



VISION²⁰₂₀
ONEIDA COUNTY

A Path Toward Prosperity

The logo for Vision 2020 Oneida County features the word "VISION" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The year "2020" is positioned to the right of "VISION", with the "20" above and the "20" below. Below "VISION" are the words "ONEIDA COUNTY" in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font. The logo is framed by two curved, overlapping shapes in shades of blue and green, resembling a stylized path or a bridge.

Progress Report

Spring 2016

Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr.



Moving ONEIDA COUNTY Forward



2015 has been a year of exciting and progressive developments for Oneida County. In order for us to realize economic prosperity, we need to cultivate and attract skilled workers, support the job needs of our diverse community, and develop key infrastructure so that people want to live, work, play, and raise their families here.

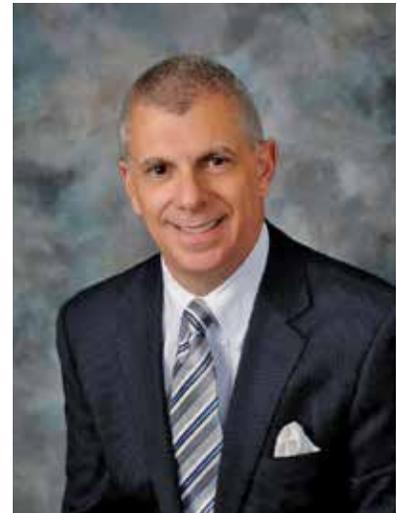
As you know, Vision 2020 is a collaborative effort to ensure that our community is ready to meet the demands of new economic growth opportunities. Vision 2020 has brought together leaders in education, workforce development, and industry to develop a plan that will propel our high-tech economy into the future. The results have been amazing.

Since we launched Phase One in August of 2013, progress has been made in three key areas – Education and Training, Access to Opportunity, and Housing. There were more student internships than ever before, allowing students to take part in our high-tech economy and seek employment here when they graduate. New academic programs have been created in high demand areas, like emerging technologies, cyber security, and healthcare. Programs and paths have been created to connect English as a Second Language students and workers with job opportunities. Changes in housing policies and adoption of tax incentives (485a) have accelerated development and made it more attractive than ever to live in Oneida County.

These are just a few examples of Vision 2020's impact. As Phase One implementation continues, we have expanded Vision 2020 and launched Phase Two, which is focused on developing solutions to our transportation needs. Our transportation amenities will consider the needs of everyone, from the new millennial workforce to senior citizens, and those who desire or need alternatives to traditional auto travel to move about the county.

The Vision 2020 committees have embraced their mission head-on and created ways that we, as a community, can unite our resources and demonstrate our ability to capitalize on the vast opportunities at our doorstep.

The following report outlines the progress of the Vision 2020 Initiative over the past two years and action items for 2016. We have, in this community today, a momentum the likes of which I've never seen before, and this is the roadmap to our future.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Anthony J. Picente Jr." The signature is fluid and cursive.

-Anthony J. Picente Jr., Oneida County Executive



Message from the Co-Chairs



Randy VanWagoner, President,
Mohawk Valley Community College

As co-chairs of County Executive Picente’s Vision 2020 Initiative, we are proud to share with you the many achievements made toward aligning Oneida County’s resources with the increasing demand for a broad range of skilled workers.

When we began, Phase One focused on strengthening our education and workforce training systems, amplifying collaborations to serve our culturally diverse and underserved populations, and creating mechanisms to streamline development of a more robust mix of housing options in Oneida County. Two years later, we’re more ready than ever!

College dual credit offerings in high schools were expanded and multiple career pathways were developed that incorporate current and new career clusters and offer students real world learning experiences. English as a Second Language (ESL) program providers were aligned with needs to better serve our English language learners and the APPLE model, an alternative high school program, was expanded to allow ESL students to learn the language, graduate, and get a job or go to college. The adoption of tax incentives (485a) has spurred the development of lofts and other mixed-use projects and supported neighborhood revitalization efforts throughout Oneida County.



Dave Mathis, Director of Workforce
Development, Oneida County

With the launch of Phase Two, the overall goal is to improve and expand the county’s transportation network to allow more people to do more things and move more easily from place to place. As our transportation committees focus on accessibility, connectivity, and alternatives to automobiles, the landscape of our transportation infrastructure will most certainly change to further ready this community for the changes that are already underway.

