



NEWS RELEASE

Date: 5/25/2016

Contact: Sharon Holbrook-Ryan

Phone: 518-954-3265 **Email:** ryans@libertyarc.org

NYS Program Partners with Liberty Fresh Market

GLEN- Taste NY opened a new service area today on the banks of the majestic Mohawk River at Lock 13 on the NYS Thruway just in time for the 2016 Memorial Day weekend. Situated on the westbound lane between Fonda and Canajoharie, this Taste NY rest area is a destination where motorists can take a break from driving, purchase affordable food and beverages, and where commuters and area residents can purchase healthy food items produced by local farmers and vendors.

Taste NY is an initiative launched by Governor Cuomo in 2013 to promote New York's food and beverage industries. It is overseen by the Department of Agriculture and Markets and has created opportunities for local producers to showcase their goods at large public events, such as the Great New York State Fair. Taste NY has also opened stores at Thruway rest areas along the state's highways and in transportation hubs, enabling travelers to buy New York State's homegrown and homemade products.

The Lock 13 service area is operated by Liberty Fresh Market through a grant from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. Liberty Fresh Market is employment training program for individuals with developmental and physical disabilities supported by Liberty, the Montgomery County Chapter of NYSARC, Inc. The new Taste NY venue will provide seasonal employment from May through October, for four store clerks, two janitorial workers, and a market manager.

"The expansion of the Liberty Fresh Market into the Taste of NY venue is a unique growth opportunity for the individuals Liberty ARC supports. We are able to offer a variety of employment choices in a competitive yet nurturing environment for persons with developmental and physical disabilities," said Liberty ARC CEO Jennifer Saunders. "Opening the door to new employment opportunities, such as these, is essential for the people we support. This partnership with the Governor's Taste NY initiative, the NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets and the NYS Thruway Authority contributes to the growth of employment training programs like the Liberty Fresh Market."

The Liberty Fresh Market, located on Route 30 in Amsterdam, opened in September, 2014. The intent is of the training program is to teach individuals with developmental and physical disabilities the skills necessary to successfully function as an employee in a retail business. At the same time, the Market offers area residents a unique variety of affordable, high quality, healthier food and product choices,

supplied by local growers and producers whenever possible. Currently, the Market offers nearly 50 products from Montgomery County and other localities.

Liberty, the Montgomery County Chapter of NYSARC, Inc. was founded in 1957 by parents of children with developmental disabilities who wished to establish special education programs in the local community. Over the past 59 years, the organization has grown to include vocational, residential, day, family support and health-related services, supporting nearly 550 individuals with disabilities in Montgomery County.

###