

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SHOP LOCAL SATURDAY EVENT AT AMERICA'S OLDEST INDOOR MALL

Watertown, NY - WatertownFirst, the Downtown Business Association, Greater Watertown North Country Chamber of Commerce and Intrepid Broadcasting, Inc. - TUNES 925 /1045 are encouraging consumers to Shop Local this holiday season. And to kick it off, the community is invited to a special holiday event at the **Paddock Arcade**, America's oldest continuously operating indoor shopping mall, on **Saturday, November 28 from 10am to 2pm**. Shoppers will enjoy hot chocolate, carolers, and **Santa Claus will arrive at 11:30am** for free pictures.

WatertownFirst Executive Director Cody Horbacz says the event will focus on the organization's mission.

"Our goal is to encourage the greater Watertown community to shift a portion of spending to local and independent businesses. On average, more than three times of each dollar spent at local, independent stores recirculates in the local economy compared to a dollar spent at chain-owned businesses."

Combined with the recent rise of nationwide campaigns like Shop Small Saturday and Shift Your Shopping, awareness about the many benefits of choosing local and independent is accelerating. Local businesses help employ many more people than seen on the sales floor. They're more likely to bank and source locally, while employing local outside providers like accountants, graphic designers, sign-makers, webmasters, suppliers and many other high-skilled positions. The long-term relationships fostered by local business also cement commitment to civic institutions like schools, churches, and fraternal leagues that aid not just economic prosperity, but community cohesion and trust.

WatertownFirst, a fiscally-sponsored 501(c)(3) organization through affiliation with the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA), is a not for profit network of locally owned, independent businesses and organizations dedicated to building a sustainable community. Their mission is to shift community culture in the greater Watertown area to support the core of independent businesses by encouraging people to buy local and live local. Eligible businesses are more than 50% owned by people who reside in Jefferson, Lewis, or St. Lawrence Counties; are privately owned (not publicly traded); and their owners are the primary, autonomous decision makers.

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