

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Chautauqua County

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



 716-664-9502

 <https://chautauqua.cce.cornell.edu>

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Cornell Cooperative Extension | **Chautauqua County**

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Randolph 'Randy' Henderson

Vice President

Allyssa Porter

Secretary

Chad Buck

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George Haffenden

At-Large Members

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Suzanne Fassett-Wright

Dan Heitzenrater

Camille Rosado

Pat Walker

4-H Youth Development Representatives

Sue Lindsey

Louis Smith

Agricultural Representatives

Jessica Brehm

Emma Boutelle

Master Gardener Representative

Dianne 'Dinah' Hovey

Legislative Representatives

Tom Nelson

Fred Johnson

Cornell Extension Specialist

Renee Mooneyhan

STAFF

ADMINISTRATORS

Emily Reynolds

Executive Director

Darcy Cramer

Finance Administrator

Lucia Conti

Administrative Assistant

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT

Lisa Kempisty

Dairy Livestock Community Educator

Shannon Rinow

Master Gardener Coordinator

Rose Clarke

Agricultural Program Educator

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Lindsey Cristanti-Meeder

4-H Community Educator

Josephine Laurie

4-H Community Educator

Lisette Cabrera

4-H Program Coordinator

Nancy Johnson

Temporary 4-H Coordinator

NUTRITION DEPARTMENT

Molly Harvey

SNAP Education Community Educator

Mary Ryder

SNAP Education Community Educator

Wendy Alexander

Building Healthy Habits Community Educator

Ko Svetanics

Building Healthy Habits Community Educator

OUR MISSION

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well-being. We bring local experience and research based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS STATEMENT

As members of the Cornell Cooperative Extension – Chautauqua Board of Directors, we are so very thankful for the hard work of all who have labored this past year to forward the organization’s mission, which is to enable people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience and research knowledge to work. This past year has been a season of change, but also of hope for the future.

Over the past year, CCE-Chautauqua has experienced several staffing changes, adding new members to the team and wishing others well as they move on to their next professional venture. CCE-Chautauqua has now seen evidence of current workforce trends showing that approximately 30% of the total workforce will change jobs every 12 months, a modern truth that is now coming to pass in our organization. Adding new employees and saying goodbye to valued team members is difficult. It adds to the workload of current staff and grace needs to be offered to new employees as they learn their roles. We’re so very thankful for the dedication of the CCE-Chautauqua staff as they navigate these changes, knowing their work lifts up so many that depend on CCE-Chautauqua throughout the county.

We’re also so very thankful for the support of the Western New York Foundation as CCE-Chautauqua works through a capacity assessment called “ICAP”. This process started in early 2024 and is intended to examine the current structure of CCE-Chautauqua and how it might be improved to better serve all stakeholders. This process has already proved to be valuable, connecting us with experts who can guide the organization towards more effective strategic planning, stronger support for engaging with stakeholders in the County and to explore the best use of available resources to support the needs of those we serve. We’re in the middle of this process now and will be updating the public as we finalize the steps that will be taken in the future.

One of the goals explored as a part of the ICAP study is increased board recruitment and engagement. To that end, the website will be updated with information about how to become a board member, what the responsibilities are and ways to reach out to learn more. We encourage you to keep your eye out for that information coming soon.

We greatly look forward to continuing to support the efforts of CCE-Chautauqua through our close work with Emily Reynolds as she leads the staff through this challenging time of transition. We pledge to provide our support and guidance, listening closely to the needs of the community with an eye towards improving communication and clarifying the potential impact of the changes yet to come resulting from the ICAP study. We are proud of the significant growth that has happened over the last year, are unified to take on the challenges to come and we look to the future with great hope for what is to come.

