

HCC's Community Recognition: Olean Recreation Center

1. How long has the Olean Recreation Center been around, what types of activities are offered, age groups etc.?

The William O. Smith Recreation Center opened in 1980 and was extensively renovated in 2017 at a cost of 3.3 million dollars. It is a year round facility and is used for:

- Public ice skating rink from September thru early April, various public ice skating sessions, learn-to-skate program, birthday and school parties, adult and youth skate and shoot sessions
- Home rink for practices and games for: Olean Area Youth Hockey, Olean Area High School Hockey, Olean Men's League, St. Bonaventure University, and Alfred State University. Pitt-Bradford has utilized the rink, but currently does not have a team.
- All different age groups are targeted including little ones learning to skate, adult men playing hockey, and senior citizens playing ice bocce and skating

2. What programs and activities does the Olean Rec Program offer for fall?

- We run a Fall/ Winter program out of the former St. John's School for grades 3-8. We have been running this program since 1996.
- Various activities are included in this program including: Open basketball, foosball, X-Box, homework help, arts and crafts, tournaments, special events, holiday parties, recreation during school holidays, boys and girls grade 4-6 basketball league
- All programs are free of charge

- The William O. Smith Recreation Center is open seven days a week for various activities including public ice skating, ice bocce, and adult and youth skate and shoot sessions.
 - The John J. Ash Community Center located at 112 North Barry Street has activities for senior citizens aged 60 or over from Olean and the surrounding areas.
 - The center offers numerous activities including breakfast club, lunch program, country line dancing lessons, Tai-Chi, game days, and AARP driving course and tax preparation.
 - Olean Area Youth Court meets twice per month, this is a juvenile delinquency program for first time offenders between the ages of 7-17.
3. How do you think the Olean Rec helps young people in our community?

Our programming allows youth the opportunity to have activities in a safe and positive environment. Activities allow youth to meet new people and a place to socialize with friends. The Fall/ Winter program gives the kids a chance to relax and decompress after a long day of classes. One of our goals is for kids to learn, and our programs attempt to do that, whether it be learning how to skate, how to play a new game, or how to problem solve.

4. What areas of need do you see in the community?

Try to continue to work in the school system that is where many of the problems seem to develop. Use social media to get your message out. I was very resistant to this at first, but it works.

Good outreach would be to connect with After-School Recreation programs such as ours and Salamanca.

5. Do you have any words of advice for youth and adults in terms of substance use prevention?

Recognize the warning signs, don't be afraid to seek help. I would encourage groups to keep working, don't give up. Ultimately, this prevention starts at home, but as we know that does not always work.