



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Small Communities. Big Opportunities.**

*Virtual conference highlights business ownership in northern New York State*

**SARANAC LAKE, N.Y.** — A regional coalition aims to showcase small business opportunities to the next generation of entrepreneurs in a four-day virtual conference running from February 24-27, 2021.

The [North Country Center for Businesses in Transition](#) (CBIT) will host a virtual event that will attract and empower aspiring entrepreneurs to pursue business ownership in northern New York. The conference — *Small Communities. Big Opportunities: Own a North Country Business* — will include several one-hour sessions over the course of four days to accommodate participants' work schedules. Registration is free of charge and now open at [www.northcountryopportunities.com](http://www.northcountryopportunities.com).

“There are thousands of business owners throughout the region who are ready now or will be ready to sell in the next few years,” said Danielle Delaini, business transition program coordinator for the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA). “There’s also growing interest among North Country residents and entrepreneurs from outside the region to operate businesses here. This conference is designed to address these needs and ultimately invigorate local economies with new energy.”

The conference will take place virtually over four days, with most sessions lasting one hour. Participants may choose to attend the entire conference or only the sessions that interest them. Attendees will learn from local business owners and regional business support professionals about taking over an existing business, the logistics of accessing capital and insights into relocating to the North Country. In addition, conference sessions will highlight available business ownership opportunities and connect aspiring entrepreneurs with retiring business owners.

“The goal is to provide a space for entrepreneurs to explore opportunities in the region, while providing tools and resources to help them realize their dreams,” said Angela Smith, assistant director of SUNY Canton Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and a lead partner with CBIT. “This is an opportunity for all aspiring business owners to learn, ask questions and connect with regional businesses and support services, regardless of where they are in their entrepreneurial journey.”

Conference attendees will also be invited to sign up for one-on-one meetings with owners whose business opportunities interest them. Invited business owners will come to the conference ready to speak to potential buyers, having prepared their books and determined their business value ahead of time. During and following the conference, representatives from CBIT and SBDC will facilitate working groups and other services that support business owners and potential buyers through the business transition process.

Pete Cummings of Clinton County, N.Y., is ready to sell his property maintenance company and meet with aspiring entrepreneurs — a task made difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic. "I want to be part of the virtual conference because COVID-19 has made it difficult to meet with potential buyers in person, my preferred method. I look forward to meeting with people interested in new opportunities in the North Country."

CBIT, which was partially funded by a grant from the Northern Regional Border Commission in 2018, addresses the loss of area businesses by providing matchmaking services with potential buyers, access to planning tools and connection with existing services. The Center's 2021 efforts have expanded to also support aspiring entrepreneurs who wish to purchase an existing business in the region. CBIT serves 14 counties in northern New York: Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, Oswego, Saratoga, St. Lawrence, Warren, and Washington Counties.

Registration for the conference is now open at [www.northcountryopportunities.com](http://www.northcountryopportunities.com) and free of charge. Questions may be directed to [transitions@adirondack.org](mailto:transitions@adirondack.org).

CBIT partners include Adirondack Economic Development Corporation (AEDC), Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA), Adirondack Park Agency Economic Services, Essex County Industrial Development Agency, Franklin County Economic Development, Hamilton County Economic Development, Lewis County Economic Development, St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, SUNY Canton SBDC at Clinton Community College, Ticonderoga Area Chamber of Commerce, and Greater Watertown-North Country Chamber of Commerce.

**Attached:** one (1) PDF document and one (1) image

*The North Country Center for Businesses in Transition 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.

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 Economic Development](#) exists to improve the quality of life in the Franklin County region by supporting economic growth, employment and community development. FCED 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 generates 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 area's 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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