

# SULLIVAN COUNTY BUSINESS EDGE

MARCH 2023

Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development \* Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency \* Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce \* Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association \* Sullivan County Democrat

## Sustaining our growth

BY JOSHUA POTOSEK,  
SULLIVAN COUNTY  
MANAGER



Joshua Potossek

DEMOCRAT FILE PHOTO  
Sullivan County added many new businesses in 2022, including Creek House Grill in Callicoon, owned by Karen Dettori and husband/chef John.

### SMALL COUNTIES RANKED BY TOTAL NON-FARM JOB GROWTH RATE January 2022 - January 2023

RANK	COUNTY	RATE
1	Sullivan County	+6.3%
2	Greene County	+3.5%
3	Chautauqua County	+2.6%
4	Fulton County	+2.5%
5	Genesee County	+2.3%
6	Montgomery County	+2.2%
7	Allegany County	+2.1%
7	Columbia County	+2.1%
9	Lewis County	+1.5%
10	Essex County	+0.7%
11	Chenango County	+0.6%
11	Franklin County	+0.6%
13	Cayuga County	+0.4%
14	St. Lawrence County	+0.3%
14	Steuben County	+0.3%
16	Delaware County	0.0%
16	Hamilton County	0.0%
16	Schuyler County	0.0%
19	Cattaraugus County	-0.3%
20	Clinton County	-0.6%
21	Otsego County	-0.9%
22	Cortland County	-1.1%
23	Seneca County	-2.9%
24	Wyoming County	-5.7%

Source: NYS Dept. of Labor

**P**ost-pandemic job growth in Sullivan County continues to impress. In fact, Sullivan County led all of New York State throughout 2022 in non-farm job growth, according to NYS Department of Labor statistics. That includes our downstate powerhouse of New York City. Considering NYS also outpaced the national job growth average in 2022, Sullivan has seen enviable sustained success.

The trick is to maintain that success. That starts with analyzing where our job growth is highest and where it is lowest. Almost a third of the State's job gains were in lei-

sure and hospitality, and we contributed significantly to that for a county of our size – an estimated 600 new jobs in 2022, according to Labor data. Job gains were non-existent in financial activities and information, which have never been the strongest performers in Sullivan County.

In addition to leisure services, we saw decent growth in health & education services and trade, transportation and utilities. That's a reflection of the existing businesses, for- and non-profit, in Sullivan. While we seek to improve upon the growth in those sectors, it's

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## TO THE PEOPLE

### Market Uncertainty Underscores Importance of Economic Development

We have been here before; rising inflation, increasing mortgage rates, rising energy costs, war, and general uncertainty in the economy. For the past five decades there has been a moment in time in each where these issues have been front and center on our minds. Does anyone remember the double-digit mortgage interest rates of the 80's and 90's? Throw in a war or two, financial crisis, and a pandemic and uncertainty becomes more certain, ironically. So, what can we do as a community to bounce back, stabilize, or continue success in our local economies? Focus on Economic Development. Get our communities and sites ready for investment, job creation, visiting travelers, and the associated commerce that it can create. While a bounce back in the economy

is always just around the corner (of course depending on many factors, like leadership, public policy, global challenges and more....), like all things in life, preparation dictates what the outcome is in the future.

At the Sullivan County Partnership, we have been steadily working with landowners, towns, and professionals to secure preapprovals for future development while assisting a portfolio of current projects. We remain dedicated to diversifying our economy to every extent possible. We facilitate business needs large and small with the goal to continue to positively impact the economy and provide opportunities for all. Getting communities and sites ready for marketplace demands puts us in the best position to be ready for development and therefore attracts investment in a variety of industry sectors. This investment impacts local spending, tax rates and payroll, which helps everyone. Due to the recent approvals, we are now



CEO/President Marc Baez

getting attention from investors that would not have considered our area otherwise. Supply chain and product development onshoring, has increased demand for locations ready to serve the growing needs of the market. Consumer purchasing trends have shifted. For example, online purchasing has increased from 4% to 18% of all retail sales and accelerating fast. Virtually every way products are made and delivered is changing rapidly, so we must be ready and adapt to these trends.