Sincerely,
The Board of Directors

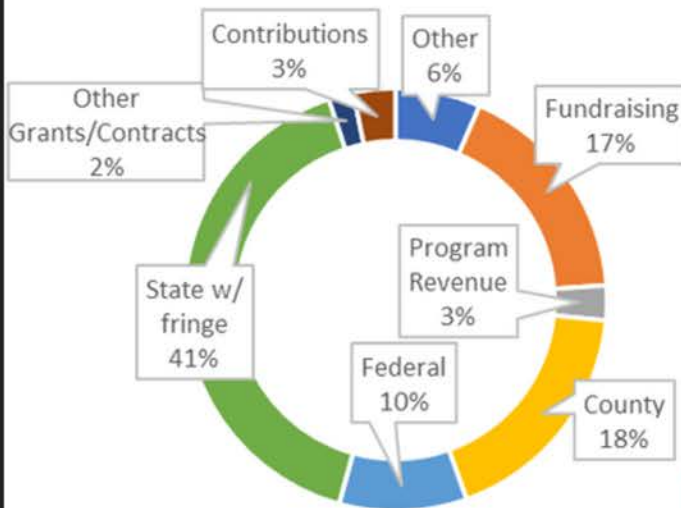
DIRECTORS STATEMENT

In this document you will see many accomplishments and milestones from our programming between October 1, 2023, and September 30, 2024. What you may not see is the amount of change and growth we are experiencing. As the executive director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauqua County, I am proud of the staff development, program successes and initiatives that have begun to take shape this past year. Both our local staff and regional teams have seen growth and development that allow us to continually redefine programming to meet the needs of our county residents. The Lake Erie Regional Grape team is now fully staffed with support from Penn State. Locally we said goodbye to some amazing staff members that have each moved into amazing new chapters in their lives, including a retirement, a new local Agriculture teacher, and some moving farther away to run organizations on the other side of the country. Each time staff changes it does present some challenges but also opportunity. In the last nine months we have been blessed with support from the Western NY Foundation allowing us to look deeply into our own capacity, internally reviewing how we can be a better organization, resulting in deeper engagement with our board of directors, redeveloping our positions to maximize and improve program offerings, and create plans for new marketing and impact reporting strategies. We appreciate everyone's input, support and patience as we continue to improve.

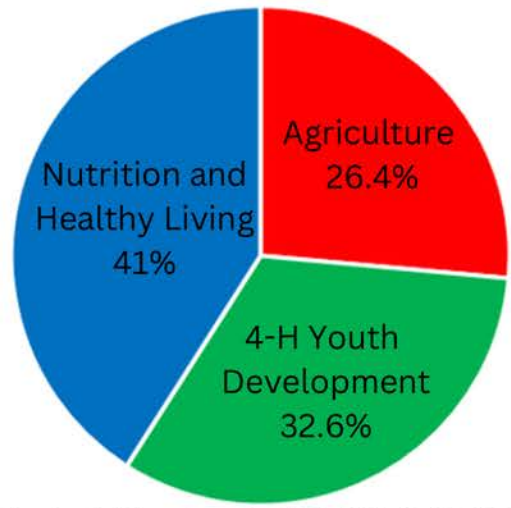
Nothing we accomplish in CCE Chautauqua is done without collaboration and support from the community and it is what motivates me every day to be a better leader. Chautauqua County is rich in community members that are compassionate, talented, and committed to improving the lives of all our residents. As you read through some of our 2024 accomplishments you may just find one you helped make a success, we thank you for all that you have done to support our programs.



Estimate of Support



Program Budgets



Total Budget: \$1,856,039.46

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

In 2024, CCE Chautauqua had two Program Advisory Committees representing Agriculture, and Youth Development. The main purpose of program advisory committees is to advise the board of directors and staff in planning, developing and evaluating educational programs that meet the needs of the citizens of the county. Program advisory committees should avoid getting involved in day-to-day management issues, since that is the role of the executive director under the oversight of the board of directors.

The role and responsibility of Program Advisory committees include:

- Advise the board of directors and staff on the need for and relative priority of specific educational programming within the topical area
- Provide input to the plan of work cycle
- Advise on the content, structure, and targeted audience of such programming
- Advise on marketing specific programs
- Assist with program evaluation
- Develop awareness, understanding and support for program, and represent CCE generally to the public, constituent groups, funders and public decision makers

4-H Youth Development Program Committee

Louis Smith, Board Representative
Sue Lindsey, Board Representative
Betty Catanese
Lindsey Eckman
Mary Jantzi
Keith LaRoy
Laura LeBarron
Jan Schauman
Taylor Young

Agriculture Program Committee

Jessica Brehm, Board Representative
Emma Boutelle, Board Representative
Andrew Campbell
Katie Card- Allen
Virginia Carlberg
Rosemary Joy
Ben Nickerson
Michael Wilson
Derek Yerico

CORNELL REGIONAL TEAMS

Chautauqua County's investment of \$109K in CCE's dairy, livestock, field crops, vegetable and grape teams, leverage \$1.64M in extension and applied agriculture research programs critical to the success of progressive farms in Chautauqua County. In partnership with Cornell and other counties, we are able to deploy 20 highly skilled specialists in the areas of dairy, livestock, field crops, vegetable, grape and ag business management.

