



# BNNY Business

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The 2025 class of 20 Under 40 award recipients. Jonathon Wheeler/Watertown Daily Times

## 2025 class of emerging leaders celebrated

By **JONATHON WHEELER**

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**T**wenty emerging young leaders were recognized June 4 for their work in improving life in the north country.

NNY Business' annual 20 Under 40 awards dinner was held at the Paddock

Arcade in Watertown.

The 2025 class of leaders, all age 40 or younger, includes professionals from Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties working in a variety of fields, including health care, construction and local government.

"This year's class is a true mix of tal-

ents and passions," Alec E. Johnson, president and publisher of Johnson Newspaper Corp., told recipients. "In their free time, these amazing leaders are always on the go, coaching others, volunteering for various boards and organizations, and doing all sorts of

See LEADERST11

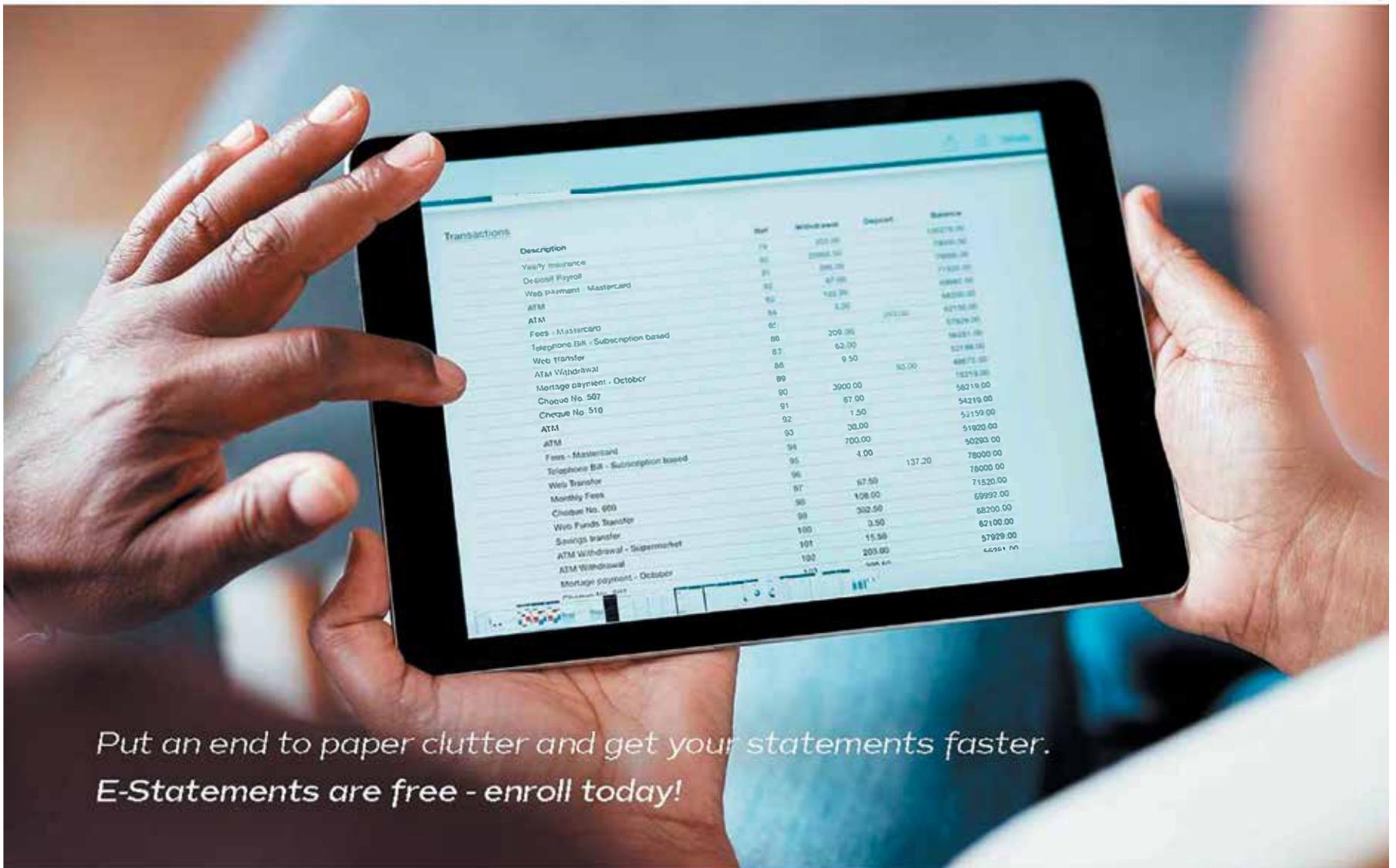
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# Clayton Island Tours stays the course of 'dad's dream'

By **CHRIS BROCK**

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**C**LAYTON — Nearly 20 years ago, Capt. David L. Kay, who piloted tour boats from Alaska to the Sea of Cortez in Mexico, turned his love of the St. Lawrence River into a business.

"I cruise in a lot of beautiful places," Kay, a 1973 graduate of Thousand Islands High School, told the Times in 2006. "But the St. Lawrence has its own natural beauty. There's plenty of water and it's well-charted. In the summer, I don't think there's anything better than the St. Lawrence."

His Clayton Island Tours grew from one catamaran-style pontoon vessel to a fleet of five, offering a variety of themed trips for a growing clientele. The boats, which can carry between 43-65 passengers depending on the vessel, draw about 18 inches of water, allowing them to get close to islands that are off limits to larger vessels.

In August, the river community and his family mourned the death of Kay, following a short battle with cancer, at the age of 69.

"I'm going to miss him, and I think our region is going to miss having an operator like Dave who wasn't comfortable just with the status quo," Corey C. Fram, director of the Thousand Islands International Tourism Council, said shortly after Kay's death. "He was always trying to figure out how to grow and how to improve the experience for visitors."

Part of Kay's obituary stated that he considered his staff part of his family, especially his long-time management team of Deborah Scholes, Beth Rusho, Trish Hunt and Brian Drappo. As his cancer made rapid advances, Kay made sure that Clayton Island Tours stayed on course after his passing, continuing its journey to what he envisioned. Three co-owners of the business are now at the helm of that mis-



**David L. Kay, left, Clayton, launches his new boat, Miss Clayton, into the St. Lawrence River on Sunday, April 2, 2006 as he also launches Clayton Island Tours. Kenneth M. Brabant, also of Clayton, assists. / Watertown Daily Times**

sion.

"I want us to continue dad's dream of getting people on the St. Lawrence River," said daughter Denise L. ("Dede") Morrow. "That is very purposeful. It's a beautiful area of our country. People who come up here to see it are in wonder when they leave yet feel they didn't get to see it all. We always welcome them to come back."