For the past two years, we have enjoyed a successful economic comeback due in large part to a prolonged surge in tourism. Years of preparation, messaging and marketing by the Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association (SCVA) has paid dividends. Our Sullivan Catskills outperforms other larger more resource advantaged

areas because of the SCVA's relentless focus on continuing its mission; to market our area as a destination like no other and it has worked. While the effects of incoming travelers throughout the pandemic certainly boosted our economy in many ways, the groundwork SCVA had done prior, positioned the Sullivan Catskills to welcome many new visitors to the point where we are now recognized internationally as a serious destination option. Our IDA and Sullivan County Chamber too play a vital role in incentivizing projects and providing the retention support respectively. Each is necessary to keep our communities looking forward to new opportunities while they are managing the daily needs of our residents and visitors.

Government, whether at the local, regional, or state level including our schools, must be an Economic Development partner, weighing current operational costs and unforeseen challenges with the need to promote a



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**TO THE PEOPLE:** Continued from page 2

business-friendly environment. This is not always easy, particularly locally, as constituents often are afraid of change, yet if communities stay stagnant and do not encourage economic development that is well matched with their locations, they risk ever increasing costs, and an ever-shrinking tax base. This puts immense pressure on small budgets, forcing increased taxes in order simply to keep up with rising costs and the downward cycles in the economy that again, have become a certainty.

At the second annual Economic Development summit held at the Kartrite Resort we tackle these issues as a way to help our community leaders. We help leaders understand the market, how the development and approval process can be done more efficiently, and the challenges developers face when conducting projects from inception to completion. We cover energy, and environmental demands, and how, if municipalities prepare, they can enjoy the positive benefits of Economic Development for a more prosperous future. It is important to keep educating stakeholders about all the elements involved in the attraction and development process. With the current economic uncertainty facing us today, Economic Development has never been more critical.

Sincerely,



Marc Baez  
President and CEO  
Sullivan County Partnership

**GROWTH:**

Continued from front page

important for us to continue to diversify. That's a key reason behind our focus on the County Airport, where we have plenty of room for development – on property that consistently receives millions of dollars for improvements from the Federal government.

Many of our downtowns are doing well, if not thriving. But the best long-term strategy is not to rely solely on the second-home and tourism crowds to sustain that success. We need local, good-paying jobs to provide customers to these downtown businesses, so the County and its economic development partners continue to seek out warehouse and manufacturing employers, among others.

The best long-term strategy is not to rely solely on the second-home and tourism crowds to sustain success. We need local, good-paying jobs to provide customers to downtown businesses.

**Joshua Potesek**

Sullivan County Manager

We also are stimulating job growth directly, by providing workers to our industries which need them most. Thanks to the County Legislature, we're offering 15 carefully selected adults a 9-week course in the construction trades, by the completion of which they'll be fully employable in a growing and lucrative field. We've also expanded our Sullivan Promise scholarship from one year to two years of free tuition at SUNY Sullivan for any local high school grad. While some of these young people

will go on to other colleges and other areas, I have high hopes that some will stay and utilize their newfound education and skills to benefit their hometowns.

We don't know for certain what 2023 will bring, but with 2022's high job growth and record-setting sales tax revenues (crossing the \$70 million mark and outpacing our property tax revenues for the first time in our history), Sullivan County is incredibly well-positioned to maintain and expand our healthy economy.

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Moving our region forward:

# Route 17 expansion will improve mobility, enhance safety and boost our economy in the Hudson Valley

BY MAUREEN HALAHAN AND MARC BAEZ

In business, as in life, we can find ourselves in a rut. The way out may be complex or simple, but it always involves change. That's the key to moving forward; idling holds you back, and doing nothing gets you stuck in reverse.

If the past several years have shown us anything, it's that we must be nimble and able to pivot quickly. Our region was one of the first in the nation to be gripped by the pandemic and one of the first to bounce back and demonstrate amazing resiliency.

The Hudson Valley is open for business. Companies are expanding and investing here, people are relocating here and tourists are coming back in droves. These are positive changes that add to our region's rich diversity,

broaden our talent base and give our communities a much-needed economic boost.

## Help is on the way

But, while the Hudson Valley has been growing and evolving, our infrastructure has not kept pace. We now have the opportunity to change that – with the funding in place to improve mobility and safety in the region by providing necessary upgrades and an additional travel lane along Route 17 in Orange and Sullivan counties.