The CCE agriculture teams provide cutting edge research and education to Chautauqua County's 1,291 farms, operating on 242,021 acres with a total market value of \$1,008,237,000 (land, equipment, machinery) and generates annually over \$242 million/year for the local economy according to the USDA 2022 Ag Census. The county's investment in supporting agriculture through CCE represents only 0.05% of the value of the county's ag industry per year...a small investment to ensure the growth and profitability of the food industry that is vital to put food on resident's tables but is also an important economic engine in the county!

The county's investment to ensure a strong agriculture and food system represents a 15x ROI, not including the value of fringe and overhead by the University. Including this, the value of the program is \$2.93M or a ROI of 27x.

By participating in regional agriculture teams, Chautauqua County is able to access the expertise and resources of all 10 regional teams in the Extension System and more effectively access the rich faculty and program resources of Cornell University and the entire National Land Grant System to benefit Chautauqua County growers and ultimately, all residents of the county.

TEAM MEMBERS

Vegetable Team

Elizabeth Buck
Robert Haddad
Christy Hoepting
Julie Kikkert
Margie Lund
Judson Reid

Grape Team

Andrew Holden
Kimberly Knappenberger
Megan Luke
Jennifer Phillips- Russo

Dairy, Livestock, Field Crops Team

Amy Barkley
Katelyn Miller
Camille Lage
Katelyn Walley

AGRICULTURE



CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR
RETIREMENT

Lisa Kempisty

CCE Chautauqua congratulates Lisa Kempisty on her retirement! Lisa dedicated over 40 years to the Cornell Cooperative Extension during which she served in various roles including working with several producers in the Dairy and Livestock industries in both Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties. She also worked very closely with the 4-H Youth Development program. Throughout her 40 years, Lisa was known to many for her advice, networking connections and being a listening ear for all things agriculture. Lisa developed deep connections with farm families and was a key component in creating. One of Lisa's past co-workers described her as, "a warm, kind, caring educator. Her work, mission and purpose are deeply personal."



Lisa, we wish you the best for this next chapter!



AGRICULTURE

The Cornell Vegetable Program (CVP) is a Cornell Cooperative Extension partnership between Cornell University and CCE Associations in 14 counties: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne and Yates. The team of Vegetable Specialists provides educational programs and information to growers, processors and agri-business professionals, arming them with the knowledge to profitably produce and market safe and healthful vegetable crops.

2024 CVP FRESH MARKET VEGETABLE IMPACT NUMBERS

93.58

Hours of Educational programming provided related to Fresh Market Vegetable Production

1,540

Participants attended events and direct programming related to Fresh Market Vegetable Production

421

Individual Phone consultations provided to Fresh Market Vegetable Producers

In 2024 The Cornell Vegetable Program successfully delivering an intensive, highly technical, 18 hour pesticide safety course in our region. Starting in summer of 2023, a needs assessment from local growers, regarding their comfort level, knowledge, and current pesticide usage practices, was conducted. Finding that many growers across all cropping disciplines had not had the opportunity to take focused pesticide safety and education classes, The Cornell Vegetable Program and Local CCE staff, set a program into action. CVP assembled and lead a planning and teaching team that included 7 Cooperative Extension units and the DEC. Together, they developed an 18 hour training course that completely covered the 400 page NYS CORE pesticide training manual and offered support for discipline-specific category manual training. Course work was hands-on lesson plans and pragmatic, field-relevant activities that allowed students to practice putting their new knowledge to work. Sponsors provided funds to purchase participants' training manuals, cover course teaching expenses, and buy educational materials and teaching props. 18 hours of pesticide safety, pesticide math, label reading, good environmental stewardship, legal compliance, sprayer calibration, and general pesticide best practices education was delivered in Randolph, NY over the course of 6 sessions over 8 weeks. The program also offered 9.5 continuing education credits for current pesticide license holders, 95% of all the credits a grower needs to renew their license. CVP also offered a second location repeat of the entire series in Belmont, NY. Seven growers from Chautauqua signed up to take the training series and sit the exam.

