

Exhale's First Three Western New York Pilots

A first cohort of respite pilot projects emerged from an initial (2019) learning phase which brought 50+ rural WNY organizations serving family caregivers and older adults together through five workshops to learn and apply creative problem-solving techniques, develop collaborative teams, and identify new strategies for supporting family caregivers. Organizations participating in the training were eligible to apply for respite pilot grant funding. Through this program, three pilot projects were created and are currently experiencing success: [Caregiver Tech Solutions](#), [Intergenerational Enrichment and Educational Respite Program](#), and [Musical Memories Cafe](#).

Caregiver Tech Solutions: Finding Relief Through Technology – Healthy Community Alliance and partners in Cattaraugus and Wyoming counties implemented Caregiver Tech Solutions to focus on how physical and digital technology can be used to help WNY rural caregivers achieve a sense of relief (respite), learn self-care techniques, and solve new problems in caregiving. Project partners include Cattaraugus and Wyoming County Area Agencies on Aging, Directions in Independent Living, Total Senior Care PACE, Homecare and Hospice, Interfaith Caregivers Inc., and Western New York Integrated Care Collaborative.

Intergenerational Enrichment and Educational Respite Program – Allegany-based Ardent Solutions, Inc. leads a pilot focused on intergenerational engagement and the full range of ways in which young people and older adults interact, support, and provide care for one another. Ardent Solutions and partners, Genesee Valley Central School District and Allegany County Office for the Aging, operate the Intergenerational Enrichment and Educational Respite Program where caregivers, older adults, and youth collectively access Genesee Valley Central School District assets and interact through social and educational forums.

Musical Memories Café – West Falls Center for the Arts is expanding its unique approach to an internationally recognized joint enrichment model, the Memory Café, to provide music, socialization, support, education, and an elegant meal to caregivers and their loved ones. Through partnerships now with community, arts, and aging services organizations in Erie and Niagara counties, Musical Memories Café is expanding its replicable model for older adults living with Alzheimer's Disease or dementia and their caregivers, while also developing a new model designed for isolated older adults and caregivers.