The two other owners of Clayton Island Tours are Kay's sister, Teresa A. Kay of Clayton and Cape Coral, Florida and Morrow's brother, David J. Kay of Chaumont.

"Teresa will be here on Monday, and she'll be able to be in the office for more day-to-day type things," Morrow said.

Morrow said that a key element in the transition is Scholes, director of operations. "Her knowledge and experience are invaluable. She's been doing this alongside my dad for 20 years. It wasn't like overnight we took it over. We are in transition."

Scholes said she first met Kay when she worked for developer Donald E. Cole and Kay piloted the Night Heron out of Swan Bay. She said Kay also piloted the paddle-wheeler Bonnie Belle out of Bonnie Castle Resort, which Cole sold in 2012. Bonnie Belle is now owned by Lockport Locks and Erie Canal Cruises, re-

named Lockview V1.

Scholes said that Kay, following her tenure with Cole, said to her one day that he was thinking of starting a boat line in Clayton.

"I thought it was a wonderful idea," she said. "It's a beautiful area and people want to see that part of the river. He asked if I'd be interested in working for him."

Kay brought his first tour boat, Miss Clayton, up from Florida. The fleet of five includes one, The Island Girl, that he built himself.

"I was very pleased to be part of that," Scholes said of getting the business off the ground. "It was a struggle for years. We struggled to make a go of it, but we eventually made it to this point with where we are very happy with what's going on, and David was also."

Clayton Island Tours started out at its current site off of State Route 12. But for more visibility, Scholes said she suggested moving a tour boat to the village dock. But with more downtown development, the company lost that dock space. Its tour operations returned to Route 12, and by that time, the internet and social media made the company much more visible, Scholes explained. "It worked out because we were well-established and people started looking for us."

Morrow said she worked with

Stewart Signs this year to install signs at its operations off Route 12 that are much more visible.

"I'm here to continue the legacy of Dave," Scholes said. "It's very gratifying to see too, because I worked as hard as he did, starting it and getting it going, watching it flourish and grow, hiring people, training tour guides, writing tours and all of that, to make a go of it."

"There's a lot of regulatory stuff and things like that which go into this kind of business," Morrow said. "I'm learning every day from (Scholes). It's all the different things that go into it, from Coast Guard compliance, insurance, regulations and things like that."

The Clayton Island Tours business also includes the Chateau Country Inn and The Captain's Cottage, both on Chateau Lane, off Route 12. The tour's business office is located at the chateau. Morrow manages the properties. The Chateau Country Inn features five river-themed rooms with private bath, common kitchen, living room and screened-in porch. The fully equipped Captain's Cottage features four bedrooms and three bathrooms.

"On the weekends, I dedicate my time to Clayton Island Tours to make sure we're up and running and anything they need from me," Morrow said.

## BACK TO HER ROOTS

Morrow moved back to Clayton from Ohio two years ago with her husband, Ronald. They lived in the state for 30 years.

"I moved back here to help with the business," she said. "Dad and I had talked about it a couple years prior. At the time, Ronald and I were doing senior care for his father. He passed in 2022. In 2023, my husband and I moved back to Clayton to get situated. We weren't anticipating my dad passing, of course, but we kind of thought he's rolling up into some retirement years and maybe he'd like to have us there to start transitioning the



**Clayton Island Tours founder Capt. David Lawrence Kay died in August. Submitted photo**

business as he saw fit. We just weren't aware that he was sick at the time. But we thought it would be a good time to move, being in the transition stage of our lives."

Morrow has a business background, and she also juggles a full-time remote job. "I work as a material analyst/purchasing for a company in Ohio that makes and sell parts for off-road equipment such as tractors and construction equipment." I do a lot of importing from Europe. On the weekends, I dedicate a lot more time to running the business, and I'm constantly running The Chateau Country Inn and The Captain's Cottage concurrently throughout the week."

Morrow is happy to be back in Clayton. "Whenever I would leave to go home to Toledo, I just knew in my heart that I was making a mistake," she said. "Not that I didn't love my life in Toledo, but I knew where I should be. I should be back here."

She said her husband is very handy, in terms of repairs and maintenance. "He's all around good at building and mechanical things. His dad was very mechanical and had a repair business. Ron was like his little shadow, learning everything he could from his dad. And my dad,

# New business on Malone's Main Street

## Owner shares love of collecting

By **ALEXANDER VIOLLO**

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**MALONE** — A new business, featuring a variety of trading cards and sports memorabilia, recently opened its doors in the village.

Mahoney's Local Card Shop, located at 432 East Main St., opened about two weeks ago, according to the store's owner, Liam Mahoney.

Mahoney said he started collecting cards when he was six-years old and has added to his collection ever since.

"This has been a hobby of mine for some time and they have just been collecting over the years," Mahoney said, "There's probably, I bet you, there are two million cards in this shop. It's always been a hobby for me."

Mahoney said his collection, which features baseball, basketball, football, hockey, and Pokémon cards, has grown from purchases of other private



**Liam Mahoney**

collections.

"From guys whose kids weren't into it or they just didn't know what to do with the stuff anymore," Mahoney said, "I'd poke through it and tell them what it was worth and if they wanted to keep it or get rid of it I could help them no matter what. I've just been doing that

over the years."

Mahoney said a store in Plattsburgh, Ed and Mikes, closed in 2009, leading to another addition to his collection.

"They used to be in the mall in Plattsburgh and I happened to be friends with one of the brothers of Ed and Mike and after they went out of business I got to look at all their inventory and I bought that out too and I kept buying what I was buying," Mahoney said, "Here I am probably a couple million cards later."

According to Mahoney, the first set of cards he started collecting was 1990 Topps baseball.

"Those were in a lot of the stores when I was a kid in 1990 and you could get them reasonably cheap," Mahoney said, "I got them and that was when I first started and that was it, I just went into everything other sports and everything else."

Mahoney said the store is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday,

adding he buys, sells and trades cards.

Mahoney said beyond baseball, basketball, football and hockey cards, the shop has some tennis and soccer cards, celebrity autographs, and game-used and autographed memorabilia, balls, sticks, pucks and jerseys, in addition to new hobby boxes.

"There's something for everybody here for sure," Mahoney said, "It's a total shop, a total active hobby shop."

Mahoney said some of the shop's special items include a signed Babe Ruth baseball, a Mickey Mantle ball that is signed by Mantle and the first and last pitchers he hit home runs off of, a signed Mike Tyson Punch-Out! picture and a hockey stick autographed by the 1992-93 Montreal Canadians, the last Canadian team to win a Stanley Cup.

"I'm particularly fond of the Babe Ruth one for sure, that's probably my favorite in the whole shop," Mahoney said, "The Canadians stick I really like too, those are probably my two favorite although I do like my autographed Bobby Orr picture even though he was Bruin I still like that one."