The need for an additional lane on Route 17 has been confirmed by two separate New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) studies and has bipartisan support at all levels of government. The DOT has been very responsive to local concerns and has addressed considerations ranging from safety, the environment, quality-of-life and

projected financial costs. Last year saw important milestones in the campaign to upgrade Route 17:

- Up to \$1 billion was included in the FY 2023 state budget for an environmental review of the Route 17 project, as well as construction to add another lane and make necessary upgrades.

- Gov. Kathy Hochul said the funding will be used to “accelerate the conversion of the Route 17 corridor in Orange and Sullivan counties to Interstate 86, fueling transformative levels of economic growth in the region and improving quality of life by alleviating congestion.”

- Gov. Hochul on Oct. 5, 2022 announced the start of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Route 17 – a key step forward to convert the corridor to Interstate 86.

We are grateful to Gov. Hochul for making Route 17 a priority for investment. Our coalition, 17-Forward-86, is a broad-based group of industry, trade and civic representatives who have been advocating for these critical upgrades for more than five years. We comprise some 200 members of economic development groups, community and civic organizations, construction trades, tourism groups and energy companies representing thousands of individuals who share a common vision for expanding the capacity of Route 17 to ensure the economic well-being of the Hudson Valley and Sullivan Catskills.

The Route 17 expansion has widespread support because the benefits are many and far-reaching. An additional lane will improve mobility and provide critical access for first responders – police, fire,



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## COALITION MEMBERS



CONTRIBUTED GRAPHIC

These are the members of the 17-Forward-86 Coalition.

ambulance services – and make the route safer for everyone on the roads. It will result in less congestion and thus reduce the environmental damage from vehicular emissions caused by idling motorists. The project itself will create good-paying jobs and restore a sense of stability in our communities.

These improvements are right in line with our state's progress in encouraging electric vehicle (EV) use. Gov. Hochul has announced a number of charging sites to support more accessible EV travel, including along I-86 and Route 17. However, even as we transition to EV use, traffic problems will remain. A vehicle in traffic, whether EV or gas, is a vehicle stuck in traffic. An additional lane on Route 17 will help all motorists, regardless of what types of vehicles they drive. In fact, the Route 17 enhancement project is about mobility for all, including the thousands of daily bus riders, many of whom use the 15 park-and-ride lots along the corridor. Let's face it, our region is growing.

Orange County has the fourth-fastest growing population in New York State, increasing at a rate of more than 9 percent between 2010 and 2023. Census data for 2021 shows Sullivan County as the fastest-growing county in the state. Tourism, too, is on the rise. Visitors spent \$3.8 billion in the Hudson Valley in 2021 and Orange County itself saw a 63 percent spike in spending. The Sullivan Catskills continues to attract upward of 4 million visitors, drawn to Bethel Woods Performing Arts, Resorts World Catskills, The Kartrite Resort & Indoor Waterpark, new luxury lodging, endless outdoor experiences and Delaware River adventures. The four counties comprising the Catskills Region saw a 122.9% increase over 2019 and 64.1% growth over 2020, reflecting \$1.9 billion in visitor spending. The Sullivan Catskills saw a 122.8% increase over 2019 and 66.3% over 2020, reflecting \$710 million in visitor spending. Our business communities are growing as well. We've seen the expansion of Woodbury Common

and construction of Legoland, and there are a host of planned developments underway. We need these investments and we need the infrastructure to support them.

Now is the time to do it. Several DOT projects have already upgraded sections of Route 17, including reconstruction of the interchange at Exit 131, where Route 17 meets I-87 and Route 32 (Woodbury Common) and reconstruction of exits 122 and 125 (Legoland) to meet interstate standards. In addition, an interchange reconstruction project is underway at Exit 105 A and B in the Town of Thompson. Let's finish the work and ensure our infrastructure is equipped to handle the added capacity to improve mobility and ensure our safety now and for generations to come.

**ABOUT THE AUTHORS:** 17-Forward-86 Coalition co-chair Maureen Halahan is President and CEO of the Orange County Partnership; 17-Forward-86 Coalition co-chair Marc Baez is President and CEO of the Sullivan County Partnership. To learn more, visit [www.17Forward86.org](http://www.17Forward86.org)



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# Preparing to Get Customers in Your Doors—Spring in the Sullivan Catskills

BY ISABEL BRAVERMAN  
BRAND AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER  
SULLIVAN CATSKILLS VISITORS ASSOCIATION

The Sullivan Catskills offers a unique blend of natural beauty and small-town charm that has made it a popular destination for travelers seeking a break from the hustle and bustle of city life. With spring just around the corner, businesses in the region are gearing up for another busy season of outdoor activities, events, and increased visitation.

