

# THE MILEPOST

May 2018

An update from



[Mobility Management of South Central New York](#) serves five counties in SCNY and is a program of the Rural Health Network of South Central NY.

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## GetThere Transportation Voucher Program

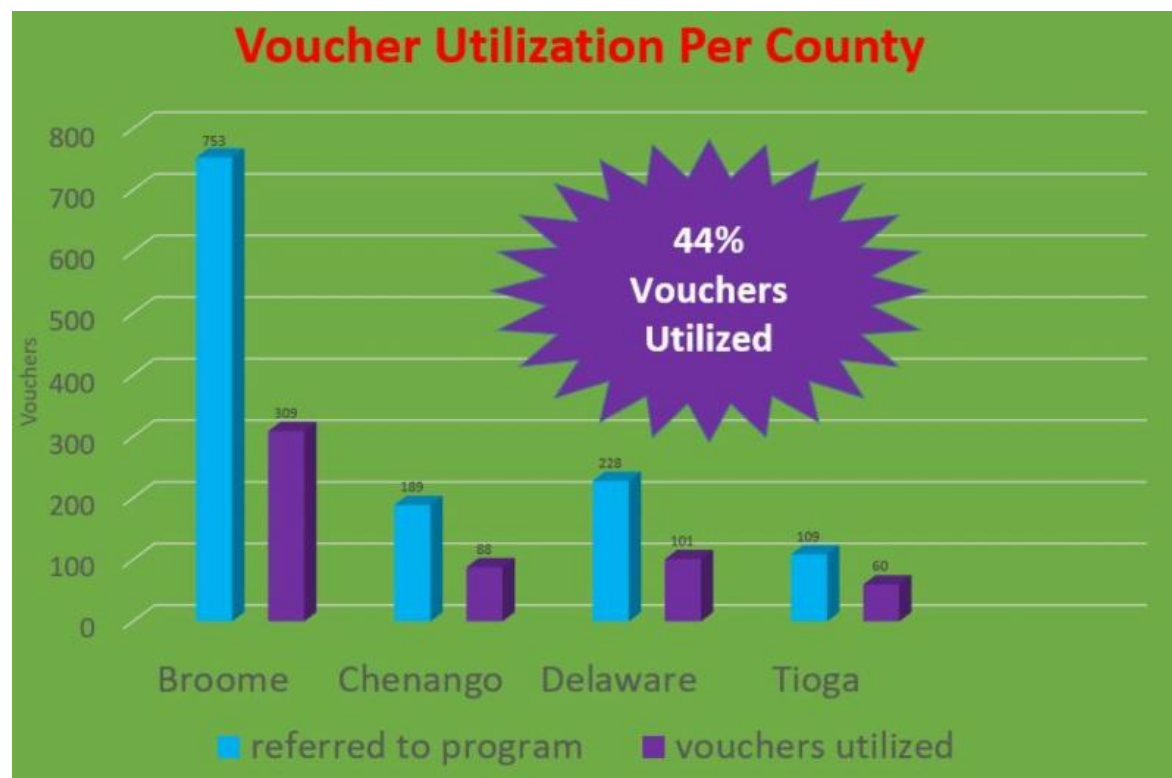
An Anniversary-A Recap

The Transportation Voucher Program is one of MMSCNY's newer initiatives. It rolled out as a pilot last April for Broome, Chenango, Tioga and parts of Delaware counties to assist some of our most vulnerable residents. It provides a means to address unmet transportation needs that are directly related to health. It is designed to also help track healthcare needs and costs for those who use the Transportation Voucher Program. After one year, (from 4/1/17 through 3/31/18), the following illustrates its use:

- over 8700 miles of service were provided for 1014 one-way trips;
- 190 unique individuals utilized 544 vouchers (surpassing the goal of 500);
- the total amount spent was \$17,487 and cost per voucher utilized was \$32.15 (including public and private transportation and fuel cards)

A year's experience prompted MMSCNY to examine and change some of the program parameters. Voucher referrals started slowly but improved as more health care providers were trained and became familiar with the program and the process. The first year of the program ended with 1279 total referrals. Early in the program, usage was at about 20% (percent usage of total vouchers handed out). Vouchers have an expiration date; those not used within 45 days expire. After updating the referral process so that providers are now giving out fewer vouchers at a time, the usage rate has increased to 44%.

