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WEEKEND

OBSERVER-DISPATCH

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2025 | UTICAOD.COM

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Food sits in a local food pantry, waiting for distribution to people in need in this O-D file shot from earlier this year. Local food pantries and soup kitchens expect to see an increase in demand in November if Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, benefits don't go out in November because of the federal government shutdown.

PROVIDED BY CARA DOLAN BERRY

SNAP benefit disruption shows local challenges

Amy Neff Roth
Utica Observer Dispatch
USA TODAY NETWORK

If you've ever thought of donating to a food pantry or soup kitchen, this would be a good time. Local nonprofits are bracing for the perfect storm of food insecurity this fall in winter with the latest flurry coming from the federal government shutdown.

Benefits from the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, likely won't be delivered in November, Gov. Kathy Hochul announced in mid-October. "We're going to see an uptick in clients definitely (without SNAP benefits)," said Sonya Ellinger, director of Foothills Rural Community Ministry in Holland Patent, which runs a food pantry. "They rely heavily on that."

And the increased demand combined with rising food prices will make it harder for nonprofits like hers to feed everyone, she said. "All around, I think it's going to hurt everybody," Ellinger said. "It's not just going to hurt the people on food stamps; it's going to hurt the nonprofits trying to feed them."

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Robert Brooks case not over yet

Casey Pritchard
Utica Observer Dispatch
USA TODAY NETWORK

Though a jury found one of the three corrections officers in the Robert Brooks case guilty of second-degree murder on Oct. 20, there's still one more case that has to go to court and rumblings of a federal case on the horizon.

Brooks, an incarcerated individual transferred to Marcy Corrections Facility on Dec. 9, was brutally beaten with his hands cuffed behind his back by corrections officers while in custody. He died as a result of his injuries on Dec. 10.

An autopsy was conducted by the Onondaga County Medical Examiner's Office and, in February, Brooks' death was ruled a homicide and three of the four corrections officers who had not taken a plea deal with the special prosecutor were on trial; David Kingsley, Mathew Galliher, and Nicholas Kieffer.

On Oct. 20, a jury handed down the verdict for David Kingsley, Mathew Galliher, and Nicholas Kieffer.

The corrections officers indicted

On Feb. 20, the grand jury indictment in the Robert Brooks case was unsealed. At the time, the charges were the following.

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Clinton man arrested for allegedly threatening Hakeem Jeffries

Terry Collins
USA TODAY
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Jan. 6 rioter pardoned by President Donald Trump has been charged with allegedly threatening to kill House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries. Christopher Moynihan, 34, of Clinton, New York, is charged with one felony count of making a terroristic threat. He is accused of sending threatening text messages regarding a scheduled public appearance by Jeffries in New York City.

"Hakeem Jeffries makes a speech in a few days in NYC I cannot allow this terrorist to live. ... Even if I am hated he must be eliminated. ... I will kill him for the future," the text messages read, according to the felony complaint filed in New York state court in Clinton, on Oct. 18. Jeffries, D-New York, spoke at the Economic Club of New York on Oct. 20. The New York State Police said on Oct. 18 that it was advised by the FBI that Moynihan had made threats to kill a member of Congress. "These text messages placed the re-

cipient in reasonable fear of the imminent murder and assassination of Hakeem Jeffries by the defendant," the criminal complaint said. Moynihan is scheduled to appear in court on Oct. 23, New York State Police Trooper Krystal Paolicelli told USA TODAY on Oct. 21. In 2023, Moynihan was sentenced to 21 months in prison on charges including obstruction of an official proceeding for his role in the Jan. 6 Capitol riots. He was among more than 1,500 supporters

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House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-New York, speaks to reporters at the U.S. Capitol on Oct. 17, in Washington, D.C. ANNA ROSE LAYDEN/GETTY IMAGES



Welcoming
SURAMYA SIVARAJAN, MD
Rome Medical Office

SURAMYA SIVARAJAN, MD, has joined Mohawk Valley Health System (MVHS) Rome Medical Office. Prior to joining MVHS, Sivarajan served as a medical assistant for Palms Medical Center in Mississauga, Ontario, and for Relyone Home Health in Toronto, Ontario.

Dr. Sivarajan earned her medical degree from the Medical University of the Americas in Nevis, and she completed her Family Medicine Residency with MVHS.

She can be reached at 315-336-8260.

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