



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Mayor Aiello Honors City Volunteers** **John Balacki Named Volunteer of the Year**

**October 28, 2024--Olean**—William J. Aiello, Mayor of the City of Olean, held a Volunteer Appreciation Pizza Party at the John J. Ash Community Center on Thursday, October 24, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. Numerous volunteers who serve the City were invited to attend. Guests represented the Litter Control Group, the Downtown Olean Beautification Group, the Senior Center and the Bartlett House.

In recognizing the Olean Beautification Committee, he said, “We have a group that meets monthly, makes plans for the gardens in the business district and carries those plans through. They design and put together the planters and the baskets. They volunteer in the gardens, and recruit others to join them. Their work does not go unnoticed. I get so many compliments from residents and visitors. They notice the charm that this group has added to our beautiful Olean.”

He added, “There is one member of the Committee, I would like to name as Volunteer of the Year: John Balacki. He has been instrumental in keeping our gardens beautiful and full of life.”

As Volunteer of the Year, Dr. Balacki, received a Key to the City on a plaque that reads, “For his dedication and service to our community especially in the public gardens; for working with the City and outside contractors to implement landscapes he designed; and for cultivating a strong volunteer network of gardeners who have transformed North Union Street into a beautiful oasis.”

Other members of the Olean Beautification Committee include: Susan Bly, Danielle Eaton, Joey Enright, Laurie McCarthy, Kathy Marzec, and Kevin Vogel.

Mayor Aiello also recognized a group of residents who envisioned how Franchot Park could look and took on a project to upgrade the gazebo and the dugouts. The group, which included Marcia Nandillon, Patty Fries, Gary Ahrens and Aaron Kellogg, gave Franchot Park a whole new look.

Mayor Aiello ended the program by adding, “I really do appreciate all the work our volunteers do for Olean. None of your work goes unnoticed. Thank you so much for your dedication and commitment to our community.”

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