



# TODAY: Cortland County

TODAY: Cortland County is the Business Development Corporation's newsletter promoting industry and business growth in Cortland County.

November/December 2015  
Volume 1 Issue 6

Garry L. VanGorder  
Executive Director/CEO

Michael McMahon  
Chairman



**T**his marks the sixth and final issue of 2015, our first full year publishing TODAY: Cortland County.

Our intent when launching the newsletter was to accentuate the positive, whenever possible, and happily, there has been no small supply of good stories to tell. Through profiles of new businesses, Forkey Construction, Long Island Bagel, The Cortland Beer Company and the Local Food Market to pieces about Pyrotek, Lime Hollow Nature Center, a rejuvenated Cortland Line Company, Greek Peak, Rex's Hot Pasta, Cortland Repertory Theatre, the growth of the tourism industry and much more, our readers know that the local economy is far from dormant.

There is much work ahead of us in 2016, of course—CFA program projects and other business recruitment and retention activities leading the list—but there will be ample time for that. For now, as falling leaves have given way to blowing snow, we encourage everyone to enjoy the holiday season and to perhaps take stock of how fortunate we all are to live in an area that, for all of its challenges, has an awful lot going for it.

*The BDC is Cortland County's principal economic development organization working for economic and community growth. Together, its programs, projects, and services aim to support existing businesses while promoting other job-creating opportunities across the county.*



Garry L. VanGorder  
Executive Director/CEO

If only labor statistics were skin deep.

On its surface, October's report that placed Cortland County's unemployment rate at 4.7 percent—the lowest it's been for any month since 2007 and a rate that many economists consider to be “full employment”—looks pretty good. Even better, the county's unemployed population is just 1,100, the lowest that number has been since 2006.

Other numbers beneath the surface take some luster from the report, however: the 23,700-person labor pool for September (the combined number of employed and unemployed people actively looking for work in Cortland County) is also at a nine-year low. And as it has across the region and nationwide, the decline of the labor participation rate, with baby boomer retirements and younger people eligible to work but electing to stay in school primary drivers of the movement, is forcing the unemployment rate to somewhat misleading lows.

But 4.7 percent is 4.7 percent, and we haven't been there in a while. We're also holding our own in comparison to other counties, tied with five of them for a 31st lowest ranking of 62 across the state.

Still, we have some work to do in driving that rate lower and helping to meet the employment needs of our business community.

There are many factors at play, of course, not the least of which may be a growing disconnect between the skill sets employers require of their workers and the skill sets possessed by job seekers or the long-term unemployed. Other factors include the unvarnished truth that many of our citizens are content with their unemployed lot in life, and still others may be willing to work but unable to pass a drug test or meet even the most basic day-to-day requirements of an employee—show up, show up on time, and keep showing up.

Our workforce challenges must be addressed if Cortland County is to meet its economic potential, and the issue is sure to be a focus locally and regionally in the year ahead.

As 2015 draws to a close, I would like to thank our many partners in community and economic development. For all of our challenges, we have an asset that sets us apart from so many other communities: the countless citizens that step up each and every day, in their own way, to make us better.

# 6

Consecutive Cortaca Jug  
wins for SUNY Cortland

# 4

New members of the  
Cortland Common Council

# 1,000

Marshalls stores  
in the U.S. and Puerto Rico



37 Church St., Cortland, NY 13045  
P: 607/756-5005  
www.cortlandbusiness.com  
info@cortlandbusiness.com

## Marshalls Opens New Store in Cortland

Marshalls, one of the nation's leading off-price retailers, has opened a new store in Cortlandville at the former Tractor Supply store in the Cortlandville Crossing plaza. Marshalls says shoppers will find a surprising selection of high-quality, on-trend, brand name and designer merchandise in ladies, men, juniors, kids, shoes, accessories, home, pet, beauty and more.

The new Cortland store will be stocked weekly with a new, fresh assortment of the brand name and designer merchandise that our shoppers love," said Marshalls president Richard Sherr. "Our buyers are fashion experts with a keen sense of style and are passionate about finding the most coveted merchandise for our shoppers for so much less!"

Hundreds of people attended an October 29

Grand Opening of the store that featured giveaways, gift card prizes and more.

The new store plans to bring approximately 60 full- and part-time jobs to the area, and made its first impression as a new county business leader with its \$5,000 donation to Access to Independence. Marshalls, with more than 1,000 stores in 48 states and Puerto Rico, also has national and local partnerships with charitable organizations around the country including JDRC, the Alzheimer's Association and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

The addition of the Marshalls store bring more "Big Box" retail to south Cortland on the fast-growing Route 13 corridor. More commercial development is expected in the future.