Other changes that are underway pertain to the program's intent to provide a short-term fix to critical needs. It is not meant to be a long-term, maintenance solution. Additionally, less expensive modes of transportation for those utilizing the program are being encouraged. Securing food remains high as a reason for the voucher use, often involving trips to grocery stores. 55% of the vouchers used have been for food assistance. The second most common purpose for voucher use is for benefit renewal at 21%.



voucher program use during its first year

We are pleased that a Transportation Voucher Program was recently approved to cover the rest of Delaware County and also Otsego County, with thanks to funding by Leatherstocking Collaborative Health Partners. Elsewhere, a similar program has been funded by Care Compass Network for Cortland, Tompkins, Schuyler, Steuben and Chemung counties. [See the article below](#). At least 10 counties, possibly more, will have a voucher program. In addition to helping so many of the most vulnerable, we anticipate that the expanse of the program will result in additional data and allow tracking by county. Collecting information on the use of the vouchers will help determine the impact on health outcomes, as well as to illustrate return on investment.

Looking forward, MMSCNY has developed an instruction guide on the voucher program on [HWapps](#), which is a DYSRIP portal for workforce training. Healthcare providers who are members of Care Compass Network or Leatherstocking Collaborative Health Partners can access it for information and directions about the program, as well as FAQs and answers.

The Transportation Voucher program targets those at high risk for medical issues. We hope over time its impact on readmission rates (hospital readmission for a related condition within 30 days) will be demonstrable. NYS's readmission rate is currently 16% for the Medicaid population. ([NYSHF](#)). Bringing this down will represent a significant cost

savings.

Reviewing the use of the program to date has been encouraging, though leaves some nagging questions: What is the impact on the health of individuals using the program? What savings can potentially be experienced? Are we ignoring a significant population with similar needs--those who are not Medicaid enrollees? We will be moving forward with these questions in mind.

In closing, we thank Care Compass Network and Leatherstocking Collaborative Health Partners for making this program possible. For further information, contact MMSCNY Director, [Bill Wagner](#) at 607-584-0551.

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## Meeting Critical Needs

Some examples of recent cases will illustrate the breadth of the travel voucher program, and how it is helping with critical needs.

*Getthere* received a call from a woman who lives in a rural area. She is a single mother of five children and doesn't have transportation. She and her children have Medicaid, but only receive transportation to medical appointments. One of her children was taken to urgent care over the weekend and during the subsequent week, she was informed that her child's cultures came back positive for strep. A prescription was called in for the child, but she didn't have a way to get it; couldn't leave her children unattended to do so; and couldn't afford a taxi. The voucher program made it possible for a courier service through a local taxi company to pick up the prescription and take it to her.

A gentleman called *Getthere* after being discharged from the hospital, having spent several weeks there. He received vouchers for transportation upon discharge and called a couple hours later to use them. He had gotten home and found that much of the food in the house had gone bad during his hospitalization. He also had a prescription for pain medication that he needed to fill. It was late and he was in a rural area with no family or friends who could take him to the neighboring town to get some food and to pick up his prescription. *Getthere* was able to set up transportation for him to accomplish these needs that evening.

An individual called who was looking to use a voucher to get transportation to pick up a prescription. The individual lives in a rural area where there is no public transportation, and had been needing to pick up these prescriptions for a while. Because of a disabled vehicle and the inability to afford the repairs needed to get it back on the road, there were not a lot of options. The voucher program enabled *Getthere* to arrange pick-up and delivery of the prescriptions via courier service.

(cases provided by Anne Marie Sanford, Mobility & Transportation Advocate)

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## Mobility Management Welcomes Rich Couch

**Rich Couch** recently joined the Mobility Management of SCNY team as **Mobility and Transportation Advocate**, bringing over two decades of experience in government, government relations, program administration and policy advocacy. Rich is responsible for assisting individuals with their transportation needs via the *GetThere* Call Center. He will also provide individuals with case management, referral services, trip planning, travel training and transportation education services as needed.