Mahoney said his son, who is almost 11, runs the Pokémon part of the store.

"He does it all by himself and knows what he is doing," Mahoney said.

In addition to the storefront on East Main Street, Mahoney said he sells cards through an eBay store, luckyclovercards.

"I've had that store since 2013, I've got about 700 something things up there on it," Mahoney said, "I've always been pretty active with it. When I first started out it wasn't nearly like this but the industry has just gone crazy. When COVID hit it magnified everything. Everybody was looking for a hobby or something to do at home and all of the sudden everybody and their brother go into it."

Mahoney said the industry has come out with a lot of unique and game-used patch cards that have helped increase

interest in the hobby.

"The industry has really gone leaps and bounds above where it was in the late 80s or early 90s," Mahoney said, "A lot of people are very interested in the hobby and it's a good way to spend time. If you know what you are doing you can make money at it too, if you want, but I've always just enjoyed collecting myself."

Mahoney said he grew up in Altona and has roots in Malone through his grandparents.

"My grandparents were originally from Malone and they moved out when my grandfather began working for Customs at the border in Champlain, he was the port director out there for 35 years," Mahoney said, "I recently moved here from Champlain after I retired from the Department of Corrections. I also retired, at about the same time, from the Vermont Air National Guard in Burlington."

Now that he is retired Mahoney said he has the time to have his own shop.

"I've always wanted to have my own shop," Mahoney said, "It took me a couple of careers to be able to do it but here I am and I have always wanted to do this since I was a kid. It is definitely a dream come true type of thing."

Mahoney said he is happy to be located on Main Street.

"I always liked Malone anyway and always talked about opening a shop in Malone. I bought a house and happened to come across this space and when I first looked at it I could see it just like it is now," Mahoney said, "Plus I want to be part of the revitalization of the downtown area here."

Mahoney said after opening he has been going through his inventory, with the help of friends.

"It's going to take us years to go through all the stuff in the back but I plan on doing box breaks and stuff like that for people to get in on," Mahoney said, "I'm planning on group grading too, I'll send peoples' cards, if they think they have got a card that is a beautiful card we will send them in."

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# Chamber honors industry leaders at 8th annual Tourism Dinner



**The 2025 STLC Tourism Excellence, Best to the Guest Award was given to the Best Western University Inn. From left are, Kathryn Puleo, Destination Manager, STLC Chamber of Commerce; Best Western University Inn Staff — Stephanie Taillon, Susie Davis, Sonya Butler, Dorothy Derfler, and Scott Nickerson. Photo provided**

fresh collection of 14 themed cards designed to highlight St. Lawrence County’s unique seasonal experiences and diverse activities. This new suite captures the distinct character of the county’s regions, offering a dynamic resource to better showcase outdoor adventures, cultural attractions, and year-round visitor opportunities across all corners of the county.

The night culminated with the presentation of the 2025 Tourism Excellence Awards, led by Kathryn Puleo, Destination Manager for the STLC Chamber. The awards honored outstanding contributions to the county’s tourism industry. This year’s honorees included:

**Best to the Guest Award:** Best Western University Inn, Canton

Recognized for its exceptional hospitality, community involvement, and commitment to enhancing the visitor experience.

**Best Destination Marketing Initiative Award:** Seaway Visitor Center at Eisenhower Lock, Massena

Honored for its innovative reopening campaign, leveraging community partnerships and creative marketing strategies to reignite interest and visitation.

In addition to the Tourism Excellence Awards, this year’s honorees were also presented with Citation Certificates from the 116th New York State Assembly District Office, recognizing their outstanding achievements. The certificates, issued by Assemblyman Scott Gray, further underscored the regional significance of their contributions to tourism and community development.

“We are incredibly proud of how this event has grown to become a celebration of not just our tourism partners but the entire community,” said Tiffani Amo, Director of Tourism. “Tourism is a catalyst for community pride, economic sustainability, and connection, and tonight’s gathering reaffirmed that we are moving forward together.”



**The 2025 STLC Tourism Excellence, Best Destination Marketing Award was given to the Seaway Visitor Center at Eisenhower Lock. From left are, Amanda Helmer and Amy Stark, Seaway Visitor Center at Eisenhower Lock; Tif Amo, Director of Tourism, STLC Chamber of Commerce. Photo provided**

OGDENSBURG — The St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce held its 8th Annual Tourism Dinner on June 4, at the historic Freight House restaurant in Ogdensburg, bringing together community leaders, tourism partners, and business owners for a night dedicated to championing the role of tourism across the county.

Held under the theme “Tourism at Home,” the event emphasized the powerful impact tourism has not only on local businesses and economic development but also on the community’s overall quality of life. The evening offered a blend of networking, celebration, and inspiration as attendees reflected on the value of welcoming visitors

while strengthening the fabric of their own hometowns.

Guests enjoyed a buffet dinner, followed by remarks from Tiffani Amo, Director of Tourism, who provided updates on the Chamber’s marketing initiatives and strategic partnerships focused on driving year-round visitation. The keynote presentation by Josiah Brown, nationally recognized founder of Famous Destination Marketing Inc. and “The New York Sherpa,” captivated the audience with a compelling talk on the concept of Resident First Tourism, highlighting how local engagement and pride are at the heart of sustainable tourism growth.

The Chamber unveiled its brand-new Rack Card Suite, a

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## Why you need dental insurance in retirement.

Many Americans are fortunate to have dental coverage for their entire working life, through employer-provided benefits. When those benefits end with retirement, paying dental bills out-of-pocket can come as a shock, leading people to put off or even go without care.

Simply put – without dental insurance, there may be **an important gap** in your healthcare coverage.

### When you're comparing plans ...

- ▶ Look for coverage that helps pay for major services. Some plans may limit the number of procedures – or pay for preventive care only.
- ▶ Look for coverage with no deductibles. Some plans may require you to pay hundreds out of pocket before benefits are paid.
- ▶ Shop for coverage with no annual maximum on cash benefits. Some plans have annual maximums of \$1,000.

### Medicare doesn't pay for dental care.<sup>1</sup>

That's right. As good as Medicare is, it was never meant to cover everything. That means if you want protection, you need to purchase individual insurance.

### Early detection can prevent small problems from becoming expensive ones.

The best way to prevent large dental bills is preventive care. The American Dental Association recommends checkups twice a year.

### Previous dental work can wear out.

Even if you've had quality dental work in the past, you shouldn't take your dental health for granted. In fact, your odds of having a dental problem only go up as you age.<sup>2</sup>

### Treatment is expensive — especially the services people over 50 often need.

Consider these national average costs of treatment ... \$222 for a checkup ... \$190 for a filling ... \$1,213 for a crown.<sup>3</sup> Unexpected bills like this can be a real burden, especially if you're on a fixed income.

