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Young Professionals See Opportunities for Continued Growth in the North Country

Young professionals in the North Country see opportunities for more activities in arts, culture and entertainment. This was one message delivered by attendees at the Greater Watertown Jaycees Emerge NNY summit held in October 2009 at Jefferson Community College. Attendees were given the opportunity to reflect on survey results from prior Emerge NNY events that focused on the business climate, arts, culture, entertainment, and volunteerism in the North Country.

Participants were overwhelmingly in support of enhancing arts, culture, and entertainment opportunities in the North Country. They were encouraged by the efforts of the North Country Arts Council and Clayton Opera House, among others, in putting a spotlight on regional talent and enhancing entertainment opportunities. Participants were concerned that the lack of a larger multi-purpose facility hindered the ability to attract large-scale events or concerts to the region.

Participants at last fall's Emerge were pleased with the focus Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties were giving to the coordination of motorized recreational trails, and the work being done to enhance non-motorized trails like bike paths and walkways in communities like Watertown, Potsdam and Ogdensburg.

In addition to the arts and culture, participants identified opportunities to enhance the business climate in the North Country. Opportunities included further identification of alternative energies; renewed focus on maintaining and growing our existing small and medium-sized businesses; on-going rehabilitation efforts in our area's downtowns; and improved long-term government planning and public communication. As in past years, participants were discouraged by the state's energy costs, workforce healthcare costs, taxes, and lack of incentive programs for businesses.

For more information on the Emerge NNY 2009 survey results please go to the website at www.watertownjaycees.org or contact Leslie O'Hara at lohara@wpbstv.org. Additional details are available on the supporting grids attached. Please look for the next Emerge Summit in the Spring of 2011. Look for more details to come!

The Greater Watertown Jaycees is a local chapter of the National Junior Chamber International and is focused on professional development, community engagement and networking in the North Country.

