with hiking trails and the Great Sacandaga Lake,” he said. In addition, the county is only three and a half hours from New York City, Boston, and Montreal. “You have the ability



Hoffnung also emphasizes the draw of a skilled workforce. “We have found that the greater Albany area has a tremendous amount of talent and human capital,” he said. “We’ve been able to hire scientists and are very impressed with the talents in the area.”

D’Amore points out the technology-oriented high school and college programs in the county. “We’ve got an educational system that rebuilds itself to address the needs of tech companies,” he said of the Fulton County Community College programs.

to get to the bigger places and still have the comforts of small-town living that are here.”

<http://208.84.119.28/sites/primary-development-areas/tryon/>

# Westmeadow Farm

## Chooses the Mohawk Valley to Demonstrate Healthy, Sustainable Farming



Tom Vaughan intends to be the motivating force to bring farmers together to overcome what he describes as a food crisis in the United States, and he is doing it right here in Fulton County and neighboring Montgomery County. Vaughan and his wife, Patricia, opened Westmeadow Farm and Dairy to show that it is possible to produce natural food in a clean, sustainable, and conscious way.

After working in the aerospace industry for 40 years, including founding his own multinational firm, Vaughan has returned to his roots, having grown up on a dairy farm in Ireland.

Westmeadow Farm is Vaughan’s project to prove that it is possible to restore healthy ways of farming and eating. He is on a mission to change the way that farmers produce crops and treat animals and to connect people with the food they put in their bodies.

From the time he was a young boy, Vaughan watched his family’s farm deteriorate as new, artificial fertilizers replaced traditional, natural ones, and the soil became depleted. This was the beginning of what Vaughan views as a crisis in the treatment of animals, soil quality, and people’s view of the agriculture industry. Vaughan plans to turn this around. To that end, he purchased a farm in Canajoharie and a building for his creamery in Johnstown to have a proving ground for what’s possible. “They can come here and see and believe that it can be done,” he said.

Vaughan purchased the former Spray Nine plant, an 80,000-square-foot building in Johnstown that had been vacant for a decade. He invested \$5 million to transform the 3.25-acre site into a manufacturing facility and a retail store for his dairy products. He used local contractors for labor and equipment whenever possible. “It was a pleasant surprise to find highly-skilled sub trades like plumbers and electricians, and their costs to do business are quite competitive”, Vaughan said, noting that his company spent 82 percent of its budget for capital expenditures in New York State. Having locally made products means that he has support for those products readily available nearby.

At Westmeadow Farm, Vaughan has a milking herd of 150 Jersey cows whose comfort comes first. The cows roam freely between fresh pastures and composted-bedded pack, an alternative, loose housing for dairy cows that offers them good comfort for lactating. Their cozy barn has thermally-heated floors. Milking happens via a state-of-the-art robotic milking system designed to reduce stress by rewarding the cows with treats when they give milk. The basic idea is that happy cows produce higher volumes of healthy milk.





That milk is transported “within comfortable trucking cost” down to Westmeadow’s creamery in Johnstown. Workers pump it into vats, including the main cheese vat that holds 2,000 gallons of milk. From there, it is crafted into gourmet cheeses, yogurt, ice cream, and butter.

The various cheeses, made from both cows’ and goats’ milk, are crafted with the highest quality in mind, catering to those with a taste for artisanal products. “It’s a product that’s a cut above,” Vaughan said. Cheddar cheeses in 28 flavors from strong and aromatic to mild age anywhere from six months to 10 years in a cooler before being shipped out to over 100 specialty grocery stores or to customers worldwide. The longer the cheese ages, the more flavorful it is. Flavors include hickory-smoked, seriously super sharp, bacon-peppercorn, green olive and garlic, tomato-basil, roasted red pepper and olive, wild onion, garlic, and dill. Workers package wheels of chevre, the goat’s milk cheese, in small cardboard boxes, hand-tied with string for an artful presentation.

Vaughan sees the artisan cheese market as a growing one. “It’s becoming a social thing, with people hosting cheese nights and enjoying wine or beer with it,” he said.

In addition to its online store, Westmeadow plans to open an on-site store in its newly renovated building in November 2020. There, customers will indulge in gourmet coffees and fresh baked goods from local farms and bakeries at a coffee counter, or in warmer weather, they can head outside to the deck to enjoy an ice cream cone on a sheltered porch. The store will stock not only Westmeadow’s products, but other organic products produced by Vaughan’s fellow farmers.

Vaughan has plans to add an educational component to the creamery to fulfill his mission of educating the public about healthy, sustainable, high-quality food. There will be plant tours and a viewing room where visitors can watch cheesemakers at work. Large video



screens will livestream cows being robotically milked and goats being born at the farm, with an equivalent video system for visitors at the farm to watch creamery operations. A shuttle will transport visitors between the farm and the creamery. He plans to build a microfarm outside the creamery where children can see the animals that produced the milk used to make the dairy products that they eat. Other plans include special events like courses for home-cooking enthusiasts. All these amenities are designed to make the creamery and farm a day-long destination.

Vaughan originally intended to locate his farm in Connecticut, where he already had a small farm and office. But he needed grasslands to feed his animals, and in addition to the high property costs in Connecticut, he didn’t find the availability of land that he required. “When we came here, we were so pleasantly surprised by what we saw,” Vaughan said. It then occurred to him to locate his farm project in New York entirely. “We came here by accident—it wasn’t by intent, and because

continued

# Westmeadow Farm



we were welcomed the way we were and so many things were put forward to help us, we just decided to put the whole operation here instead, and we have no regrets,” he said.

Johnstown turned out to be an ideal place to do business. “We see Johnstown as a growing center that’s not yet mired in big city issues like restricted car parking space or lack of suitable buildings and office accommodations,” Vaughan said. “It’s possible to arrive and secure very good tenancy arrangements and storage,” he said, noting that he was warmly welcomed to the city by the mayor and local residents.

Vaughan was also highly pleased with how city officials and code officers worked with him. “They could not help us more than they have—it’s extraordinary,” he said. “They’ve gone out of their way to be flexible and find ways around challenges. From a town hierarchical management perspective, I don’t think we could have found better than Johnstown.”

In addition to this type of support, he found a rich resource in the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth. “Multiple packages were offered to us,” he said. “They couldn’t have done more for us. They offered us all kinds of startup and employment programs. There are multiple programs and financial incentives available.” Having this kind of help available allowed Vaughan to concentrate on getting his manufacturing facility operational. “We have so many distractions and challenges that having an independent organization that is focused on what we need takes the weight off our mind. It’s a shared burden there,” he said.

Other attractive aspects of Fulton County for Vaughan are reasonable taxes, rents, and costs of procurement and materials. “Operating in Johnstown is not an expensive proposition,” Vaughan said. “I certainly came with the expectation that it would be more expensive to do business here.”

Once he proves that he can make his products in a natural, sustainable way without GMOs, Vaughan plans to reach out to other neighboring farms and begin the

process of pooling and processing milk, creating a new alliance of farmers. This network will allow individual farmers to come together to overcome the challenges that they could not surmount alone. “If those wells of energy get together and use their creativity, anything’s possible. We want to harness that, he said.”

Vaughan knows he has a great deal of work ahead of him, but he is completely confident that he can be successful in his mission, starting right here in Fulton

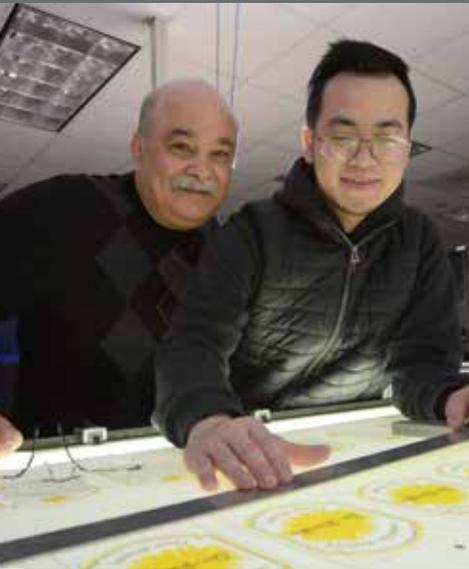


County. “We need to get about the business of bringing clean food back to the table. The stewardship of the land—that’s our future—that’s crucial,” he said.

[www.westmeadowfarm.com](http://www.westmeadowfarm.com)

# FMCC

## Customizes Training and Degree Programs to Serve Your Business Needs



**When the business community speaks, the faculty at Fulton-Montgomery Community College (FMCC) listens. “We change our programs and courses based on input from our employer groups,” said Mark Swain, assistant professor of accounting and business.**

Before teaching at FMCC, faculty members practiced in the fields in which they teach. “These are real world people teaching in the classroom the skills they used in the real world—it’s more real world and less ivory tower,” said Laurence Zuckerman, associate professor in the Department of Business. That makes them particularly relevant instructors for students who are being trained to enter the workforce upon graduation, plus makes the professors valuable to local businesses because they understand firsthand what businesses need.