1 "Medicare & You," Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, 2025. 2 "Aging changes in teeth and gums", medlineplus.gov, 4/17/2022. 3 American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2020 Survey of Dental Fees, Copyright 2020, American Dental Association.

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# Longtime best friends open Watertown jewelry store

By CRAIG FOX

cfox@wdt.net

**W**ATERTOWN — Chris Shorkey recalled how they were in the sixth grade when he was the first friend Steve Booth met after Booth's family moved to the north country more than 30 years ago.

They remain best friends.

And now they are business partners, opening up Celebrations jewelry store in a small strip plaza in front of the Walmart on outer Arsenal Street almost a month ago.

"I tried to talk him into doing it for 15 years," Shorkey said.

With a slogan "your jewelry destination," they named the store Celebrations because they help their customers celebrate weddings, anniversaries,

graduations, birthdays and other special occasions, Shorkey said.

They offer engagement rings, wedding bands, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, watches and gold fashioned and gemstone jewelry.

Both age 42, the two friends bring 23 years of experience in the jewelry industry, all with Kay Jewelers.

Shorkey said he began his career with Kay Jewelers in 2002 at age 18 as the manager of the local store, recruiting his friend to work there three years later.

For more than 20 years, Shorkey worked at the store in the Salmon Run Mall before it moved three years ago to the Watertown Towne Center plaza, across the street from Celebrations, while Booth



Store co-owner Chris Shorkey, left, helps Colton Roberts look for some ruby jewelry at Celebrations. Craig Fox/Watertown Daily Times

managed the Syracuse Destiny

USA store for three years before heading off to Long Island as a district manager, then to North Carolina and Las Vegas.

"I was the local jewelry guy," Shorkey said about those years.

They had all that corporate experience, but they always wanted to run their own business and put their own touch on the jewelry store experience. Their commitment to service sets them apart, Booth said.

"Excellent service is No. 1," he said.

They look at it as helping family make their jewelry selections, they said.

Everyone who comes into the store is offered a dainty chocolate cookie that's served under a glass cake dome and a bottle of water or soda.

About 10 years ago, Booth had to battle hours of Long Island traffic to deliver wedding bands on a couple's big day because they had finally selected them just a few days before, he recalled.

But he got them there in time, he said.

"We're the unsung heroes," his partner said.

On a recent day, young couple Sheila and Colton Roberts came into the store with their 3-year-old daughter, Sephriana, looking for some ruby jewelry.

"It's my birth stone," the young mother said. "My husband has some and my daughter has some, too, but I don't and it's my birth stone."

Booth showed them some selections in display cases at the back of the 1,500-square-foot store.

The two businessmen designed the layout and look of the store themselves, traveling to Springfield, Massachusetts, to find the display cases that they like.

Three display cases are devoted to Le Vian chocolate diamond selections, Booth pointed out.

They are celebrating a grand opening on June 14 with food trucks and other activities.

Celebrations is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and is closed on Sundays.



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# 11 Graduate St. Lawrence Leadership Institute 2024-25 Program

By Ben Dixon

St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce

CANTON — Eleven emerging leaders received their certificates of completion in a Graduation ceremony of the St. Lawrence Leadership Institute (SLLI) at the Best Western University Inn on Wednesday, May 13 th.

The graduates included Kirk Davis (of Con Tech Building Systems, Inc.), Kristine Demeter (Cornell Cooperative Extension), Jennifer Gollinger (North Country Savings Bank), Olga Grant (St. Lawrence University), Karla Keruskie (Legacy K Elderly Care Homes LLC), Wendy Lawton (St. Lawrence University), Christine Lauzon (The Arc Jefferson-St. Lawrence), Scott Morgan (AmeriCU), Seamus L. O'Brien (North Country Savings Bank), and Abigail Wilson (Children's Home of Jefferson County), and Lisa Mitchell.

Over the course of eight monthly classes, the participants in the SLII developed their leadership skills with expert speakers and workshops on subjects that included Strengths-Based Leadership, Emotional Intelligence, Building and Leading Effective Teams, Organizational Change, Conflict Resolution & Negotiations, and Ethical Leadership.

Classes also featured discussions of county community issues with panels of leaders in their field sharing perspectives on the state of agriculture, government, public health, justice, education, the arts, environment, and business development.

Handing the torch of leadership to the graduates



**Photo caption: The 2025 Graduates of the St. Lawrence Leadership Institute. Pictured left to right are Christine Lauzon, Lisa Mitchell, Olga Grant, Abigail Wilson, Seamus O'Brien, Jennifer Gollinger, and Scott Morgan. Graduates not in the photo are Kirk Davis, Kristine Demeter, Karla Keruskie, and Wendy Lawton.**

were members of the SLII Board of Directors, which includes Cassandra Caswell (of Cornell Cooperative Extension), Ben Dixon (St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce), Malissa Hale (Children's Home of Jefferson County), Josh LaFave (Clarkson University), Brandon LaShombe (St. Lawrence Federal Credit Union), Felicia Neahr (Workforce Development Institute), Laura Pearson (St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce), Kenneth Rhee (SUNY Canton), Stacy Vassar (St. Lawrence University), and Elizabeth Yenchko.

Closing remarks were provided by Ben Dixon, President of the SLII Board, 2007 SLII alumnus, and Executive Director of the St. Lawrence

County Chamber of Commerce. "In working with many partners in the North Country since 2006, we have continuously recognized the need for leaders to champion creative new approaches to community development," said Dixon. "That [these individuals have] chosen to hone skills and knowledge in this program and accept the mantle of leadership is critical to the vitality and quality of life in our communities."

The St. Lawrence Leadership Institute was established in 1993 to foster the development of emerging and existing leaders for the advancement of St. Lawrence County, its businesses, and its communities. This leadership development is achieved through three pro-

gram elements: leadership skills development, issues awareness, and networking. The not-for-profit Institute is managed, and the program developed, by a volunteer board of directors with administrative support from the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce.

The St. Lawrence Leadership Institute is now accepting applications for the 2025-2026 program. Interested parties should visit [www.visitstlc.com/slli](http://www.visitstlc.com/slli) for an application or more information. Questions can be directed to Laura at [Laura@slcchamber.org](mailto:Laura@slcchamber.org) or 315-393-3620, or to any member of the Board of Directors.

## Naturally Lewis Launches survey

By KYLEE TABOLT

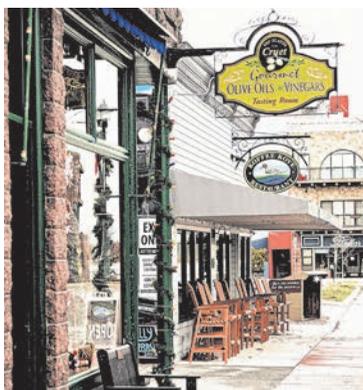
Naturally Lewis

LEWIS COUNTY, NY – Naturally Lewis, Inc., as the appointed tourism promotion agency for Lewis County, New York, is launching a resident sentiment survey to benchmark community attitudes on recreation and tourism in our community. This data will guide insight-driven decision making for intentional recreation and tourism development by Naturally Lewis, Inc. and our partners in tourism development.

