



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie Celebrates 'Maple Weekend' WITH Region's Newest Young Farmer

PATTY RITCHIE March 29, 2014

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State Senator Patty Ritchie celebrated “Maple Weekend” with a visit with the region’s newest young farmer, Josh Parker, a 16-year-old who has set up his own Canton maple sugar operation. Josh’s maple operation uses wood pellets to power his evaporator—the first such operation in the state. Maple Weekend is celebrated each year to promote New York’s maple industry, which will also get a boost from increased funding in the new State Budget. And young farmers like Josh will benefit from a new initiative designed by Senator Ritchie, who is chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, to encourage more young people to pursue

farming as a career. With 2.2 million taps, New York is the nation's second largest maple producer, with plenty of room to grow. Senator Ritchie made sure that the new budget, which is expected to be approved Monday, includes the fourth year of funding for maple producers. Maple Weekend continues Sunday, March 30. Information about participating maple producers and special pancake breakfasts can be found at: [www.mapleweekend.com](http://www.mapleweekend.com).