AGRICULTURE

The Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock, and Field Crops Program offers educational programming and research based information to agricultural producers, growers, and agribusinesses to improve their farming operation.



The Southwest NY Dairy Livestock and Field Crops team is supporting a small diversified livestock and produce farm in Chautauqua as they transition from more labor intensive products to those which require fewer inputs that still meet their financial and land stewardship goals. Using the parameters they've

shared, we're working together to develop a plan to move forward, including the development of practical grazing plans, disease management strategies, and marketing changes. The potato leafhopper (PLH) is among the most prevalent insect pests affecting alfalfa in New York State. Their feeding can result in significant plant damage, lower forage quality, and economic losses. To support a Chautauqua County farmer, SWNYDLFC field crop specialist, Katelyn Miller, conducted weekly scouting to monitor PLH populations. This proactive approach enables the farmer to make informed and economically sound management decisions.



2024 SWNYDLFC IMPACT NUMBERS

2,068

Farm Consultations on topics related to Farm Business Management, Field Crops, Dairy Management and Livestock Production

4,846

Event and program direct participants who've attended one of our 23 events/ collaborations or have received our direct email/mail updates

356

Website submissions, press releases, interviews, and Facebook posts providing timely information to a large audience of more than 20,000 indirects.



AGRICULTURE

The Cornell Lake Erie Regional Grape Program is a cooperative program between Cornell and Penn State Universities, Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations in Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Erie and Niagara Counties, Penn State Extension – Erie County, NYS IPM Program, National Grape Cooperative, Constellation Brands, Walker’s Fruit Basket and growers of the Lake Erie Grape Industry



Out of this World Collaborations- NASA Acres Leadership Tour

In August the LERGP and CLEREL staff were involved with a tour to collaborate and learn from NASA. NASA leadership joined us in Geneva and then at the Cornell Lake Erie Research and Extension Laboratory for the ‘Space for Ag Tour’ to have conversations with growers, stakeholders, and researchers about their needs and challenges. The goal of this visit is to have two-way dialogue with end users, stakeholders, and researchers to improve NASA Earth Science’s research portfolio in specialty crop agriculture and viticulture while fostering a broader conversation about effective research translation into practice. We continue to foster this relationship and work towards collaborating to improve data for our grower stakeholders. This visit and listening tour are supported by Cornell AgriTech and the Cornell Institute for Digital Agriculture.



2024 LERGP IMPACT NUMBERS

3,498

individuals participated in Agricultural education related to the WNY Grape Belt

77,783

participants we reached through media platforms such as podcasts, webinars and newsletters

17

opportunities provided to obtain pesticide certification credits at educational grape related presentations

AGRICULTURE



Former CCE Master Gardener Coordinator, Shannon Rinow, says the most impactful 2024, MGCV program was the Master Gardener Lunch & Learn Series, because it offered volunteer opportunities to our Master Gardeners to present topics that interested them. They also received volunteer credit for research, which also provided professional development opportunities. We offered these mini-classes hybrid, with an option to come in-person, join virtually or to watch the recording at their convenience. We had 57 registrations for the 3-Fall 2024 Lunch & Learn classes we offered!

2024 Master Gardener Impacts

3,101 volunteers hours dedicated to teaching horticulture-related topics in the community, a value of **\$103,852.49** *

