



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Center for Businesses in Transition Announces 2020 Partners and Programs
Community liaisons, workshop topics and initiatives set for Center's second year

Saranac Lake, N.Y. — As they look forward to spending more time with their grandkids, reviving old hobbies or traveling to warmer climates, many business owners know they need to make a business succession plan before they retire. They often feel daunted by valuing their business and finding a qualified new owner. To help retiring business owners overcome these challenges, the [North Country Center for Businesses in Transition](#) (CBIT), now in its second year, will again offer targeted programs and resources to transitioning businesses in 2020.

Following its annual gathering of lead partners and representatives at the Porcupine Inn in Saranac Lake on January 17, 2020, CBIT announced an updated slate of community liaisons, topics for its 2020 workshop series and other ways the group will expand its programming to meet the needs of North Country business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs.

“The Center for Businesses in Transition is making great strides in expanding economic opportunity across our region through its developed network of professional resources and services, connecting businesses and entrepreneurs,” said Adirondack Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) Executive Director Victoria Duley, whose organization joins the Center this year as a lead partner. “The AEDC is happy to be part of this excellent team!”

The Center is a unique collaboration of regional organizations and leaders whose shared goal is to support existing business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs in developing successful business transition strategies. In 2019, 88 North Country business owners reached out to CBIT for assistance, tapping into a network of useful tools, learning opportunities and knowledgeable professionals.

According to Danielle Delaini, business transition program coordinator at the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA), over 98 organizations and community leaders throughout the 14-county North Country region actively support the partnership. In 2020, ten designated community liaisons will play a crucial role to help navigate successful transitions through options including open market sales, intergenerational family transitions and conversions to worker ownership models.

The Center's new and returning community liaisons include the following regional representatives:

- **Kelsey O'Shea**, Cornell Cooperative Extension North Country Regional Ag Team
- **Russ Kinyon**, Franklin County Industrial Development Agency
- **Christy Wilt and Rachelle Martz**, Hamilton County Economic Development
- **Brittany Davis**, Lewis County Economic Development
- **Mike Besaw**, St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
- **Patrick Murphy**, Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce
- **Matthew Courtright and Erin Mullen**, Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce
- **Kylie Peck**, Greater Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce

Victoria Duley and **Stephanie Donaldson** of the AEDC join the project as a lead partners.

Angela Smith of the SUNY Canton Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Clinton Community College and **Carol Calabrese** of the Essex County Industrial Development Agency are returning as lead partners for the second year of the initiative.

"Returning to the CBIT partnership for 2020 is important to the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce," said Michael Besaw, St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce Assistant Director. "Last year, we broke ground by sharing information and resources with our business community. In 2020 we look forward to meeting with more businesses and connecting them with experts who can aid in their transitions."

The Center will host its second annual workshop series to address topics relevant for transitioning businesses. These six morning workshops, hosted by partner organizations throughout the region, are scheduled for April, May and September of 2020. Each of the following workshops will take place from 8:00-10:30 a.m.:

- **April 23, 2020:** "Business Transitions Overview: Where Do You Start?," hosted by Lewis County Economic Development/IDA
- **April 28, 2020:** "Mentoring a New Owner: The First Year," hosted by St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
- **May 6, 2020:** "From Hello to Key Transfer: Communicating During the Transition Process," hosted by Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce
- **May 7, 2020:** "Marketing Your Available Business," hosted by the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and the County of Franklin Economic Development/IDA
- **September 23, 2020:** "Determining Value: Perspectives from Buyers and Sellers," hosted by Hamilton County IDA
- **September 24, 2020:** "Your Best Possible Successor is Already Working for You," hosted by Greater Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce

After receiving positive feedback about different participation opportunities offered in 2019, community liaisons will again offer remote viewing sessions for those who are unable to attend workshops in

person. Workshops will also be recorded so that interested business owners can view them at their convenience and as needed in the future.

The Center will sponsor additional 2020 programming developed by regional partners, including a forum on strategic planning for small businesses, farm transitions and other topics related to business transitions and succession planning.

Following the January 17 strategic planning retreat, CBIT presented relevant data to invited local leaders and government officials interested in learning more about the partnership and its objectives.

“In 2019, 56 percent of retiring business owners and 71 percent of aspiring entrepreneurs who reached out to CBIT are just starting their journeys,” said Delaini. She said that many of these people are interested in learning more about the Center, accessing free and low-cost local resources and attending informational events.

“There is much work to be done. Transitioning a business takes an average of three to five years to complete, and there are many variables to work through.”

All materials developed by the partnership are available for other organizations to use to assist businesses. Economic development staff who would like access to these tools are invited to contact the Center. The partnership is also seeking co-working spaces and event partners to assist with workshops and other events.

North Country business owners looking to transition their operations to new owners or a new ownership model, as well as aspiring entrepreneurs looking to take over an existing business, are invited to contact the Center at transitions@adirondack.org or (518) 891-6200 for more information or to be connected with a community liaison. Information about the Center and its programs can be found at www.adirondack.org/businesses-in-transition.

Attached: one (1) PDF document and one (1) photo

Photo courtesy of ANCA: On January 17, 2020, Center for Businesses in Transition community liaisons and other community leaders gathered at the Porcupine Inn in Saranac Lake to brainstorm ways they can work together in the coming year.