Vision 2020 has seamlessly worked to address the needs of industry, while ensuring that all citizens of Oneida County and beyond will benefit from economic growth.

Thanks to the leadership of County Executive Picente, and the dedication of our committee volunteers, we’re ready to embrace change and collectively obtain our prosperous future.

Mission:

Oneida County’s Vision 2020 Initiative will cultivate, attract and empower skilled workers, and will foster an entrepreneurial spirit and the renewal of our communities.

Vision 2020 Guiding Principles

- Each recommendation will be supported by research and data.
- All strategies and tactics will be designed to support the needs of a new economy, including job creation, education, housing, and diversity needs of future employers.
- Established milestones will be immediately actionable and built to support long-term needs.

As a result, the following is a phase one action plan that:

- Is guided and resourced by Oneida County government.
- Maximizes available resources.
- Achieves an optimum blend of efficiency and effectiveness.
- Provides a set of recommended strategies and tactics to optimally position the county for economic growth in the very near future.

PHASE ONE

EDUCATION & TRAINING

To cultivate, attract and empower skilled workers, and foster an entrepreneurial spirit and the renewal of our communities.

Committee Chair:

Howard Mettelman, District Superintendent Sole Supervisory, District of Oneida-Herkimer-Madison Counties

Committee:

Pat Costello - President, IBEW-43

Steve DiMeo - President, Mohawk Valley EDGE

Ray Durso - Executive Director, Genesis Group

Greg Evans - President, Indium Corporation

Keith Fenstemacher - Former President & CEO, Mohawk Valley Health Network

Robert Geer - Acting President, SUNY Polytechnic Institute

Terry Humphries - Program Development Manager, Working Solutions - Rome

Todd Hutton - President, Utica College

Bruce Karam - Superintendent, Utica City School District

Kim Lambert - Senior Executive Associate to the President for Planning & Facilities Oversight, Utica College

Dave Langone - Superintendent, Whitesboro Central School District

Kevin Marken - On Point for College

Dave Mathis - Director, Oneida County Workforce Development

Darby O'Brien - Library Director, Utica Public Library

Shawna Papale - Senior Vice President, Economic Development and Administration, Mohawk Valley EDGE

Alice Savino - Executive Director, Workforce Investment Board, Working Solutions

Eve Van de Wal - Regional President, Excellus BlueCross BlueShield

Randy VanWagoner - President, MVCC

Plus Task Force partners across our community

With the theme, "Our Collective Impact," the Workforce & Education committee brought together public and private educational institutions and systems, private industry, community agencies and government to focus on cultivating, attracting, and empowering a skilled workforce. The economic development opportunities in Oneida County, now and in the future, require a systemic and sustainable education network that prepares students for college, career, and community.

2014-2015 Accomplishments

With this in mind, the committee focused its activities in several key areas and accomplished the following:

- Increased internships more than 50% from 2013
- Established new dual credit programs: Emerging Technologies and Culinary Arts
- Created new articulation agreements in Automotive Technology and Certified Nurse Assistant
- Established QUAD C internship series offering SUNY Poly students unique internship and job opportunities with global companies after graduation
- Implemented the Pioneer Construction Management internship and the Business Education and Businesses and Industry Partnership programs at Utica College
- Established SUNY Poly Outreach Center which collects and analyzes resumes to identify gaps and provide resources for filling gaps to qualify applicants for desired job opportunities
- Formed Nanotechnology Advisory Board to help the community prepare for the specific skills and training that will be needed
- Created a comprehensive Workforce Matrix that outlines future jobs and related qualifications for prospective applicants
- Conducted needs assessment of workforce system partners to ensure training and program offering to meet business and industry demands

2016 Action Items

Moving forward, this committee continues to focus on education and training needs of our current and new workforce. Some of the goals for 2016 include:

- Convene workgroup to revamp workforce/employment system related to Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act
- Develop County-wide outreach plan to help ensure awareness of three regional career opportunities
- Increase internships by an additional 50%



HOUSING

To meet the demands of a changing demographic associated with those employed by the nanotechnology industry.

