



**Deborah Markley**, is co-founder and managing director of the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, a national non-profit organization. The Center works in partnership with communities to provide research-based, asset-focused comprehensive and customized entrepreneurial development assistance. She leads the Center's empowering research efforts including practice-driven assessment of best models for entrepreneurship development. She has extensive experience conducting field-based survey research

with rural bankers, entrepreneurs, service providers, investors, small manufacturers and others. Markley has a B.A. and M.S. in agricultural economics from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Virginia Tech. Before founding the Center, she held academic positions and operated her own consulting practice.

### **The Ellen C. Burt '42 Endowment for North Country Education**

The mission of the annual North Country Symposium is to convene stakeholders in northern New York to explore and ultimately enhance the region's economic, environmental and social vitality. It is funded by St. Lawrence University's Ellen C. Burt '42 Endowment for North Country Education.

In 2002, Ellen Cuthbert Burt, her husband, Stuart, and their three children, Jeffrey, Laurie and John, gave St. Lawrence University an endowment to support education in New York's North Country. With family ties in St. Lawrence County back to 1835, the Burt family watched the continual decline of the North Country's economic strength and environmental quality, and the subsequent negative effects on educational achievement in our schools and the migration of young people out of the area. The Burt family recognizes that the region's educational institutions—its colleges and its public schools—carry the potential and the responsibility to reverse these economic and environmental trends, and their endowment gift was given with this in mind. It was an act of extraordinary benevolence and faith in human resources in the North Country.

The symposium was conceived as one of the primary initiatives to be sponsored by the endowment. In past symposia, we have mourned the passing of Stuart Burt in 2003 and Ellen in 2006, and we remember them for their vision, benevolence and good spirit. Jeff, Laurie and John continue their support and thoughtful engagement with the work of the North Country Symposium.

15<sup>th</sup> Annual

## **NORTH COUNTRY SYMPOSIUM**

*Exploring Sectors That Drive the North Country's Economy:  
Mapping Systems...Identifying Gaps*

**May 8, 2017**

Eben Holden Conference Center  
St. Lawrence University



*With assistance from the University's Ellen C. Burt '42  
Endowment for North Country Education*

[www.stlawu.edu/north-country-symposium](http://www.stlawu.edu/north-country-symposium)

# MONDAY, MAY 8

## 8:30 a.m. Registration and Refreshments

## 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Participant Introductions

- Welcome: *Lisa Cania, Vice President for Community & Employee Relations, St. Lawrence University*

- Table Introductions: Each person at the table will briefly share who they are, where they are from and why they are here.

## 9:30 a.m. Applying a Value Chain Framework to Sectors that Drive the North Country's Economy

*Deborah Markley PhD., Co-Founder and Managing Director, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship*

## 10:15 a.m. Break

## 10:30 a.m. Value Chain Mapping Group Exercise Instructions

*Deb Markley*

- **Agriculture**
- **Energy**
- **Arts**
- **Tourism**
- **Logistics**

Based on your interests, choose one of the four sectors to explore more deeply in the breakout session. In your sector breakout, begin by brainstorming a more focused list of value chain products.

For example, value-added dairy, local produce, forestry products; biomass, energy efficiency; outdoor recreation, creative arts (music, film). Form small groups (5-6 people) and choose one of these focused products or services to map. Use the value chain mapping handout and work through Parts 1 and 2 before lunch.

## 10:45 a.m. Value Chain Mapping Small Group Activity - Session 1

## 12:00 Lunch - Gather, food and network

## Pop-up Reports on Entrepreneurial Activities

A series of short, pop-up reports from participants on activities they've planned, undertaken or been engaged in since the

last symposium to build a stronger entrepreneurial economy in the North Country. (1-2 minutes long) Be sure to let people know where to learn more.

## 1:00 p.m. Value Chain Mapping Group Exercise Instructions

*Deb Markley*

Return to your sector breakout group and complete Parts 3 and 4 of the value chain mapping handout. Bring your map back to the main room and post it on the wall when you are done.

## 1:15 p.m. Value Chain Mapping Small Group Activity - Session 2

## 2:10 p.m. Return to Main Room - Sit with your sector table group.

## 2:20 p.m. Identifying Commonalities and Realizing Opportunities

*Deb Markley*

Each small group will identify their product or service, point out their value chain map and share 1 gap and 1 idea for filling that gap with the larger group. Leave pages 3 and 4 from the value chain mapping handout on your table so we can collect them at the end of the Symposium.

Discussion: Where is the "energy" for sector development in the North Country? Hint: What products or services were most commonly explored? Where is there some consensus for action in the region? Hint: What common gaps were identified in the sectors?

## 4:00 p.m. Synthesis

Throughout the day, experts have been listening closely to the small group discussions and pulling some important themes and opportunities from the collective conversations. They will share some thoughts on these ideas and what next step actions they suggest for the region.

## 4:00 p.m. Thanks and Adjourn

## SYMPOSIUM OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop an understanding of some key sectors that drive the North Country's economy.
2. Map the value chain systems that underlie these key sectors.
3. Identify gaps in those systems and creative ways to fill those gaps.
4. Build stronger networks and connections with other sector actors and champions that can drive value chain development and a stronger, more durable North Country economy.