To augment that understanding of employers’ needs, the college also has a business advisory board made up of a subset of industry leaders in the community. “It’s a broad representation of the entire business community,” Zuckerman said. Faculty members consult with the business advisory board to ensure that their courses and programs help students develop the abilities that employers want them to have. “When we ask them what skills their employees need, we’re drawing on

employers that have connections all over the world,” he said, pointing out the broad international corporate make-up of Fulton and Montgomery counties.

The faculty listens and adapts its offerings accordingly. “Our local businesses get that opportunity to tell us what they need, and we listen,” said Charlene Dybas, assistant professor of business technology applications. Then, the faculty changes, eliminates, or adds courses based on the feedback and suggestions they receive from the business advisory board members.

“Being focused on the needs of businesses not only helps employers, but also FMCC’s students. “We want our students to have a job when they leave,”

Being focused on the needs of businesses not only helps employers, but also FMCC’s students. “We want our students to have a job when they leave,” Dybas said.

continued



As industry needs change, so do FMCC's programs. "All of the programs are very responsive to the needs of the employers," said Jeremy Spraggs, assistant professor of electrical technology. "Fifteen years ago, it was telecommunications; now, it's factory automation and clean rooms," he said, noting that this responsiveness to local industry is key to students' employability upon graduation.

Students take classes and work with tools and software that they will find in the real world upon graduation. For example, students train in the Department of Technology's automation labs and clean room. Students in the Department of Business will soon be learning in

a newly constructed Financial Technology Center. With a focus on practical education, the center will feature a streaming stock ticker, world clocks, wall monitors, and a host of computers stations. "Students actually know how to open a brokerage account and trade stocks," Zuckerman said.

In addition to providing an extremely relevant education program that develops students' employability, FMCC, being a small school, is extremely accessible to employers. "Our size is our advantage, because employers that come here can immediately develop a working relationship with our college," Zuckerman said, noting that employers can easily access senior faculty



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That working relationship takes a variety of forms. Through FMCC's Center for Employer Services, faculty provide customized services to meet a company's training or workforce development needs. Professors teach on site at an employer's location, or employees can attend trainings and courses at FMCC. "If employers have specific course or training needs, that can be developed very quickly—no bureaucracy," Zuckerman said.

For example, in the college's automation labs and clean room, over 300 employees from 24 employers have taken classes that Spraggs developed and tailored to meet employers' specialized needs.

Faculty pride themselves not only on the flexibility of their programs, but also the college's schedules. When GlobalFoundries, a Capital Region manufacturer, wanted some employees to earn their associate degrees, Spraggs rearranged the class schedules for the electrical technology program so that students who worked full-time could also attend FMCC to earn their degrees.

Swain points out that FMCC's programs are also a great choice for returning adults, with in-person and online options. For example, in the Department of Accounting, Swain changed the advanced bookkeeping course to a "flex mode course," with in-person and online options to accommodate students who are working full-time.

Businesses also have the opportunity to have interns from FMCC. "We love to have our students go out," Dybas said. "It's usually a win-win—most of our students are hired by the company," she said.

FMCC is also part of the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (PTECH), a joint program with the Hamilton Fulton Montgomery BOCES, where high school students take credited college courses at FMCC while earning their high school diplomas.

FMCC's faculty members value the partnerships they form with members of the local business community. It is high on their priority list to provide as great a service for local companies as possible, which both helps the college's students and contributes to the growth and success of local businesses.

[www.fmcc.edu](http://www.fmcc.edu)

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# SUCCESS



## Is BREWING In Fulton County

Some people do a double take when they drive down Main Street in Johnstown these days. They've spotted people sitting at café tables, enjoying espressos, cappuccinos made with milk from nearby dairy farms, and made-on-the-premises baked goods, amidst an attractive arrangement of flowers and plants. It's a scene that you might expect to see in a cosmopolitan city like Montreal or New York, except it's right in Fulton County.

Second Wind, opened in 2019 by Gloversville born and bred entrepreneur Shawn Beebie, is a prime example of the city's own second wind as the local economy continues to grow.

Beebie, himself on his second wind after surviving cancer, did most of the demolition, building, and interior design work himself in the year prior to opening. He ripped up floors to reveal the original hardwood, exposed the space's brick walls, and built a restroom, among other renovations, breathing new life into the old downtown building.

Local government was enthusiastic about Beebie's desire to open an

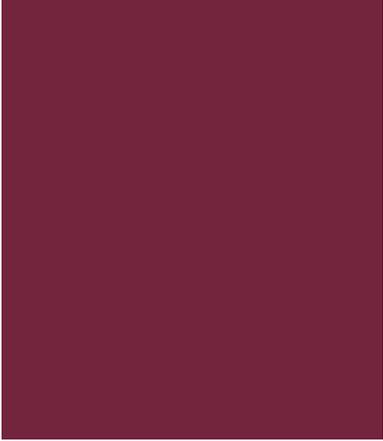
upscale coffee shop. "I was welcomed with open arms with my vision," he said. The Fulton County Center for Regional Growth assisted Beebie in securing a \$32,357 Microenterprise grant, part of which he used to purchase a handmade espresso machine from Slayer, a small Seattle-based company that patented a new technology for brewing espresso. Beebie describes the sleek, modern-looking machine as "the Ferrari of the coffee industry."

To brew the specialty coffees that give his customers a second wind, Beebie uses organic, fair trade coffee beans from sustainable farms all over the world, including Peru, Brazil, Colombia, and Ethiopia. He

created his own line of Second Wind Coffee beans that he roasts, packages, and sells in the shop and plans to offer online.

His coffee not only comes from around the globe; it travels there, too. "I've had people from Italy, France, Germany, Scotland, Ireland, England, and Canada," he said. A German couple who was touring the United States googled "coffee shops," got off the interstate

To brew the specialty coffees that give his customers a second wind, Beebie uses organic, fair trade coffee beans from sustainable farms all over the world.



at Fonda, and drove up to Johnstown just to sample his coffee. They took some home with them.

Part of what makes Second Wind a destination is the coffee shop's rustic, urban chic interior design, which reflects the theme in its repurposed furnishings and décor, like the tables Beebie constructed from the floorboards of an old leather mill, a toilet paper holder crafted from an old wrench, counters made from the sides of an old tractor-trailer, and the front of a 1963 Chevy C-10 pickup truck that serves as a centerpiece over the coffee bar. "Most people would cast a lot of these things aside, but I see beauty in a lot of things that are old," he said.

Beebie's passion for hospitality and his love of food go beyond a cup of joe. He hosts "pop up" nights featuring varying cuisine, where people come in for a one-night event. At one pop up, he served steamed clams, lobster rolls, oysters, and lobster tails. By advertising through social media, he attracted a crowd of about 200. Other planned pop ups include a wood-fired pizza night and a street taco and corn night.

Since opening, he added a lunch menu with offerings that include a variety of sandwiches, a soup du jour and sweet treats. In the future, Beebie plans to expand his business through extended evening hours, so that he can offer craft beer and wine samplings paired with live entertainment including, guitar players and open mic night.

Beebie's offerings, including the sidewalk café setup out front, have not only brought customers to his shop, but to other downtown businesses as well, exemplifying the spirit of cooperation and mutual support that are hallmarks of the city. "I've actually been told by a lot of other local businesses that since I've been here, they are getting so much more foot traffic to their businesses," Beebie said. After people stop for coffee, they might pop into the clothing store next door or across the street to the comic book and hobby shop.

Second Wind is just the beginning for Beebie, and his enthusiasm for being part of the City of Johnstown's second wind is clear. Based on his success in Johnstown, he is looking to add other Second Wind

locations throughout New York's Capital District, as well as opening some restaurants, bars, hospitality venues, and catering services. "My goal—my mission—is that I want to bring really good culinary to Fulton County, as well as sourcing from local farmers and local craftsmen," he said.

<https://www.facebook.com/secondwindcoffee/>



# Fulton County Barber Shop – Never Underestimate The Power Of A Barber



The Fulton County Barber Shop is not just a place to get a haircut. It's also a comfortable place to hang out with friends and a prime example of a young entrepreneur investing—and thriving—in the revitalization of downtown Gloversville.

In 2011, Mike Medina began renting the Main Street building his business now occupies. He worked for a year, bit by bit, to redo the space: erecting walls, painting, and furnishing. He did not want to take out a loan, so he worked out of his home as he worked on the commercial space. “I would cut hair for a week, and I would make a purchase, and I would repeat that week after week until I put these pieces of this puzzle together,” said Medina, noting that all the barber shop’s furnishings came from Craigslist.

