



For Immediate Release

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## NYATEP Introduces the Inaugural Buffalo & Niagara Falls Workforce Leadership Academy Fellows

*Local leaders selected for the program in partnership with the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program*

**March 23, 2023**, Buffalo & Niagara Falls, New York – Today, the New York Association for Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP) introduced the inaugural class of a new program designed to improve local economic mobility and workforce development efforts and present innovative solutions to the challenges faced by workers and businesses.

The Buffalo & Niagara Falls Workforce Leadership Academy, a yearlong fellowship developed through a partnership with the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program, engages nonprofit, government, academic, and business leaders in a series of retreats and workshops as they work together to advance an innovative and equitable workforce ecosystem.

The Buffalo & Niagara Falls Workforce Leadership Academy is the first in the region and one of six to be launched this year through the support of Walmart, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, and The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation. This Academy is the latest in a series of several [Workforce Leadership Academies](#) hosted in communities across the United States and Canada.

The 24 members of the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Workforce Leadership Academy Class of 2023 represent a range of nonprofit organizations, business associations, institutes of higher education, training efforts, and public agencies. The Academy launches on March 23, 2023, and will culminate with a collaborative capstone project presentation on December 5, 2023.

Fellows selected for the Buffalo & Niagara Falls Workforce Leadership Academy are:

Brittany Tranello, Erie Niagara Area Health Education Center; Carol Machowski, OLV Human Services; Carolyn Storms-Stoltman, Northland Workforce Training Center; Cassidy Malough, Goodwill of WNY; Dixie Farr, Workforce Development Consortium, Inc Buffalo Employment and Training Center; Harvey Miles, GreenForce Training, Inc.; Jake Moskal, Jewish Family Services of Western New York; Jennifer Pauly, Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce; Jennifer Van Dusen, The Construction Exchange of Buffalo & WNY Inc.; Jesana Gadley, M&T Bank - Tech Academy; Joseph Milazzo, Villa Maria College; Justin Rogers, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Niagara County, Katie Pieri, Nonprofit Support Group; Kristin Fields, Buffalo State; Kristine Bieniek, Buffalo Niagara Partnership; Lillian Kahris, Western New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO; Michele Taylor, NYS Department of Labor; Mike LaBerta, Workforce Development Institute; Ondalee Horton, The Service Collaborative; Purnima Mohan, Westminster Economic Development Initiative (WEDI); Rob Leteste, Invest Buffalo Niagara; Roscoe Naguit, M&T Tech (M&T Bank); Stephanie Bevacqua, Niagara University; Stephanie Peete, Say Yes Buffalo.

"NYATEP is honored to be entrusted with bringing this incredible opportunity to New York State, starting with Buffalo and Niagara Falls. We are excited to learn from the Fellows and support their work as they rethink the regional workforce ecosystem," said Melinda Mack, Executive Director at NYATEP.

"Collaboration grows at the speed of trust, and today's workforce development leaders are increasingly being asked to devise solutions through collaboration," said Sheila Maguire, senior fellow at the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program. "This Academy is a rare opportunity for these local leaders to step back with colleagues from Buffalo & Niagara Falls, reflect on their own organizational challenges, hear from leading practitioners from around the country, and develop the network and trust so essential for success."

The Buffalo & Niagara Falls Workforce Leadership Academy is led by NYATEP and an Advisory Board that includes Lindsay Aleshire, M&T Bank; Paul Brown, Buffalo Building Trades Council & the Niagara Building Trades Council; Molly Carr, Jewish Family Services of WNY; Michael Casale, Niagara County Center for Economic Development; Betsy Constantine, Community Foundation of Buffalo; Susan Dundon, Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation; Karen Kwandrans, Niagara University; Christina Orsi, The John R. Oishei Foundation; Robert Restaino, Mayor of Niagara Falls; Casimiro Rodriguez, Hispanic Heritage of WNY; David Rust, Say Yes to Buffalo; Laura Smith, Buffalo Niagara Partnership; Stephen Tucker, Northland Workforce Training Center, and Thomas Ulbrich, Goodwill WNY.

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