Our mission is to serve as the informed voice for mental health in rural America, and to provide mental health information and resources. We are working to confront mental health challenges in rural communities and the stigma that surrounds mental illness.

A Message from Rural Minds Founder and Chairman Jeff Winton

In 2022, deaths by suicide increased by 2.6% in the United States – reaching an all-time high of 49,499 suicide deaths – according to the latest estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This statistic underscores the devastating mental health crisis in America, especially in rural communities where suicide rates are 64% to 68% higher compared to those of people living in urban and suburban areas.

Suicide is preventable in most cases. And I believe we can all get involved in some way to help save lives and reverse this rising trend in suicide deaths that is tragically affecting so many people and their families. The death by suicide of my 28-year-old nephew, Brooks, was the tragedy that led to me founding Rural Minds.

This September – National Suicide Prevention Month – Rural Minds is hosting a webinar that will provide suicide awareness and prevention training. We hope you can join us on September 19 at 2 pm ET to learn why people consider suicide, how to recognize the warning signs of suicide and what you can do to help someone in a suicidal crisis. Find more information about the webinar and register for free here.

As always, we are grateful for your continued support and the opportunities to collaborate with other organizations to shine a light on the stigma, silence and suffering that surround mental illness in rural America. In this newsletter, you can read about some of the progress that Rural Minds is making in confronting the mental health challenges in rural America, including cosponsoring the
The next webinar in our Rural Mental Health Connections Webinar Series:
“Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training”

Rural Minds, the National Grange, the National Association of Wheat Growers, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and NY FarmNet are pleased to present another Rural Mental Health Connections Webinar – the third FREE webinar in the 2023 series.

Tuesday, September 19, 2023
2 pm ET | 1 pm CT | 12 pm MT | 11 am ET

Click here to register now!

This webinar will provide suicide awareness and prevention training from Cornell University-based NY FarmNet Family Consultant Case Supervisor Becky Wiseman, LCSW-R, a mental health professional with a presentation that’s relevant to people living in rural communities.

Learn:
- What causes people to consider suicide
- The warning signs from someone who may be considering suicide
- Strategies for managing one’s own mental health
- How to get help for someone in a suicidal crisis.

The webinar will be moderated by Rural Minds Vice President of Communications Julie Lux and presented live via Zoom with the option to hear audio as listen-only.
To honor the confidentiality and privacy of those attending this webinar, attendees will only be able to see the webinar presenters and no one watching the webinar will be able to see the name or image of any other person who is watching the webinar.

This webinar is presented by:

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Collaboration is key for Rural Minds in our work to confront the mental health challenges in rural America and eliminate the stigma, suffering, and silence that surround mental illness. That’s why we’ve created this new feature for our newsletter – Partners in the Spotlight – where we take a moment to recognize organizations that collaborate with us as valued members of the Rural Minds Partnership Council.

In this issue, we highlight the first partner company that joined the Rural Minds Partnership Council – Lundbeck.

Lundbeck is a global pharmaceutical company that specializes in brain diseases. For more than 70 years, it has been at the forefront of neuroscience research. Lundbeck is one of the only global pharmaceutical companies solely focused on the brain, and its research programs tackle some of the most complex challenges in neuroscience.
The company’s pipeline is focused on bringing forward transformative treatments for brain diseases for which there are few, if any, therapeutic options. Lundbeck works closely with patients, healthcare professionals, and the neuroscience community to uncover causes and find new treatments that can bring back quality of life to people living with brain disorders.

Too many people worldwide live with brain diseases – complex conditions often invisible to others that nonetheless take a tremendous toll on individuals, families, and societies. Lundbeck is committed to fighting stigma and discrimination against people living with brain diseases and advocating for broader social acceptance of people with brain health conditions.

Rural Minds Advocacy Update –

*Original Cosponsor of the National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act*

Rural Minds is proud to be an original cosponsor of the National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act – a bipartisan bill that will establish a hotline through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to help provide mental health support, information, suicide crisis intervention, mental health and substance use disorder support services, as well as agricultural-related referral services, for farmers, ranchers, farm workers and families.

We believe the national agricultural crisis hotline will be a life-saving resource that helps farmers and ranchers get the support they need.

*Click here* to learn more about the National Agricultural Crisis Hotline Act.

