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

As you’ll read in this newsletter, the past few weeks have been especially busy and productive for the Rural Minds Team. This included many presentations and media interviews across the country, as well as the launch of our new Rural Mental Health Resilience Program at the 157th Annual National Grange Convention in Niagara Falls, New York, and at the 80th Annual National Association of Farm Broadcasting Convention in Kansas City, Missouri.

Developed in collaboration with the National Grange, the Rural Mental Health Resilience Program is a collection of mental health information and resources to help rural residents become part of the solution to improving rural mental health in their communities. The program materials can also be used by individuals or groups interested in conducting community meetings to raise awareness and provide life-saving information about rural mental health. Learn more about the Rural Mental Health Resilience Program and access, download, print and share the free program materials here: www.ruralminds.org/resilience.

We believe that our partnership with the National Grange on this program is key to confronting the mental health crisis in rural America. We are grateful to Betsy Huber for her leadership as past president of the National Grange and congratulate the newly-elected president of the National Grange, Chris Hamp.

As this year comes to an end, we would like to thank all of our valued partners, sponsors and donors, as well as those who have courageously shared their personal stories about experiencing a mental health challenge in rural America.
Without your support, we could not have accomplished all that we have in our efforts to improve mental health in rural America.

We look forward to working together in 2024 to provide vital mental health information and resources to people living in rural communities in our quest to end the silence, suffering and stigma surrounding mental illness.

The Rural Minds Team extends our warmest wishes to you and your family for a wonderful holiday season and a happy, healthy New Year!

Donate Today!

Ten Tips for Tackling the Holiday Blues

Feeling stressed or sad about the holidays? You’re not alone. A 2021 survey found that 60% of Americans feel the holidays have a negative impact on their mental health, including higher levels of stress, depression, and anxiety, as well increased substance abuse. For people affected by mental illness, the holiday season can be
especially challenging. One study by National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) found that 64% of people with mental illness said the holidays make their conditions worse.

What can you do to take control and manage the increased stress of the holidays? Find 10 tips in this blog to help you do just that.

A Recording of Our Latest Rural Mental Health Webinar Is Now Available

In case you missed our latest webinar, “Managing Mental Illness in Rural America,” a recording is now available. Sponsored by Janssen Neuroscience, this webinar presented one mother’s lived experience with managing her adult son’s mental illness and overcoming barriers to mental healthcare in rural Wisconsin, as well as a community psychiatrist sharing her expertise in treating patients in rural America.

Click here to watch the webinar at any time.

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.

Chuck Strand gave a virtual presentation about Rural Minds to an advanced agriculture class at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, PA. The professor wanted to be sure his students learned about the mental health challenges faced by people in the agriculture field and in rural America. This topic has a personal meaning for the professor, who had lived through the farm crisis and known neighbors who had died by suicide.
Rural Minds Social Media Coordinator Adriel McMahan attended the Louisiana Peer Action Advocacy Coalition’s Annual Summit in Baton Rouge, LA, where she shared mental health information and resources – including information about the upcoming November Rural Mental Health Connections Webinar – with meeting attendees and representatives of local organizations from across Louisiana.

Last month, Rural Minds participated in the 157th Annual National Grange Convention in Niagara Falls, NY. Jeff Winton, NY FarmNet Family Consultant Case Supervisor Becky Wiseman, and Travis Carlson, a writer and independent filmmaker with Pan-American Film Division, presented a session about recognizing and confronting mental health challenges in rural America. Following the presentation, there was a multi-generational discussion on rural mental health featuring Grangers as panelists. The event was moderated by National Grange Community Service Director Pete Pompper, with participation from Rural Minds and NY FarmNet. In addition, Rural Minds and NY FarmNet presented a “Talk Saves Lives” Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training session. During the convention, we also introduced the Rural Mental Health Resilience Program – a collection of free, potentially life-saving mental health resources.
On November 16, Jeff Winton joined Rachael Lansing from Society of Valued Minds on an Instagram Live broadcast to talk about why it’s important to raise awareness for mental health and provide access to resources in rural America, and how Rural Minds is working to do just that.

On November 16, Rural Minds Vice President of Communications Julie Lux participated in a media event during the 80th Annual National Association of Farm Broadcasting Convention in Kansas City, MO, as a guest of agricultural science company, FMC. During the event, Julie conducted interviews with radio broadcasters serving rural America and provided information on Rural Minds and the new Rural Mental Health Resilience Program.

Julie also presented a session focused on solutions to the rural mental health emergency at the 116th Kansas Farmers Union State Convention on November 29 in Salina, KS. The session was sponsored by Health Innovations Network of Kansas.

Rural Minds Founder and Chairman Appointed to NY FarmNet Advisory Board
NY FarmNet has appointed Jeff Winton to the organization’s Advisory Board. A highly-valued partner of Rural Minds, NY FarmNet is a Cornell University-affiliated nonprofit that helps New York State farms navigate transition, opportunity and challenge through educational programming and holistic consulting that addresses financial, family and social stress. For years, NY FarmNet has served Jeff’s farm family and hundreds of other farm families across New York State.

The NY FarmNet Advisory Board consists of 18 members from diverse backgrounds and professions. Board members cover backgrounds in finance, insurance, mental health and agriculture – just to name a few – but all have a common interest in helping New York State’s agriculture thrive. The purpose of the board is to advise the organization’s staff and consultants in furthering and promoting its mission to provide New York farm families with free, confidential consulting services.

Give Hope for the Holidays

If you’re looking for a holiday gift to honor someone special who finds happiness in making a positive impact on others, consider a tax-deductible donation in their name to Rural Minds, a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Give a gift that spreads hope during the holidays by supporting the work that we are doing to improve mental health in rural America. And if you work for a company that provides a matching gift program, your donation to Rural Minds could double!

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

Make A Donation Today!

IN THE NEWS:
Rural Minds and Mental Health in Rural America

Be sure to visit the “Rural Minds in the News” webpage to see media
coverage of our organization that helps to increase awareness about mental health challenges in rural America and the stigma surrounding mental illness.

Click on the links below for some of Rural Minds’ latest media coverage:

RFD-TV – The Rural Mental Health Resilience Program Is Offering New Resources for Those Struggling

Agri-Pulse – Lawmakers Consider Mental Health Resources for Farmers

The Buffalo News – Another Voice: Rural Health Includes Mental Health, But Too Often, Residents Suffer in Silence

American Ag Network – National Grange to Highlight Rural Health at Annual Convention

www.RuralMinds.org

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