

## Finding Common Ground Series Debuts On WCKN

CANTON - The partners of St. Lawrence County civic organizations working on the Finding Common Ground video news magazine series announce the broadcast debut of their second show in the series.

Finding Common Ground on K-12 Education in St. Lawrence County will air for the first time at 7:30 p.m. Monday and Tuesday on WCKN, Time Warner Cable Channel 30, following Peak Moment TV, in the Potsdam market.

Check the websites for Common Ground, AAUW-St. Lawrence County (<http://www.northnet.org/stlawrenceaauw/index.html>) and the League of Women Voters of St. Lawrence County (<http://slc-leaguewv.org/>) for specific program links.

This local production, loosely based on the Washington Week in Review format, brings together a broad group of people who can put their respective ideologies aside and listen to each other in order to find common values that will lead to solutions to the challenges and problems we all face.

Moderated by Alexandra Jacobs, the media relations/government relations manager at SUNY Potsdam, a group of local people have been meeting since last fall to explore what the future holds for K-12 education in St. Lawrence County.

The guest panel for this discussion includes Tom Burns, district superintendent for St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES;

Elizabeth Kirnie, superintendent of Norwood-Norfolk Central School; Ann Carvill, a former teacher and former Board of Education president at Potsdam Central School; and Donna Seymour, a member of St. Lawrence County Branch of the American Association of University Women and also a parent and grandparent

If you live in the north country, you know that national, state and local budgets are in crisis. These public financing problems are having a harsh impact on our K-12 public schools as well.

With cuts in aid, unfunded mandates and the burden of soaring healthcare costs, these pressures and more have led to political gridlock during the annual budget process.

Meanwhile, some districts have seen civil discourse degenerate to ineffective name-calling and mudslinging. The intense concentration on these issues often obscures not only finding an answer but also the underlying questions:

This Finding Common Ground panel looks at the current state of education and has a productive discussion about these difficult and pressing issues that goes beyond the needs of any one interest group. Join in a conversation that explores answers to meet a broad spectrum of needs around the question of quality education.

The civic partners for Finding Common Ground are AAUW-St. Lawrence County,

the League of Women Voters of St. Lawrence County, Seedcorn, the Center for Excellence in Communication at Clarkson University, and the Communications students at Clarkson University, who provided the technical video assistance.

You can watch the show on WCKN or on YouTube, after its broadcast debut. The Common Ground website <http://commongroundslc.wordpress.com/> is intended to let you read about the issues and help us frame questions that will help us reach solutions to these challenges.

Go to the Common Ground website and give your feedback and suggestions for additional topics. Some suggestions include redistricting, the Farm Bill, and rural poverty issues.

In other civic programming news, a new program has been added to WCKN's cablecast schedule. WCKN is proud to be the local provider of Democracy Now!

This program is distinctly different from your typical corporate TV mass media. Democracy Now! is a daily hour-long news broadcast that is progressive, nonprofit, and independently syndicated. Award winning journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez host the program with guests from around the world.

The show will air on WCKN's Time Warner cable channel 30 for Potsdam and Canton at 10 p.m. Monday through Friday. On Clarkson Friday hockey nights, the program will air after the game.