Committee Chair:

Ferris J. Betrus Jr., Executive Director, Clinton Chamber of Commerce

Committee:

Jack Endryck - Endryck Group Business Info

William Guglielmo - President, Rome Chamber of Commerce

John Kent - Commissioner of Planning, Oneida County

Bob Lambe - Managing Partner, PRES Services, LLC

Luke Lewis - Lewis Custom Homes, Inc.

Dave Mathis - Director, Oneida County Workforce Development

Donald McHarris - McHarris Appraisals, Inc.

Mark Mojave - Owner, Gerber's 1933 Tavern

Dominic Pavia - President, Pavia Real Estate Services

Brian Thomas - Acting Commissioner of Urban & Economic Development, City of Utica

Randy VanWagoner - President, MVCC

Plus Task Force partners across our community



Photo credit - SUNY Polytechnic Institute

2014-2015 Accomplishments

The housing needs of our new economy are drastically different from the current housing landscape in Oneida County. The Housing committee studied housing needs and made very strategic and focused recommendations. These efforts helped promote change and have resulted in the following accomplishments:

- Adoption of tax incentives (485a) to encourage development of diverse housing options that the new emerging workforce demands
- Creation of Uniform Tax Exemption and Agency Benefits Policy to encourage development of specific types of market rate rental housing by the Oneida County Industrial Development Agency (OCIDA)
- Increased public awareness of planned and in-progress development projects

2016 Action Items

The committee continues to focus on ways to encourage development of varied housing options in Oneida County. Moving forward, some of the goals for 2016 include:

- Standardization of the zoning process, including terminology and planning board application/form, to unify the process and shorten process timelines
- Creation of digital maps to show availability and zoning



Photo credit - SUNY Polytechnic Institute

Photo credit - SUNY Polytechnic Institute

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

To support the needs of a diverse community in relation to new job opportunities that are being created through Oneida County's economic development efforts.

Committee Chair:
Tony Colon, President, TECHNO-LOGIC SOLUTIONS, LLC.

- Madeline Barlow - Utica MHA
- Chip Bassett - Principal Planner, Oneida County
- Sam Berardino - Financial Advisor, Morgan Stanley
- Patrice Bogan - Deputy Director of Health, Oneida County
- Shelly Callahan - Executive Director, Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees
- Sandra DePerno - Oneida County Clerk, Oneida County
- Michael Donaghue - Executive & CEO, Boy Scouts of America, Revolutionary Trails
- Phyllis Ellis - Health Director, Oneida County
- Sonny Greco - Chief of Staff, City of Utica
- Dietra Harvey - Chair Utica, NAACP
- Robert Maciol - Sheriff, Oneida County

- Sonia Martinez - Chairwoman, Mohawk Valley Latino Association
- Dave Mathis - Director, Oneida County Workforce Development
- Pamela Matt - Executive Director, Young Scholars Liberty Partnerships Program
- Jackie Nelson - Rome Community
- Morris Pearson - Director, Civic Responsibilities, MVCC
- Jawwaad Rasheed - Support Magistrate, Oneida County Family Court
- Mickey Smith - Manager, Utica Adult Learning Center
- Ken Tompkins - Regional Director, Empire State Development
- Randy VanWagoner - President, MVCC
- John Zogby - Senior Analyst, Zogby Analytics
- Plus Task Force partners across our community

Like the diversity of our community, the members of the Access to Opportunity committee represent a variety of ethnic populations, cultures, and lifestyles. They have been focused on the community's growing number of workers who come to Oneida County with various ethnic backgrounds, education levels, and skill sets. The committee has developed a plan to connect these members of our community with resources to assist them in obtaining jobs in existing and new industries.

2014-2015 Accomplishments

The Access to Opportunity committee is organized into three task forces to tackle its many initiatives.

