



Onondaga  
**Citizens  
League**

# Annual Report

## 2010-2011

### Onondaga Citizens League Mission Statement

The Onondaga Citizens League fosters informed public discourse by identifying and studying critical community issues affecting Central New York, developing recommendations for action, and communicating study findings to interested and affected groups.

### Stay connected with OCL

Visit our web site:  
[onondagacitizensleague.org](http://onondagacitizensleague.org)

E-mail: [ocl@syr.edu](mailto:ocl@syr.edu)

Phone: 315-443-4846

Dear OCL Members:

OCL takes seriously its role as “community think tank.” Our studies continuously strive to add to public understanding of key policy issues, and offer recommendations that will improve policies that affect the community’s economic health and quality of life.

Policymaking takes place every day, all around us, and affects every Central New Yorker. Policy is made not just in government, but by nonprofit organizations, businesses, schools, households—each of us has a role as a policy maker. Countless decisions made around a given issue without deliberation, however, can take us in directions we do not necessarily mean to go. OCL’s mission is built on the belief that every citizen has a role in analyzing complicated public policy issues and developing thoughtful recommendations for action to improve decision-making and enhance our community.

Civic engagement is most effective when it brings together a mix of stakeholders to define the questions to be answered, identify the people and the resources needed to understand the issues, and then create the solutions. By involving a range of individuals and organizations in the process and working through shared goals and a common self-interest, OCL’s study process spurs informed community conversations and promotes good public policy.

Sadly, we note the loss of a longtime civic leader, Tom Letham, a very active, honorary member of the OCL Board, who passed away in December 2010. Tom’s affiliation with the Citizens League spanned decades and his involvement in the community brought valuable insight to our board and our studies. His service to OCL included participation in numerous studies, and serving as co-chair of three OCL studies. He is missed.

In the coming year, we hope you will join us as we continue to explore ideas and goals to make CNY an even better place to live and work.

Sincerely,



Anthony Malavenda  
2010-11 Board President



Karen Kitney  
2011-2012 Board President

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## OCL Study Reports

The annual study is the most important activity of the Citizens League. As each year's study gets underway, OCL board members and volunteers continue to work on communication of study findings and advocacy for recommendations from past reports.

### 2010-11 Study: Community Image: Creating a Better First Impression

Board members Tony Malavenda and Merike Treier are co-chairs of the 2010-11 study "*Community Image: Creating a Better First Impression*." Community Image is seen as a significant issue—not just as a question of beautification, but as a critical factor in making residents feel more connected to their community and in making the community more attractive to investment. The study focuses on the importance of the idea of promoting "ownership" of responsibility for a better community image—ownership among government agencies, local residents, businesses and organizations in order to protect our assets and preserve the community character that makes us unique. The report is scheduled for completion at the end of 2011.

### 2009-10 Study: What Does It Mean To Be Green?

The "*What Does It Mean To Be Green?*" study report, released in October 2010, received extensive coverage in *The Post-Standard* and other local media. The report generated praise for highlighting some of the underlying changes necessary in order to protect the environment. Board members **Jason Allers** and **David Holder** co-chaired the 2009-10 OCL study, which focused on public policies to promote the environmental sustainability of Central New York. The study report made important points about sustainability being rooted in our settlement and transportation patterns, and the high degree of importance that local residents place on environmentally-friendly public policies, the need for better public transportation and a culture that promotes biking and walking. OCL will continue to press in these areas.

### 2008-09 OCL Report: Rethinking I-81

The Citizens League continues to be involved in discussions and activities concerning public input and planning for the major I-81 corridor study. OCL was selected by the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council as a member of the Community Liaison Committee for "*The I-81 Challenge*" transportation project public input process. In the past year, OCL has continued to give presentations on the report findings to community groups, and was featured in a post on Streetsblog Capitol Hill on using highway removal to revive downtown economies.

## OCL News

Board member **David Holder** represented OCL at the 2011 annual conference of the **International Town and Gown Association** in Boulder, Colorado in June. OCL was selected to make a presentation on Community Engagement, describing the OCL model, OCL's relationship with University College of Syracuse University, and the community-building results of OCL studies.

OCL was presented with a **Tender Loving Care Award** by the **Preservation Association of Central New York** for promoting preservation and revitalization through creation of the first annual Downtown Living Tour, which has been continued by the Downtown Committee of Syracuse.

## OCL Annual Meeting

The OCL Annual Meeting was held on June 8, 2011 at the Rosamond Gifford Zoo. Retiring board members **Hannah Eherenreich**, **Don MacLaughlin**, and **Doug Sutherland** were thanked for their service to the Board. Board member and past president **Betty DeFazio** chaired the Nominating Committee. Board members **David Holder**, **Heidi Holtz**, **Karen Kitney**, **Grant Reeher**, and **Wendy Riccelli** were appointed to second three-year terms.

