



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**“Creative Economy” event brings downtown revitalization
experts to Saranac Lake**

Philip Morris of Schenectady’s Proctors theater will present at roundtable discussion

Saranac Lake, NY - Throughout rural America, artists, creative businesses, cultural organizations and community leaders are creating economic opportunity by developing a strong cultural sector. This movement and the experiences of regional revitalization experts, including Philip Morris of [Proctors](#) theater in Schenectady, NY, will be the focus of a presentation and roundtable discussion on August 22.

The [Adirondack North Country Association](#) (ANCA) and [Traditional Arts in Upstate New York](#) (TAUNY) have partnered to bring creative thinkers and planners together to discuss how the creative economy can invigorate North Country downtowns. The presentation, “The Creative Economy: Re-imagining Our Rural Downtowns,” will take place at the historic Harrietstown Town Hall on Tuesday, August 22 at 7:00 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be provided.

“Philip Morris has an inspiring story to tell about downtown revitalization. This event offers a great opportunity for regional leaders and creative entrepreneurs to engage with professionals who are active in the region’s growing creative economy,” said Jacob Vennie-Vollrath, Regional Advocacy Program coordinator at ANCA. “We expect a great turnout and a conversation that digs into some of the ways North Country communities are boosting their downtown economies with creative enterprises.”

Philip Morris, chief executive officer of Proctors theater in Schenectady, will begin the evening’s event with a short presentation about his experiences revitalizing downtowns through creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Following the presentation, [North Country Public Radio](#) (NCPR) Station Manager Ellen Rocco will moderate a roundtable discussion among leaders of local and regional arts and cultural organizations. Panelists include Jill Breit, executive director of TAUNY in Canton; Amy Catania, executive director of [Historic Saranac Lake](#); Joshua Kretser, executive director of [The Strand Center for the Arts](#) in Plattsburgh; and Aaron Woolf, owner of the [The Deer's Head Inn](#) in Elizabethtown.

"TAUNY's decision to locate its cultural center in the heart of downtown Canton is an expression of our belief that the arts bring opportunity and vitality to communities," said Breit. "We have seen how our investment has furthered our own commitment to the creative economy and engendered rich engagement of residents in discussions about how to improve experiences for both residents and visitors. I'm looking forward to engaging with Philip Morris and other participants and learning more about how we can bring a variety of creative economy opportunities to the region."

During his time with Proctors, Philip managed a \$40 million capital campaign that expanded a historic stagehouse to create a multi-use cultural space for theatrical productions, conferences and educational use. He also initiated a clean energy project that recycles waste heat, reducing energy costs for the theater and neighboring downtown businesses. As part of Morris's mission to promote community entrepreneurship, Proctors also manages Schenectady's public access television, the Schenectady County Heritage center and the Schenectady County Visitors Agency.

"Philip's work demonstrates the power of arts and culture and historic preservation in downtown revitalization," said Catania. "I look forward to highlighting some of Saranac Lake's unique arts and cultural assets and to explore ways that we can capitalize on these assets to build a brighter future for the whole community. I expect that Philip will help us to envision ways that Saranac Lake and the Adirondack region can build on our strengths."

There is no charge to attend this event, although RSVP is appreciated. Attendees can learn more about the event and RSVP at <https://adirondack.org/CreativeEconomy>.

[ANCA](#) is an independent nonprofit organization working to build dynamic local economies that sustain thriving communities in Northern New York. Since 1955, ANCA has leveraged the investment of hundreds of millions of dollars into the region in sectors that drive sustainable local economic development.

[TAUNY](#) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people understand and appreciate the folk traditions and local culture of everyday life, past and present, in the North Country. TAUNY seeks to research and preserve a record of diverse groups, customs and traditions; to recognize and empower traditional arts and artists; to identify and promote regional identity; and to provide opportunities for people of all ages to learn about folklore and local culture.

Attached: one (1) photo

Photo of Philip Morris, courtesy of Proctors.

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