## Cuomo Enacts Wage Hike

Governor Andrew Cuomo in November took executive action to implement a \$15 minimum wage for all state workers.

Similar to the recently approved wage increase for fast-food workers, the minimum wage for state workers would be raised incrementally to workers in New York City by the end of 2018 and to the rest of the state's workers by 2021.

Business leaders and Republicans in the state legislature oppose the increase, saying it will hurt jobs and drive price increases.

A full schedule for the increase can be found at the governor's web site, [www.governor.ny.gov](http://www.governor.ny.gov).

## NBT Bank Opening

A November 16 ribbon cutting marked the Grand Opening of a completely remodeled NBT Bank branch office on Main Street, Cortland.

The renovation offers a new open floor concept that features digital kiosks, where customers can perform a variety of self-service transactions as well as free-standing teller pods where customers may interact with bank staff on a more personal level than a traditional teller line allows.

The new design also allows bank employees to circulate among customers to answer questions and assist them as needed.

McNeil Development Company of Cortland provided construction services for the project.

"We're proud of the work that's been done here and also of the fact that we made a major investment in downtown Cortland," said NBT vice president John Mason.



NBT's remodeled branch in downtown Cortland was officially opened with a November 16 ribbon cutting.



## success story

# Cortland Regional Medical Center

**Providing the region with the highest quality medical care for a wide range of health needs.**



**C**ortland Regional Medical Center (CRMC) is the best in New York State, according to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which recently released its rankings of U.S. hospitals. The Centers assessed hospitals in four areas: mortality and patient safety, patient satisfaction, clinical care processes and overall efficiency.

“We attribute much of this success to our continued commitment to the development of a culture of patient safety at the medical center,” says President and CEO Mark Webster. “These scores defeat the myth that bigger is always better. Cortland should be proud of its medical center.”

Cortland Regional Medical Center dates back to 1889, when the local chapter of the Loyal Circle of King’s Daughters, a service organization, saw the need for a hospital in the region and began fundraising efforts to make that vision a reality. Over its nearly 125 year history, the hospital has grown and expanded to become a medical campus with a 162-bed acute care hospital and an attached 80-bed residential care facility. Growth will continue in 2016 with groundbreaking for a new medical office building and a cancer treatment center.

“Cortland Regional is more than just your local hospital,” says Mary Wright, RN, vice president for nursing services. “We are a regional medical campus offering the highest quality of care that covers a wide range of health demands.”

CRMC operates 24/7, 365 days a year. With a 2015 operating budget of more than \$92 million, CRMC has served tens of thousands of residents this year, keeping the community healthy, strong and vibrant. While this record of high quality health care service is and will always be its most valuable contribution to the community, the medical center’s impact includes many facets that extend beyond direct patient care.

“Cortland Regional Medical Center is a critical component to the economic viability of the Cortland community,” says Johanna Ames, vice chair of CRMC’s board of trustees. “From the people it employs to the direct and indirect effects of spending, its value as an economic engine for the local community is undeniable. In addition, substantial indirect spending takes place further ‘downstream’ in the economy, providing a sizeable contribution to federal, state and local tax revenue.”

CRMC’s growing list of health services includes breast cancer care; cardiology; emergency and prompt care; home health services; hospitalist care; intensive care and telemetry; laboratory services; long term home health care; maternity care; medical imaging; medical oncology and hematology services; mental health services; medical/surgical units; nursing and rehabilitation; nutrition therapy; pharmacy; physical rehabilitation services; sports medicine; post-mastectomy services; respiratory care; social work services; surgical services; wound care; and more.

*“Cortland Regional Medical Center is a critical component to the economic viability of the Cortland community.”*

*—Johanna Ames,  
CRMC Board of Trustees*

CRMC has also made considerable inroads in enhancing outpatient services, which are provided at off-site locations including Wound Care and Medical Imaging on Route 281; the Outpatient Rehabilitation Center on Fisher Ave., Home Health Services on Homer Ave., and two laboratory draw stations on Route 281 and Euclid Ave. And with three locations for lab work (one on campus and two in the community), appointments are

not required and lab results are usually available the same day.