New board members appointed to three-year terms commencing in September 2011 are:

**Michael Feng**, PEC, Inc.

**Kristen Mucitelli-Heath**, St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center

**Peter Sarver**, Welch Terrace Housing

**Albert Stirpe Jr.**, Synapse Sustainability Trust

Keynote speaker at the 2011 annual meeting was **David Holder**, president of the **Syracuse Convention and Visitors Bureau**. David spoke on the effects of perceptions and marketing on community image, and the need for us to base our community's messages on the community image we want to project. David described the SCVB's recent market research study and advertising campaign that resulted in a measurable positive impact on potential travelers' perception of Syracuse as a destination, and on increased rates of travel to Syracuse by those who saw the ads. David charged the attendees to envision the future and project an image of the community we want to be.

On behalf of OCL, Board member **Merike Treier** presented the **2011 Levi L. Smith Civic Education Award to 40 Below**, an independent organization launched seven years ago to connect, engage, and empower young adults in Central New York. The group's mission is to harness the collective strength of our communities to make positive change; build pride and hope in our communities; spark a cultural renaissance that will put us on the "creative" map; and make Central Upstate New York a more vibrant place to live, work, learn, and play. As such, it has involved thousands of young and young-at-heart, creative, energetic Central New Yorkers into projects and processes, serving as a catalyst to implement its mission in concert with, and in support of, existing organizations.

On behalf of OCL, Bea González, Dean of University College, recognized **Kathy Goldfarb-Findling**, former executive director of the Gifford Foundation, for promoting civic engagement. Kathy joined the Gifford Foundation in 1999, serving as executive director from 2000-2010. The foundation's mission is to use its financial and human resources to build the capacity of individuals

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and organizations to enhance the quality of life for the people of Central New York. A lifelong Syracuse resident, Kathy dedicated her work at the Foundation to ensure that all the community's voices are heard and civic leadership is developed within all Syracuse communities. The Onondaga Citizens League recognized Kathy Goldfarb-Findling for helping citizens to work in partnership with each other and with the public and private sectors to shape our shared future.

The Levi L. Smith Civic Education Award was named for the founder and former executive vice president of the Citizens League, and honors an outstanding citizen or organization that has contributed to the field and practice of civic education in Central New York. Recipients have demonstrated understanding of, and commitment to, citizen education and involvement in public affairs.

**2010-2011 Board of Directors**

- Rev. Kevin Agee, Pastor/Hopps Memorial CME Church
- Jason Allers, Vice President/Agency Specialists, Inc.
- Sandra Barrett, Executive Vice President/  
Onondaga Citizens League
- Barbara Carranti, MS, RN, Clinical Asst. Professor/  
Le Moyne College
- Elizabeth Dailey, Executive Director/Onondaga County  
Public Library
- Lisa Daly, Program Manager/Internet Consultant
- Betty DeFazio, Corporate Director Community/  
Planned Parenthood of Rochester/Syracuse Affairs and  
Public Policy

- Donna DeSiato, Superintendent/East Syracuse-Minoa  
School District
- Hanah Ehrenreich, Project Manager/CNY Works
- William Emm, CFO/Onondaga Community College
- Marion Ervin, retired executive New Process Gear/  
Onondaga Citizens League
- Karen Hanford/Hanford Pharmaceuticals
- David Holder, President/Syracuse Convention and  
Visitors Bureau
- Heidi Holtz, Director of Grant Making/Gifford Foundation
- Virgil Hutchinson, Owner/BD Trauma Scene Clean, Inc.
- Karen Kitney, retired SOCPA/Onondaga Citizens League
- Michael Lemm/Retired Syracuse Police Department Officer
- N. Thomas Letham, retired CEO/Onondaga Citizens League
- Benjamin Lockwood, Director of Development/  
Housing Visions, Inc.
- Donald MacLaughlin, retired CFO/Onondaga Citizens League
- Anthony Malavenda, Owner/Duke's Root Control, Inc.
- Paul Predmore, Partner/Green & Seifter Attorneys
- Grant Reeher, Professor/Syracuse University
- Wendy Riccelli, Manager, Tax Department/  
Testone, Marshall & Discenza
- Adelaide Silvia, Community Volunteer/  
Onondaga Citizens League
- Cynthia Stevenson, Program Director/Onondaga County  
Office of Aging & Youth
- Doug Sutherland, Managing Partner/Franklin Properties, LLC
- Merike Treier, Assistant Director/Downtown Committee of  
Syracuse

**Financial Statement—September 2010-August 2011**

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Expenses</b>
Membership Dues.....\$7,110	Printing and Postage ..... \$3,188
Corporate Contributions.....2,800	Professional Services.....4,000
Annual Meeting .....3,485	Annual Meeting .....3,435
Bank Interest.....225	Supplies and Miscellaneous .....2,841
Total ..... \$13,620	Total ..... \$13,464
	Net from Operations.....\$156
Opening Fund Balance ..... \$51,200	Year-end Fund Balance..... \$51,356