Medina and two other barbers now cut hair for about 75 clients a day at the shop. He also offers before- and after-hours appointments that customers can book with him online.

But cutting hair is just the beginning for Medina. Eventually, he was able to purchase the building that houses the barber shop as well as the adjacent space. He is currently working on rehabbing the upper floors of the space next door, which had been vacant for 75 years. “I’m going to invest in myself,” Medina said, outlining his plans to have a line of his own products,

including shampoo, conditioner, aftershave, soap, body wash, and combs. “I want to be able to have a full-scale manufacturing operation going on upstairs on the second floor, creating a job or two for someone,” he said. The young businessman has set big goals for himself. He wants to sell his products online, by subscription, and possibly even in retail outlets.

“The community has been really supportive,” Medina said. “They love us.” He loves them right back, sponsoring events like “Santa & Friends,” where he and his barbers dress up like Santa Claus and elves to offer



“The community has been really supportive,” Medina said. “They love us.”

free haircuts for kids 12 and under. Last year, he augmented the event with a toy drive, and he and some clients went caroling to deliver the gifts to families. He also holds his back-to-school “Read to the Barber” special, where kids from pre-K through college receive half off a haircut if they read to the barber while he cuts their hair. To promote father-son bonding, he encourages dads to bring their sons in on Father’s Day. Dads pay for their haircuts, but their sons’ are gratis.

In addition to the Fulton County Barber Shop, Medina has invested in another business venture, Chayla’s Cuchifrito, a food truck offering authentic Puerto Rican cuisine cooked by his parents. Medina received a \$25,000 microenterprise grant from the New York State Community Development Block Grant Program to purchase the truck. He plans to offer the international cuisine outside his shop as well as at other locations in the city.

[www.fcbarbershop.com](http://www.fcbarbershop.com)





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### General Program Guidelines

- Current Program ends 03/31/21
- Application and approval are required prior to project start
- All grants are reimbursable after project completion
- Grant amounts listed are the maximum allowable award

Find more info on National Grid's economic development programs and your regional contact at [www.ShovelReady.com](http://www.ShovelReady.com)

The utility has a long history as a leader in economic development, helping customers grow with targeted programs and services in Upstate NY for more than 80 years.

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# AFFORDABLE SPACES AVAILABLE

## In A People-Led Downtown Groversville

Groversville is an affordable, strategically located city--just a few hours or less from major metropolitan areas including Albany, New York City, Montreal, Boston, and Buffalo.

Like other upstate New York communities, Groversville has launched itself down the path of radical, innovative transformation, making it a premier place to start a business, invest, and work while enjoying a high quality of life.

When Nuno Castainca and Vincent Chang, partners in NVP Development LLC of New Jersey, were looking for a data center, they started researching cities in New York and Pennsylvania that had low electricity costs and good power infrastructure. “We did a power grid for New York,” Castainca said. That was when the pair stumbled on Groversville.

After seeing some of the available buildings during a trip to the city, they were encouraged to visit with the city’s mayor, Vincent DeSantis. While the investors originally had been looking only for a space to set up a data center, DeSantis inspired them with his vision for the city, prompting them to take on the development of four historic buildings downtown. These structures will



not only house NVP Development’s data center, but also 14 one- to two-bedroom apartments, a retail space, and office space for Chang’s multinational company, Arrosoft Solutions. Chang’s company has offices in New Jersey, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.

“The mayor has a real mission, and we’re innovators in our field, and we’d like to be a part of reinventing a town,” Castainca said. “We want to be a part of the movement of change.”

Other extremely attractive aspects of the city from a business perspective are its low property taxes and underground fiberoptic channels; a rare find, according to Castainca.

continued

# GLOVERSVILLE

In a \$2 million project, partly funded by a Main Street Grant of \$500,000, NVP Development has been renovating three of the four buildings it purchased. What the fourth building will be depends on what the market calls for when they are ready to work on it. They have a preliminary idea of turning that building into a penthouse apartment with a “We Work” type of open office space for businesspeople on the lower levels. NVP Development hopes to attract a bar with a “speakeasy” look to the retail space it will lease, a nod to the building’s historic character. This would provide a gathering place for people to relax after work and on the weekends.

NVP Development’s project is just one example of the investment taking place in downtown Gloversville. While the city has a knack for artfully preserving its historic structures with their magnificent architecture and blending them into the fabric of a city-in-transformation, there are also new buildings being constructed in the city. The Family Counseling Center broke ground in 2020 on a new, 18,000-square-foot building that will link with its existing 9,000-square-foot facility. The \$6 million project will allow the Family Counseling Center to consolidate its offices in one strategic location in the county.



## Other affordable spaces are available for development downtown. These are a few highlights:

- Listed for \$105,000 (\$8.08 per square foot), the 12,996-square-foot commercial space at 48 S. Main St. consists of three stories with spaces suiting a variety of commercial applications such as offices, retail, warehouse, apartments, a brewery or distillery, and more. Annual taxes with no exemptions are \$2,799.
- The historic 18,000-square-foot building at 39 N. Main St. has three stories and list price of \$90,000 (\$5 per square foot). The second floor was the former owner’s apartment and features a new kitchen and a large bathtub with a hot tub. This building is available for a variety of business ventures with the possibility of living on site. Annual taxes are \$3,500.
- The three-story brick building at 21-23 Fulton St. has two ground-level storefronts with accessible entry and an open concept style with bathrooms and offices. Apartment space is available on the upper floors. This 8,946-square-foot building has a list price of \$89,000 (\$9.95 per square foot) and annual taxes of \$3,168.

“The mayor has a real mission, and we’re innovators in our field, and we’d like to be a part of reinventing a town,” Castainca said. “We want to be a part of the movement of change.”



The transformation of downtown Gloversville is focused largely on placemaking, a process that considers residents' and business owners' input about what they want to have in the areas where they live, work, and play. The city introduced community members, business leaders, elected officials, economic development professionals, and other stakeholders to the concept at Placemaking Conferences in 2018 and 2019. Michael Medina, owner of the Fulton County Barber Shop, won the city's Placemaking Award in 2019 for embracing this concept with his shop and its community outreach programs.

One major placemaking project was 100in1Day in May 2019. Gloversville was the first city in the United States and 32nd worldwide to participate in this movement, which began in Bogotá, Colombia in 2012. During this day of rich community pride and unity, residents collectively performed 100 acts of positivity in one day. Activities included a spring cleanup, tree plantings, free car washes, free breakfasts for seniors, food drives, clothing giveaways, bench installations, children's car seat inspections, a bike safety clinic, a book exchange, free drawing lessons and a musical performance, to name a few.

One current placemaking project is the renovation of Elk Street Park. In this citizen-driven project, the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth, local residents, and the national non-profit Project Backboard partnered to transform the park. Project Backboard resurfaces public courts and turns them into large-scale pieces of art. Elk Street Park's basketball court will feature a mural designed by a Gloversville high school student, and the court will have new bleachers. Colorful Adirondack chairs on a new concrete terrace will replace metal chairs on asphalt and pavers. The roughly \$50,000 required for this redevelopment project is coming from community contributions as well as city funds. A second phase of the revitalization of the park will involve the use of two buildings that the city purchased from the county at auction.

Another placemaking project is the multidimensional plans to turn the city's Trail Station Park into a destination. One addition will be a grant-funded spray park on the site of a current parking lot. Another part of the project is converting an asphalt lot into a greenspace for families, residents from the senior apartment building across the street, and those using the FJ & G Rail Trail, an asphalt foot and bike path built on the 19th century rail bed of the Fonda, Johnstown, & Gloversville Railroad. The park would also have a children's adventure area and an open lawn area with picnic tables. The popular park is host to festivals, concerts, and other community events.

Helping to fuel the renaissance of downtown Gloversville is the exodus of people from larger metropolitan areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many are seeking to live in less crowded, smaller cities with a lower cost of living and an elevated quality of life. Gloversville fits the bill for those who want to switch from a high-stress, high-cost environment to a relaxing lifestyle with a reasonable cost of living and a highly engaged and friendly community.



While Gloversville offers prime opportunities for business, it is also a perfect place for play. The city is located at the foothills of the Adirondack State Park, with its myriad recreational opportunities. Those with jobs downtown can be at the Great Sacandaga Lake within 20 minutes of leaving work. The city has a plethora of cultural and arts offerings as well as engaging shops, restaurants, farmer's markets, parks, and other amenities that contribute to making the city an attractive place to live.