One of the most popular spring activities in the Sullivan Catskills is fishing, with the opening day of trout season on April 1. The region boasts some of the best trout streams in the Northeast, including the famous Beaverkill and Willowemoc rivers.

As the weather warms up, anglers from across the country flock to the region to try their luck in the crystal-clear waters. Businesses

that offer fishing equipment rentals, guide services, and lodging can expect a boost in demand during the spring season.

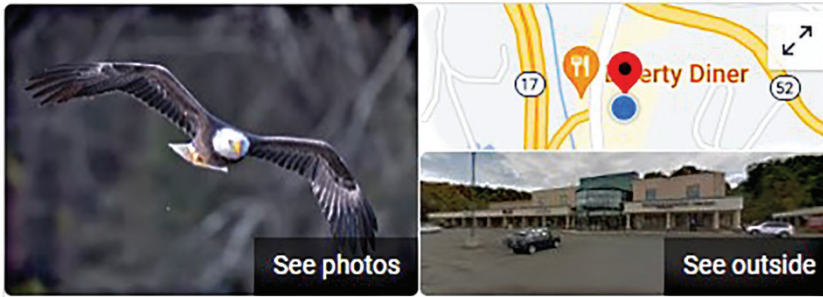
And save the date for Catskill

Cuisine—a foodie festival to be held May 12 and May 13 at Bethel Woods Center for the Arts. This culinary event will highlight celebrity and local chefs, with

eventgoers having the opportunity to meet chefs, sample tastings, and shop from regional vendors. This event will bring in an influx of visitors, booking lodging and populating our area businesses.

Short-term rentals have become increasingly popular in the Sullivan Catskills in recent years, with properties such as cabins, cottages, and farmhouses in high demand, especially during the peak spring and summer seasons. Local businesses that offer property management and rental services can expect a steady stream of bookings and revenue.

Having a strong online presence is essential for any business, and the Sullivan Catskills region is no exception. A Google Business Profile is a powerful tool that can help local businesses improve their



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bla Shad Fest was held earlier this summer at Fort Delaware in Narrowsburg. The first ever

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online visibility and attract more customers.

By creating a Google Business Profile, businesses can provide potential customers with essential information such as location, hours, contact information, and customer reviews. With more people relying on the internet to plan their trips, having a well-optimized Google Business Profile can make all the difference in driving foot traffic and revenue.

The Sullivan Catskills region offers a wealth of opportunities for businesses looking to capitalize on the growing demand for outdoor activities, short-term rentals, and online marketing. By leveraging these trends and staying ahead

of the curve, local businesses can thrive in the increasingly competitive tourism industry. Whether you are a small business owner or an entrepreneur looking to start a new venture, the Sullivan Catskills region is a great place to

invest your time and resources.

Visit [www.sullivancatskills.com](http://www.sullivancatskills.com) or call our office at 845-747-4449. Make sure to download the free app, Sullivan Catskills Go, and share it with your customers and visitors.



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# Seven X Motors is building toward the future

STORY AND PHOTOS BY FRED STABBERT III

**D**riving by Seven X Motors in Mongaup Valley is impressive. For the last three years the company has been building new buildings, constructing an impressive used car display platform and continuing to be a leader in the used car and service industry in Sullivan County.

“Business is booming – we are rolling (no pun intended),” Eric Alleva said about the success of the family business he runs with his sister, Faith.

With nearly 150 cars in stock, Seven X hopes to increase that number to 300 by mid-summer, and also work on doubling its staff from 17 employees to 35.

It is a vision which Eric and Faith have for a business which was started by their father in a small building with just an outdoor lift and a couple of employees to do oil changes.

Eric and Faith got to work with their dad, Ercole “Eric” Alleva, during the early years – and they know full well how proud he would be of where they are today.



Eric and Faith Alleva run Seven X Motors in Mongaup Valley, and continue to grow the business and its offerings



**BEFORE:** This photo, taken in December 2019, shows Eric Alleva reviewing the construction of the three-bay repair shop.



