

# THE COMMUNITY

One of the largest cities in the Mohawk Valley, Utica is the socioeconomic hub of the greater Utica-Rome metropolitan area (estimated population: 300,000), a thriving area that supports industries such as technology, manufacturing, health care, education, insurance, tourism, finance, and retail. Located 90 miles west of Albany, 50 miles east of Syracuse, and 30 miles south of the Adirondacks, Utica is in the heart of one of New York state's most scenic, historic, and culturally rich areas.

Social, cultural, and recreational opportunities start on the Utica College campus, where students, faculty, and staff can enjoy a wide variety of musical and theatrical performances, poetry readings, art exhibits, and other events. Throughout the academic year, Utica College hosts concerts by local acts as well as nationally recognized performers who play a variety of music, including rock, hip hop, gospel, classical, blues, jazz, and folk. Students are also welcome to attend concerts, plays, and other cultural events at nearby colleges and universities.

The city of Utica and its surrounding communities offer a wealth of cultural assets, including the prestigious Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute and its School of Art, which is affiliated with Pratt Institute; the Stanley Performing Arts Center; the Oneida County Historical Society; the Children's Museum; the Utica Zoo; the National Distance Running Hall of Fame; F.X. Matt Brewery; the Kirkland Art Center; the Rome Art & Community Center; and the Utica Memorial Auditorium. Local residents can enjoy performances by the Utica Symphony; the Broadway Theatre League; the Great Artists Series; and the Mohawk Valley Ballet company. Live acts ranging from Kanye West to Itzhak Perlman have visited Utica, as have entertainers specializing in blues, jazz, rock, Cajun, classical, folk, classical ballet, modern dance, opera, and Broadway theatre. There are, in addition, a wide variety of area libraries, art galleries, and cultural programs from which to choose.

Just a short distance away from Utica are the Landmark Theatre, Burnet Park Zoo, Everson Museum, and Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science and Technology (home to an IMAX theatre) in Syracuse; Vernon Downs Harness Racetrack in Vernon; the Shako:wi Cultural Center in Oneida; Turning Stone Casino Resort in Verona; the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in Saratoga; and historic Cooperstown, home to the world-class Glimmerglass Opera.

Athletic and recreational opportunities also abound. On-campus facilities include a pool, a gymnasium, an athletic stadium, a dance room, a free-weight room, tennis, racquetball, and volleyball courts, a fitness center, and a multi-sport stadium with an all-weather field. The city of Utica's extensive park system includes the Val Bialas municipal ski slope, three large public swimming

pools, an 18-hole public golf course, public tennis courts, picnic grounds, and an abundance of public athletic fields. The Mohawk Valley also offers excellent opportunities for golfing, running, swimming, boating, fishing, hiking, biking, skiing (downhill and cross country), snowmobiling, and camping. Nearby lakes include Oneida, Delta, Onondaga, and Otsego, and there are extensive park and trail systems in Verona, Rome, Brookfield, Chittenango, and Syracuse. Each July the area plays host to the Boilermaker, a nationally recognized road race that draws nearly 10,000 runners from across the United States as well as several foreign countries. And in late February Utica College provides the starting and ending point for America's Greatest Heart Run & Walk, which consistently raises more money than almost any other event of its kind in the country.

Utica is at the foothills of the Adirondacks, which provide ample opportunities for hiking, camping, canoeing, white water rafting, snowmobiling, and skiing. Ski centers such as Woods Valley near Rome, Snow Ridge in Turin, and McCauley Mountain in Old Forge are all less than 90 minutes away. Hunter Mountain in the Catskills, Gore Mountain in North Creek, Whiteface Mountain in Lake Placid, Toggenburg Ski & Board Center in Fabius, and Song Mountain Resort in Tully are considered first-rate facilities for the outdoor enthusiast and are just a day trip from Utica.

The Mohawk Valley is also rich in history. Historic treasures include the Oriskany Battlefield, Fort Stanwix National Monument, Erie Canal Village, Canal Town Museum, Oneida Community Mansion House, and the homes of Revolutionary War heroes General Nicholas Herkimer and Major General Friedrich Wilhelm Baron von Steuben. Less than one hour away is historic Cooperstown, home to the Baseball Hall of Fame, the Farmer's Museum, and the James Fenimore Cooper House.

The Mohawk Valley offers three large retail centers and a multitude of specialty boutiques for shopping, a number of movie theatres including several with discount ticket prices, live music in coffeehouses, taverns, and other small venues, and a wide selection of restaurants offering everything from gourmet meals to pizza and wings to ethnic foods such as Chinese, Greek, Indian, Italian, Jamaican, Japanese, Lebanese, Mexican, Spanish/Latino, Polish, Thai, and Vietnamese.

Safe, clean, and scenic, yet offering the advantages of larger metropolitan areas, the Mohawk Valley is a great place to call home.