



The RTT Collaborative

in rural health professions education and training
Growing our own...together

QUARTLERLY NEWSLETTER » JUNE 2017

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Photo courtesy of: R Longenecker

There are many things we can do together, that we can't do by ourselves. Although each flower is a masterpiece in itself, the beauty of this array of bluebells near Athens, Ohio, is much more impressive as a group.

So it is with The RTT Collaborative! For more information about joining as a participating program see **Page 6**, or visit our new website at <https://rttcollaborative.net/join-the-movement/>.

CONNECT WITH US!

www.RTTcollaborative.net

Message from the Executive Director



Bricolage

For those of you who haven't figured this out yet, I have a fascination with concept words! And one of those words is 'Bricolage.'

'Bricolage' is a French term introduced by French philosopher Levi Strauss last century (not the blue jeans guy!) and used in other areas of higher education to convey the idea of "making do with what is at hand." I was introduced to the word by a medical education researcher at the ICEMEN conference in Thunder Bay last summer.

The concept has been elaborated as an integral element of successful entrepreneurship, and it strikes me that as a strategy it is very relevant to our efforts in rural health professions education. It is also important for our learners. In fact, one of the domains of competence important to rural practice, that several of us describe in an upcoming issue of Family Medicine, is maintaining an outlook of "abundance in the face of scarcity and limits."

Then in February this year, Scott Sonenschein, of Rice University, published a fascinating book entitled, *Stretch: Unlock the Power of Less-and Achieve More Than You Ever Imagined*.¹ Although he does not use the term, he in effect gives practical pointers on how to practice 'Bricolage.'

"People and organizations approach resources in two different ways: "chasing" and "stretching." When chasing, we exhaust ourselves in the pursuit of more. When stretching, we embrace the resources we already have. This frees us to find creative and productive ways to solve problems, innovate, and engage our work and lives more fully."

Last month, right after The RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting in Anderson, SC, I had the opportunity to attend the Rural WONCA meeting in Cairns, Australia. There I did a workshop on the topic of 'Bricolage.' Attendance was excellent and so was the audience's participation. It was humbling to hear from one individual from Africa. He thanked me for the presentation because it affirmed what he had already experienced and had already come to know, in a setting much more resource-limited than my own.

¹ Sonenschein S. *Stretch: Unlock the Power of Less-and Achieve More Than You Ever Imagined*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2017.

Rural programs in health professions education, faced with challenges of low student interest, limited faculty with the necessary comprehensive scope of practice and wide range of teaching skills, and inadequate funding, are an excellent place to employ this strategy. Hardship and limits foster creativity, and it is in the face of hardship that resilience is born.

So, in the coming year, let's "stretch" the resources we have, rather than "chasing" the ones we do not.



Randall Longenecker MD
Executive Director

"One can create the conditions in which surprise is possible. But even when surprise is not forthcoming, nothing has been lost by creating the conditions for it."

G. Gayle Stephens, MD, presenting The First G. Gayle Stephens Lecture at the Second National Conference on Primary Health Care Access, Beaver Creek, Colorado, April 1991.
<http://coastalresearch.org/1991/04/> (Accessed 11-19-2016)



Bruce Chater speaking at Rural WONCA, Cairns, Australia - Photo courtesy of [Rural WONCA 2017](#).

RTTC Annual Meeting

Highlights

Navigating the Rapids: Engaging the Community in Scholarship

April 19-21, 2017

Hosted by: Seneca Lakes Family Medicine Residency Program, Anderson and Seneca, South Carolina; [Presentation downloads are available on our website.](#)



Photo courtesy of: Rural PREP



Photo courtesy of: Rural PREP

Researchers, students and program directors participated in the Community-Based Participatory Research preconference workshop Wednesday afternoon and in a subsequent Rural Health Professions Design & Dissemination Studio on Thursday morning.



The ACGME and Rural Programs

Stacy Potts, M.D., M.Ed.

