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

Spring has sprung and it’s been a busy and productive time for Rural Minds! In this newsletter, we highlight many of the nationwide events and media interviews which the Rural Minds team has participated in recently.

Last month, we presented the “Rural Mental Health Resilience Program Launch Webinar” – the first webinar in the 2024 Rural Mental Health Connections series. The Rural Mental Health Resilience Program provides a toolkit with free mental health information and resources to help rural residents improve mental health in their communities. We were pleased with the overwhelming positive response to the webinar, including record-breaking registration numbers. In case you missed it, you can watch a recording of the webinar here.

As we look ahead to May – Mental Health Awareness Month – Rural Minds will be hosting our next Connections webinar that will focus on managing tardive dyskinesia (TD) in rural America. We are grateful to Neurocrine Biosciences and Teva Pharmaceuticals for sponsoring this upcoming webinar covering important information for people affected by TD, like Todd Donovan, President of the Board of Directors, National Alliance on Mental Illness – New Hampshire. During the webinar, Todd will share his lived experience in managing TD. We hope you’ll join us on Thursday, May 9, at 7 pm ET, for this
informative webinar! Learn more and find a link to free registration below.

As always, we are thankful for you – our valued partners, sponsors, donors and individuals who bravely share personal stories about experiencing a mental health challenge to let others know they are not alone, and to break down the stigma that surrounds mental illness. With your support and collaboration, we continue to expand our efforts to improve mental health in rural America.

Donate Today!

The Next Webinar in the Rural Minds Rural Mental Health Connections Webinar Series:

Managing Tardive Dyskinesia in Rural America

Thursday, May 9, 2024
7 pm ET | 6 pm CT | 5 pm MT | 4 pm PT

Click here for more information and free webinar registration

In recognition of TD Awareness Week and Mental Health Awareness Month, Rural Minds and the National Grange will present a webinar on “Managing Tardive Dyskinesia in Rural America.”

Tardive dyskinesia (TD) is a condition that causes your face, your body, or both to make sudden, irregular movements that you can't control. TD may develop a few months to many years after taking certain medications, including antipsychotic and neuroleptic drugs that are commonly used to treat mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder and depression.

Sponsored by Neurocrine Biosciences and Teva Pharmaceuticals,
this one-hour webinar will feature Todd Donovan, President of the Board of Directors, National Alliance on Mental Illness – New Hampshire, sharing his lived experience managing tardive dyskinesia in his rural community. It will also feature Dr. Mark Frye, a psychiatrist with Mayo Clinic, providing medical expertise and perspective on screening for TD and managing the condition when living in a rural area. A Q&A session will follow.

The webinar will be moderated by Julie Lux, Vice President of Communications at Rural Minds, and presented live via Zoom with the option to hear audio as listen-only.

Register Now!

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 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 National Grange. As co-presenter of the Rural Mental Health Connections Webinar Series and Rural Mental Health Resilience Program, the National Grange has been instrumental in helping Rural Minds increase awareness of mental health challenges in rural America, as well as develop and distribute program materials for mental health resilience and rural suicide prevention.

The National Grange is a family, community organization with its roots in agriculture. Founded in 1867, the Grange was formed as a national...
organization with a local focus. Grange members are given the opportunity to learn and grow to their full potential as citizens and leaders. There are approximately 140,000 members across the country in 1,500 local Grange chapters.

The family is the base of the organization with full membership beginning at age 14. Women have been equal members since the inception of the Grange. The organization also has a Junior Grange program for children between the ages of 5 and 14 years old, which has helped the youngest members of the family learn about community values and citizenship for more than 100 years. The Grange Youth program develops the leadership skills of young adults and young married couples.

The Grange has four levels – Community, County or District, State and National – to ensure that members’ voices are heard. The membership sets the direction and activities for their Community Grange in true grassroots fashion, and those decisions seep up to the national level. Nonpartisan legislative advocacy, educational programs, service projects and social interaction and networking are just a few of the ways local Granges serve their communities and members.

For more information, visit nationalgrange.org.

