



## News from Livingston County, NY

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### **Meet the Winners of the 2019 Dream-O-Vate Competition**

**Geneseo, NY, November 15, 2019** — Many small business owners struggle through their first few years with overhead expenses, marketing, and the day-to-day details of managing a new or expanding business. The Dream-O-Vate competition is a game-changer. Developed by Livingston County's Economic Development Office, the competition provides winners with the essential resources and tools needed to successfully open or expand a downtown business including matching grant funds and customized technical assistance.

"The contest aims to increase downtown retail occupancy in the County's nine downtown districts," said Bill Bacon, Director of Livingston County Economic Development. "We're trying to enhance the existing business mix in order to increase traffic and capture greater resident and visitor spending."

Dream-O-Vate launched in January 2019 and garnered the interest of 38 applicants. Participants completed a five-week Business Boot Camp before submitting their business plans to the selection committee. Plans were evaluated based on business concept, community need and impact, readiness, viability, and financial feasibility. Nine winners were announced in May 2019 and since then have been working tirelessly to get their businesses up and running.

"The winners showed creativity and relevance," said Louise Wadsworth, Downtown Coordinator for Livingston County's Economic Development Office.

Ribbon cutting celebrations are scheduled to begin this month for a few winners and will continue into 2020.

The nine Dream-O-Vate winners are:

- **The Boriken Restaurant:** Owned by Melanie Alvarez Santiago, this Caribbean Restaurant will transport visitors to the delights of Puerto Rico. *Grand Opening Celebration: November 22, 2019 @ 11am, 40 Main Street, Mount Morris*

- Sweet Arts Bakery: Owned by Ruth Ann Lewis, Sweet Arts Bakery has added handmade candies and chocolates, a special order cake shop and space for classes and small community meetings. *Grand Opening Celebration: December 4, 2019 @ 3pm, 95 Main Street, Geneseo*
- Honeygirl Gourmet: Owned by Alyssa Cope, Honeygirl Gourmet is curated with high-quality products with an emphasis on local and handmade. *Grand Opening Celebration: December 6, 2019 @ 4pm, 61 Main Street, Geneseo*
- Wendy's Pantry: Owned by Wendy Pospesel Allen, Wendy's Pantry is an old-fashioned candy and high-end food store with an emphasis on items produced in New York State. *Grand Opening Celebration: December 2019*
- Dublin Corners Tap Room: Owned by Justin and Heather Grant, Dublin Corners' second location offers residents, tourists, and college families a taste of their award-winning brews as well as an offering of New York State wines and ciders. *Grand Opening Celebration: TBD*
- Livonia Inn: Owned by Ralph Parker, the Inn will reopen as a multipurpose venue housing two new businesses – Parker's Pub and Commercial Café. *Grand Opening Celebration: TBD*
- Sunrise Bouldering: Owned by Jake Caplan, the facility will encourage a healthy mindset and enable participants to climb up, down, or across artificial rock walls using proper climbing techniques to complete a set number of routes. *Grand Opening Celebration: TBD*
- TrailOtter: Owned by Bill Waterhouse, TrailOtter will sell outdoor safety gear and food, along with items to support visitors and campers at Letchworth State Park and beyond. *Grand Opening Celebration: TBD*
- Jonny B's Custom BBQ: Owned by Jon Belec, this family-friendly restaurant will offer quality southern cuisine for dine in or take out along with a strong entertainment component in the form of a music hall. *Grand Opening Celebration: TBD*

Due to the overwhelming interest in and success of the first Dream-O-Vate competition, the Livingston County Economic Development Office plans to apply for funding to launch a second competition in the future.

For more information on the Dream-O-Vate competition and the 2019 winners, please contact the Livingston County Economic Development Office at 585-243-7124.

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