"This resident sentiment survey will provide comprehensive, quantifiable measures of tourism impacts in our community" says Kristen Ward-Aucter, Director of Tourism at Naturally Lewis, Inc. "By measuring quality of life and perceptions of tourism, we have a benchmark to create a path forward based on what the community truly wants. The end goal of tourism is a thriving community for our residents."

Naturally Lewis, Inc. encourages all residents of Lewis County to participate in this survey. The feedback collected will ensure the direction of tourism and recreation development reflects the values, needs, and priorities of the people who call Lewis County home. Community input helps shape how our region grows—not just for visitors, but for us.

The resident sentiment survey is available online at [naturallylewis.com/resident-sentiment-survey](http://naturallylewis.com/resident-sentiment-survey).



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Enid Moore - Owner 226 James St., Clayton, NY

# St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce Lining Up Events for Second Half of 2025

By Laura Pearson

St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce

Canton – The St. Lawrence County Chamber is lining up numerous events for the remainder of the year and is seeking corporate sponsors for them.

Those interested should mark their calendars for the:

- Car-B-Que on Saturday, June 21st, at Fort La Presentation in Ogdensburg.

- Business After Hours Networking event on June 24th, from 5-7pm at JJ's on the River (a Hosmer's Marina business) in Ogdensburg. Additional Business After Hours events will be scheduled at various locations around the county.

- Massena Community-wide Garage Sales on June 28th & June 29th.

- Canton Community-wide Garage Sales Saturday August 2nd & Sunday August 3rd.



**Bill Fiacco, owner-operator of the Gristmill Brewery in Massena, shares the history of the brewery with attendees of the May St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours. The Chamber has a wide range of events lined up for the second half of 2025.**

- Craft, Food & Wine Open Air Market on Saturday, September 20th, at the St. Lawrence Power & Equipment Museum in Madrid.

- Non-Profit Conference

on Wednesday, September 17th, at the Best Western University Inn in Canton.

- Annual Dinner on Wednesday, October 22nd, at the GranView in Ogdensburg.

- Craft, Food & Wine Holiday Market – location and date to be determined.

Chamber events early in 2026 will include Canton Winterfest, the North Country Kids Expo, the Annual Membership Breakfast Meeting, and Massena Spring Fever Festival.

“Chamber events, while just one element of our extensive programming, provide multiple benefits to our members, businesses, non-profit, service organizations, and communities of St. Lawrence County,” said Ben Dixon, Executive Director. “Through them, we provide networking, exposure, education, commerce, tourism attraction, and quality of life opportunities.”

The Chamber seeks corporate sponsors for the events. “Corporate sponsorship of our events is a great way for businesses and organizations to give back to the community, as it is what makes the events, and the benefits they provide,

possible,” said Laura Pearson, the Chamber’s Community Coordinator & Business Development Specialist, who takes a lead role in organizing most Chamber events. “Sponsors get extensive recognition through our advertising and promotion of the event – in social media, press releases, electronic newsletters, multimedia advertising, signage, and at the event.”

The St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce looks forward to hosting thousands of business representatives, residents, and visitors to impactful events in the second half of 2025.

For more information on these upcoming events or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Laura Pearson at [Laura@slcchamber.org](mailto:Laura@slcchamber.org) or 315-386-4000 ext. 6 or visit our website at: [www.SLCChamber.org](http://www.SLCChamber.org).

## Enroll Anytime in Jefferson’s Free Home-Based Childcare Training

### Launch Your Business in Just 4 Months

Jefferson Community College’s (JCC) home-based childcare training program is now offering rolling admission — start anytime! This free program is available to residents of Jefferson and Lewis counties and prepares participants to open their own home-based childcare business in as-little-as four months.

Jefferson’s training provides essential business and education knowledge, along with support for obtaining New York State Office of Children and Family Services (NYSOCFS) licensing and business counseling. Participants complete 34 hours of non-credit instruction in business and health/safety requirements. Start-up supply funding may be available for eligible individuals through Community Action Planning Council (CAPC) or Naturally Lewis, depending on the

county of residence.

Participants will receive comprehensive support throughout the program, including personalized mentorship from a dedicated Program Coordinator, one-on-one business counseling from a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) advisor, and regulatory guidance from a CAPC representative to assist with NYSOCFS approval.

“This is a no-cost, no-pressure opportunity for anyone who’s ever dreamed of working with children to take that first step,” says Joanna Brislan, Director of Community Services at Jefferson. “You don’t need prior experience—just a love for kids and a desire to build a better future. In just a few months, you could be running your own licensed childcare business from home, earning income while making a meaningful impact in your community.”

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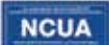
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**20 Under 40 recipient Emily Griffin, webmaster/online communications coordinator for Samaritan Medical Center and marketing director for Zoo New York, with Johnson Newspaper Corp. CEO Gary C. Valik.** Jonathon Wheeler/Watertown Daily Times



**The Paddock Arcade in Watertown hosted the 15th class of NNY Business' 20 Under 40 for an awards dinner.** Jonathon Wheeler/Watertown Daily Times



**NNY Business held its annual 20 Under 40 dinner Tuesday night at the Paddock Arcade in Watertown.** Jonathon Wheeler/Watertown Daily Times

## Leaders

From T1

selfless things.”

Those honored on Tuesday were: Jessica Goodrich, director of infection prevention and control at Samaritan Medical Center; Meghan Harney, director of the Lowville Free Library;

Sarah Shoemaker, director of buildings and grounds at Watertown Family YMCA; and Brittany Matott, broker at County Seat Realty.

Also, Ariel Snyder, associate at BCA Architects and Engineers; Tim Reddick, CEO at ConTech Building Systems Inc.; Robert (Bobby) Killmer, employee relations specialist at North Star Health Alliance; Kylee McGrath, CEO of the Watertown Local Develop-

ment Corp.; Jamie Roberts, SPAO coordinator at THRIVE Wellness and Recovery; and Dylan Soper, deputy Jefferson County administrator.

Awardee Joseph Austin, fire chief with the Lowville Volunteer Fire Dept. said that it’s “a distinct honor” to be recognized Tuesday.

“It’s one of those things that I wasn’t really expecting and then I got the notification and was like ‘Oh that’s kind of fun,’” he said. “I’m just glad that I serve the community. I’m glad to be a part of it and see it grow and I’m glad to be able to do my part.”