Through CRMC's Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, rehabilitative physicians and nurses work with patients at the main medical facility. For patients who are able to live independently at home but still need medical attention and/or equipment, CRMC offers long term home health care which provides disabled, chronically ill, and elderly persons with the care necessary to safely remain at home; and home health services which include home delivery and pick-up of medical equipment and supplies.

In 2014, CRMC launched a physician recruitment initiative that in a period of 18 months brought in more than 20 new physicians representing 14 specialties. "Our initial goal was to fill positions that served the community's most urgent needs," says Jennifer Turck, director of physician recruitment and special projects. "Entering 2016, we will continue our recruitment efforts as we also introduce the community to the new physicians who have recently joined our team."

There are now more than 172 physicians serving patients at CRMC, the majority of whom are board certified. "Our exceptional medical staff provides our community with access to a diversity of medical expertise that rivals many larger urban hospitals," says Roger Scott, DO, chief medical officer and president of regional medical practice. "These professionals recognize the challenges, opportunities and quality of life that this region has to offer."

Webster says the hospital will continue to improve. "As we care for our friends and neighbors with the same high level of skill and compassion that has served this community for nearly 125 years, we look to grow to meet the greater Cortland community's needs and excel in being a safe, high quality, low cost provider. New and improved facilities and services in these areas will continue to enhance our strong record of putting safety, quality and patient satisfaction first."

### **CRMC Adds New Endoscopy Center**

Early detection of colon cancer is correlated with high survival rates. But when patients must wait up to six months for colonoscopies and gastroscopies because of the availability of only one procedure room, some lose interest in having these vital diagnostic procedures performed. CRMC has addressed this urgent medical need by creating a new endoscopy center with three procedure rooms. With the expansion, CRMC expects to perform an additional 1,000 endoscopic procedures annually to diagnose and treat diseases including colon cancer. This more than doubles the current number of procedures. Recruitment of additional gastroenterologists to perform these procedures is also under way.

### **Wound Care Close to Home**

Chronic wounds need a specialized approach for healing. Through a partnership with Healogics, the world's largest wound care management company, CRMC has established the Cortland Regional Wound Care Center, a new, comprehensive center offering specialized wound care. The Center is on track to heal more than 200 patients annually.

The wound care center team includes a dedicated physician with advanced training in wound management and hyperbaric oxygen therapy; nursing staff trained in the care of chronic wounds; technicians who perform non-invasive studies and various therapies; and experienced staff to assist with appointments, medical records and health insurance processing.

### **Expert Oncology and Hematology Services**

Medical Oncology and Hematology Services at CRMC offers a convenient, compassionate cancer treatment option close to home. CRMC collaborates with in-house and off-site medical experts in the fields of radiology, medical oncology, surgery, and radiation oncology to meet patients' needs. A specially trained nurse navigator coordinates patients' care from diagnosis and treatment to follow-up and support. A dedicated treatment and infusion room as well as a waiting area are designed for patient and family comfort. With the treatment room onsite at the medical center, patients can remain in one location for all related healthcare services, such as lab work and imaging.

### **Regional Medical Practice Expansion**

Regional Medical Practice (RMP), an affiliate of Cortland Regional Medical Center, prides itself on its growing reputation for high caliber patient care. RMP physicians offer the greater Cortland community convenient access to cardiology, general surgery, breast surgery, orthopedics, physical medicine and rehabilitation, hematology, oncology, ophthalmology, infectious disease, hospital medicine, internal medicine and family practice. In summer 2015, RMP added specialists in psychiatry, sports medicine, hand surgery, endocrinology, gastroenterology, nephrology and pulmonology. They chose to bring their expertise and experience to Cortland, New York because they recognized the healthcare needs of our community and the quality of life that this region has to offer.



*Regional Medical Practice Orthopedic Hand Specialty Team: Fellowship-trained hand surgeon, Michael Pryce, MD (right); Erin Lawrence, PA (left); and certified hand therapist, Stephanie Partis (center) (Photo by DigiPro)*

## Revolving Loan Fund Program

The goal of the BDC is to retain and create quality employment opportunities in Cortland County. One of the ways we accomplish this is to make low-cost loans available to new and existing local businesses through our Revolving Loan Fund Program.

Eligible borrowers include those engaged in business for profit and conducting, or proposing to conduct, business in Cortland County. Retail businesses that can demonstrate a substantial amount of sales originating from outside of Cortland County will also be considered.

