



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie Helping Local Hospitals Better Serve Community

BRIAN DWYER September 27, 2018

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Thanks to \$450,000 in state funding secured by State Senator Patty Ritchie, four area hospitals which in addition to serving their communities, also provide medical care to Fort Drum troops and their families, are now able to purchase medical supplies that will assist with surgeries and treatment to improve patient care.

“Our local hospitals are critical to the health and well-being of our communities. They are also critical to the mission of Fort Drum, meeting the medical needs of the installation’s 30,000 soldiers and family members,” said Senator Ritchie, who represents Fort Drum and its

surrounding communities. “I am pleased to deliver this important funding to our outstanding hospitals which treat our community and our brave service members and families who give back so much to our region and our country.”

The funding comes as part of a \$1.25 million “Base Retention” grant that was secured by Senator Ritchie in the state budget and aims to strengthen Fort Drum, which does not have its own hospital. It will be distributed as follows:

***Samaritan Medical Center:*** \$200,000 for a new echocardiogram machine to create 3-D pictures of the heart, allowing it to better check a heart’s structure and blood flow to help with the diagnosis and treatment of heart problems.

“Once again, we are extremely grateful to Senator Ritchie for her continued support of Samaritan and the healthcare services we provide to our civilian and military community,” states Thomas H. Carman, President and CEO of Samaritan Medical Center. “This new echocardiography equipment provides a three-dimensional view of the heart, making the images clearer and more precise for our patients and the physicians treating them. This announcement comes just after we recognized Senator Ritchie for her support of our Center for Women & Children, which was announced in 2015 and broke ground earlier this summer.”

***River Hospital:*** \$100,000 for a special microscope used in eye surgeries. It assesses lens options before implantation, allowing surgeons to measure and assign each lens precisely for patients, adding to the hospital’s assisted cataract procedures.

“River Hospital is very thankful to Senator Ritchie for her support of River Hospital and her commitment to the North Country,” said Ben Moore III, the CEO of River Hospital. “The funds to support the purchase of this equipment will continue to enhance and sustain quality specialty surgical services for the River communities. The ophthalmologic surgical

team has begun using the new equipment and it is going exceptionally well.”

***Gouverneur Hospital:*** \$50,000 to purchase “safe patient handling” equipment to help hospital staff lift and move patients, keep patients warm and comfortable, monitor their vital signs and use a bladder scanner to prevent unnecessary and painful urinary catheters.

“We are proud of the high quality services we offer to Gouverneur and the surrounding communities,” said David Bender, CEO of Gouverneur Hospital. “We are very grateful that Senator Patty Ritchie recognizes access to quality care is a critical issue in the North Country. The funding she has acquired for our hospital has been allocated for safe patient handling equipment that will enhance our patient experience.”

***Carthage Area Hospital:*** \$100,000 to purchase new operating room equipment to support orthopedic surgical services, including a new stretcher and a mini C-arm, which reduces radiation exposure to the patient and staff and can be operated by the surgeon.

“We sincerely appreciate Senator Ritchie’s continued support and advocacy for Carthage Area Hospital and the personalized care we provide to the Fort Drum population and our communities,” Carthage Area Hospital CEO Richard A. Duvall said. “This grant will help strengthen our orthopedic program while protecting patients and enhancing operating room safety for all. The Senator is a valued partner in helping to secure needed resources for a rural area.”

Senator Ritchie started the ‘Military Base Retention’ grant program in 2012 to help strengthen Fort Drum, the surrounding communities it partners with and to protect the installation from potential federal cuts.