



## A Message to our Artist Members

Dear Friends,

**We in the Southern Tier are facing a very dangerous time.** Yesterday, the Steuben County Manager wrote an open letter to the community, which you can read [here](#). The COVID cases in the county are escalating and we are averaging over 30 new cases a day. Steuben County has surpassed 100 COVID-related deaths. When combined with the ongoing surge in Chemung County, it is clear that now is a time for action. In order to protect yourselves, your loved ones and our small business economy, I urge you to take all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of this disease. We all know what they are: *wear a mask in public, wash your hands, maintain physical distance from people outside of your household, and limit the number of people with whom you interact.*

Maintaining the discipline to follow these guidelines is hard. It is easy to let down our guard or even give up altogether. **Now is the time for renewed vigilance.** *The vaccine is coming!* There is a light at the end of the tunnel. We will make it through this time. Let's do it by working together, caring for each other and remembering what we really value – our friends and neighbors.

**When the vaccine is distributed and life begins to open up, our community will need our creativity to recover.** The fundamental necessity of the arts is clearer during this pandemic than at any other time in my lifetime.

**Thank you all for the gifts you give to the community.**

With deep respect and affection,  
Connie Sullivan-Blum  
*Executive Director*