



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release:

ONEIDA COUNTY SHOP SMALL BUSINESS WEEK BEGINS JUNE 29TH

Oneida County in partnership with Mohawk Valley EDGE, the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce, Rome Area Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber Alliance of the Mohawk Valley and Oneida County Tourism will designate the week of June 29th as "Shop Small Business Week." Details can be found on <https://www.loyaltolocal315.com/>.

With many larger stores deemed essential by the state and able to fill online orders, it is our small businesses that have been most impacted by the current pandemic.

According to our first joint business impact survey:

- Over 50% of Oneida County businesses were completely closed, almost all small businesses.
- And 60% of these businesses lost at least 80% of their revenue while they were closed.

"Our local small businesses have been devastated by the COVID-19 pandemic," **said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr.** "As they slowly regain their footing as we move through a safe, phased reopening of our community, they need all of the support we can give. I am happy to proclaim June 29th to July 4th 'Shop Small Business Week' in Oneida County, and I encourage everyone to shop local and do their part to help our small businesses make it through this difficult time."

The Small Business Administration's "National Small Business Week" usually held in the first week of May was postponed this year because of the pandemic. But as we move through Phase 3 and our businesses reopen and adjust to new operating conditions, it is important that we as a community get out and shop local.

How can you get involved?

Shop Small: Each day all our of partners will be posting and drawing your attention to many of the great small businesses in our community. Each day will be a different theme!

- **Main Street Monday:** Many of our small Towns and Villages rely heavily on their Main Street storefronts to bring sales tax revenue and foot traffic into their downtowns.
- **Grati-Tuesday:** Many personal service providers and restaurants have been closed for months. Let's show our appreciation and leave a few extra dollars on the tip!
- **Wellness Wednesday:** Self-care is probably more important than ever. Get that kale smoothie, do some outdoor yoga, buy a new journal, take a zoom fitness class. Whatever you need to feel refreshed, find a new way to rock Wednesday!
- **Thirsty Thursday:** From your morning coffee to your happy hour beer. Stay hydrated with your favorite local beverage.
- **Burger and Fry-day:** Getting ready to head to the store to pick up food for your July 4th party? Think of your local stores first! The selection and quality, can't be beat!
- **Small Business Saturday:** As you begin to celebrate 4th of July, think of all the ways in which you shopped local during the week and post your favorites to social media!

Post your Shop Small purchases on social media for a chance to win local prizes:

Use the #LoyaltoLocal315 hashtag on your social media posts for a chance to win special prizes each day. Prizes include items from Almost Local, Liberty Car Wash, Universal Wellness, Saranac Brewery, Copper City Brewery, Edible Arrangements, Bonomo's, Enchanted Forest Water Safari and Cayo Industrial Horror Realm!

"With so many small businesses being affected by the coronavirus pandemic, it is more important now than it ever has been to shop at locally owned establishments," **said Meghan Fraser McGrogan, Executive Director of the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce.** "Local businesses give back to our community in many ways by creating jobs, supporting and sponsoring local organizations, revitalizing neighborhoods, and so much more. Now, they need our support-for some, the future of their business literally depends on it!"

"Shopping is consistently the number one traveler activity in the US," **said Kelly Blazosky, President, Oneida County Tourism.** "Locally owned shops contribute to the unique character of our destination. Not only do they help create a charming and memorable experience, the jobs they provide sustain households and livelihoods. Shopping small makes a big impact. Visitor spending on retail shopping along with food and beverage tops \$684 million annually in Oneida County. We encourage everyone to participate in Oneida County Shop Small Business Week, June 29 thru July 4 - this week and every week. Be loyal to local business owners, show them some love and shop small!"

"When you shop locally you are helping create new jobs, and save existing jobs," **said Adam Hovak, Chairman, Rome Area Chamber of Commerce.** "Please join our regional effort to keep jobs LOCAL and you will be helping to grow our community's property tax base. Local sales tax dollars help the County to meet its financial obligations without raising property taxes. The purchases you make assist in efforts to keep our region a safe place to live, work, and raise a family. We urge you to support Oneida County Shop Small Business Week and keep sales taxes working where they belong – for you, in your community."

“Small businesses are the backbone of our regional economy,” **said Steven J. DiMeo, President, Mohawk Valley EDGE.** “Time and time again our community has stepped up in times of crisis to help each other out. As many of our businesses reopen, it is incredibly important that we step up once again and show support for our neighbors. The regional economy has been on an upswing and we want to continue the momentum that has been generated over the last few years. Our small businesses have been critical to that success.”

“ The Chamber Alliance represents 23 organizations and all are supportive of concentrated efforts to support the economic viability of the regional business community,” **said Ray Durso, President, Chamber Alliance of the Mohawk Valley.**

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