



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IGNITE received grant to raise political awareness among young population

Auburn, NY – Inspiring young professionals to get more involved and go out and vote in local elections is something that most communities struggle with. IGNITE, Cayuga County’s Young Professionals Group, which is a program of the Chamber of Commerce, made those issues their focus for this year. In early July, IGNITE was awarded a matching grant through the We Live NY (WLNY) Livable Communities Capacity Grant Program for their proposed project “IGNITE the Vote! 2011.”

The “IGNITE the Vote! 2011” campaign is part of a step-by-step approach to connect, engage and involve Cayuga County’s young professionals in the community and encourages voting in the upcoming city and county elections. The grant project aims to promote civic engagement, spark interest and participation, increase organizational capacity and support Cayuga County’s young professionals in shaping the community’s future. Throughout the next several months, IGNITE will be conducting activities to promote this initiative.

“We worked hard on this grant application because we believe in order to make a difference in our community we need to take responsibility. We want young people to realize that they have a stake in Cayuga County and that they can make a difference if they get involved. This year, IGNITE focuses on getting our peers interested in local issues and encouraging them to vote. We don’t care who they vote for; what we do care about is that the voices of young professionals are being heard in Auburn and Cayuga County,” stated Monika Salvage, IGNITE Chair.

The WLNY Livable Communities Capacity Grant is a matching grant program funded by Empire State Development Corporation and administered through the New York State Urban Council. WLNY invited applicants to apply for awards between \$500 and \$2,000. IGNITE was awarded the maximum of \$2,000 and committed to raise the same amount to implement the proposed campaign activities. A total of \$4,000 will be invested to inform the young population of Auburn and Cayuga County about the election process, local campaign issues and why it is important for them to go out and make their mark come election day.

“The purpose of this campaign is to encourage our young professionals to take an interest in who is leading this community. If you live here, own a business, have children, pay taxes, own property – you should care about who those elected officials are who shape public policy that affects all of us,” said Monika Salvage.

A program of the



36 South Street ★ Auburn, New York 13021 ★ 315.252.7291 ★ fax: 315.255.3077

IGNITE has already begun its campaign activities by attending the first BID Summer Concert in downtown Auburn, the Cayuga County Fair in Weedsport and the Aurora Fest, all of which took place last week. IGNITE will have a presence at various events throughout the summer in an effort to reach out to young professionals in and around Auburn as well as in the northern and southern part of the county. Depending on the event, IGNITE will either host a table with informational material and voter registration forms or work the crowd by handing out flyers to the targeted audience. In the fall, IGNITE plans to host its own political forum with candidates running for seats at the upcoming elections to give them a venue to connect with the young professionals community.

Andrew Fish, Executive Director of the Cayuga County Chamber of Commerce, said, "We are very proud of all the work IGNITE has been doing to ensure that people in our community recognize and enhance the value of living and working in Cayuga County. This campaign is a testament to the commitment IGNITE has to impact the future of our community and ensure that young people not only stay in Cayuga County, but play an active role in shaping our future."

For up-to-date information follow the discussions on www.facebook.com/ignitency. If you are interested in becoming a member or want to volunteer for the "IGNITE the Vote! 2011" campaign, contact IGNITE at info@ignitecny.com.

Contact:

Monika Salvage, Chair
315-372-9831
liberty1307@yahoo.com

A program of the



www.cayugacountychamber.com

36 South Street ✦ Auburn, New York 13021 ✦ 315.252.7291 ✦ fax: 315.255.3077 ✦ www.IGNITE_CNY.org