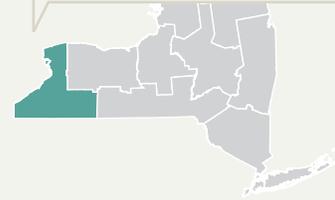


# OPPORTUNITY AGENDA

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo put forth a comprehensive agenda that builds on the success of fostering economic growth through quality jobs by making the state a more equitable place, with a focus on fighting poverty. While poverty continues to be a pervasive issue affecting communities across the five counties of Western New York, the collaboration and coordination spurred by the WNY Regional Economic Development Council created multipronged strategies with which to tackle many of poverty's underlying causes. For Western New York, workforce development is both a strategy at the heart of our economic development plan, as well as a key component in systemically dealing with economic inequality. By building on the success and expertise of the Regional Economic Development Council and leveraging the ongoing work of community stakeholders, we can overcome the challenges and barriers that prevent many in our region from entering the workforce and fully participating in our state's continued economic revitalization.

WNY Regional  
Economic Development  
Council



## Our Goal

The WNY Regional Economic Development Council will address the challenges and barriers to job connectivity, economic self-sufficiency and equal access to resources for the most vulnerable populations in our region, including the formally incarcerated, the unemployed, individuals living in poverty and individuals with no work experience.

## The Opportunity

Themes and their related opportunities for growth are outlined below, as examples, to help guide current and future strategies, projects, and initiatives as they leverage the expertise and resources of the Regional Council and other state agencies. In addressing concentrated poverty in a concerted and collaborative manner, capacity for change is built from within the region and gives communities the tools necessary to deal with issues that once seemed intractable.

## Education & Training

### AGENDA

- Expand apprenticeship models in organizational settings
- Establish a sourcing portal for job and training opportunities
- Increase support and accessibility for on-the-job training
- Create transferable skill training programs
- Invest in career talent pipeline initiatives

## Transportation

### AGENDA

- Increase access to public transportation in rural and other underserved areas
- Enhance coordination between public transportation service areas and employment hubs
- Improve transportation services for early morning/late night workers

## Foundational Support for Success

### AGENDA

- Facilitate access to safe and affordable child care in distressed areas and rural communities
- Expand the availability and access to affordable quality housing options close to employment hubs
- Encourage job creation and business investment in areas of high unemployment and poverty

WNY's Poverty has grown while the region's overall population decreased.

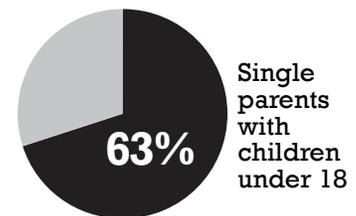
*Individuals living in poverty in WNY's five counties with incomes under the federal poverty level, 2011*

MORE THAN **202,800**

**1 in 7** WNYERS LIVE IN POVERTY

WNY's single parents with children under 18 are affected disproportionately.

*Families living in poverty, 2011*



Since 2000, poverty has grown more in the region's suburbs and rural areas than it has in the urban core.

*Growth in poverty in...*

*...suburbs and rural areas, 2000-2011*

*...urban areas, 2000-2011*

**29%**

**1%**

Sources: County-level data for the five counties are from the 2000 Census and the 2009-11 American Community Survey. Municipal level data, used to analyze the spatial distribution of poverty across the region, is from the 2000 Census and the 2007-2011 American Community Survey.