Awardee Emily Griffin, webmaster/online communications coordinator at Samaritan Medical Center and the marketing director for Zoo New York, said that when she received the email,

she thought it was just an announcement, not thinking she was one of the recipients.

“I was very surprised and I was confused because I feel proud of my accomplishments and everybody tries to do their best and work hard. But I feel like there are so many more people in the community that have done way more than I have and I aspire to be more like them,” she said. “It’s nice to just share in the happiness with (the other recipients),” she said.

Also honored were Danielle Young, assistant human resource director at THRIVE; Derek McNeill, vice president at V.S. Virkler & Son; Anthony Adamczyk, director of economic development at Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority; Amanda Drake, owner of Rags and Rivers;

Adam Bullis, district forester at LandVest; Brittney Doyle, owner of Polished; Gregory Stickel, home inspector at First Class Home Inspection; Mara Snyder, office manager at Miller’s Turf Inc. and Eastview Grain and owner of Snyder’s Sugar Shack.

Sponsors of the event were: NNY Business; Naturally Lewis; Northern New York Community Foundation; Jake Johnson Properties; Morgia Wealth Management; Watertown Savings Bank; Samaritan Medical Center; Jefferson County Economic Development; RBC Wealth Management; WBLH Tunes 92.5/104.5; Victory Promotions; NNY360; and the Watertown Daily Times.

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# JCC Featured Honors Program Student

By PAMELA DIXON

JCC

Peyton L. Enghusen, Watertown, is the featured Jefferson Community College (JCC) Honors Program student for the month of June 2025. Enghusen is a humanities and social sciences major with a concentration in psychology. For one of her Honors Program options, she researched how mental health disorders impact communication.



**Peyton Enghusen**

The Jefferson Community College Honors Program offers students with exceptional academic skills the opportunity to receive enriched instruction within their current program of study. For the Honors Program, students select three courses within their curriculum, and enhance them as Honors Options. The option is based on a project agreed to by the student and a faculty member willing to work closely with the student to provide a unique and rewarding experience. Students also take the Honors Seminar; a unique interdisciplinary course open only to program participants. The seminar examines a single theme each semester and features guest speakers from a variety of disciplines and often includes some sort of field experience. Successful program participants earn a prestigious Honors Gradu-

ate designation on their academic transcript for each Honors Option course. Students demonstrating excellent academic achievement in high school or who have completed 12 credit hours of college coursework are invited to apply for admission to the Honors Program.

"I chose to join the Honors Program to push myself in my academics and meet other individuals who have a passion for learning," says Enghusen. "It gives you the opportunity to challenge yourself to new heights and is a very rewarding experience!"

For more information, visit [www.sunyjefferson.edu](http://www.sunyjefferson.edu) or contact Honors Program coordinator, Dr. Joshua Canale, at [jcanale@sunyjefferson.edu](mailto:jcanale@sunyjefferson.edu).

# JCC Holds Annual Recognition Celebration



**Front row (l-r): Retirees Diana Marin, Sandy Creek, secretary, 20 years of service; Edie Roggie, Croghan, alumni development officer, 20 years of service; Irene Wilder, Copenhagen, assistant professor, 34 years of service; Rebecca Small-Kellogg, Dexter, director of access and opportunity programs, 37 years of service; Michele Gefell, Watertown, coordinator of career planning and placement, 36 years of service; Paul Alteri, Watertown, associate professor, 29 years of service. Back row (l-r): Cindy F. Intschert, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees; David J. Males, Chair, Board of Trustees; retiree Jeri Fairman, Watertown, provost, vice president of academic and student affairs, 36 years of service; Daniel J. Dupee II, College President. Unavailable for photo: Peter Crump, Carthage, senior building maintenance mechanic II, 10 years of service.**

By PAMELA DIXON

JCC

*Honoring Emeriti, Retirees, SUNY Awardees, Service Milestones and Spirit of Jefferson Recipients*

Jefferson Community College (JCC) held its Annual Recognition Celebration on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, hon-

oring eight retirees, five newly appointed emeriti, SUNY Chancellor's Award recipients, and employees celebrating milestone service years, continuing appointments, promotions, and sabbaticals. The Spirit of Jefferson Award recipient was also announced.

Retirees who received **Emeritus Designation** are: Tina Berkey, Watertown, college service emerita, Rosemary Deusser-Jensen, Watertown, professor emerita, Linda Dittrich, Watertown, associate vice president emerita, Dr. Monica LeClerc, Alexandria Bay, professor emerita, and Rosanne Weir, Watertown, dean emerita.

**Tina Berkey, College Service Emerita**

Berkey served JCC for 35 years. Her career started in 1982 as the College's first "Word Processor" and progressed into key administrative support roles. A campus and community leader, she served as Senate Secretary and President of the JCC Women's Organization and was active in Relay for Life and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer. A technology pioneer, Berkey was the first employee to transition from a Mag Card Typewriter to a computer. Her accolades include the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Classified Service (2010), two Jefferson Performance Awards, and multiple profes-

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# JCC

From T12

sional certifications. Berkey also serves as board member and secretary for the Adams Center Free Library and Watertown Lyric Theater.

## Rosemary Deusser-Jensen, Professor Emerita

Deusser-Jensen served Jefferson for 31 years, advancing from adjunct instructor to Professor of English and Speech Communication. She advised student organizations including Student Government and Phi Theta Kappa, presented communication workshops for campus and community groups, and contributed to numerous college committees. She received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching and Service (1998) and the Thomas W. Myers Award for Excellence in Co-Curricular Life. A member of the National Communication Association, she pursued advanced coursework and consulting certification throughout her career.

## Linda C. Dittrich, Associate Vice President Emerita

Dittrich served Jefferson for more than two decades, joining the college in 1999 as Associate Dean for Mathematics and Science, later becoming Associate Vice President. She managed multimillion-dollar budgets, led over 70 faculty and staff, and launched programs in Renewable Energy Technology, Paramedic/EMS, and Animal Management. She helped secure a \$2 million Department of Labor grant to expand healthcare education and served on the Academic Standards and Strategic Planning committees. Dittrich also mentored faculty and advised students, while remaining active in community organizations, including the Roswell Flower

Memorial Library Board.

## Dr. Monica G. LeClerc, Professor Emerita

Dr. LeClerc served the college for 26 years as a faculty member and academic leader, including roles as Department Chair and Chair of Lab Science and Physical Education. She led curriculum redesigns, co-taught interdisciplinary science courses, and conducted sabbatical research on tick-borne diseases with SUNY Upstate and the University of Massachusetts. A dedicated mentor, she guided student research in ecology, water analysis, and microplastics and was instrumental in promoting Super Science Saturday. In 2019, she received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

## Rosanne N. Weir, Dean Emerita

Weir began her 40-year career at JCC in 1977 as its first admissions counselor. She advanced to Director of Admissions in 1989 and Dean for Enrollment in 2015. Weir led initiatives to increase college access, including College is Possible, Start Now with SUNY Oswego, and Junior Visitation Day. She championed affordability and support for nontraditional and first-generation students, advised international students, and directed the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). Her service earned the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence and numerous honors. She was also active in community programs such as Planned Parenthood and North Country Reads.