[www.downtowngloversville.org](http://www.downtowngloversville.org)



## GRASS ROOTS MOVEMENT BREATHES NEW LIFE INTO ICONIC THEATRE

While it was once the crown jewel of the Schine Brothers movie theater empire, the iconic Glove Theatre in Gloversville had become an eyesore for the city by the mid-1990s. In fact, the building was scheduled for demolition in 1995 so that the property it occupied could be turned into a parking lot.

### **The community's response? An emphatic, "No way!"**

Businesses and residents stepped in, determined to save the historic structure, which was designed by prominent Utica-based architect Linn Kinne. A group banded together and formed a not-for-profit which purchased the property the following year. They rallied local businesses, community groups, and residents and began the gargantuan job of restoring the theater and rebirthing it into an arts hub for Fulton and neighboring counties.

Local veterinarian Henry Cady and his business partner, George Dartch, opened the Glove Theatre in 1914 as a venue for vaudeville shows, opera, orchestral concerts, and other live performances. Not long thereafter, Latvian immigrant brothers J. Myer and Louis Schine purchased the theater in 1920 for vaudeville shows and live theater performances before turning it into a movie house as they built their empire of 160 movie theaters around the country. The Glove Theatre became the Schine Brothers' flagship, with their headquarters housed in the adjacent building, the former Kasson Opera House. The theater drew Hollywood stars and other prominent performers to Gloversville for movie premieres, including Henry Fonda and Claudette Colbert for "Drums Along the Mohawk" in 1939.

With a healthy glove manufacturing industry in the city, the Glove thrived as a movie theater. Unfortunately, when the glove industry faded, so did the theater's crowds, and it eventually closed in the 1970s.

Two decades later, the community came through to orchestrate a renaissance for this historic building, a once-proud structure that had been woven into the fabric of the nation's cultural heritage. Volunteers worked weekly on repairs, including sewing the stage curtain, tiling the floor, and plastering. While children rehearsed for summer





productions, parents helped repair the theater. Just over a year after purchasing it, the nonprofit was able to open the theatre for performances once again.

Work has continued since that time, as have the venue's offerings, stimulating growth for the downtown area by bringing more traffic to local businesses. "I believe the Glove Theatre has the potential to be the economic catalyst for downtown's development," said Bryan E. Taylor, president of the Glove Theatre's board of directors. He cites marketing studies demonstrating that theater patrons spend \$15 to \$20 at peripheral businesses when they attend a show. "Even a show with 200 patrons would inject \$3,000 to \$4,000 of additional revenue into downtown businesses," he said, noting that this translates to a \$156,000 to \$208,000 potential aggregate increase in revenue to those businesses when the Glove Theatre implements its plan to host productions each week by the end of 2021. By ramping up events, the board anticipates attracting patrons from surrounding counties as well as Fulton County. The theater's current capacity is 385 people.

The Glove Theatre's past events have included Beatles tribute band Hey Jude, screenings of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show," classic movie showings, collaborations with the Caroga Arts Collective, sell-out children's performances such as "Willy Wonka Kids," and an indoor holiday market for the community. In 2018, NBC's "The Voice" winner Sawyer Fredericks filmed his first music video at the Glove Theatre and debuted it there with a benefit concert for the Glove Theatre.

Currently, the theater's board is in the middle of a \$100,000, four-phase capital campaign which includes replacing the office roof, renovating the marquee, restoring the interior walls and men's restroom, and

upgrading lighting, sound equipment, and rigging system so that the theater can host more high-caliber performers. Other future plans include installing new seating and air conditioning and building new dressing rooms.

Local businesses are still stepping up with donations and discounted services to help rehabilitate the venue. Matt and Tammy Capano, owners of the True Value store in Gloversville, donated the fluorescent lights for the new marquee. "I went there as a kid to watch movies, and it closed down," he said. "I was sad. If everybody helps out a little bit, good things can happen for Gloversville," he said, exemplifying the county's collaborative community spirit.

Ruby & Quiri, a home furnishings store in Johnstown, donated and installed carpeting for the entryway and



concession areas. Gloversville-based Taylor Made, a leading manufacturer for the recreational marine market, donated labor and materials for the new marquee, while Fulton County Electric and Correll Contracting provided deeply discounted services and in-kind donations.

**"The positive changes taking place in our downtown have created a palpable momentum that I personally have never before felt in our city,"** Taylor said. The board anticipates that this momentum will aid in the completion of the Glove Theatre's restoration.

[www.glovetheatre.org](http://www.glovetheatre.org)



# PARKHURST

## Fulton County's "Field Of Dreams"

David Karpinski, who played Little League at Groversville's Parkhurst Field as a kid, started out seeking to raise funds to improve the half-century old infrastructure at the ballpark when he served on the board. In the process, he stumbled on a bit of history that he believes will turn the field into an economic goldmine for the county.

He discovered that generations of Little Leaguers had been unknowingly playing ball on the same hallowed grounds that hosted early 20th century baseball greats like Cy Young, for whom the award for the best pitcher in baseball is named. Famed major league short stop Honus Wagner, whose baseball card recently sold for \$3.2 million at auction, played there, too, as did Archibald "Moonlight" Graham, also known as "Doc" Graham, who was immortalized in the 1989 Kevin Costner movie "Field of Dreams."

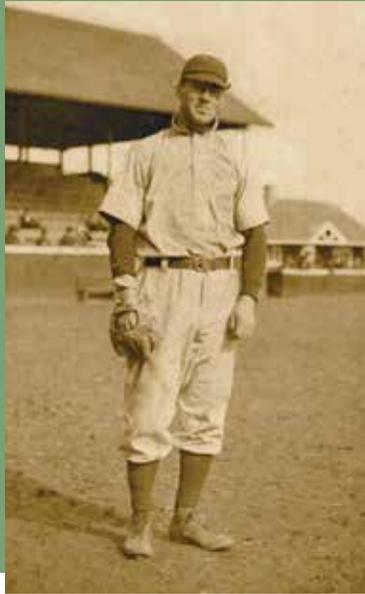
At the time, the field was named the A., J. & G. Park and was home field to the JAGs (Johnstown-Amsterdam-Groversville) team. The park hosted major and minor league teams who came to town on barnstorming tours, playing against the JAGs. Negro League baseball teams also played there when other cities refused to host them, demonstrating the inclusive nature of the Fulton County community.

Karpinski's project then became much larger, going far beyond his original intent. Until a decade ago, people did not know the history of field as an early 20th-century, state-of-the-art facility that attracted the best in baseball. After Karpinski unearthed this history, the idea surfaced to build the park out as a destination playing field for Little League teams. He has set out to do just that, not only restoring the park to its original 1906 glory, but also creating Groversville's own "field of dreams," a revenue source that will pump millions into the local economy.



To that end, Karpinski founded the Parkhurst Field Foundation in 2014 and serves as its executive director. He launched a \$2.5 million capital campaign called, "The Field of Dreams," building on the field's connection with "Moonlight" Graham, who was portrayed by Burt Lancaster in the film. Since the field is the only one remaining where Graham played—left field in seven documented games, to be exact—Universal Studios gave the foundation permission to use the name.

Karpinski has crunched the numbers. He starts off with the fact that with nearly 70 percent of children ages 6 to 17 playing a



team sport, parents spend nearly \$7 billion per year on youth sports-related travel, according to the National Association of Sports Commissions. The reason for the multi-billion-dollar figure is that the athletes do not come alone. They bring a family member or two with them. “We envision creating the demand here that would be fulfilled by somebody coming in and building out a hotel or an experience on one of the lakes or whatever it might be,” Karpinski said. Families spend an average of \$439 on accommodations during a tournament. When you add in the money they spend on eating at restaurants, groceries, entertainment, and shopping, it adds up to an average of \$1,000 per family injected into the local economy.

