



September 7, 2020

An Open Letter to the Community:

The Otsego County Chamber of Commerce is proud of our strong business and not-for-profit communities that have been engaged and committed to providing safe, clean environments for all. We stand in support of all our businesses that are OPEN and ready to provide excellent customer service. I remain optimistic about the strength and resilience of our business community. Those in retail, hospitality, housing or the service industries fully understand the profound, positive impact college students have on businesses' bottom line. Most students work summer jobs in their hometowns so they can return to our beautiful community and spend their earnings. This past week, parents and students reached out to the Chamber to speak with me personally. They shared how they are proud to be in Oneonta, how they are doing their part to be good community citizens and how they intend to contribute to our community supporting our local businesses and economy. I encourage the business community to return those good feelings, to welcome students who are being proactive about following all of the safety precautions to keep everyone safe.

To our beloved college students, I offer this perspective as a proud SUNY Oneonta alumnae. A college campus and the community surrounding it are places where young adults are expected to make smart decisions. Those decisions have short and long-term impacts and consequences for themselves, their friends, families and the community. I ask that all college students remaining here for the rest of the semester do your part. Use good judgment. Follow local, state and federal health and safety guidelines, including the wearing of masks and maintaining social distancing. Be responsible, respectful and kind to one another. These efforts will bring the business community and college students closer and enable us to remain one of the best college communities.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Ann Heegan".

Barbara Ann Heegan
President/CEO