**AFTER:** Eric is all smiles as the repair shop and office, along with paving and a retaining wall, are now complete.

But the only thing missing is his pat on the back. “COVID was tough for us,” Eric said. “Dad passed away April 3, 2021 during COVID.”

And although he never got to see the great strides his kids have made, they hope he is smiling down on their accomplishments.

While COVID provided many challenges for local businesses, Eric said it was their vision of what Seven X could become that got them through.

“In two short years we made it happen,” he said. “We never gave up. No job was too small.”

The incredible transformation of Seven X included the finishing of a six-bay repair shop that

is equipped with all the latest and best technology in the industry.

“No expense was spared in buying equipment,” Eric said. “We have lifts that accommodate 20,000 lb. vehicles and our smallest lift can handle 12,000 pounds.

“Because of this investment we are capable of performing bigger jobs,” he said. “We can do oil changes to an engine rebuild. We can also do deep electrical diagnosis that other garages can’t. There is no aspect of repair we don’t do.”

But the equipment is only as good as the team running it.





In order to display as many cars as possible, Seven X Motors has constructed a multi-tier system as well as a special spot for the Car of the Week. The business has continued to grow throughout the pandemic and now offers a complete service shop in addition to the finest used cars.



“We have hired phenomenal employees,” Eric said. “We have added high tech technicians and have been really fortunate to have a great staff.”

And moving over to the used car lot, customers will notice a custom-designed, three-tier viewing area that has everything you are looking for in used cars.

“What sets us apart in the used car market is that we completely inspect and detail our cars before

they go on the lot,” Eric said. “These cars are in the best possible shape of any used car offering.”

And with three to four cars moving off the lot every day, Eric said the company relies heavily on the “detail” workers to get more cars ready for sale.

“And our salesman Frank is fantastic,” he said.

And to put their money where their mouth is, Seven X offers a one-year warranty for free.

Because of this unique incentive, Seven X has

seen a continued growth of repeat customers and “our referrals are off the hook,” Eric said.

“We take extra pride in what we do and details count,” he said. “We are super proud to be in the Town of Bethel and are happy to see the continued growth of Sullivan County.

“We are the first business you see on 17B when you travel from Monticello to Bethel and we take it seriously,” Eric said.

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# Champion Elevator gives businesses a lift

BY FRED STABBERT III

PHOTOS COURTESY OF  
CHAMPION ELEVATOR

When your elevator isn't working, who do you call? Champion Elevator Corp., obviously.

For 34 years, company President Donald Gelestino has strived to provide the highest level of service to his customers, whether they are in need of a repair or installation of new equipment.

His move into Sullivan County happened almost by accident nearly three decades ago. One day he was visiting Parkville when the owner of a local resort told him "my elevator isn't working."

Gelestino asked him how long the elevator hadn't been running and the man answered, "Three months!"

"I have a heart attack when one of my elevators isn't working for three hours," he said. "So I brought my tools up to Parkville and took a look to see what I could do to help him."

Gelestino remembers that the elevator "was pretty shot," but he called in his top repairman to help out.

"We both teamed up and got it figured out," he said.

Because Gelestino wasn't used to hearing

anything like this in his business – a customer three months without an elevator – he decided to continue talks with the local elevator company.

"I just bought Hunter elevator," he said.

And then he went back to the company who had the aging elevator and gave them a price for a new one. The next thing he knew he had a 50% deposit and the company has had an operating elevator ever since," Gelestino said.

"They took the whole thing including a service contract."

Putting customers first is something that Gelestino learned made sense and forged great relationships.

"We are also very honest with our customers," he said. "Our message differentiates us from our competitors. We operate in real time with open and honest communication. Our customers need to know if



President  
Donald Gelestino



Clockwise from right:

Employees of Champion Elevator Corp. are always ready to help. Here three employees get read to go on a job and their shirts say it all – "Work Like a Champion," "Team Work makes the Dream Work." and "Modernize Like A Champion."



The Champion Elevator office in the Hudson Valley is located in West Nyack.

VP. Major Accounts/Operations Joseph Gati, left, joins his team for a meeting.

Employee recognition is part of the Champion Elevator culture and something which gives them an edge when it comes to great sales and service.