Rich has helped pass strong tobacco control laws in Maine and New York while on staff of the American Cancer Society and the American Lung Association. He advocated for road and bridge funding statewide in New York while with the Associated General Contractors

of New York State. He was the founding coordinator of the School Tobacco Policy Project which worked with school districts in Chenango, Cortland and Tompkins Counties. Rich is a Certified Trainer in the American Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking Program and has completed course work toward becoming a Certified Aging in Place Specialist through the National Association of Home Builders.

He started his career with the New York State Assembly where he worked as a Researcher in the Speaker's Office and an Administrative Assistant to Assemblyman Marty Luster who served Tompkins, Tioga and Cortland counties. Rich has worked for the Maine State Treasurer and the Maine State Housing Authority as well as serving as a Town Manager in a small rural community on the Maine coast.



Rich Couch, Mobility and Transportation Advocate

Most recently, Rich provided direct care for seniors in assisted living communities. Although he has lived in Maine, Washington DC, Long Island and Albany, Rich is fifth generation from Tompkins County and he is thrilled to be back "home" working to serve the needs of folks in rural New York State.

Rich Couch holds a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Maine as well as a Bachelor's Degree from the State University of New York at Oswego and an Associate's Degree from Morrisville State College.

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## Vetthere!

Clear Path for Veterans and the Getthere Call Center are partnering to assist veterans in Broome and Chenango Counties with transportation to health-related appointments. Veterans who have a vehicle, current driver's license, car insurance, and active vehicle registration are volunteering to assist with transporting their fellow veterans to their appointments. Training is provided and volunteers are reimbursed for their mileage.

Please contact Venecia DeRoose, Clear Path for Veterans Peer Support Manager, or the Getthere Call Center at 1-855-373-4040 if you are interested in becoming a driver.

### [Vetthere! is Calling All Veterans](#)

You can offer your assistance to your fellow veterans in the community by becoming part of the Vetthere! program described above. If you have a vehicle, current driver's license, car insurance, and active vehicle registration, We Need Your Help to provide fellow veterans with reliable transportation to get to their appointments.

See May 2018 [Mobility Management News](#). Vetthere! and MMSCNY were mentioned in a brief article, "*Upstate NY Counties Serve Veterans*," in the section: Mobility Professionals in The News.

Additionally, a recent [WBNG news story](#) (*New Service to Transport Veterans to Health Appointments*).

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## Building the Toolkit





MMSCNY staff (Bill Wagner (R), Director of Mobility Management, and Nick Cecconi (L), Assistant Director of Mobility Management) meet with representatives of Infojini Consulting.

MMSCNY has been working with Infojini Consulting to enhance the Getthere website. The new and improved version will feature our mobility management programs, highlight regional transportation resources for a 10-county area, and provide a trip planning tool to assist consumers, caregivers, and healthcare professionals in finding transportation solutions that meet their needs. The website will launch in two steps--the first of which will be available to users in late May. The second step is anticipated 4-6 weeks later, and will include trip planning features. We're looking forward to sharing it with you soon.

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## Right at Home

Courtney Gehl joined Chenango County Transit as General Manager in early March. She was previously with Chemung County Transit, which also included Corning and Steuben County Transit, where she started out as a mobility aide for a contract to provide transportation for cognitively disabled children to day time programs. Over eight years, Courtney worked her way up to the role of Safety and Operations manager.

Courtney finds Chenango County Transit similar to Chemung County Transit and familiar to her. "The rural character of a lot of Steuben County and Chenango County leads to people not being able to depend on public transportation."

Short term she is looking forward to getting the new

vehicles up and running so Chenango County Transit can get back to full service, which is expanding! All of their fixed runs will run more frequently, hopefully being more dependable and user friendly for people to use to get to and from work, or just for day to day errands.

"Long term, I would love to see Chenango County Transit continuously growing, getting back to doing a door-to-door service for people who are unable to use public transportation."



