



**JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE**

Public Health Facility, 531 Meade Street, Watertown, New York 13601

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May 11, 2026

**2026 Public Health Service Awards of Distinction**

**Watertown, NY** – The Jefferson County Public Health Service has established public health excellence awards to honor employees and community partners for outstanding service in the advancement and improvement of public health. The awards are given annually, and **the ceremony for this year’s recipients will take place on Thursday morning, May 14, 2026, at 8:30 a.m. at the Jefferson County Public Health Service facility, located at 531 Meade Street, Watertown, NY.** In addition to the honorees receiving such well-deserved recognition, the awards are named for the past two directors of public health, Jean A. Bilow and Ginger B. Hall, as well as Retired U.S. Army Reserve Major General Robert J. Kasulke, MD, Jefferson County’s long-serving medical director, who passed away in late 2023.

Employees nominated colleagues and partners over the winter, and the department’s administrative team selected the following 2026 award winners:

**Lisa N. Lagos**

Public Health Educator

*To be awarded the 2026*

**Jean A. Bilow Award for Public Health Excellence**

**Laurie L. Woodward**

Public Health Nurse with the department’s Preventive Services Unit

*To be awarded the 2026*

**Ginger B. Hall Award for Public Health Clinical Excellence**

**Amanda L. Rosen**

Doctor of Nursing Practice - Family Nurse Practitioner, Samaritan Family Health Network

*To be awarded the 2026*

**Robert J. Kasulke, MD Award for Public Health Community Partnership**

The award for public health professional excellence is named for Jean A. Bilow, the first and longest-served Jefferson County Director of Public Health. Much of the department’s current structure and programming was either put in place or greatly expanded through Jean’s leadership. While programs have certainly evolved since her retirement, Jean had a vision that expanded public health’s impact broadly into the greater health care system, and improved population health. The Medical Examiner, Emergency Medical Services, and health promotion programs all happened under Jean’s leadership. Jean also led the department’s responses to a significant meningococcal outbreak, novel H1N1 influenza, pertussis, and other communicable disease responses. Jean’s tenure also saw the development of public health preparedness and response, which was put in place following the 9/11/2001 terrorist attacks.

The award for public health clinical excellence is named for Ginger B. Hall, the second Jefferson County Director of Public Health. Before Ginger became the department head, and during her time as Director, her

tenure greatly advanced clinical care, quality assurance, and quality improvement standards in the home and clinic settings. Ginger also ably led the department's response through the COVID-19 pandemic, and she worked tirelessly to procure funding to establish the first community paramedicine program pilot in New York State, which is measurably and significantly reducing costly Emergency Department visits and hospital inpatient admissions in Jefferson County.

The award for public health community partnership is named for Robert J. Kasulke, MD, who served as Medical Director and Assistant Medical Examiner for Jefferson County over approximately three decades. Dr. Kasulke sadly passed away in November 2023. A hallmark of Dr. Kasulke's career was service to the community and to the country. In addition to his work for the department, he was medical director for Hospice of Jefferson County for many years, he served as a physician for the Gouverneur Correctional Facility, he was a Major General in the U.S. Army Reserves, and he was actively committed to honoring veterans, through both honors programs for veterans that became patients of Hospice, and honor flights to Washington D.C. which supports aging veterans in visiting national war memorials. Dr. Kasulke served his community tirelessly, through active membership on many community agency boards of directors, and he measurably advanced public health in Jefferson County.

Media is invited and encouraged to attend this event.

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