Confronting Alcohol and Drug Addiction in Rural America

Addiction is a growing health issue that can affect individuals in every corner of America, regardless of their age, gender, race or financial status. However, rural Americans face more challenges in combating addiction to alcohol and
Rural Minds on the Road – Raising Awareness of Rural Mental Health Challenges

Here are some highlights of the events that featured a presentation from Rural Minds over the last few weeks to help raise awareness of rural mental health challenges and provide actionable information and resources for confronting the mental health crisis in rural America.

On July 11, Jeff Winton partnered with Elaine Eaton – a family consultant with Cornell University-based NY FarmNet – to talk about the mental health crisis in rural America and provide actionable mental health information and resources. This mental health symposium was held at the Colonel Harper Grange Hall in Harpersfield, NY. The event was co-sponsored by the Grange and the Stamford Wellness Center and included table displays by Rural Minds, NY FarmNet, and Stamford Wellness Center, as well as one-on-one time with the speakers during refreshments.
On July 13, Jeff Winton spoke at the American Soybean Association's Board of Directors meeting in Washington, DC. During his presentation, Jeff talked about barriers to mental health treatment in rural America, as well as the work Rural Minds is doing to destigmatize mental illness and provide mental health resources to people who live in rural communities.

On August 22, Executive Director Chuck Strand represented Rural Minds virtually at a NAMI Kansas mental health summit – “Standing in the Gap: Rural and Frontier Access to Mental Health Care.” During a panel discussion about mental health challenges in rural and frontier communities throughout Kansas, Chuck introduced access to the free mental health resources on the Rural Minds website, which are categorized by Crisis Response, Topic and A to Z.

Help Us Help Others – A Tax-Smart Strategy for Giving

A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) is a tax-smart strategy to help support the work we do at Rural Minds for individuals and couples 70½ years of age or older. Also known as a charitable individual retirement account (IRA) rollover, a QCD allows you to donate up to $100,000 to a charity from a taxable IRA, instead of taking the required minimum distributions.

With a QCD, IRA assets go directly to the charity you choose. A QCD is not
taxed or included in your taxable income, and you don’t owe any taxes on a QCD. You may find that a QCD provides greater tax savings than cash donations, for which charitable tax deductions are claimed.

Click here to learn more about QCDs and other ways you can help Rural Minds help others.

Make A Donation Today!

IN THE NEWS:

Rural Minds and Mental Health in Rural America

The following media coverage of Rural Minds helps to increase awareness about mental health challenges in rural America and the stigma surrounding mental illness:

**Invisible Americans Podcast – Rural Mental Health with Jeff Winton & Escaping Poverty with Dapper Dan**

Jeff Winton joined Emmy Award-winning journalists and podcast hosts Carol Jenkins and Jeffrey Madrick to discuss mental health challenges faced by people who live in rural communities and how Rural Minds is working to confront the mental health crisis in rural America.

**Lancaster Farming – Mental Health, Addiction Top Rural Health Concerns**

In this recent editorial, National Grange President Betsy Huber discussed the Grange’s partnership with Rural Minds to address mental health and addiction in rural America and provide mental health information and resources to people living in rural communities.

**National Horseman – Rural Minds: Addressing the Mental Health Crisis in Rural America**

This article showcases Rural Minds’ work in addressing the mental health crisis in rural America, as well as the opportunity Rural Minds had to share its mission as the beneficiary of this year’s KC Summer Kick-Off horse show in Kansas City.

**Modern Poultry – Watch for ‘Profound’ Mental Health Strain on Poultry Producers**

Jeff Winton notes the growing mental health strain on poultry producers, the warning signs that someone may be struggling with a mental health challenge, and how you can take action and provide support.

**HealthCetera – Mental Health in Rural Communities**

In this interview that aired on WIOX Radio, Diana Mason, PhD, RN, spoke with
Jeff Winton about his experience with suicide in rural communities, the stigma associated with mental health problems, and what can be done to address these problems.

**California State Rural Health Association – Breaking the Silence: Mental Health in Rural Communities**

This recent episode of California State Rural Health Association’s podcast of “This Is Rural Health” features Jeff Winton raising awareness for the rural mental health crisis and how Rural Minds is working to make a positive change in the mental health landscape of rural America.

**Agri-Pulse Newsmakers – Zippy Duvall, Chandler Goule, Jeanette Jeffrey, and Jeff Winton on Mental Health in Rural America**

In this special edition of Agri-Pulse Newsmakers, Jeff Winton joined American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall, National Association of Wheat Growers CEO Chandler Goule, and HomePorts Executive Director Jeanette Jeffrey to talk about the mental health challenges facing farmers and ranchers across the country and how to break the stigma around seeking mental health resources in rural areas.