When complete, the newly renovated Parkhurst Field will have four fields. The premier field will be built on the site of the park’s original field where baseball greats played. “You’ll be able to tell the kids, ‘When you’re standing on this home plate, you’re standing where Moonlight Graham stood. You’re pitching where Cy Young had his pitches,’” Karpinski said. Three other regulation fields allow for an additional three teams to play simultaneously. “What we would have is a facility that would be able to hold 16 teams a week, 13 kids

continued



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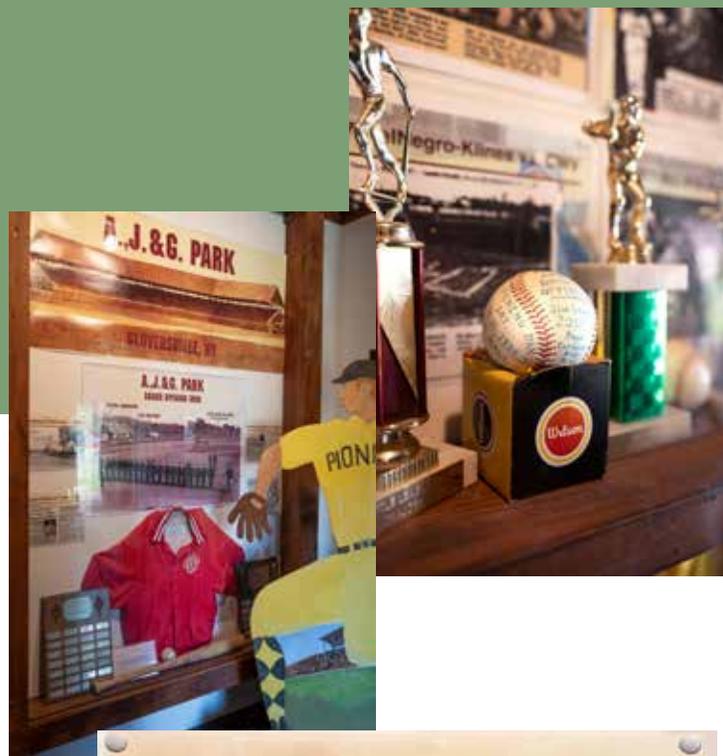
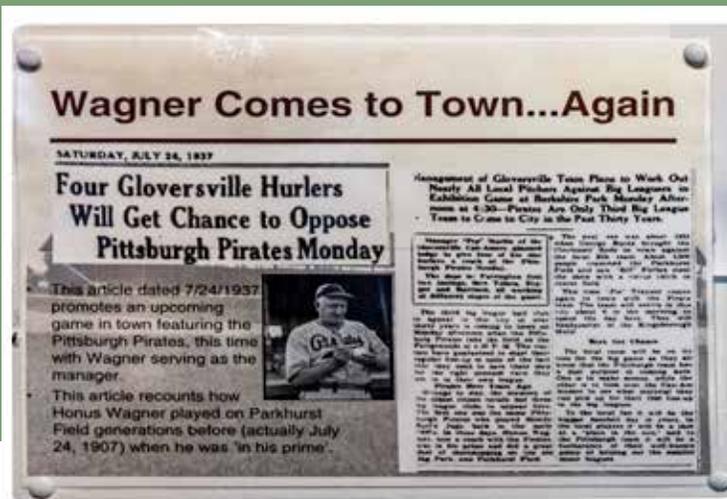
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per team,” he said. Doing the math, that accounts for at least 445 attendees per week coming for three- to four-day tournaments for a total of 10 weeks. “That has a \$1.8 million direct spend to the local area,” Karpinski said.

He even pictures the original Fonda, Johnstown & Gloversville Rail Trail that runs behind the park as a means to transport people from the park to downtown, where they would enjoy restaurants, shops, museums and historical sites during downtime between games.

In addition to what attendees will spend while they’re in town, there is residual spending. Studies also show that 59 percent of attendees return to an area for a visit or vacation after the tournament, and almost three-quarters recommend the destination to others, figures which indicate the potential for even more economic benefit for the region. Another economic impact will be the creation of 32 jobs as well as 20 construction jobs to complete the project.

Along with the playing fields, Parkhurst Field will have a new grandstand, concession stand, gift shop, batting cages, parking lots, and landscaping, all of which would be completed during three phases of construction.

The all-volunteer board of directors is in the process of raising \$2.5 million for the project through private donations. New York State awarded the foundation a Consolidated Funding Grant in 2016, which would be payable after the project has been completed.

The park remains the property of the Gloversville Little League, who would use the park through the end of June and then again in the fall, with the benefit of the lighting that is part of the development plan. The collaborative contract between the Little League and the foundation will put the facility to use for much of the year.



“Parkhurst Field could be a real economic diamond in the rough to create some external money coming in to support our local economy,” Karpinski said.

His years-long dedication to seeing the project to completion exemplifies the community’s loyalty to the area and commitment to improving the quality of life for its residents. “I was born and raised in Gloversville,” Karpinski said. “I grew up about three miles from Parkhurst Field. It’s my entire roots. I played Gloversville’s Little League in the mid ‘70s, so it’s near and dear to my heart.”

[www.parkhurstfield.org](http://www.parkhurstfield.org)



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WORKFORCE BY AGE GROUP	
Age 18 - 24	10.7%
Age 25 - 44	24.9%
Age 45 - 54	15.3%
Age 55 - 65	13.0%
Median Age	39.8

WORKFORCE BY EDUCATION	
College Grads	43.6%
Graduate Degree	14.4%
Bachelor Degree	17.9%
AA Certificate	12.3%
Some College	18.1%
High School	25.7%
< High School	6.7%



# The Sacandaga Valley Arts Network: A Cornucopia of Creativity

**Each summer, Northville Waterfront Park is the site of an idyllic scene.**

The Summer Concert Series, sponsored by the Sacandaga Valley Arts Network (SVAN), draws crowds of over 350 people who have come to connect, enjoy a picnic dinner or takeout from a local restaurant, and listen to free concerts in a variety of musical genres, with the stunning Great Sacandaga Lake as a backdrop.

SVAN, founded in 1997, is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and expanding the arts for artists and non-artists alike while acting as an economic catalyst for the region. The organization's 200-plus members range in experience from world-renowned to amateur artists and musicians as well as patrons of the arts.

up to 30 artists in a variety of media. Featured art rotates each quarter. SVAN also hosts open houses and book readings there. Additionally, the community can enjoy the work of local artists in SVAN's galleries at the Fulton County Visitor Center and at the organization's gallery in the Northville Public Library.

Each August, SVAN sponsors the Art Trails, a self-guided tour of Sacandaga Valley artists' studios. "Artists have opportunities to educate visitors about their art as well as to sell it. It has been a really popular event for us," said Carolyn Adamczyk, SVAN's board president.

The SVAN Art Club meets periodically and encourages residents to engage in their own artistic expression: music, painting, photography, textiles, weaving, woodworking, jewelry-making, writing, and many other art forms can be found at the gallery and among the art club members.

Through its all-volunteer efforts, SVAN orchestrates numerous and varied ways for artists to share their work with the community and build their own artistic expression.



Through its all-volunteer efforts, SVAN orchestrates numerous ways for artists to share their work with the community and build their own artistic expression. It operates the SVAN Arts Center Gallery and Gift Shop on Main Street in Northville, where it exhibits the work of

SVAN fosters art and music appreciation in the region's youngest citizens by sponsoring arts programs in area schools. For example, singer-songwriter residencies allow musicians to work with students over the course of a week, writing songs around a theme and concluding



with a performance for families.

The concerts in the park are just one part of SVAN's extensive musical components. Barbara Spaeth, the music committee's chair, leads the effort to present 15 to 17 concerts throughout the year, with offerings to suit a wide variety of tastes. Classical, folk, bluegrass, blues, rock, Irish, Americana, Latin, jazz, rockabilly, and classic '60s and '70s selections are all represented. Winter, spring, and fall concerts take place at various venues, such as restaurants, artists' studios, churches, and inns. "It really enriches our community quite a lot," Spaeth said.

"It's art in every form that helps to enrich the community," Adamczyk said.

Performance art is a third component of SVAN's activities. Northville Waterfront Park serves as the venue for Shakespeare in the Park performances. Sacandaga Musical Theater provides a performance outlet for residents while providing entertainment for theater lovers. They cater to different tastes by offering a range of different genres, including mysteries, comedies, and musicals. The group also presents dinner theater performances and hosts cabaret-style events.

Another important role for SVAN is the connection it fosters between artists and arts organizations. "SVAN is central in providing artists and art agencies throughout the Sacandaga Region, including Gloversville and Johnstown, with connective avenues that allow for interaction among artists and other agencies that promote businesses dedicated to the arts and individual artists who seek to share their arts," said arts center manager Sandy Peters.

The Arts Trails, combined with the year-round concerts and theater events, serve as the means for SVAN to fulfill its mission of building the valley's economy. Adamczyk points out that these events draw visitors to the region who might not have come otherwise, including travelers from out-of-state. "We've had people travel specifically for Art Trails, rent a cabin for the weekend, and then go home," she said. In addition, the organization extends its marketing beyond the Art Trails event. "When we advertise for it, we also advertise eateries, overnight accommodations, and other events that may be going on that same weekend in the area," she said.



Funding for the roughly 75 annual events SVAN hosts comes from memberships, theater events, commissions from gallery sales, workshop fees, private and corporate donations, local businesses, and grants.

When Adamczyk, a stained-glass artist, moved back to Fulton County after her Air Force service, she was surprised to find a flourishing arts community in the region. "The fact that there was such a healthy, robust artists' community here was definitely a selling point," said Adamczyk of her decision to move back to the county. "It's art in every form that helps to enrich the community," she said.