From the Rural Minds Blog

Unveiling the Sparkle Within:
A Tale of Recovery and Renewal
By Heather Majewski

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. In a recent guest blog post, Rural Minds collaborator Heather Majewski shared her lived experience of struggling with alcohol and drug use, and her journey of recovery and renewal.

Click here to read Heather’s blog post

Rural Minds on the Road – Raising Awareness of Rural
Here are some highlights of the events that featured 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.

Jeff Winton was the guest speaker at Work Well Chautauqua’s general meeting in Jamestown, NY. During his presentation, Jeff discussed Rural Minds’ mission and the important work our nonprofit is doing to challenge the stigma of mental illness and help improve mental health in rural communities across the U.S.

Rural Minds Executive Director Chuck Strand participated in a follow-up discussion on March 13 about the Western Community Assessment Network’s Rural Mental Health Solutions Roundtable for which he was a keynote speaker in February. This discussion focused on organizing mental health events and providing rural communities with more opportunities for talking, learning together and breaking down barriers that can stand in the way of getting the help and support needed.

On February 29 and March 1, the American Soybean Association (ASA) provided Rural Minds with the opportunity to share the ASA booth at the agricultural industry’s largest trade show, Commodity Classic, in Houston, TX. Jeff Winton and Chuck Strand introduced the Rural Mental Health Resilience Program’s free mental health resources. The ASA is also helping to promote the program as a distribution partner. This initiative builds on ASA’s commitment to addressing rural mental health through the #SoyHelp program, which serves as a resource for national and state-specific mental health information in states with soy farmers.

Jeff Winton was honored to present at the
National Association of Wheat Growers
Board of Directors meeting at Commodity Classic in Houston, TX. During his presentation, Jeff discussed Rural Minds’ mission and collaboration with organizations and other nonprofits across the nation to confront the stigma of mental illness and improve mental health in rural communities.

On March 27, Jeff Winton led a town hall discussion about the growing epidemic of mental illness in rural America at the Fredonia Grange Hall in Fredonia, NY. He was joined by Rural Minds Vice Chairman Jim Modica and NY FarmNet Family Consultant Christina Alesia Marsh (pictured above). Christina discussed her experience providing professional mental health assistance to farmers in rural New York.

Thank You for Helping Rural Minds Make a Difference

We at Rural Minds are humbled and thankful to have been chosen as the beneficiary of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Northern Chautauqua in Fredonia, NY, as their "Share the Plate" recipient for the month of April. Each month, a nonprofit organization is chosen to receive the financial contributions from those in attendance when the offering plate is passed. Jeff Winton observes, “Both organizations share many things in common, including the belief that everyone deserves equal rights, including access to healthcare.”

Rural Minds is also grateful to have been selected as a beneficiary for the following upcoming events:

**Big Knob Barbecue & Brew Fest** – a nationally-sanctioned barbecue contest at the Big Knob Grange Fairgrounds in Rochester, PA, on May 25 from 12:30 to 4:30 pm.

**KC Summer Kick-Off** – a horse show that will be held in the Hale Arena, Kansas City, MO, from May 30 through June 1.
We greatly appreciate these opportunities to increase awareness about the work Rural Minds is doing to confront the mental health challenges faced by people living in rural communities.

Help Us Help Others

Rural Minds depends on personal donations and corporate support to develop and distribute free educational information and training resources to improve mental health in rural America. Please consider a donation to Rural Minds to help confront the mental health emergency in rural America and the stigma that surrounds mental illness.

Make A Donation Today!

Rural Minds in the News

Be sure to visit the “Rural Minds in the News” webpage to see media coverage 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:

Facebook Live – The State of Stigma: Mental Health in Rural Communities

Brownfield Ag News – Addressing Mental Health Care Issues in Rural America

NCBA Cattlemen to Cattlemen – Meghan Grebner Interviews Julie Lux, Rural Minds Vice President of Communications

Observer – Quick Communication Has Tendency to Turn Nasty

Morning Ag Clips – Rural Mental Health Nonprofit Introduces New Program at Commodity Classic