"Although it is a new location,  
I feel right at home."  
(C. Gehl)

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## COUNTY NEWS and NOTES

### Broome County:

Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study has prepared an online survey to gain public input for the Coordinated Plan Update for Broome & Tioga Counties. Find it [here](https://bmtstransportation.questionpro.com) and please feel free to share the link (<https://bmtstransportation.questionpro.com>) with others you believe would be interested. (Scott Reigle, Senior Transportation Planner, BMTS)

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### Chenango County:

Chenango County Transit has a new General Manager, Courtney Gehl. Chenango Transit got 14 new buses, all of which are needed, and more. Their entire fleet was past the point of needing replacement. This will allow expansion of all the fixed runs; some that were dropped will be reinstated; some times have changed. Additionally, Chenango County has a new Veterans' Service Officer working out of the Chenango County Area Agency on Aging. "We are very interested in volunteer transportation in Chenango County--in particular, how to cover transportation for veterans. We have met with the new Veterans' Service Officer a few times and look forward to working closely with him in the future." (Shane Butler, Chenango County Planning & Development)

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### Delaware County:

A large group turned out for the last transportation planning meeting, during which there was a lot of discussion regarding regional pockets with transportation issues. Additionally, there was significant interest in volunteer transportation programs.

## Otsego County:

Otsego County has been examining how Otsego Express can better coordinate with other organizations to meet the transportation need.

The report from their consultants was received on 4/18. Its scope had been expanded to address more county-wide issues. It (the *Otsego County Transportation Services Analysis Review and Recommendations*) is available temporarily on MMSCNY's website.

To view it, [click here](#), or contact [Tammie Harris](#) for information on how to access it.

They (Otsego County) are currently working on a way to keep Route 12 going. Due to some contract losses with their vendor, there was a risk of losing this route.

(Tammie Harris, Otsego County Planning & Solid Waste)

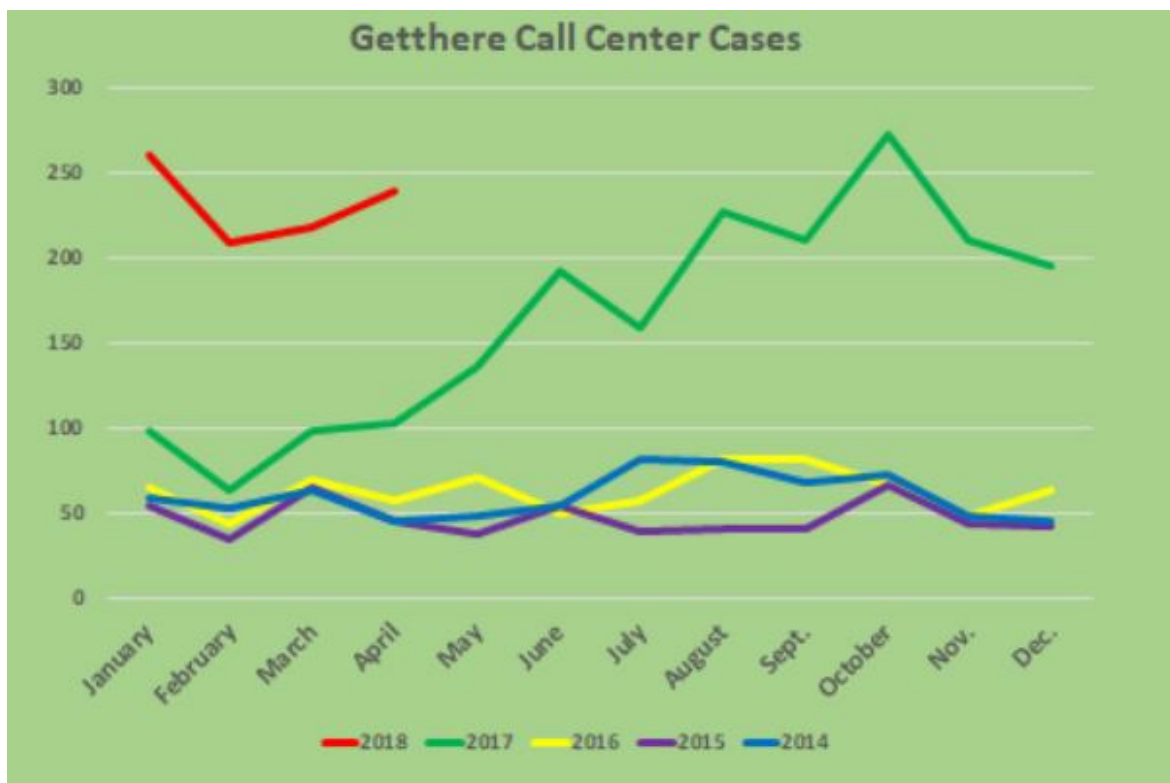
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## Tioga County:

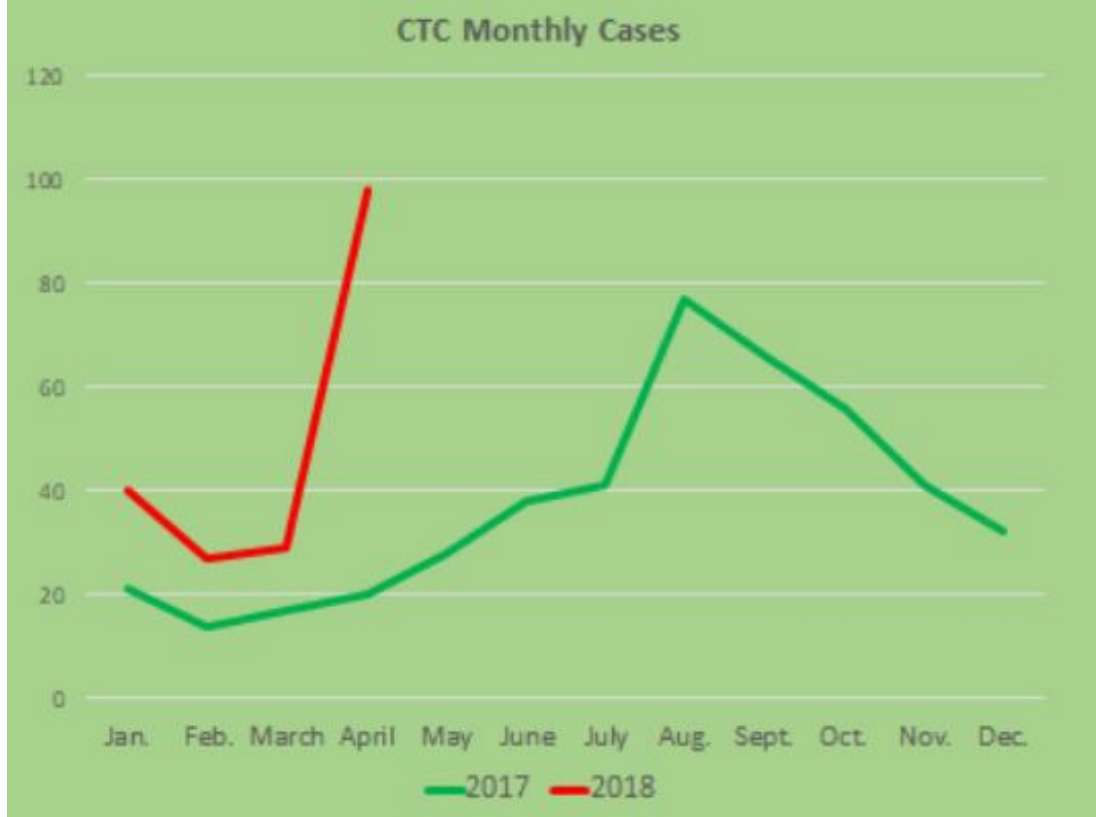
"Tioga County's Transportation Directory," an inventory of transportation resources, is now available in printed form. It can be obtained from CCE Tioga by calling 607-687-4020; it is also available on-line. ([tioga.cce.cornell.edu](http://tioga.cce.cornell.edu))

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## MMSCNY's Metrics Quick View



Case Numbers Remain High Through April



Thanks to United Way of Broome County, Chenango United Way, and the Community Foundation for SCNY for funding that allowed this jump in Connection to Care cases as illustrated above.

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## Supports-for-Health:

Made possible by a multi-county/agency effort  
and Care Compass Innovation Funds.  
(from the *Move Together NY* newsletter)

Mobility Managers of the southern tier helped bring together six organizations from five counties to create the Supports-for-Health program. The group responded to an RFP from Care Compass Innovation funding, designed to test creative solutions to lower health care costs and improve health for those who are most vulnerable. The program targets Medicaid recipients with health concerns that put them at high risk of returning to the hospital or emergency room, and help them to access critical services not currently available under the Medicaid transportation benefit. Supports-for-Health, will be piloted in Chemung, Cortland, Schuyler, Steuben and Tompkins counties. Through facilitation of mobility managers of the Southern Tier, The Arc of Schuyler will lead the project with partnering agencies: Able2, Arc of Schuyler/Transportation Link-Line, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County/Move Together NY, Human Service Coalition of Tompkins County/ 2-1-1, Institute For Human Services/ 2-1-1 and Seven Valleys Health Coalition. Technical support was provided by Mobility Management of South Central NY.