The goal of the **Business and Economic Development** task force is to promote and support entrepreneurship, business development, and job creation in the immigrant, refugee, and other underserved populations. Particular emphasis has been placed on connecting businesses with available resources and assistance programs and services. To date, this task force has:

- Compiled current foreign-born unemployment data by year of arrival, race/ethnicity and current education level and/or skills, and projected occupational titles for 2020 by education level requirement to identify needed training and education
- Compiled information and referral services information related to entrepreneurship, start-up business assistance, and employment opportunities
- Established a network for program and service referral to ensure awareness of and access to business and job resources, programs, and services

The goal of the **English Language Learner Pathways** task force is to increase availability and learner placement in appropriate English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. Through this task force to date, the following has been accomplished:

- Convened ESL providers to develop a comprehensive ESL provider database
- Convened translation service provider to develop a comprehensive database
- Formalized and expanded the Alignment of Pathways and Programs for Learners of English (APPLE), an alternative high school program for 17- and 18-year-old refugee and immigrant students that is designed to help these students learn the language, graduate and get a job or go to college
- Conducted a survey of nearly 600 Limited English Language speakers living within our community to help guide related program and support services planning



Photo credit - Utica Adult Learning Center

The goal of the **Cultural** task force is to showcase all cultural offerings and resources available within Oneida County through a single source. Oneida County is a melting pot of diverse cultures that throughout history has shaped who we are, and will continue to do so as we prepare for the opportunities ahead. This task force has:

- Collaborated with Leadership Mohawk Valley to create a website strategy and plan that highlights diversity and cultural offerings
- Developed a plan to support economic development efforts by leveraging our cultural assets



Photo credit - SUNY Polytechnic Institute

2016 Action Items

This committee will continue to develop strategies and implement actions that will support our underserved populations and have the most powerful impact on our county. Some of the goals for 2016 include:

- Create job opportunity mentors to increase awareness of regional job opportunities
- Create an ambassador program to bring information and services directly to underserved populations
- Develop pathways to seamlessly transition students from ESL to college or the workforce
- Implement a training program for service providers throughout Oneida County regarding cultural competency and how to use an interpreter
- Create a vision and plan for the development of a virtual and/or tangible Welcome Center to address the needs of our current and new workforce. This would help them benefit from the many resources and amenities in Oneida County to ensure a smooth and enjoyable transition into our community



Photo credit - Utica College ESL writing class

PHASE TWO

TRANSPORTATION

With a growing workforce, diverse community and dynamic quality of life, our transportation infrastructure has never been more critical.

On June 30, 2015, the Transportation Steering Committee convened to:

- Review the current state of Oneida County transportation systems
- Discuss the needs of major stakeholder groups, including employers, employees, community members in urban and rural areas of Oneida County, and recreational visitors
- Identify workgroups to develop strategies and action plans that would address unmet needs, identify opportunities for collaboration to enhance current infrastructure, and propose potential new investments.

Three areas of focus were identified – connectivity, alternatives to automobiles, and accessibility. Each committee has begun gathering data and developing strategies, taking into consideration a variety of potential transportation enhancements. The overall goal is to create a comprehensive action plan that accommodates our current and expanding workforce, and provides greater connectivity in and outside of the county for all.

Following is an overview of each committee and related areas of exploration.

Connectivity

The combination of Oneida County's physical geography, existing economic development and future growth, and quality of life all factor into our transportation infrastructure needs. Chaired by Paul Romano, Project Manager at O'Brien & Gere, the goal of Connectivity is to identify how Oneida County's current infrastructure might be enhanced to better meet the current and future transportation needs of residents and travelers. The committee will focus on:

- High-impact regional and local connectivity projects that address the short- and long-term infrastructure needs of workforce, freight, and leisure transportation
- Critical corridor projects that establish attractive community gateways, "right size" existing infrastructure, address inadequate or outdated design, and/or improve control or circulation while adding pedestrian-friendly features and green infrastructure elements where appropriate

- Short- and long-term strategies to address roads and intersections with high safety concerns
- Sustainable strategies related to short- and long-term maintenance, and the adoption of regional guidelines that embrace complete street concepts and flood resiliency design

Alternatives to Automobiles

For Oneida County to truly have an integrated multi-modal transportation system, the needs of all users must be addressed. From walking and biking, to using the canalway and rail system, all are important components of Oneida County's transportation network. The Alternatives to Automobiles committee is chaired by Bethan Maher, Executive Director of the Adirondack Scenic Railroad. This committee is focused on providing diverse and enhanced transportation modes to meet the needs of the expanding community and workforce, including:

