



State: New York
Community Name: Allegany County
Population Size: 46688
Percentage of Residents Above Age 60: 20
Community Structure: County
Other:

Community Type: Rural

Elected Official Signing the Letter of Commitment

Name: Curtis Crandall
Title: Legislator, Chairman of the Legislative Board

Office Mailing Address: 28 Sherman St PO Box 183 Belfast, NY 14711

Community Contact Name: Danielle DeLong

Email: [REDACTED]

Position: Age-Friendly Communities Coordinator, Ardent Solutions

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Role: Ardent Solutions developed a full-time Age-Friendly Communities Coordinator position under the Rural Health Network Development grant to develop and implement efforts for the Allegany County Age Friendly initiative. This staff position is responsible for creating informational materials, community outreach, promoting age-friendly programming and coordination of meetings and groups for the Age-Friendly initiative. We currently have a brochure, fact sheet, and PowerPoint presentation to introduce the Age-Friendly concept to our community. The Age-Friendly Communities Coordinator and leadership staff at Ardent Solutions will work with existing and newly formed groups to lead the efforts of developing and distributing a baseline assessment, development of the action plan, and the continued evaluations of the communities in Allegany County. Ardent Solutions will serve as the principle organizer in the Age-Friendly initiative for Allegany County, thus reporting and updating AARP during the five-year cycle will be the responsibility of our Age-Friendly Communities Coordinator.

Older Adult Involvement: The older adult population throughout our county will be directly involved in all planning and development of our age-friendly community initiatives. We will utilize programs that Ardent Solutions manages for older adults, such as our county wide Growing Stronger exercise program, county wide senior luncheon

sites, Senior Advisory Council, and Senior Foundation, to collect input and suggestions. Recently, in light of the Covid-19 shutdowns, we developed a connectivity survey to assess availability of technology such as computers and smartphones, internet capability, and comfort level using online platforms, to understand how we can connect with one of our older adult programs, Growing Stronger, during this time we cannot meet in live groups. This group is approximately 130 seniors ages 65+ and will serve as a small sample group for assessing access to information, that we can later expand to more older adults across the county. Additionally, we will utilize other existing senior groups to host listening sessions and focus groups to invite all older adults in the community to the table for input. To reach our homebound older adults for feedback in the Age-Friendly Communities initiative, we plan to partner with our Meals on Wheels program and home-care service providers, to deliver surveys and other materials to those community members unable to leave their homes. We will create a new Age-Friendly Communities Council comprised of older adults interested in being the voice for the senior population in Allegany County. Furthermore, the Age-Friendly Communities Coordinator will leverage Ardent Solutions' existing relationship with Alfred University, a local private college, and its Gerontology program.

**Increasing
Collaboration and
Coordination:**

The age-friendly initiative covers all sectors of a community so we expect to create a table where organizations and entities that normally would not work together are in fact coming together to develop a more livable community for everyone. We are currently in the process of using email blasts through a variety of different groups to invite everyone to the join the Age-Friendly Allegany County initiative. Representatives from our school districts, hospitals health care providers, chamber of commerce offices, municipality offices, local and corporate businesses, churches, housing authorities and many/any other organizations that want to be involved in this collaboration. We currently have many organizations, service providers, facilities, and health care providers and systems that we know will take interest in the initiative because it is largely focused on older adults, but we want to bring in entities that would otherwise not be dedicated to older adults. We will bring awareness to what it is like to be an older adult in our communities to groups that would not otherwise understand. Ardent Solutions researched age-simulation suits and hopes to obtain grant funding to purchase one a suit to carry out a project throughout our county using businesses like restaurants, grocery stores, and pharmacies, senior housing complexes, public transportation systems, and public places, to assess how an older adult might navigate each sector of the community; using this project we hope to garner support from even the most skeptic of county members! Many agencies across our county are doing great work for their respective sectors so we are excited to see what we can accomplish when we harness everyone's energy in to a collaborative effort!

**AARP Team
Member Contact
Info:**

N/A

**Most Instructive
Area of Work:**

The AARP and W.H.O. networks are both a wealth of information and resources that we are utilizing in our initial developments and will continue to utilize throughout our initiative. We hope that by conducting in-depth assessments of our communities and enacting plans for change that we create solutions - both short and long term - that will effect real change for the older adult population; in doing so we will share all of our progress and new developments with the network. Major areas of focus for our community are issues surrounding rural transportation, social opportunities, and access to technology. Ardent Solutions has already secured funding through the Ralph C. Wilson Foundation to develop and intergenerational opportunity utilizing a high school in our county; this is still in the planning phases but we will share our project when it is solidified. Additionally we have conducted a small sample survey on technology access and capability for use with one of our 60+ workout groups and we plan to expand this throughout the county in the upcoming year. As we develop Allegany County's Age Friendly Community initiative, we hope to be a resource for other communities in the network to utilize in their efforts, especially those rural communities similar to Allegany County's demographics.

**Optional
Resolution:**

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Logo or Image:

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Website:

<http://www.ardentnetwork.org/age-friendly-allegany-county.html>

Twitter 2:

Facebook 1:

@AgeFriendlyAlleganyCountyNY

Facebook 2:

**Additional Social
Media:**