Eligible applicants include sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations and limited liability companies. Examples of eligible activities include business acquisitions; manufacturing; acquisition, construction, renovation, leasing or development of real property; purchase or lease of equipment; pollution control and abatement; transportation services; agricultural production; convention centers or recreational facilities; startup operating costs and/or working capital; feasibility studies; and reasonable professional fees related to eligible projects.

A minimum of 10% owner equity is required for all loans. The maximum loan allowable is \$100,000; the minimum is \$10,000. The interest rate for all loans is 6 percent fixed.

If needed, the BDC will coordinate with other participating lenders to obtain the best collateral position possible. If the borrower is a business entity, the BDC will require the personal guarantee of all owners of the entity and will require a mortgage to secure all loans related to the improvement of real property.

For further information on the Revolving Loan Fund Program, contact IDA CFO Karen Niday at 607/756-5005 or karen@cortlandbusiness.com.

## TC3 Secures Training Grant

A \$71,500 workforce training grant is fueling Tompkins Cortland Community College's work to upgrade skills and improve job performance at five local organizations.

The grant was secured from the SUNY Community College Workforce Development Training Program with training being provided by TC3 Biz, the professional development and business training arm of the college. The college has won more than \$800,000 in grants from this program over the past 10 years, underwriting training for more than 7,200 people in Tompkins and Cortland counties. "A crucial part of the service we provide to our community is assistance in securing training grants," said Martha Hubbard, director of TC3's strategic corporate and community partnerships. "We work with organizations to determine needs, and then customize training programs to address those needs."

The grant award recipients are Byrne Hollow Farm, Cortland, yogurt and fermented dairy products training; Envisage, Ithaca, team development training; BorgWarner, Ithaca, supervisory development; Forkey Construction and Fabrication, Cortland, machinist training; and Stork H&E Turboblading, Ithaca, machinist training. More information about TC3 Biz and its programs are available by calling 607/844-6586 or at mmh@tc3.edu.

**B**usinesses have access to numerous resources at the local, state, regional and federal level to help them succeed. In addition to Cortland County's Business Assistance Programs, here are other resources to help your business:

### **Cortland County Government**

60 Central Avenue  
Cortland, NY 13045  
[www.cortland-co.org](http://www.cortland-co.org)

### **County Planning Department**

37 Church Street  
Cortland, NY 13045  
<http://www.cortland-co.org/Planning/index.html>

### **Cortland County Health Department**

60 Central Avenue  
Cortland, NY 13045  
<http://cchd.cortland-co.org/>

### **City of Cortland**

25 Court Street  
Cortland, NY 13045  
[www.cortland.org](http://www.cortland.org)

### **Town of Cortlandville**

3577 Terrace Road  
Cortland, NY 13045  
[www.cortlandville.org](http://www.cortlandville.org)

### **Town of Homer**

31 N. Main Street  
Homer, NY 13077  
[www.townofhomer.org](http://www.townofhomer.org)

### **Village of Homer**

Homer, NY 13077  
[www.homerny.org](http://www.homerny.org)

*For more resources visit us online at  
[cortlandbusiness.com/resources/](http://cortlandbusiness.com/resources/)*



## Greek Peak Mountain Resort and Toggenburg Mountain Winter Sports Center join forces to enhance the winter sporting experience in Central New York

You might expect entrepreneurs John Meier and Marc Stemerman to take a breather and enjoy some of the success of Greek Peak Mountain Resort, which they purchased in 2013 and in which they have invested millions of dollars in improvements.

Instead, 2015 saw the business partners garner an even larger piece of the winter recreation market with the business combination of Greek Peak with Toggenburg Mountain Winter Sports Center, located in the Onondaga County town of Fabius, near Syracuse. Former Toggenburg owner Jim Hickey, whose father opened the ski resort in the 1950s, will stay with the company to manage and consult on food and beverage operations at both resorts. His son, Darrin Hickey, will be Toggenburg's general manager.

Meier and Stemerman see the deal as an opportunity to increase their business presence in Central New York. "The Greek Peak-Toggenburg combination is the best value for the skier and boarder in CNY, bar none," Meier says. "Toggenburg opens up the Syracuse market to spend dollars at Greek Peak and in Cortland County."

Greek Peak has 32 trails, six aerial lifts, two surface lifts, a beginners' slope, and three terrain parks. It also operates a full service Nordic center with groomed cross country and snowshoe trails. Toggenburg has 21 trails, including two terrain parks, serviced by five lifts. Toggenburg is about 22 miles south of Syracuse and 30 miles north of Greek Peak. Combining the resorts allows season pass holders a "two-for-one" value with reciprocal ski privileges at each mountain.