- Alternative transportation strategies for urban and rural mobility to expand access to and increase usage of:
 - ▶ Bikes (bike swipe), designated bike lanes, educational efforts regarding bicyclists, safety improvements
 - ▶ Watercraft (kayak swipe, other recreational opportunities linking to transportation)
 - ▶ Railroad, trolley, and tram as commuter service options
 - ▶ Sidewalks and walking paths
 - ▶ Short-term car rentals
- Incentives and technology applications to increase awareness and encourage use of alternative modes of transportation
- Accommodate varying vehicle and traffic types throughout the county



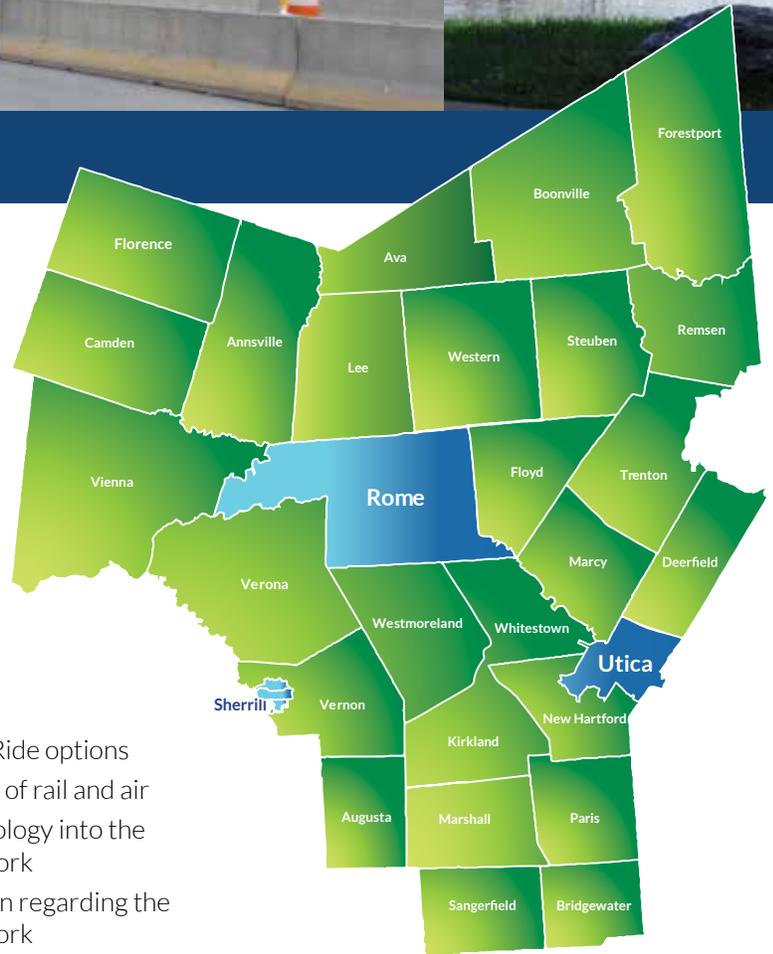
Photo credits - Oneida County Department of Planning



Accessibility

A diverse workforce also means diverse needs. Whether caregivers, people with disabilities, non-drivers, veterans, college graduates, high school students or limited English speakers, all are vital to our economic vitality and prosperity. Chaired by Debra Altdoerffer, Vice President of Communications and Development for Mohawk Valley Health System, this committee is focused on ensuring the availability of consistent and reliable means of transportation for all residents and employees within Oneida County. The committee will be developing strategies to address a variety of challenges and opportunities among these diverse populations, including:

- Ability to get to bus stops
- Increased isolation
- Ability to get to workplace and needed services
- Off-hours/peak options
- Language and distance barriers
- Access to and from rural areas
- New and/or additional bus routes
- Increased Park and Ride options
- Increased frequency of rail and air
- Integration of technology into the transportation network
- Access to information regarding the transportation network



PROCESS & PRIORITIES

Like Phase One, Phase Two begins with a series of data-gathering activities, including outreach to the many stakeholders in the community. The initial committee planning meetings will focus on prioritizing action items; creating sub-committees, as needed, to tackle the more complex action items; and developing timelines and related milestones. Throughout the process, emphasis will be placed on engaging people throughout the county to ensure the transportation needs of all those who live, work, and play in Oneida County are addressed.



The Vision 2020 Initiative has proven that the more we come together and refine a shared vision for our community, the more we will realize a self-fulfilling prophecy of prosperity.