Some jobs require a lot of heavy lifting, no pun intended, and these big motors are ready to operate a large elevator.



Clockwise from upper left:

Champion Elevator Company has all the parts necessary to complete even the most complicated repair and will make sure your elevator is up and running as quickly as possible.

Installing new parts sometimes takes a team of dedicated professionals and Champion Elevator has the manpower and expertise to handle any job in the elevator field.

Once installed, Champion Elevator is always available for maintenance and trouble shooting.

"It's a great area for us and I spend a lot of time up there and we have a lot of great customers."

"We are a good alternative for a company to have," Gelestino said. "We want every elevator fixed every day. That is the goal of our 300 employees who oversee almost 6,000 elevators."

In fact, Gelestino hopes his company hits the 6,000 mark soon.

"So we can then shoot for 7,000," he laughed.

In addition to passenger elevators, Champion Elevator also offers:

- wheelchair lifts • material lifts • freight elevators
- elevator removal • modernization
- addresses violations • testing and • big truck lifts.



we are waiting for a part - they need to be updated.

"Tell them the truth, be honest, it's the only way to be," he said.

**Growing in the Hudson Valley**

Champion Elevator recently hit the 500 unit mark in the Hudson Valley.

"I'm very excited that Champion Elevator recently joined the Sullivan County Partnership," Gelestino said.



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# How to find a complementary business to help your's grow

BY JAIME SCHMEISER

PRESIDENT AND CEO SULLIVAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

If you're a small- to medium-sized business that is trying to carve out a place for itself in a competitive market, you want to differentiate yourself from the competition. One way to do that is to offer something no one else is doing. You can create a new product or service or go after an untapped market. But if you've already tried all of those and you're looking for something else, it's time to find the peanut butter to your chocolate or the peas to your carrots.

Partnering with another business can help you both offer something to your markets that neither has seen. Here are three ways to find your perfect complementary business so you both can profit.

## Finding the Ideal Business Collaboration

If you're old enough, you may remember the Reese's Peanut Butter Cup commercials that showed two people enjoying very different snacks—one a chocolate bar and one a jar of peanut butter. Inevitably the two collided, one had chocolate in their peanut butter, and one claimed to have peanut butter on their chocolate. But either way, a scrumptious dessert was born. The same can be true of your business.

You don't need a formalized partnership with stakes in one another's business. Instead, you can create special collaborations, offers, or referrals that are mutually beneficial to the businesses and your audiences.

## Brainstorm Businesses That Fit Yours Like Peanut Butter and Chocolate

Make a list of businesses that provide a complementary service or product that you don't offer but would benefit your target market. Ideally, the collaboration between you and this business should create something that other businesses aren't doing. For instance, a bar that doesn't serve food may pair up with a

food truck to provide bar patrons with easy access to food while food truck aficionados can enjoy an alcoholic drink. Since some food trucks have sizable followings giving them access to your parking lot or a place to park can bring in new customers for you as well.

## Think About What Your Customers Want

Building on that, make a list of what you hear customers asking for that you don't currently do/offer. Take that list and decide whether those ideas make sense for your business. You can then decide to offer a new product or service line based on those customer requests, or you can



Above: The Ribbon Cutting for Bridge and Tunnel Brewery Owner Rich Castagna and family.

AT LEFT: John Kritikos, left, of the New Munson Diner with Town of Liberty Supervisor Frank DeMayo at the Ribbon Cutting of Bridge and Tunnel Brewery. A great complimentary business right next door... Bridge and Tunnel Brewery do not serve food but the New Munson Diner right next door does – so during the ribbon cutting John Kritikos ran orders from the New Munson Diner to attendees.

collaborate with someone who has already created a successful business doing those things. For instance, if you own a gym, you could create a juice bar on-site or offer a healthy menu planning service. You could also work with someone to fill those needs. Here too there are options. You can rent some of your space to that business or create an affiliate



or referral program so your gym members receive discounts for those other products or services at the other business' location.

## Decide What Is Stopping Customers From Buying

Is there something that is prohibiting potential customers from buying from you? What is the wall to

purchase? Identify what is holding people back and solve it through collaboration. For instance, if you sell something large like furniture but you don't offer delivery, partnering with a delivery or moving company may increase your sales. Some people don't have the means (strength or room) to bring a large item home. But you may not want the headache of employing movers and covering the insurance. A partnership of this kind can benefit everyone.

