



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Five regional leaders join ANCA's board

*Entrepreneurial "pioneers" gather at nonprofit's annual meeting*

**Massena, NY** - At its annual meeting here on Friday, September 22, the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) announced the addition of five board members to its Board of Directors. These regional leaders join the board as ANCA rolls out a focused strategy on growing more resilience across the regional economy.

Returning board member John Bartow, Executive Director of the Empire Forest Products Association (EFPS), will serve a new three-year term after stepping down for one year. Other new board members are Rob Bloom, Chief Financial Officer at Carthage Area Hospital; William Farber, Chairman of Hamilton County Board of Supervisors; Gerald Haenlin, Manager of Community and Customer Management for National Grid's Northern Region; and Nichole Richardson, Senior Relationship Advisor of Silicon Valley Bank.

"I am delighted to be rejoining ANCA's board in my new role with ESFPA," said Bartow. "I have worked with ANCA over the past year on their recent forestry industry analysis, which underscores the importance of the forest products industry across the region. ANCA's role in the region takes on more and more significance as we all work to rebuild the economies here based on our strengths and natural resources."

The new board members join ANCA's board in the regional nonprofit's 63rd year working to support local economies in the 14-county Adirondack North Country region. Over the past two years, the organization has grown from ten to 16 staff members who are advancing programs in three major program areas: clean energy, regional advocacy and local economies and agriculture.

"ANCA is fortunate to have such a strong and diverse team on our board," said Executive Director Kate Fish. "An experienced and engaged board, as well as a skilled and passionate staff, have allowed us to get so much done over the years. Recent growth within the organization has helped us reach more businesses and communities with more programs, and we are really excited about what we can accomplish moving forward."

The board meeting dovetailed with ANCA's annual meeting, which was open to the public. This year's meeting, dubbed "Pioneers of the New Economy," brought together ninety North Country entrepreneurs and community leaders to discuss challenges and opportunities facing new and existing businesses in the region. Attendees had the chance to share business ideas, network and learn from experts, peers and regional economic development organizations.

Following brief introductions by ANCA Board President Jim Sonneborn and Executive Director Kate Fish, meeting participants broke out into five sessions that dug deeper into the specific challenges and solutions local entrepreneurs encounter during different stages of business development: pre-venture and exciting ideas; business infancy and just starting out; experiencing early growth; looking to expand and actively expanding; and social innovators.

"We're grateful to the town of Massena for welcoming community members and leaders from around the region and creating a space for this important dialogue," said Sonneborn. "It's great to see people making connections, building relationships and beginning conversations that they can follow up on as they develop their business ideas."

Guest entrepreneurs represented a variety of fields including manufacturing, food processing, scientific research, creative arts and technology. Representatives from local and state government offices and regional economic development organizations were also in attendance. "That has always been ANCA's biggest strength," Sonneborn said. "Helping people connect with one another."

[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 job creation, good wages, community health and ecological stewardship are equally important outcomes, ANCA focuses on creating opportunity for people with diverse backgrounds, experience and education levels. Since its founding in 1955, ANCA has leveraged hundreds of millions of dollars into the region in key sectors, including farming, local food systems, the forest economy, the creative economy, small businesses, clean energy, community assets and the visitor experience.

Attached: Four (4) photos, headshots of four of the five new board members

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