### Skiing ... and So Much More

Greek Peak has evolved into much more than a center for winter sports recreation. The resort also features Hope Lake Lodge with Cascades Indoor Waterpark, and the Adventure Center with zip lines, ropes course and mountain coaster. It has expanded its banquet, wedding and meeting facilities and has added lift-served downhill mountain biking. "Weddings, family reunions, business conferences, management retreats and team building are a big growth story at Greek Peak," Stemerman says.

This fall, Greek Peak completed construction on a 6,000-sq.-ft. deck adjacent to the resort's Trax Pub & Grill. The two-tiered deck provides striking mountain views, features a fireplace and fire pit,



*A new 6,000-sq.-ft. deck outside the Trax restaurant is the latest amenity introduced at Greek Peak Mountain Resort.*

and has a seating capacity of more than 250. The deck can be used throughout the year to accommodate overflow seating from Trax.

Greek Peak was able to build the deck in part through a 2015 "Market NY: Ski Cortland" grant from the Regional Economic Development Council and I Love New York. Greek Peak shared the grant with the Cortland County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Cortland Downtown Partnership and the City of Cortland.

The objective of Ski Cortland is to advance the Central New York snow sport industry by linking Greek Peak with Historic Downtown Cortland and encouraging visitors to plan longer stays in the area. The grant funded the capital project and is also a marketing and advertising grant.

"We are moving forward with an ad campaign that will launch at the end of November and targets the Philadelphia and northern Pennsylvania areas," says Jessica Sloma, vice president of sales and marketing at Greek Peak. "The goal is to bring more customers to ski Greek Peak, promoting longer stays to encourage visitors to explore everything Cortland County has to offer."

"The IDA had the vision and foresight to recognize the tremendous ROI potential for the Cortland taxpayer," says Meier, "and, Cortland Downtown Partnership, the City of Cortland, and the Cortland Convention and Visitors Bureau recognize the strong value and great potential of snow sports on the economic wellbeing of Cortland County."





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Fax: (607) 756-7901  
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## The Center for the Arts of Homer is a staunch supporter of community enrichment through quality entertainment and arts education

The Center for the Arts of Homer is a vibrant non-profit community arts center and a vital presence in Homer's historic Main Street Business District. Founded in 2004 by a group of community volunteers, the Center is housed in a 19th century Romanesque church located at 72 South Main Street.

Main stage programs presented in the Center's 400-seat theater attract audiences from near and far for performances by artists of global, national, regional and local notoriety. Past performers include Judy Collins, Richie Havens, Arlo Guthrie, Tom Paxton and SpyroGyra. Local artists have also appeared, such as Charlie Bertini's Apple Jazz, CNY Jazz Orchestra, CNY's Finest and other emerging artists.

The Center also features film screenings for all ages, a community theater program, and showcases artwork by local and regional visual artists. Its facilities are available to community organizations and individuals for educational purposes, events and private functions.

This summer, The Center for the Arts of Homer named a new executive director, Ty Marshal, who has extensive experience working with arts and cultural organizations. Marshal's career began as a theater instructor at the Classics and Four Arts Academy in Scottsdale, Arizona. He served as an assistant manager at Dia: Beacon, a leading contemporary art museum in Beacon, N.Y., where he also operated Floor One, an independent local art gallery, and was also the curator for Windows on Main Street, an annual visual art event that pairs local businesses with local artists.

Locally, Marshal has worked for various arts organizations including the Syracuse Children's Theatre, Community Folk Art Center, Syracuse City Ballet and Rarely Done Productions.



Photo by Edward Colelli

Ty Marshal

"The Center for the Arts of Homer is an important cultural asset for the Central New York community," Marshal says. "One of my goals is to get more people coming through its doors with new initiatives such as after-school arts-based programs for young people and daytime programs with lectures, readings and performances for seniors."

*"This is a great region with so much to see and do."*  
—Ty Marshal

Marshal says he is deeply appreciative of the level of engagement the Center receives from the community. "In other areas where I've been, support like this is not nearly as strong," he says. In return, Marshal says he is a big believer in the 'local first' approach—keeping close to home as much of the Center's spending as possible.

"This is a great region with so much to see and do," he says. "When visitors come to The Center for the Arts of Homer from outside the area, we encourage them to patronize local businesses and explore everything else Cortland County has to offer."