156

Questions answered through the Help

\$1,672.25

Raised at the plant sale fundraiser

993

Youth reached through Garden programming

2382

Adults participated in Gardening related educational opportunities

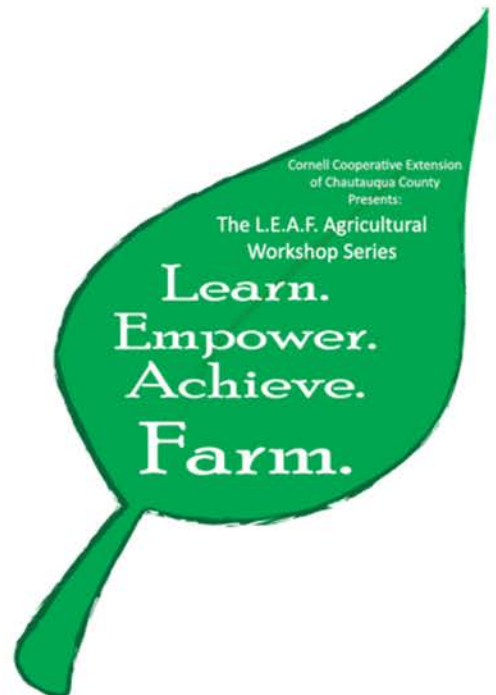




AGRICULTURE

CCE Chautauqua County's LEAF Program connects our area's residents, homesteaders, farmers, and agricultural enthusiasts to educational resources through workshops, on-site consultations, and the Western New York Beginning Farmers and Homesteaders Community to continue to diversify and grow agriculture in Chautauqua County.

A variety of interactive lessons, open to everyone, were hosted as part of the 2024 LEAF workshops. Participants had the opportunity to learn about cultivating fungus, planning a new business, marketing their business, felting wool, or preparing fruit trees for winter, among other topics. Each session is approximately 2 hours long and is designed to provide support to Western New York farmers and anyone interested in agriculture. A wide range of topics are included in the series each year, from crafting value-added products to marketing and business planning for small- to mid-sized farms. I encourage everyone to subscribe to CCE Chautauqua and stay connected to learn about upcoming workshops and connect with CCE staff to suggest future topics.



2024 LEAF IMPACT NUMBERS

96

Hours of Agricultural related education was provided in Chautauqua County

398

Adults participated in our Agricultural related Education

33

LEAF events were held in Chautauqua in 2024

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

2024 Impacts

3195 youth reached through Ag in the Classroom's
Ag Literacy Program

283 youth enrolled in yearly 4-H programming

132 enrolled volunteers

7 youth completed Tractor Safety

607 youth participated in Conservation Field Days

488 youth owned animals were on display at the
County Fair

840 works of art created by youth were on display at
the County Fair

88 youth participated in County-Level Public
Presentations



Forty-one 4-H youth club officers learned about Parliamentary Procedure through the 4-H Club Officers Training Program, Youth learned Roberts Rules of Order, how to run a meeting, and specific duties of officers. Several resources were provided to all in attendance to help them navigate their specific club officer role. Youth learned by means of hands-on activities to teach parliamentary procedure such as the "Order of Business Game" and "Mix It Up", an activity designed to teach how to have effective group discussions and decision making while making a delicious snack. Breakout groups were then established for more specific training for various officer roles.



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT



Our annual Public Presentation contest was held at Jamestown Community College. Eighty-eight youth, ages 5-18 participated. The presentation contest is designed to challenge 4-H'ers skills and knowledge of giving a public presentation while also recognizing their abilities. This contest provides an opportunity for 4-H'ers to develop and practice

communication skills, build self-confidence, enhance knowledge in a selected subject matter area, and share information with others. Teams of volunteer evaluators provide feedback to the youth. Youth who gave exceptional presentations were selected to participate at the Western District Public Presentation Day contest. Chautauqua County selected 11 youth to participate at the Western District level.



The New York State 4-H Horse Program is thrilled to announce its outstanding performance at the 2024 Eastern National 4-H Horse Roundup. Sixteen dedicated youth from across the state proudly represented New York in Horse Bowl, Hippology, Judging, and Communications. This year's competition featured participants from over 20 states, highlighting the exceptional talent and dedication of all involved. Chautauqua's own Charlotte Couchman, coached by Sarah Wilhelm and Trish Bagley of the State Communications team, earned 1st place in Public Speaking. Additionally NYS members Sydney Kolodziej took 1st place in Individual Presentation, and Tess and Fenton Bergjford achieved 3rd place in Team Presentation. New York claimed 1st place as the top Team Communications group.

I am looking forward to having a 4-H Shooting Sports program up and running again in Chautauqua County this year.

NUTRITION



- 32%** of adults Improved their Diet quality
- 40%** of adults improved their food security
- 45%** of adults and **59%** of youth improved their Food Safety Practices
- 26%** of adults and **62%** of youth improved their physical activity
- 74%** of adults and **38%** of youth reduced the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages
- 39%** of adults and **15%** of youth improved their Food Resource Management
- 45%** of youth increased their vegetable consumption
- 25%** of youth increased their fruit consumption
- 24%** of youth decreased their TV/Screen time

The 2024 program from Building Healthy Habits that had the biggest impact was the adult class at the Ripley Library. We used money from a grant to provide all the food for a healthy recipe for all the participants that were in attendance. The participants were very grateful and were able to go home and make a healthy recipe for their family.

