

2026 Canstruction for Northern New York

The **Youth Philanthropy Council** of the Northern New York Community Foundation invites students at local schools and participating in student groups to create a “Canstruction” project to help with food insecurity in their community and across the North Country.

This group activity encourages students to use their creativity and construct a project made of collected canned food, other non-perishable food items, and hygiene products that will support an area food pantry or backpack program of their choice. It’s a fun and competitive effort with an opportunity to win a prize and help your community.

Project Guidelines

As you design and build your Canstruction project, please follow these project guidelines:

- Each sculpture must be made entirely out of unopened, commercially available cans of food. Hygiene products (toothpaste, soap, shampoo, etc.) are also eligible for use.
- The cans used must be standard sized (approximately 10 to 15 ounces) and cannot be dented, damaged, or expired.
- The sculptures can be no larger than 10 feet high by 10 feet wide by 10 feet long.
- The design and construction of the sculpture must be structurally sound and stable.
- The sculpture must be able to be deconstructed and all of the cans used must be donated to the area food pantry or backpack program noted on your registration form.
- Each team is responsible for collecting and transporting the cans to the competition site and to their recipient.
- Each team is also responsible for raising funds to cover the cost of the cans and any other materials needed to construct their sculpture.
- All sculptures must adhere to local fire and safety codes.
- The sculptures must be designed and built within a specified time frame. **Canstruction for Northern New York submissions are due by Thursday, April 2, 2026.**
- An official form for your completed project will be provided ahead of the submission deadline.
- Overall, the project goal is to raise awareness about hunger and food insecurity, while also providing a fun and creative way for teams to give back to their communities.

Awards

Three opportunities to win \$500 to be directed toward the local nonprofit organization of your choice: Top Collection Award (most items collected); Best Design Award; People’s Choice Award (voting to be conducted online).

Timeline

- January 22 to February 27 — Registration open to schools/student groups to participate
- March 2 — Canstruction begins!
- April 2 — Official project submissions due to YPC/NNYCF
- April 15-17 — YPC/NNYCF announces official winners!

Project Calendar

To support the organization of your Canstruction project as a class/group, below is a sample outline to coordinate your effort. Please allocate enough time and preparation to design and build your structure:

<u>Calendar</u>	<u>Activity</u>
January 22 – February 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sign up for the challenge!• Think about design concept w/ team
March 2 – April 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start project and begin collection!• Procure materials to support design• Determine # of cans/donated items• Identify location to feature project• Coordinate time to build your structure before the deadline• Complete documentation to ensure official submission for the challenge• Organize method to transport collected donations to selected pantry/backpack program
April 6-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prominently feature your finished project on campus and in the community!• Keep structure together to coordinate YPC/NNYCF presentations should project receive an award.• Voting by YPC/NNYCF and community takes place for awards
April 15-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canstruction winners announced!• Coordinate photo/presentation with YPC /NNYCF to highlight challenge winners (this may occur before or after spring break)



Northern New York
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*** **Questions:** Please contact Community Foundation Philanthropy Associate Emily Pfeil:
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Canstruction for Northern New York – Past winners!



Carthage CSD Middle School – 2025 “People’s Choice” and “Top Collection” winner



South Jefferson CSD Junior National Honor Society with “Walk a Mile in Someone Else’s Shoes” received “Best Design” honors in 2025.



Indian River Central School District – 2024 “People’s Choice” and “Top Collection” winner



Canton Central School District’s Banford Elementary School with “We CAN build our ABCs” received “Best Design” honors in 2024.



General Brown Central School's "Giving Tree" project received "People's Choice" and "Top Collection" honors in 2023. This effort was led by the school's high school statistics class.



Stage Notes earned the "Best Design" award for its "Night at the Theater" theme in 2023.