SCHOOLS

Adirondack Central School
Camden Central School
Charter Schools
Clinton Central School
Faith Christian School
Greater Mohawk Valley STEM Hub
Holland Patent Central School
Jefferson-Lewis-Hamilton-Herkimer-Oneida BOCES
Madison-Oneida BOCES
New Hartford Central School
New York Mills Central School
New York State School for the Deaf
Notre Dame Elementary & Junior/Senior High
Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES
Oriskany Central School
Parochial and Private Schools
Remsen Central School
Rome City Schools
Sauquoit Valley Central School
Utica Academy of Science Charter School
Utica City Schools
Vernon-Verona-Sherrill Central School
Waterville Central School
Westmoreland Central School
Whitesboro Central School

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Hamilton College
Mohawk Valley Community College
PrattMWP
St. Elizabeth College of Nursing
SUNYPolytechnic/CNSE
Utica College
Utica School of Commerce

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Air Force Research Lab
Aviation/Military
Biosciences
Construction
Cyber Security
Data/Information Technology
Distribution Logistics
Education
Finance
Food Processing
Healthcare
Human Services
Insurance
Law Enforcement
Manufacturing
Nanotechnology
Not-for-profit
Real Estate
Retail
The Arts and Entertainment
Travel, Tourism and Hospitality

GOVERNMENT

Oneida County Government
Cities of Utica, Rome, and Sherrill
26 Towns and 19 Villages

WORKFORCE SYSTEM PARTNERS

ACCES VR (Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-
Vocational Rehabilitation)
ARC of Oneida County
BOCES Consortium of Continuing Education

- Department of Labor
- MVCC
- Oneida County Workforce Development
- Resource Center for Independent Living
- Women's Employment and Resource Center

Colleges and Universities, Career Services and Corporate Training
Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees
SUNYPolytechnic Small Business Development Center
Trade Apprenticeships
Workforce Development Institute
Workforce Investment Board
Working Solutions

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

County IDAs (Industrial Development Agencies)
County IDCs (Industrial Development Corporations)
County LDCs (Local Development Corporations)
Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC)
Griffiss Institute
Mohawk Valley Economic Development
Mohawk Valley EDGE (Economic Development Growth
Enterprises Corp.)
Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council
(MVREDC)

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Business Associations
Charitable Organizations
Faith-Based Organizations
Philanthropic Organizations
Senior Citizen Organizations
Service Organizations

RESOURCES



The following is a sample of the studies, databases, and other resources that Vision 2020 Committee members researched and considered in development of their Phase One Vision 2020: Workforce Ready report.

Regional Planning Reference Materials

(available at: <http://www.oneida-boces.org/collectiveimpacts>)

Alignment Nashville Overview - www.alignmentnashville.org
Center State Corporation for Economic Opportunity
Draft Goals
Educational Readiness for Crucial Transitions
Greater Mohawk Valley STEM Hub
Marcy Nanocenter at SUNYIT/Business Development Update - www.marcynanocenter.com
Maternal Care & Reducing Obesity Across the Lifespan
Mohawk Valley EDGE - www.mvedge.org
Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development - <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/mohawk-valley>
New NY Education Reform Commission Preliminary Recommendations
OHM BOCES Community of Resources and Expertise (CORE) - www.oneida-boces.org/page/292
Oneida Counties, Inc. - www.hocindicators.org
Putting Students First, Education Action Plan - www.NYPuttingStudentsFirst.com
SEMI HTU
State of the Council
STRIVE – Theory of Action Overview
STRIVE – Theory of Action Frequently Asked Question -www.strivenetwork.org
The Community Foundation of Herkimer & The Power of COLLABORATION, Annual Report 2012
The Pulse, A Community Indicators Project for Herkimer and Oneida Counties
Transitional Career and Life Skill Development for Young Adults
United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica Area - www.unitedwaygu.org

Greater Utica & Rome Board of Realtors

Herkimer and Oneida Counties Census

Literacy Coalition

Literacy Pipeline

Local area real estate companies

Oneida County Youth Services Council

Profile of the NT Labor Force (National NT Infrastructure Network)

Saratoga County IDA

The Saratogian special report on Nanotechnology - June 23, 2013

U.S. and Oneida County census data



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