**SUNY Chancellor's Award recipients** are Trevor J. Bradish, Watertown, assistant professor of mathematics, Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, and Renee Patterson, Watertown, account clerk, Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Classified Service.

Bradish joined Jefferson in 2011 as an instructor and

## NNY Business

was promoted to assistant professor of mathematics in 2015. Actively engaged in campus governance, he chairs the Academic Standards Committee, which guides college policies. He previously chaired the Guided Pathways Subcommittee for three years, contributing to the development of Jefferson's Prior Learning Assessment Policy, and led the Academic Affairs Committee for two years, overseeing curriculum revisions. He also served five years on the Carnegie Quantway Adoption Steering Committee. Throughout his tenure, Bradish has developed course content, integrated educational technology into his teaching, and supported assessment and accreditation efforts. He is an active member of the New York State Mathematics Association of Two-Year Colleges, where he has held roles as secretary and Region 2 Member At-Large and presented at annual conferences. Beyond the classroom, Bradish is a committed advisor and mentor to students in both the math and nursing programs. Bradish holds a bachelor's degree and a Master of Education degree from SUNY Potsdam.

Patterson has been a dedicated member of Jefferson's classified staff for nearly 20 years, serving as an account clerk in the Financial Services office. Known for her strong work ethic, adaptability, and meticulous attention to detail, she has made a lasting impact across multiple departments, including Enrollment Services, the Finance office, and Financial Services. Always willing to share her knowledge, Patterson has played a key role in training new staff, particularly in Enrollment Services. Her contributions have enhanced efficiency and strengthened student support campus-wide, all while managing a wide range of re-



**(front row, l-r): Rosanne N. Weir, Watertown, Dean Emerita; Dr. Monica G. LeClerc, Alexandria Bay, Professor Emerita; and Linda C. Dittrich, Watertown, Associate Vice President Emerita. Back row (l-r): Cindy F. Intschert, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees, Daniel J. Dupee II, College President, and David J. Males, Chair, Board of Trustees. Unavailable for photo: Tina A. Berkey, Watertown, College Service Emerita, and Rosemary Deusser-Jensen, Watertown, Professor Emerita.**



**Honored for 25 years of service to the College are (l-r) Todd Vincent of Adams Center, professor, Heather Natali of Watertown, senior secretary, Eleanor Minnick of Calcium, secretary, Amy O'Donnell of Watertown, assistant professor - pictured with Daniel J. Dupee, II, College President. Unavailable for photo: Dean Dyer of Adams, instructional technical specialist.**

sponsibilities with care and precision. Patterson holds associate degrees in business administration and individual studies, along with a certificate in accounting, all from Jefferson.

**Retireesare** Paul Alteri,

Watertown, Associate Professor, 29 years of service; Peter Crump, Carthage, Senior Building Maintenance Mechanic II, 10 years of service; Jeri Fairman, Water

See JCC14



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From T13

town, Provost, Vice President of Academic and Student affairs, 36 years of service; Michele Gefell, Watertown, Coordinator of Career Planning and Placement, 36 years of service; Diana Marin, Sandy Creek, Secretary, 20 years of service; Edie Roggie, Croghan, Alumni Development Officer, 20 years of service; Rebecca Small-Kellogg, Dexter, Director of Access and Opportunity Programs, 37 years of service; and Irene Wilder, Copenhagen, Assistant Professor, 34 years of service.

Jefferson Community College recognized these current employees for **milestone years of service:**

**Five Years:** Nicole Arcuri, Pulaski, Valerie Slate, Copenhagen, Nicholas Thornthwaite, Black River, Lori Tuttle, Theresa

**Ten Years:** Peter Crump, Carthage, Jessica Emerson, Watertown, Marylou Evans, Carthage, Matt Gorman, Watertown, Megan Stadler, Watertown, Donna Yang, Watertown

**Fifteen Years:** Joshua Hammond, Carthage, Joshua Hollenbeck, Evans Mills, Cynthia Sloan, Watertown

**Twenty Years:** Peter Boening, Watertown, Susan Hughes, Watertown, Diana Marin, Sandy Creek, Lisa Shelmidine, Adams

**Twenty-Five Years:** Dean Dyer, Adams, Eleanor Minnick, Calcium, Heather Natali, Watertown, Amy O'Donnell, Watertown, Todd Vincent, Adams Center

**Thirty Years:** Mark Streiff, Evans Mills

The Spirit of Jefferson Award, established in 2011, recognizes a campus team that exemplifies cooperative effort and achieves exemplary results. The 2025 Spirit of Jefferson Award was pre-

sented to Strategic Planning Co-Chair Team - Dawn Bartlett, Watertown, and Larry Danforth, Corning.

Beginning in summer 2024, the Strategic Planning Team led the process with dedication, leadership, and professionalism. From early meetings with the Board of Trustees and President's Cabinet to the launch of five campus-wide workgroups, Bartlett and Danforth set a tone of intentionality that guided every step. They built a strong foundation by refining the College's Mission, Vision, and Values, and supported the process with a robust communication structure, including a centralized repository of data and research. Even while balancing faculty responsibilities, they ensured that students, faculty, staff, and community members were meaningfully engaged, making the process truly collaborative. The resulting Jefferson Strategic Plan 2025–2030 reflects their integrity, vision, and deep commitment to the institution.

Past recipients of the Spirit of Jefferson Award include the JCC Women's Organization (2011), Science Division ~ Super Science



**Honored for 30 years of service to the College is Mark Streiff (left) of Evans Mills, professor, pictured with Daniel J. Dupee, II, College President.**

## NNY Business



**The Spirit of Jefferson Award recipient was also announced. (l-r): Cindy F. Intschert, Vice Chair, Board of Trustees; David J. Males, Chair, Board of Trustees; Renee Patterson, Watertown, account clerk, SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Classified Service; Trevor J. Bradish, Watertown, assistant professor of mathematics, SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching; Daniel J. Dupee II, College President.**

Saturday (2012), Library Learning Center (2013), JCC Relay for Life (2014), Ever-GREEN Committee (2015), North Country Community Cup Team (2016), Chaos Pa-

trol (2017), Facilities Team (2018), National Endowment for the Humanities Grant Team (2019), JCC Campus Community (2020), JCC Food Pantry (2021), Return

To Campus COVID Committee (2022), Cannon Threads Closing Closet (2023), and President Dupee's Inauguration Planning Workgroup (2024).