NUTRITION



Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chautauque County's 'Grow Chautauque' initiative, part of the New York Food for New York Families program funded by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and the USDA was a success in 2024.



23

Chautauque Supplied for for the NY Food for NY Families grant

over

\$250,000

invested within the local Food-system

It is estimated over

1,000

individual families were served

over

200,000

pounds of locally grown fruits, vegetables, meat products, baked goods, jams, honey and maple syrup were provided to community members in need.

The program aims to support local and traditionally disadvantaged farmers and producers, establish broader partnerships within the food distribution community, and improve food access for underserved, rural and remote communities.

"We could not have accomplished this incredible community investment without the dedication of our local agriculture community, small businesses, and passionate volunteers and community organizations" shares Community Food System Educator, Linnea Haskin.

Main partner Brigiotta's Farmland Produce & Garden Center packaged an average of 500 food-boxes per week, delivering them to various partners, who worked directly with the community.



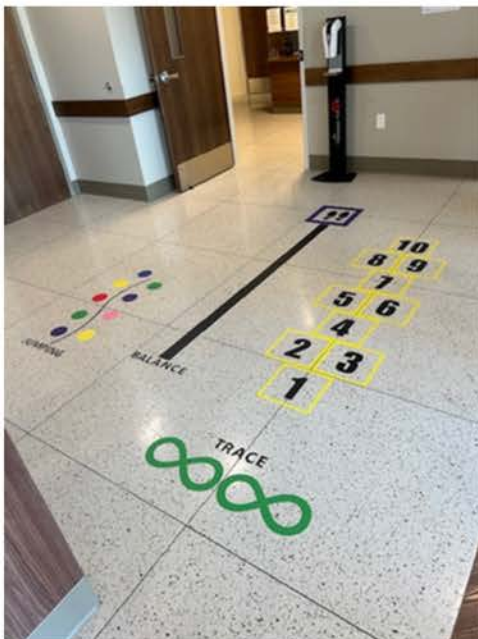
NUTRITION



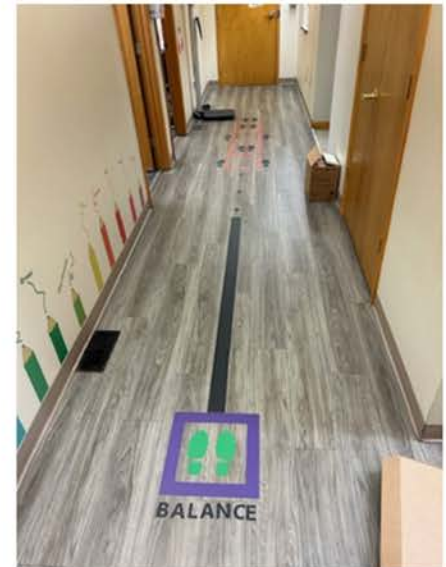
The CCE program for SNAP-Ed NY delivered several great programs this year. One was at Dunkirk Middle School, where Molly Harvey taught 6 classes a day with an average of 20 students per class. The classes are hands-on in the kitchen, which the kids love!

Educator Mary Ryder appreciates the connections made with the kids in our community. Youth in the community recognize our educators and say things like “Hey, you are the smoothie lady”, or “Are you coming back again”, which is a reminder to Mary that she is making an impact on the youth in our communities.

SNAP-Ed teaches new life skills that youth take them as they grow.



In partnership with the Chautauqua Center, SNAP-Ed NY, Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Allegany, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua are working with The Waterfront Foundation’s (TWF) Waterfront Health and Wellness Program with the installation of “wellness trails” in the waiting rooms of all practices under TCC Health. The trails include signs with nutrition and wellness tips and sensory floor stickers with fun activities. They have also incorporated QR codes on the wellness signs for additional online resources and nutrition information related to the program.



Cornell Cooperative Extension | Chautauqua County

“Thank you for supporting CCE Chautauqua, we look forward to a wonderful 2025!” - Emily Reynolds, Executive Director

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