Front row, left to right: **Kelsey O’Shea**, Cornell Cooperative Extension North Country Regional Ag Team, **Mike Besaw**, St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, **Patrick Murphy**, Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, **Russ Kinyon**, Franklin County Industrial Development Agency, **Kylie Peck**, Greater Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce, **Erin Mullen**, Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce, **Lauren Richard**, Adirondack North Country Association, **Rachelle Martz**, Hamilton County Economic Development, **Stephanie Donaldson**, Adirondack Economic Development Corporation

Back row, left to right: **Danielle Delaini**, Adirondack North Country Association, **Angela Smith** of the

SUNY Canton Small Business Development Center at Clinton Community College, **Brittany Davis**, Lewis County Economic Development, **Christy Wilt**, Hamilton County Economic Development, **Victoria Duley**, Adirondack Economic Development Corporation, **Matthew Courtright**, Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce, **Dan Kelleher**, Adirondack Park Agency

The Adirondack North Country Center for Businesses in Transitions partnership includes the following organizations:

[ANCA](#) is an independent nonprofit organization growing the New Economy in northern New York. Using an integrated approach to sustainable economic development and prosperity where economic health, community vitality and ecological stewardship are equally important outcomes, ANCA focuses on creating opportunity for people with diverse backgrounds, experience and education levels.

The [Adirondack Economic Development Corporation Inc. \(AEDC\)](#) is a not-for-profit economic development corporation. AEDC was formed in 1976 as a cooperative effort of community leaders from towns in the northern Adirondacks to reduce traditionally higher than average levels of unemployment and to expand employment opportunities for the residents of the region. The AEDC's mission is to foster the growth of North Country communities through support for existing and new small businesses.

[Cornell Cooperative Extension](#) links the research and extension efforts at Cornell University, the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cornell AgriTech, providing the knowledge to maximize New York State's agricultural and natural resources. CCE's regional agriculture teams provide research-based information, programs and technical assistance to dairy, field crops, vegetable, tree fruit and grape producers all around the state. The North Country Regional Ag Program provides science-based information and services to producers and agri-business professionals, equipping all with the knowledge to profitably produce and market safe and healthful dairy products and crops, contributing to the viability of New York State agriculture. The North Country Regional Ag Team is supported, in part, by six county Cornell Cooperative Extensions including Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Clinton, Essex and Franklin Counties.

The [Essex County Industrial Development Agency's \(ECIDA\)](#) mission is to create a viable business environment that will attract compatible and diverse sustainable economic development opportunities focusing on major assets, retention/expansion and attraction projects for public benefit to encourage business development and advance job opportunities, health, general prosperity and economic conditions to improve the standard of living and quality of life. They can provide assistance to eligible projects; financing, economic incentives, assistance with local regulatory agencies and building and site location assistance.

The [Franklin County Local Development Corporation](#), in partnership with the [County of Franklin Industrial Development Agency](#), exists to improve the quality of life in the Franklin County region by supporting economic growth, employment and community development. The FCLDC/IDA offers a broad range of services to help local businesses expand and succeed. From loans and tax incentives, to technical assistance, to buildings and business parks, we're here to help grow local business.

[Hamilton County Department of Economic Development and Tourism](#) and the [Hamilton County Industrial Development Agency \(HCIDA\)](#): HCIDA assists with the general prosperity and economic welfare of the citizens of Hamilton County. The primary objective of the agency is to encourage and foster entrepreneurial activity, business expansion and job creation. The Economic Development and Tourism Department advocates, promotes and helps to improve the quality of life in our communities both for our residents and our visitors. We help to foster the

development of healthy businesses and institutions through marketing, networking, promotion, business assistance and outreach.

[Lewis County Economic Development and IDA](#), as a one-stop-shop, work together as the central office to provide business assistance and new business development in Lewis County, NY. The agency works locally and regionally to enhance business opportunities, help create jobs and maintain economic stability within Lewis County. Through the Naturally Lewis brand, we promote Lewis County as the 'natural choice' to live, work and do business.

The [St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, Inc.](#) plays a pivotal role in strengthening and maintaining the economic health of St. Lawrence County. The mission of the St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce is to cultivate, develop and support Chamber members and other businesses by creating a vibrant business climate that encourages growth and enhances the unique quality of life in St. Lawrence County.

The [Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce](#) (SLACC) acts as a catalyst for business and community development in the Greater Saranac Lake Area. SLACC provides services for its membership and generating economic development with promotional and marketing strategies.

The [Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce](#) (TACC) is a non-profit organization that serves, markets and promotes the Ticonderoga Area including Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Hague, Moriah and Putnam, NY. TACC serves as the areas Business and Visitor Center. TACC's Mission is to initiate and provide programs, services and leadership which will enhance a cooperative business community and create a vibrant economy, making the Ticonderoga Area an exceptional place to live, work and visit. TACC's Vision is to be the leading advocate for business, serving as a driving force in the economic vitality of the greater Ticonderoga Area, uniting communities and maximizing resources. TACC's key areas of focus include: membership, business, tourism, communication, leadership and organization.

The [SUNY Canton Small Business Development Center](#) (SBDC) at Clinton Community College is part of a statewide network of business assistance centers supported by the State University of New York and the Small Business Administration. The New York State SBDC (NY SBDC) is accredited by America's Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC). The SBDC is charged with assisting North Country entrepreneurs, small business, and industry through advising, training, and research. Additionally, the SBDC provides needed services to manufacturers, women, veterans, minority, and physically challenged individuals, or on businesses impacting distressed and targeted areas. Counseling services are free and confidential.

The [Greater Watertown- North Country Chamber of Commerce](#) (GWNC) is a membership organization with over 100 years of experience working to strengthen business and enhance the community in the Greater Watertown – North Country region. Since its establishment in 1903, the chamber has grown to become the largest business association in the North Country. They represent businesses of varying sizes and industries, helping them to drive growth and make meaningful connections.

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