**2025 Recipient of the Spirit of Jefferson Award was presented to the Strategic Planning Co-Chair Team, Associate Professor Dawn Bartlett of Watertown and Assistant Professor Larry Danforth of Corning - pictured with Daniel J. Dupee, II, College President.**

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Supporting Business Building Community

# Career fair shows community and students there are jobs are available

**By Elaine M. Avallone**  
eavallone@lowville.com

CARTHAGE — Inviting high students and adult job seekers, the Carthage Central School District held its inaugural Career & Job Fair April 16.

“As the director of grants, it is incredibly important to me that we continue to expand career and college exposure opportunities for Carthage Central School District students,” said Mackenzie L. Ritz. “When I originally wrote the C5 (College & Career Connections in the Carthage Community) grant, the vision was to provide as many students as possible with meaningful career-related experiences and exposure. Events like the Career and Job Fair as well as our Summer Career



**Carthage senior Breanna Fuller practiced taking blood pressure on Ewan Ranyon an EMT student at the Carthage Area Ambulance Squad under the watchful eye of Jill Brown, CARS community engagement officer at the Carthage Central High School Career and Job Fair. Elaine M. Avallone/Johnson Newspapers Corp**

Camps, give our students to their postsecondary education or entering the workforce after graduation. Partnering with the

Chamber of Commerce has further strengthened our community connections, a key focus of the grant and a priority of our Board of Education. Together, we are ensuring our students are better prepared, more informed, and more connected to both their futures and their community.”

The career and job fair attracted about 50 business ranging from agriculture to transportation. Job seekers from the community and high school juniors and seniors attended to see what employment opportunities were available.

Some of the 50 community members in attendance said they liked the number of entry level jobs available said Ms. Ritz, noting they plan to make this an annual event.

David Aubin and Michael Aubin came in search of jobs and left with some applications.

They mentioned that this job fair was better than one they had attended the previous week.

Carthage High School senior Breanna Fuller practiced taking blood pressure at the Carthage Area Ambulance Squad table and received a stethoscope.

Breanna has been accepted into the nursing program at Jefferson Community College, Watertown.

“I like helping people and making people well,” she said, noting she may volunteer as an EMT.

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# Clayton

From T3

when he was with us, was able to show Ron quite a bit how to do some boat management and boat maintenance. In addition, we have Brian Drappo here. He has a lot of hands-on experience and is also one of our main captains."

Morrow said that the staff of Clayton Island Tours is now at 38 employees, mainly seasonal, full-and-part-time. Despite a wet and clammy spring, she said that business this year has been good.

"People don't want to be closed up in their cottages," she said. "They know that our boats are covered and that we've been doing this for many years. We have a good reputation for being a safe option for them to go out onto the river. We don't necessarily have heat on the boats, but when those cold days were hitting us in May, people still came out. They had extra layers on, or pulled a blanket from our bin if they needed it. They came to see the river, not the inside of their cabins."

Clayton Island Tours offers



**Some of the staff of Clayton Island Tours gathered earlier this week at the company's new sign, off Route 12. In front, from left: Patracia Turso, Capt. Skip Hellings, director of operations Deborah Scholes, Capt. Chuck Peterson, Capt. Brian Drappo, and co-owner/partner Denise (Dede) Morrow and husband Ronald. Second Row: Riley Wilson, Trish Hunt, Capt. Jack Benoit, Bryan Weed, Capt. C.T. Roberts and Matt Bell.**  
Courtesy of Clayton Island Tours

regularly scheduled Thousand Island boat tours to Boldt Castle on Heart Island; Rock Island Lighthouse on Rock Island; "The Ultimate Sightseeing Tour" in the Thousand Islands, Two Nation Tours and sunset cruises. Custom private charters, such as weddings, are also offered. One of the fleet's boats has a glass bottom.

In a few weeks, Morrow said that the revamped "Thousand Islands/Canada No Passport Required Tour" will leave daily at 11 a.m. for a 2½ hour trip.

"It takes you through some scenery that take you through the Canadian islands north of Grindstone. We go through the international border and showcase where some of the best

fishing spots are, the Thousand Islands National Park in Canada, the waterfront of Gananoque and the Admiralty and Lake Fleet Islands.

The Admiralty Islands were named after prominent figures in the British Admiralty, while the Lake Fleet Islands were named after British naval ships that operated on Lake Ontario.

## LOOKING AHEAD

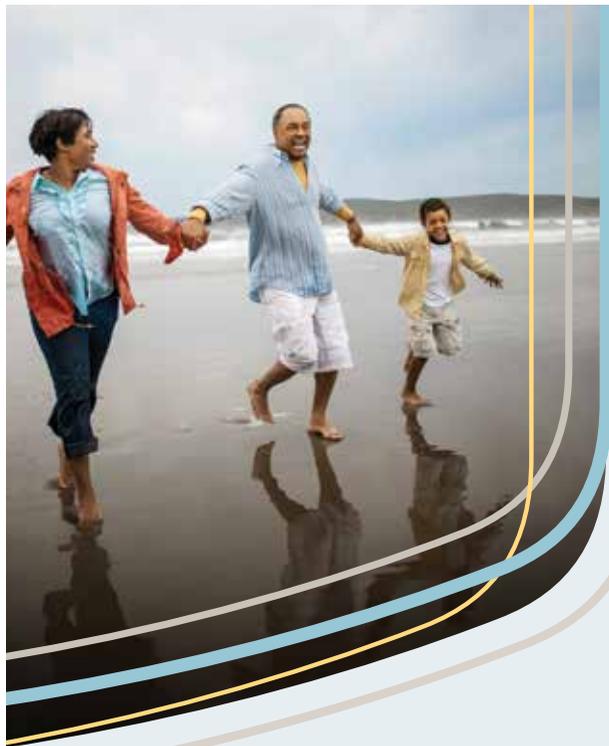
The list of changes that Morrow expects sometime in the future includes a revamped bathroom facility area at the company's docks.

"That's aging," she said. "So, we think we're going to revamp that space and maybe even add a boutique. We are regularly asked, 'Do you guys have anything that say Clayton Island Tours, like T-shirts, sweatshirts?' At the moment, we do not. When my dad was with us, he was spinning a lot of plates, so adding retail wasn't necessarily a plate he wanted to start."

Near the end of this month, Morrow's daughter, Sylvie, and her fiancé, Connor Ruetz, will wed at Boldt Castle. The company's tour boats will carry guests to the site.

Sylvie is a nurse, while Ruetz is an access specialist at Ohio State University's Student Life Disability Services.

"Sylvie and her fiancé are talking about coming here at the end of the year or early next year to assist us in running the business in the future," Morrow said. "They are looking to move here. It'll be nice — a full family business."



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