MTNY is proud to be a partner and will assist in outreach, education and program evaluation. More details about the program will be available shortly.

(Thanks to Amber Simmons for this [article](#). Amber is Schuyler Mobility Manager and a member of the Move Together NY team; she will be heading up this project.)

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## Links of Potential Interest

[BC Transit Award for Purchase of Hybrid Electric Buses](#)



You may find other items of interest in these two newsletters, both referenced above: [Move Together NY](#), a newsletter from the Move Together NY Regional Transportation Project

**Mobility Management News**, a [newsletter](#) from NCMM, the National Center for Mobility Management. NOTE: Vetthere! and MMSCNY's role were mentioned in a brief article, "Upstate NY Counties Serve Veterans," in the section: Mobility Professionals in The News, May 2018.

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## Did You Know?

### What is HARP?

HARPs are Health & Recovery Plans. They integrate and manage the Medicaid services for adults with significant behavioral health needs. They provide enhanced care management for members to help them coordinate all their physical health, behavioral health and non-Medicaid support needs and allow access to Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). Within the scope of these services, there is an added transportation benefit.

Additional information can be found on the NYSHD website at:

[https://www.health.ny.gov/health\\_care/medicaid/redesign/behavioral\\_health/index.htm](https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/behavioral_health/index.htm).

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## You Can Help

Join in promoting our cause! You can help spread the word and gather feedback. Share this communication with others who may be interested or let us know who to add to the distribution list. Share your ideas and those you hear from others with us. Share mobility related news, events, and images representative of your area.

Partner involvement and support at the local, regional, state, and national level has been critical to MMSCNY. We extend thanks to our numerous partners, stakeholders and funders.

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## Upcoming Events, Conferences, Workshops, Save-the-Date

May 17, [Mobility Summit in Rochester](#)

The Mobility Innovation Summit will focus on smaller cities and rural communities. It is a free forum.

June 1, Tioga County Transportation Group's quarterly meeting - 1 pm, at Tioga DSS

June 10 - 14, CTAA EXPO: The Future of Mobility:

CTAA is excited to be bringing [the Community Transportation EXPO](#) back to Pittsburgh, site of the 1994 conference. EXPO is the premier annual event for community and public transportation professionals to participate in essential learning events and network with colleagues. Speakers and sessions will keep attendees up to date with innovative technology, workforce development, communication strategies, funding, and regulations. The EXPO also features a trade show with all of the latest community transportation goods and services.

Note: June 12: **A Mobility Management Event!** Promotions indicate that, "if you can only go one day - make this the day!"

**Postponed [Transportation Camp Ithaca](#)**

Transportation Camp is an un-conference, where the sessions are developed by the attendees. Last year's sample topics: Building the Perfect Beast: Regional Vanpool Edition, Rural Mobility, Transportation Demand Management in Upstate NY, Mobility-as-a-Service for Small Urban and Rural Areas, Options for Low-Income Workers - gaps in transit service to suburbs. This year's program will include discussion on volunteer transportation and shared mobility, among other highlights. Watch for additional details on Basecamp: New York Mobility Managers Network.

More info at [facebook.com/events/375667812879979](https://facebook.com/events/375667812879979).

June 21, MMSCNY Quarterly Advisory Committee, noon  
and

BMTS Coordinated Transportation Committee, immediately following at 1:30 pm  
STIC on Frederick Street.

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MMSCNY Quarterly Advisory Committee meetings for 2018 have additionally been scheduled as follows: 8/16, 10/18 and 12/13.

Those interested in attending or learning more about MMSCNY Advisory Committee meetings should email [Bill Wagner](#).



# LIVE UNITED

United Way  
of Broome County

Chenango United Way

United Way  
of Delaware & Otsego Counties




## BROOME - TIOGA RIDESHARE

Contact information:

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