

## **Press Release-For Immediate Release**

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### **Pen Pal Program Connects Seniors and Youth in St. Lawrence County**

**Canton, NY.**

The St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau has launched a pen pal program, Connecting Seniors and Youth, to benefit our county's elderly and youth population. After completing a successful holiday card drive, it became apparent there's a need to foster and support human connection during this stressful time.

"We are excited to be partnering with St. Lawrence County's Office for the Aging to offer this pen pal program. Our county students are experiencing screen fatigue from e-learning and Zoom meetings and want to feel a sense of community. There are a lot of benefits of intergenerational interaction including having a positive impact on emotional health. Additionally, this is a critical time to combat depression while we continue to self-isolate and socially distance during COVID-19," commented Alexa Backus, Youth Bureau Director.

Office for the Aging Director, Andrea Montgomery states, "This will be a wonderful integration and partnership of older adults and youth. This program will help ease the isolation and loneliness many older adults are facing due to the pandemic."

Students of all grades can sign up through the Youth Bureau by emailing [RZuhlsdorf@stlawco.org](mailto:RZuhlsdorf@stlawco.org) or calling 315.379.9464. Educators are welcome to register classrooms too.

Seniors can sign up through Office for the Aging by emailing [PZimmerman@stlawco.org](mailto:PZimmerman@stlawco.org) or calling 315.386.4730.

In order to ensure the safety and confidentiality of all participants, all letters will be facilitated through the Youth Bureau. Addresses and last names will not be shared. Registration should be completed by mid-February.

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