[www.svanarts.org](http://www.svanarts.org)

Whatever a company's workforce needs are, the Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery (HFM) BOCES is one of three educational institutions in Fulton County that is positioned to meet those needs, even creating new programs when necessary.



## Business-Partnered Education Program Trains Future Fulton County Workforce

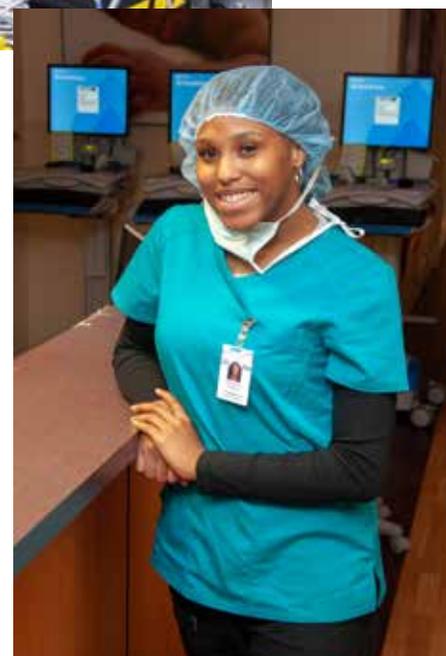
Some of the county's students start preparing to enter the workforce as early as their freshman year in high school. The HFM BOCES offers two programs, Pathways in Technology Early College High School (PTECH) and Career & Technical Education (CTE), both of which are designed to equip students with marketable skills, making them highly appealing to local employers. For example, PTECH students pursuing the Advanced Manufacturing pathway take several college math and physics courses and are trained in the basics of repairing complicated electrical equipment. "It requires quite a bit of math and science knowledge, so starting them off in 9th and 10th grade is pretty key to that," said Matt Davis, PTECH's principal.



These programs represent New York State's efforts to link education with regional economic development and to provide companies with the skilled workforce that will make their businesses thrive.

Implemented in 2013, the PTECH is a six-year program that begins in 9th grade. "The goal of our program is to have students earn their associate degree and high school diploma," Davis said.

From their freshman year, students are considered college students, and all tuition, lab fees, and books are covered by the program. Pathways in agriculture, advanced manufacturing, business, computer science, and medical/health science offer 20 different degrees that are conferred by Fulton Montgomery Community College or the State University of New York at Cobleskill.



# It's a hands-on approach to everything.



As freshmen, students attend professional skills seminars, and by the time they are in 11th grade, they move on to job shadowing and corporate visits, with the opportunity to do an internship their senior year if they meet GPA requirements.



CTE focuses on career exploration and hands-on learning for students in 11th and 12th grades. Students spend half the day at CTE and the remainder in their local high schools. "It's a hands-on approach to everything, with hands-on activities every single day," said CTE principal Michael DiMezza, noting that there are opportunities for students to earn college credits while still in high school.



Students can choose from 16 different pathways that run the gamut from Engineering Technology to Digital Multimedia as well as skilled trades like electrical, HVAC, and plumbing, to name a few. In some cases, students leave the program with an industry credential; for example, in environmental conservation, construction, or cosmetology.



Both PTECH and CTE rely heavily on partnerships with local industry. "We really work closely with our business partners so that we can get the best possible experience for our students and business partners at the same time," DiMezza said.



Facilitating this collaboration is the Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce. With HFM BOCES, the organization formed the HFM Business Education Partnership. The chamber's director of workforce development, Nicole Walrath, coordinates mentorships, job shadowing, internships, guest speakers, and workplace tours. "The goal is to prepare a talented workforce, and these students have had business interactions and mentoring with professionals since day one," Walrath said.

The benefit for local employers is that they have an opportunity to groom their own workforce. Crystal Geyser Alpine Spring Water's Johnstown plant is a case in point. Amy McCray, the company's northeast regional human resources and safety manager served as a business mentor for the PTECH program. As part of

continued



her company’s STEM recruiting, McCray sought interns. She selected PTECH graduate Marcos Santiago for an internship in Crystal Geysers’ mechanic technician role after his senior year. “Marcos is going for a degree in electrical engineering, which certainly would be highly compatible with our type of business,” McCray said. The company was so pleased with his work that pre-COVID, management had planned for him to intern at one of Crystal Geysers’ other facilities, either in New Hampshire or Florida, to give him a broader experience of the company’s operations. “We hope when he graduates that we will have some placement for him,” she said.

PTECH and CTE faculty are highly focused on meeting the workforce needs of local employers. “We invite in industry partners to give feedback to make sure that we’re relevant,” DiMezza said, noting that industry changes so rapidly.

Davis points out that HFM BOCES can add additional pathways to its programs if there is a demonstrated need in the area. For example, CTE added its Cybersecurity & Computer Technology pathway in response to input from local employers. Whatever the need, Davis said, HFM BOCES can partner with a community college for an instructor and create a program where students are trained to work in a particular industry.

“They do a wonderful job preparing the students to really become part of that next workforce,” McCray said.

[www.hfmboces.org](http://www.hfmboces.org)



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# STAYING LOCAL: Family Renovates Historic Store and Opens Chic New Restaurant

In the village of Northville, Fulton County's gem on the shores of the Great Sacandaga Lake, people can enjoy the nostalgic experience of shopping at a 5 and 10 store and then step next door for a bite at a newly opened upscale eatery outfitted with the latest in health-promoting UV-C lighting.

The Northville Five and Dime Store, along with its sister business, the Local Five and Dine, showcase Fulton County's savvy business community, commitment to history and heritage, and community pride. The two establishments, juxtaposed with one another, demonstrate how Fulton County business owners blend the ever-present desire for innovation with the honoring of local heritage, a combination that produces great results for customers.

While others might have succumbed to the intense competition from big-box stores, Brian and Susan Correll, who purchased the store in 1997, did not. Instead, they researched, renovated, expanded, and brought in unique products that made their store a destination shopping experience for tourists while remaining a mainstay for locals. The store, which opened in 1907, retains the distinction of being the longest continually operating 5 and 10 store in the United States. It moved to its current location on Main Street in 1914 and has remained open ever since.

The Fulton County Center for Regional Growth (FCCRG) assisted the Corrells in obtaining a \$500,000 Main Street Grant through the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal. With the funding, the Corrells began renovating and expanding the Five and Dime. They increased the store's retail space to the second floor, adding 3,000 square feet for its merchandise, which includes penny and novelty candies, vintage toys, region-related clothing and other items, jewelry, books, puzzles, fishing and camping supplies, and everyday household goods. One of its signature products is a selection of 12 to 15 flavors of fudge, homemade on the premises by Susan.

In making the space new, the Corrells preserved the old, such as the original wood floor made of alternating cherry and maple planks and the embossed tin ceilings and stained-glass windows. The expansion brought an almost 50 percent increase in revenue, and store manager Elayne Wade said that she could use even more space to house the wide variety of products that cater to the needs of both visitors and locals.



In addition to revitalizing the Five and Dime, the couple partnered with Nicole Sikorski, Susan's daughter, to open the Local Five & Dine, a chic, upscale restaurant next door, preserving and breathing new life into the 1890 building while offering cuisine unique to the lakeside community. The run-down building required a great deal of renovation, as it was leaning away from the adjacent store. The Corrells completed the structural rehabilitation, which included new wiring, plumbing and septic as well as the reinforcement with steel beams. They turned the downstairs into a sleek, modern-looking restaurant and bar area with a combination of soft seating and high-top tables.

The restaurant opened just four days before it was forced to shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though takeout service was not part of her original plan, Sikorski, who manages the restaurant, sprang into action, adapting the restaurant's menu and processes to accommodate the sudden switch to takeout service. "We've definitely impressed some people with how our whole team has just been able to be so flexible," said Sikorski, who worked in the Five and Dime as a high school and college student and recently returned to the area with her husband and children to be part of the family business. Even though most customers had not had a chance to taste the restaurant's food pre-pandemic, they ordered takeout, allowing the business to continue operating during the COVID-19 restrictions.

The Local's "chef-inspired" menu features freshly made appetizers, salads, and entrees that are intentionally crafted to be different than any other area restaurant's, avoiding competition and embracing a sense of community and cooperation with other restaurateurs. As Sikorski and chef Evan Luey discover customers' favorites, they adapt the menu accordingly.

Sikorski used the shutdown time to fine-tune the kitchen's operations to make them more efficient. She also focused on the adjustments that would be required for reopening. AeroMed, Inc., a local company, provided the restaurant with upper UV-C lighting as an added safety measure. "We're just trying to make people feel more comfortable in here," Sikorski said of the return to limited-capacity indoor dining. "We're doing all of the sanitation procedures that we need to do plus more."



