



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senate Passes One-House Budget Resolution

DAVID J. VALESKY March 26, 2015



The Senate passed its one-house budget resolution this week, with my support. This resolution delivers for hardworking middle class families in Central New York and throughout the State while holding the line on spending. It provides additional funding for school districts, invests in upstate transit to prevent Centro service cuts, and provides property tax relief for homeowners. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue the process with the goal of enacting an on-time, responsible budget.

OCC Students Recognized for Academic Excellence and Service

Two Onondaga Community College (OCC) students received the USA Today Phi Theta Kappa All-New York Academic Team Recognition on March 9 in Albany for their academic excellence and community service. Pictured, at top, from left are OCC President Casey Crabill, Greg Freitag, Alena Cerro, and Sen. Valesky. Cerro is an electronic media communications major and vice president of public relations for the College's Alpha Sigma Zeta chapter. Freitag is a hospitality management major and has maintained a 4.0 GPA while volunteering for campus events, working several jobs, and raising seven children.

Additional Home Heating Assistance Available

Those in danger of running out of heating fuel or having their utility service shut off can now apply for a second emergency benefit through the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). The additional assistance is being made available in light of the prolonged cold weather and additional federal funding awarded to the state. Applications for HEAP are being accepted through Friday, March 27. For more information about the Home Energy Assistance Program, call the hotline at 1-800-342-3009, or visit the [website](#).

Veteran Business Conference

Veterans and members of the military community who would like to start their own small business or expand an existing business will find the resources they need at Operation: Start Up & Grow, a free business conference on Thursday, March 19, from 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. at the SRC Arena & Events Center at Onondaga Community College. The half-day event includes breakout workshops, networking sessions with guest experts and exhibitors, an award ceremony, and free breakfast and lunch. Details are available on the [Small Business Administration website](#).

Green Lots Grants

Next month, the Greater Syracuse Land Bank will award up to two Green Lots grants. Winners can earn up to \$2,000 in capital improvements to be made to a Land Bank lot they lease for community-oriented use. Find out more about the competition guidelines on the [Green Lots website](#). Look over the [list of available lots](#) or the [map](#) of available lots. Applications for the Green Lots Grant program are due April 1.

Even without a Green Lots Grant, a lot can be leased from the Land Bank for a community-oriented purpose such as a community garden or shared recreation space. Contact the Green Lots office for more information on the leasing process: email info@syracuselandbank.org or call (315) 422-2301.

Recycle Your Old Mercury Thermostat or Thermometer and Receive a \$5 Dollar Home Depot Gift Card

Take old mercury thermometers or thermostats to [OCRRA's Rock Cut Road Drop Off Site](#) year-round during normal hours of operation to receive a \$5 Home Depot gift card and a mercury-free thermometer. Not sure if an item contains mercury? Check on the [OCRRA website](#).

DEC Adopts New Freshwater Fishing Regulations

New freshwater fishing regulations go into effect April 1. These regulations will be published in the 2015-16 Freshwater Fishing Regulations Guide, which will be available at all license sales vendors in March. The changes can be viewed on the [DEC's website](#).

Madison County Looks Ahead to Growing Season

Thinking about signing up for a CSA but want to learn more about the idea? Madison County Cornell Cooperative Extension is hosting its first Madison County Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fair on Saturday, March 21, from 2:00-5:00 p.m. at the Madison

County Ag Center, 100 Eaton St., Morrisville. Meet local farmers and learn more about how to buy fresh, seasonal food directly from them.

It's also time for the Madison County Soil and Water Conservation District tree and shrub sale. Prepaid orders are currently being accepted and are due by March 31, with pick up on April 23 at the Pole Barn, 6503 Wes Rd., Hamilton, from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Click [here](#) to view this year's [order form](#).