

REGIONAL NEWS

OFFICES IN UPPER JAY AND CANTON FOR YOUTH ADVOCATES IN EDUCATION

Five VISTA volunteers have arrived in the North Country to spend the next year working as Youth Advocates in education related areas under the direction and supervision of North Country Legal Services, Inc. The VISTA Program is part of the thirty-one member statewide VISTA project of the Statewide Youth Project, a project which has been sponsored by the New York Civil Liberties Union, Rochester Office for the last two years.

William Zukosky, an attorney, and Kim Fulmer, a community organizer, will spend the next year working out of the North Country Legal Services, Inc. Canton Office; while Beth Ralston, Philip Peacock and Roy Ano will be assigned to the North Country Legal Services, Inc. Upper Jay Office. The team will be supervised by Marilyn Ray, Coordinator of the North Country Legal Services Canton Office,

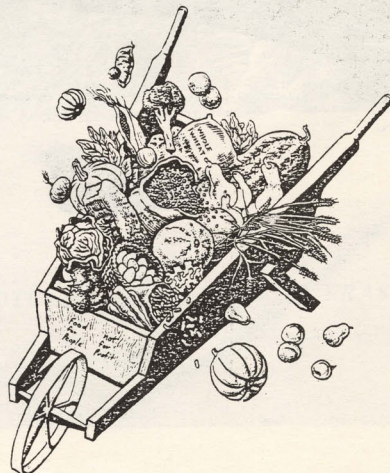
who has worked with the Statewide Youth Advocacy Project for the last two years.

The VISTA Project was designed following Statewide Youth Advocacy Project research findings that approximately 21% of New York State's youth are leaving high school before graduation. Some of these people drop out voluntarily, but others are "pushed out" by exclusionary policies, or they drop out because they feel they will soon be told by school officials to leave.

The objective of the Project is to find out why the students leave school and to train a network of people as advocates to help every student acquire an appropriate education. The network is expected to remain active on school issues even after the VISTA Project is terminated.

FORMATION OF TASK FORCE FOR FOOD AND FARM POLICY IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

The Northeast Task Force for Food and Farm Policy is a formal coalition of political and grassroots leaders in the nine Northeastern states: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania. The Chairman of the Task Force is NYS Assemblyman Maurice Hinchey of Ulster County. The Task Force was formed in 1976 to provide leadership and direction in the critical areas of food supply now confronting the states. It is important that more citizens become aware of the elements and origins of the incipient food crisis, and be alerted to the urgent need for action to avert food shortages in the 1980's. Through the efforts of the Task Force, the skills and resources of the Northeast communities are being focused and mobilized to confront these multiple



and interlocking problems. A series of conferences have brought together individuals and organizations to develop a common analysis and understanding of the situation, to discuss strategies for action, and to establish networks of communication and cooperation.

Thus far, the attention of the Northeast Task Force has focused primarily on federal, regional and state levels of government and economy. It is important that the efforts of the Northeast Task Force be carried on and substantiated at local levels within the various geographic and political regions of the Northeast. This would involve bringing together community groups and agencies to address the issues and initiate local programs of public education and action. A particular concern is to make every effort to encourage farmers and small scale growers, consumers and grassroots organizers to attend conferences and planning meetings. Too often these events bring together the articulate representatives of public and private institutions, but fail to elicit the participation and input of citizens most directly affected by the problems being discussed.

David Yarrow of the Central New York Co-op Coalition has been instrumental in get-

ting an Upstate New York Task Force started. In two meetings so far, held in Syracuse because of that city's central location, representatives of the Ithaca Real Food Co-Op, Rochester Peace and Justice Education Center, Oswego Community Co-Op, Syracuse Peace Council, Syracuse Real Foods, the Natural Farmers' Association of the St. Lawrence Valley, and the Common Place Community Land Trust, as well as a number of organic growers, have met to discuss goals they might have as a group. What appears to be forming is a loosely structured alliance which will be able to draw on the resources, personnel and activities of existing organizations and constituencies. David Yarrow, himself, believes the fundamental message of a food and farm alliance to be that, "we together possess the resources and expertise to solve our problems, which is simply to re-establish a common sense measure of regional self-reliance to our vital food supplies."

The Task Force is seeking individuals or groups for membership. To be put on their mailing list write to: David Yarrow, Task Force for Food and Farm Policy—Central New York Region, 733 Allen Street, Syracuse, New York. Telephone—(315) 474-0635.

CENTER FOR ADIRONDACK STUDIES ESTABLISHED IN SARANAC LAKE

Murray Heller, Professor of English at North Country Community College at Saranac Lake, has recently been announced as the new director for a Center for Adirondack Studies at the College.

The Center for Adirondack Studies intends to make the rich resources and heritage of the region readily available. The Center's primary thrust will be to collect this essentially untapped cultural heritage into the academic world. The Center will also facilitate communications between all historical and cultural institutions now functioning in the Adirondacks.

The overall objective of the Center for Adirondack Studies is to provide the resources to study and learn about the history of the Adirondack region for the edification and enrichment of people interested in expanding



their knowledge of the region; its development, and impact on the State of New York and surrounding areas.

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This will be implemented by having exhibition units and instructional packages at the Center, and extending these programs through involving historical societies and museums; by developing and hosting pertinent conferences and workshops; by functioning as a "clearing-house" for all specific information pertaining to the Adirondack region; by developing a two-year academic program in Adirondack studies.



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