When state COVID restrictions began to ease, the town government encouraged Sikorski to open up outdoor seating as soon as it was allowed. "The town has been really supportive," she said. "They were willing to help us in any way, and they said we can use as much of the sidewalk as we want."

The Corrells add a personal touch to the restaurant experience, making daily visits to greet customers and ensure that they are satisfied and having a good time, Sikorski said.





The 19th century-style variety store paired with a modern, relaxed yet elegant dining experience is a winning combination for the historic Adirondack village, whose Main Street was originally surveyed and planned in 1797. “We’re very thankful for the support we get from our community,” Wade said. “It’s a blessing.”

[www.thelocalfiveanddine.com](http://www.thelocalfiveanddine.com)

[www.northville5and10.com](http://www.northville5and10.com)

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hat started out as a local mom-and-pop canopy shop in Gloversville grew into a multinational corporation and one of the leading suppliers of recreational boating parts and aftermarket accessories to the marine industry.

**Taylor Made Group, LLC** produced residential and commercial awnings for half a century before expanding into the manufacture of parts and components for boating and off-road vehicles, including windshields and aftermarket products. The company distinguishes itself by engineering innovative products “constructed by boaters, for boaters,” earning dozens of patents for its original creations.

Taylor Made continued its expansion over the past century, opening facilities in Indiana, Ohio, and Florida as well as the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom. The company had licensed affiliates in Australia, New Zealand, and Poland.

In 2000, with the assistance of a grant from New York State, Taylor Made added 50,000 square feet to its Gloversville facility, enlarging it to a total of 120,000 square feet. This provided the company the space to grow its offerings of cutting-edge products.

When Lippert Components, Inc., an Indiana-based recreational vehicle parts manufacturer, was looking to expand into the boating market, Taylor Made was its choice. After acquiring Taylor Made in January 2018, Lippert sought to build on Taylor Made’s brand recognition, a nod to how Taylor Made has distinguished itself in the industry.

In 2019, the company purchased an additional 80,000-square-foot facility so that it could relocate its distribution and shipping center and use its original building to expand its manufacturing capabilities. The Fulton County Center for Regional Growth helped to work out an agreement so that the building’s seller, Swany America Corporation, could lease back 38,000 square feet from Taylor Made, an example of the cooperation between businesses in the county.

Even more growth is on the horizon. “We want to expand the distribution center again,” said Jason Pajonk-Taylor, president of Taylor Made. “We view this as a great location because we have a team here already, and it’s a great northeast distribution place for not just Taylor products, but for our corporate parent,” he said, noting that Taylor has “incredible longevity” for employees at both of its plants.

According to Pajonk-Taylor, the company is committed to remaining in Gloversville where his great-grandfather, Nelson Taylor, founded the business.

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# PRACTICAL, PROJECT-BASED LEARNING



## Equals Employability, a Win-Win for Employers and Students

What do Humvees traversing Afghanistan's rugged terrain have to do with students at Northville Central High School? Students assisted Johnstown manufacturer Electro-Metrics in the prototyping process for the vehicle's antennae and a gun mount, right in the fabrication lab at their school, thereby playing an important part in providing this critical equipment to the United States military.

a great job preparing kids for college—the traditional pathway,” McFarland said. “I always had this vision of strengthening programs for those students that school isn't for them—they just want to get out there and work,” he explained. The program not only equips students with the skills to earn a livable wage right out of high school, but it also serves students who continue on to other pathway programs to earn associate degrees



This is just one example of the real-world experience that students gain in Northville Central High School's Advanced Fabrication Technology Program.

In 2016, Northville Central School superintendent Leslie Ford teamed up with middle school and high school principal Kyle McFarland and his teaching staff to create a program that would not only serve its students but also provide workforce development for local employers. Later that year, the school began offering the classes that would, in 2019, officially become the Advanced Fabrication Technology Program. “We do

or who choose four-year colleges. “We want to connect real-life issues, project-based learning, the expertise of teachers, and the interests of kids and regional businesses,” Ford said. They intentionally designed the program to be as well-rounded as possible, but without a designated, specific outcome like a BOCES program. Ford points out that they were not looking for students to leave the program with a certificate, but with the skills that open up a variety of options for local employment. McFarland and his teaching staff created the program while keeping local employers and

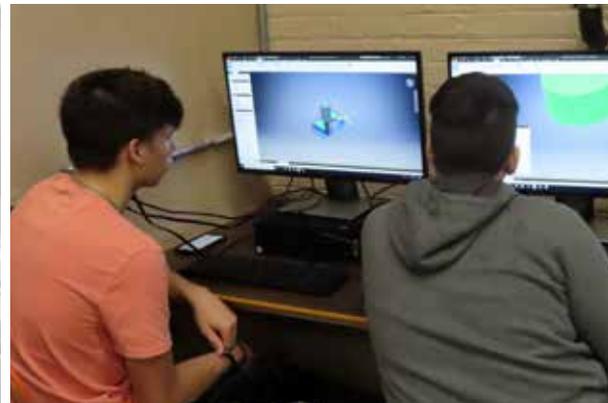
# NORTHVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL



the area's educational resources in mind. The majority of graduates who do attend college move back to the county after graduation, McFarland said. He and his staff asked themselves, "How could we strengthen giving our students opportunities to work and to work in a field that is exploding?" They kept local manufacturers as well as the region's nanoscience industry in mind. The program integrates coursework, project-based learning, and business partnerships to prepare students for work

fabrication lab, according to McFarland. The program has strong partnerships with several area employers. As a result, students tour local workplaces and interact with business professionals through panel discussions and professional skills seminars, job shadowing, and internships.

The program has been a boon for both students and area employers. One graduate went to work at a local convenience store after graduation. Not long thereafter,



in engineering and other technology-related fields. In addition to traditional high school coursework, students take classes in digital design and production, CNC (computer numerical control) machining (the school has three CNC machines), computer-aided manufacturing, and technical math. They take part in vinyl cutter training and learn how to use a 3-D printer. Students also have the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. Coursework includes projects to assist local businesses, using the lab's equipment, which match the components of a university-level

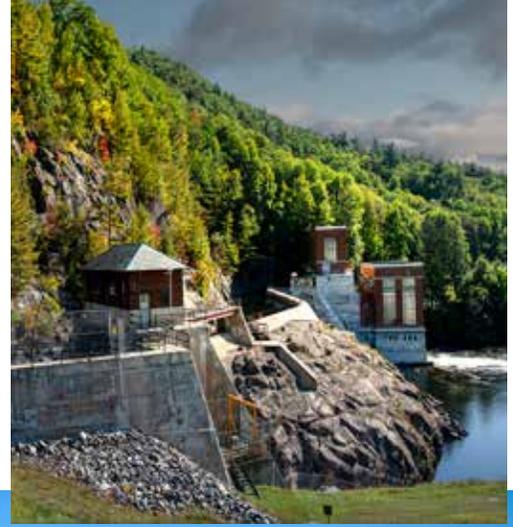
he called McFarland to tell him that Electro-Metrics had contacted him, asking him to interview for a job. By September, the company hired the graduate of the high school's Advanced Fabrication Technology Program, providing training and full benefits. "That is what a program like this can do," McFarland said.

[www.northvillecsd.k12.ny.us/](http://www.northvillecsd.k12.ny.us/)

Fulton County is one of three counties that encompass the 125 miles of shoreline around the largest reservoir in New York State, the Great Sacandaga Lake.

**This paradise of the Adirondacks boasts a booming tourist economy and is a place where locals and visitors come to relax and enjoy fun times together.**

The Great Sacandaga Lake pumps millions of dollars into Fulton County's economy each year. Ironically, the creation of the reservoir in 1930 meant



# RISING ABOVE THE FLOOD: Business Prospers Around New York's Largest Reservoir

the death of communities and industries along the Sacandaga River, the largest tributary of the Hudson River. Today's robust lake economy is a tribute to the character of the area's residents and their ability to adapt and thrive.

The story of the lake's creation is largely characterized by the sacrifices the region's citizens made for the greater good. As early as 1867, the New York State Legislature entertained proposals to build dams and reservoirs to control flooding, but it was not until 1913, following the devastating flooding of cities along the Hudson River, that the legislature passed an amendment allowing for the creation of state-owned reservoirs.

During a five-day period, beginning on Easter Sunday in 1913, torrential rains brought the equivalent of four to six weeks' worth of normal rainfall. Water destroyed bridges and river walls, flooded streetcar lines, power-generating stations, and sewage-treatment



plants, and even burst gas lines, igniting fires that raged throughout downtown Troy.