Business collaborations can help your business, the collaborator's business, and (both of) your markets. By understanding what your customers need and want, as well as what holds them back from buying, you can create a satisfactory collaboration that benefits everyone and serves to separate you from your competition. This way, you'll gain exposure to a new market or additional customers as well as improve business relationships. If you're not sure how to make connections with other businesses, contact the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce 845-791-4200. We can put you in touch with someone looking to grow in a similar way – We are your partner for success!



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## How can the county be more resilient?

Sullivan County is developing a Countywide plan that will identify and improve what drives the County's resiliency, through the perspectives of economy, community and environment.

"Resiliency" describes a community's ability to withstand and recover from damaging economic, environmental and climate events, and to learn from these challenges and build on strengths in preparation for future challenges. To achieve this, Metropolitan Urban Design (MUD) Workshop, a multidisciplinary team based in Brooklyn, is helping the County identify local threats and challenges; analyze the current state of the County's physical, economic, social and institutional infrastructure; and develop key actions to make the County stronger and more resilient.

"We hope to draw upon residents' vast and unique knowledge of

Sullivan County and our existing community networks, institutions and organizations," explains Interim Planning Commissioner Heather Brown. "For example, how might future events such as extreme weather, economic disruptions, flooding or changes in the growing season put stress on us? How might our schools, farms and businesses be affected? What do we need in terms of housing, energy and water resources? How do we help our most vulnerable neighbors? That local knowledge is vital."

MUD Workshop has set up two interactive online tools to collect these insights. At the project website ([www.resilientsullivan.com](http://www.resilientsullivan.com)) is an overview of resiliency issues and a set of town and village fact sheets (click the "Engage" tab) that provide baseline information about our communities. The "Connect" tab offers residents the opportunity to provide feedback. Please see **COUNTY**, page 18E

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# SUNY Sullivan committed to workforce development; continues with two-day Healthcare Conference

March 23–24  
at Resorts World Catskills

**The Conference offers continuing education, professional development, and recruiting/networking opportunities to students and healthcare practitioners in all medical fields.**

**W**orkforce development is a long-term core mission of SUNY Sullivan, and the College remains committed to pursuing creative initiatives and partnerships that strengthen professional development and career opportunities for students and support regional workforce needs.

Healthcare is the largest employment sector in Sullivan County, and the demand for frontline health care workers remains strong in the wake of the pandemic. SUNY Sullivan has long worked to meet the evolving career and training goals of its students and the community's workforce needs through the College's Health Sciences and Psychology & Human Services programs, which offer degree and certificate programs in Nursing, Respiratory Care, Medical Assistant, and Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counseling.

As part of the College's effort to enhance professional development and networking opportunities for Health Sciences students and the greater community, SUNY Sullivan is hosting a two-day healthcare conference at Resorts World Catskills in Monticello on March 23–24. The conference offers students and medical practitioners—including respiratory therapy, EMT, nursing, and medical assistants—the opportunity to learn firsthand from experts in the field about topics that are vital to the delivery of quality patient care, and to receive Continuing Education Units and Continuing Medical Education Units. The event also includes a networking and recruitment reception on March 24.

"Healthcare is a quickly changing environment which has highlighted the essential roles of the frontline healthcare workers," said Respiratory Care Program Director of Clinical Education Brandon Bedenbender. "We are looking to help provide education on these changes and build a community network for all health-related fields. Our upcoming graduates have worked very hard to enter their respective fields, we would like to showcase and celebrate their talents."

To purchase tickets, view a full conference schedule, or get information on exhibitor opportunities, please visit [sunysullivan.edu/healthcare-conference-2023](https://sunysullivan.edu/healthcare-conference-2023), email [bbedenbender@sunysullivan.edu](mailto:bbedenbender@sunysullivan.edu), or call 845.434.5750 ext. 4308.

In addition to the healthcare conference, SUNY Sullivan is once again offering the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Basic Original and EMT Refresher courses this spring as part of the College's effort to meet

the strong regional demand for frontline health care workers. To provide greater access to these life-saving courses, this spring's EMT courses are being held at the Sullivan County Emergency Services Training Center in Swan Lake.

