



PUTNAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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A PHAB-ACCREDITED HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Twelfth Annual Food Operator’s Seminar Held;
Eight Putnam County Food Establishments Honored**

Brewster, NY— More than 135 attendees—chefs, caterers, owners and operators of Putnam County’s food establishments—were in attendance for the twelfth annual Food Operator’s Seminar on April 16 and 17. This year the event took place in the newly renovated Tilly Foster Farm venue, and showcased food prepared by the BOCES culinary students at the farm who have honed their skills under the direction of their instructor chef Christina Holic over the past year.

The seminar had representation from all types of restaurants, delicatessens, food shops, institutional food services and other food vendors. They gathered again, as has become tradition, to learn about new topics and trends in the food industry. The event also offers an opportunity for the health department to recognize food establishments for both “lifetime” achievements, as well as those of the past year.

One “hot” topic on the agenda this year was food waste reduction, which is not only good for the planet, but also helps cut food establishment costs. Other practical topics included restaurant branding and social media, and the top ten critical violations and how to avoid them. The health department also took the opportunity to discuss food safety and operations during the recent power outages this past winter. Presentations given by outside speakers included a talk about food safety measures, and another on dining choices such as the paleo diet, “clean 30” and

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gluten-free options. A demonstration on knife skills and sharpening given by the culinary school students.

The recognition side of the program included the presentation of two Health Inspectors Commendation Awards for distinguished performance to Mia's Pizza and North Brewster Deli & Market. The department's highest and most stringent honor, the Commissioner's Gold Award for operational excellence was presented to six food establishments: The Arch Restaurant, Austin Road Elementary School, Countryside Kitchen, Henry H. Wells Middle School, John F. Kennedy Elementary School and Matthew Paterson Elementary School.

The mission of the Putnam County Department of Health, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), is to improve and protect the health of the Putnam County community, composed of nearly 100,000 residents. Core services include community health assessment, disease surveillance and control, emergency preparedness, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education. For more information, please visit our County website at www.putnamcountyny.com; or visit our social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

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Complete Award Listings

Commissioner's Gold Awards

The Arch Restaurant - George Seitz
Austin Road Elementary School - Robert Campisi, Aramark Food Service
Countryside Kitchen - Lee and Christina Vataj
Henry H. Wells Middle School - Cathy Ashe
John F. Kennedy Elementary School - Cathy Ashe
Matthew Paterson Elementary School - Patrick Rodia

Health Inspectors Commendation

Mia's Pizza - Dante Mazzotta
North Brewster Deli & Market - Saverio Zuccaro

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PHOTO 1—Commissioner’s Gold Award winners included, from left, Patrick Rodia, Matthew Paterson Elementary School, with the interim Health Commissioner Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD; awardees Lee and Christina Vataj, The Countryside Kitchen, and George Seitz, The Arch Restaurant, and PCDOH staff members Shawn Rogan and Lisa Seymour. Not pictured is Robert Campisi from Aramark Food Service, who also received a Commissioner’s Gold Award for Austin Road Elementary School.



PHOTO 2--Awardees also included Saverio Zuccaro from North Brewster Deli & Market, center left, recipient of a Health Inspector’s Commendation Award and Cathy Ashe, center right, recipient of two Commissioner’s Gold Awards for Henry H. Wells Middle School and John F. Kennedy Elementary School of the Brewster Central School District. They are joined by PCDOH staff from left, Shawn Rogan, Lisa Seymour, Mitchell Lee and Brian Stevens.