A particularly horrific event for the city of Albany occurred when water burst through the doors of the Albany Pump Station, flooding the filters that clarified the municipal water. This caused untreated river water contaminated with human waste to end up in Prospect Reservoir, which supplied water to residents' homes. This led to an outbreak of typhoid fever in the city.

"Before we had the reservoir, there was no way to control the snowmelt coming down from the river," said Lauren Roberts, the Saratoga County historian. "The



Photos collection of the Hart Cluett Museum, Historic Rensselaer County, Troy, NY

Hudson River flooded every spring, costing millions of dollars in property damage and human life,” Roberts said. “It was detrimental to people’s health, businesses, and livelihood,” she said.

Within months of the Easter flood, the legislature took action to allow for the building of dams to create reservoirs. In the case of the Great Sacandaga Lake, this involved the construction of the Conklingville Dam and the flooding of the Sacandaga basin to an elevation of 771 feet above sea level.

This meant the destruction of 10 communities along the river. Residents had the option of selling their homes or moving them. Any structures that were left were burned. Carefully and respectfully, the government relocated 3,800 gravestones. Workers cleared 12,000 acres of timber. Today, visitors to the lake can sometimes catch a glimpse of empty foundations where buildings used to stand or the stumps of trees that lined the streets of river towns.

In 1930, 17 years after the Easter flood, engineers closed the gates of the dam. Waters flooded the Sacandaga basin to form the Sacandaga Reservoir, which was later renamed the Great Sacandaga Lake to encourage tourism.

Year-round, the Great Sacandaga Lake is the perfect place for recreational activities. During the summer, people fish for pike, trout, bass, and walleye. They go boating, sailing, waterskiing, canoeing, kayaking, whitewater rafting, and tubing on the lake’s 42 square miles of water. Cyclists enjoy 140 miles of trails around the lakes. Some visitors prefer to relax on the beach or

camp on the shores of the lake. Dwellings from small camps to elegant lakeside homes surround this gem of the Adirondack Park. Shops and farmers markets offer a sampling of locally made products to please any palate, including pies, jams, maple syrup, and apple cider. Shoppers discover unique offerings by local artists. In the winter, the lake draws skiers, snowmobilers, and ice fishermen.

The Great Sacandaga Lake became a draw for those who wanted to take up permanent residence as well as tourists, and it remains that way today. New businesses sprang up around the lake economy. “Over the course of time, from it originally being a river to its change into the reservoir, it has always been a magnet for business,” Roberts said. “When it was a river, it was a really important resource because all of the mills and tanneries relied on the waterpower of the river for water-powered industry. It was important then for a different reason. Now it’s important for drawing in a tourist economy. It’s still the power of the water that’s drawing people to the area,” she said.

[www.visitsacandaga.com](http://www.visitsacandaga.com)

“It’s still the power of the water that’s drawing people to the area.”



# NEED WATER? GOT WASTEWATER? FULTON COUNTY IS THE WHEY TO GO!



Just as the waters of the Great Sacandaga Lake draw tourists to the area, the abundant water resources of Fulton County attract manufacturers. Water abounds in Groversville, which has four reservoirs providing 710,000,000 gallons of storage capacity.

The county processes wastewater, including whey, from local manufacturers, at the Groversville-Johnstown Joint Wastewater Treatment Facility (GJJWTF), which has a designed capacity of 13.8 million gallons per day of residential and industrial wastewater. In addition, high-strength whey from the local dairy industry is piped to an anaerobic digester which generates methane gas. This renewable methane gas fuels a combined heat and power system. GJJWTF's state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant is the first and only wastewater treatment plant in the United States that produces 100 percent of its own electrical power needs and sells excess electrical power to the grid.

In 2019, the facility processed 387,636,401 gallons of wastewater from industrial sources. Since the dairy industry represented most of the industrial load, the GJJWTF designed and constructed a unique dairy wastewater processing unit to handle the dairy's high-strength washwater, a combination of cleaning agents and dairy product residues. As a result of this future planning, GJJWTF operates at 50 percent of its designed load capacity for biological oxygen demand (BOD) and total suspended solids (TSS).

Dairy manufacturers accounted for 211,637,684 gallons of this total in 2019. To eliminate the need for manufacturers to truck their whey to the treatment facility, GJJWTF installed whey and washwater pipelines directly from their factories to the facility. Currently, the dairies simply pump their whey directly to the mesophilic anaerobic digesters that produce the methane that runs the plant's

combined heat and power generators, converting the whey to fuel. "In terms of green, we're very green," said manager Wallace Arnold. "You're not going to find a wastewater plant that generates more power than it uses."

With an abundant supply of water and the facility to process wastewater, Fulton County is well-positioned to welcome new companies that have high water demands and wastewater discharges.

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# European Company Chooses Fulton County for Entree into the North American Market

When Spanish meat manufacturer **España** wanted to expand its operations to North America in 2015, it chose Gloversville, New York as the best place for that expansion.

In an unassuming building in the Gloversville Industrial Park, employees dry, cure, package, and ship all-natural, antibiotic- and nitrite-free delicacies like pancetta, beef bresaola, chorizo, and exotic products made from boar, duck, bison, truffles, and venison. Americans can find España's offerings, including "Tapas Essentials," a line of ready to serve products specifically designed for the North American market, in specialty and high-end markets like Whole Foods and Fresh Market. The company is working on expanding its distribution to other supermarkets as well. España has also manufactured charcuterie for Aldi, under the Aldi store brand name.

The company has humble roots. In 1947, company founder Esteve España began producing sausage using traditional recipes in his Olot farmhouse in the Catalan region of Spain. Since then, España has become a household name in Europe, with a level of brand recognition comparable to America's Boar's Head brand meat. The company ships its signature cured hams worldwide.

España acquired another meat manufacturer in 2016 and set up shop in its USDA-approved facility in Gloversville, infusing the business with several million dollars

for modernization, expansion, and development. España installed a new slicing line that can slice blocks of ham in a few seconds, as well as a new packing machine, among other equipment. "They expanded our production capacity by adding more modernizing equipment in the production room," said plant manager Kyle Sullwold. España entered a partnership with international companies to produce meat-based snack sticks, and configured and stocked the facility for maximum growth.

España employees process 20,000 to 25,000 pounds of salami alone per week, which dries to about half that weight on wall to wall racks in the facility's drying rooms. In addition to its own products, the company also processes meats from co-packers, including local



# “There’s no shortage of people looking for work in the area.”

farmers. “We’ve gotten it pretty much to the point where it’s at maximum capacity,” Sullwold said. “It’s an even mix to diversify the business,” he said.

Fulton County was a perfect place, because Espuña wanted to be near its major market, New York City and the surrounding areas. “To be able to place a manufacturing facility near our target market and have local distribution and carriers to bring our product to market with relative ease, it’s a big advantage,” Sullwold said.

Gloversville’s proximity to Canada, a four-hour drive with accessibility to international waters at the Port of Montreal, also contributed to the reason why Fulton County is an ideal location. Espuña imports a great deal of its pork from Canada and can bring in container shipments from Spain, which was essential when Espuña first opened in Gloversville. “Spain would feed us with container shipment after container shipment,” Sullwold said. Since then, though, due to the contacts he has made in the local community, that need has diminished. “We’ve had to import less and less,” he said.

He cites the example of a microbiology lab Espuña is able to rent from the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth. “We have somewhere local, and we don’t have to invest in building a lab,” Sullwold said. He also found a machine shop nearby that can repair Espuña’s machinery when necessary. “I could wait six weeks for a part from Germany, or take it down the road and see if he can fix it,” he said.

The networking between manufacturers makes business easier. “Manufacturing is strong in the county,” Sullwold said. “We’ve found that a lot of the connections that are formed between businesses beget more connections,” he said. For example, Espuña does not have its own trucks at the Gloversville facility, but through his contacts in the area, Sullwold was able to tap into the transportation network available to move Espuña’s products to its distribution networks all up and down the East Coast and in Miami.

Sullwold is easily able to find the labor force of 22 to 25 people he requires to run the plant. “There’s no shortage of people looking for work in the area,” he

said, noting that he recently added a second shift for cleaning, sanitation, and organization. He had no problems finding people to work at night.

Espuña continues to increase production in its Gloversville manufacturing facility. For example, to serve the manufacturing requirements of a partnership it formed with two European families, Espuña acquired a meat smoker to produce a new line of snack sticks and meat loops from these families’ old world recipes, distributed under the brand name “Bigoes.”

More growth is on the horizon for Espuña’s Gloversville-based North American operation. The company continues to build the partnerships that will facilitate westward expansion into new markets across the continent.

[www.espuna.es](http://www.espuna.es)



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