SUNY Sullivan Dean of Student Success and Workforce Development, Dr. Jennifer Wrage said she has worked closely with Sullivan County EMS Coordinator Alex Rau, Fire Training Coordinator John Hauschild, and SUNY Sullivan EMT Instructor David Weinstein to ensure the college's EMT training program meets the needs of the county and creates career pathways for residents.

"In a rural area, it is vital to develop a strong EMS workforce," said Dr. Wrage. "Our collaborative working relationship with county officials allows us to work together to develop additional workforce training opportunities for our residents."

SUNY Sullivan offers the EMT Basic and Refresher class three times a year. For applications and information on upcoming courses, contact Bridget Schiffer at [Bschiffer@sunysullivan.edu](mailto:Bschiffer@sunysullivan.edu), or call 845-434-5750, ext. 4242.

In addition to our focus on healthcare, we continue our work with county workforce development staff to fine tune the College's Green Building Technology, Hospitality and other programs to create new learning opportunities that adapt to the region's evolving workforce needs, including the new two-year Construction Technology degree program. This innovative partnership with the North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters is thriving in its first year.

Other upcoming workforce events and opportunities at SUNY Sullivan include: A Career & Job Fair on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, from 10 am–1 pm in the E lobby. This event is open to the public and students and is a great opportunity to meet with many of the region's largest employers, including Garnet Health, The Center for Discovery, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and others. And, as part of the College's sustainability mission and focus on Earth Day, SUNY Sullivan is hosting a Clean Energy Careers Summit in partnership with New Yorkers for Clean Power on April 28, from 10 am–2 pm.

For more information on SUNY Sullivan's programs, events, and admissions, and to learn more about the College's free-tuition Promise Scholarship opportunity for Sullivan County High School graduates and GED recipients, visit [sunysullivan.edu](https://sunysullivan.edu).



FILE PHOTOS  
One of SUNY Sullivan's premier programs is Nursing, with lifelike apparatus used to simulate real life nursing applications.



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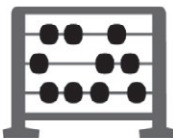
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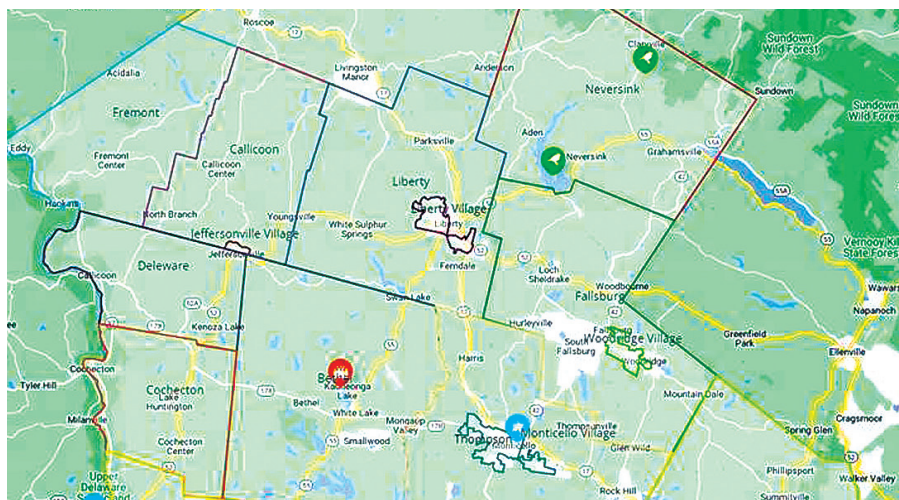
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A map of the different areas of Sullivan County.

### GROWTH:

Continued from page 14

or steer project leaders toward additional important information.

At <https://mudworkshopmy.com/socialpinpoint.com/sullivan> resiliency is a mapping tool that allows users to pinpoint a location in any of the County's 15 towns and six villages – right down to a specific property or street intersection – and provide a note about economic, environmental or social resiliency relevant to that location.

"Please take the time to help us

plan for our own future," urges District 8 Legislator Ira Steingart, chair of the Legislature's Planning Committee. "Visit both sites and share your special knowledge of Sullivan County and your own community – you know it better than most!"

Questions about the planning process for "Resilient Sullivan" can be directed to the Division of Planning and Community Development at 845-807-0527 or via e-mail at [planning@sullivanny.gov](mailto:planning@sullivanny.gov).



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