Chair, Review Committee for Family Medicine

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Discussion

- What do you think is the key to engaging preceptors in faculty development?
- What faculty development modalities have worked at your organization? What made them effective?
- Of the activities described today, which one might be most beneficial and attainable for your organization and why?



This year's meeting included productive conversations with Dr. Stacy Potts, Chair of the ACGME Review Committee for Family Medicine, regarding accreditation challenges and opportunities for rural programs. This year we included a rural residency coordinator track Thursday morning, and later a breakout demonstrating a unique approach to rural faculty development led by Amelia Challender, Denver, Colorado; Kara Traxler, Sauk City, Wisconsin; Marcia McGuire, Seattle, WA; and Lori Rodefelf, Monroe, Wisconsin.



Photo courtesy of: Rural PREP



Three medical students in Dartmouth's Rural Health Scholars program, with their faculty advisor, shared their experiences in preparing for rural practice.



Photo courtesy of: R Longenecker

The conference concluded on Friday with a trip to Seneca and the ever popular panel of residency graduates who answered questions from the audience.

Thanks to all for another successful Annual Meeting! We look forward to seeing you next year in Spokane and Colville, Washington, April 11-13, 2018.

Become a Participating Program

Join the Movement!

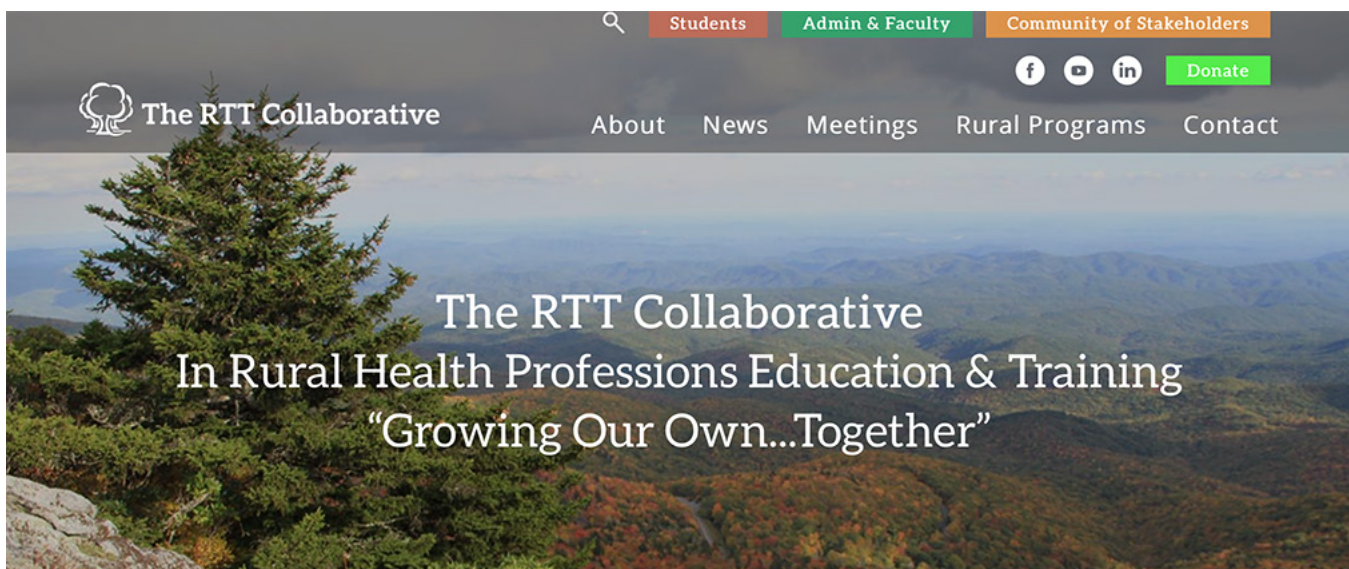
Have you dreamt of joining a network of individuals and programs dedicated to sustaining health professions education in rural places? Your dream is only a hop, skip and a [click](#) away! Please visit the rest of our new website at <https://rttcollaborative.net/>.

Apply to be a participating program with the RTT Collaborative today!

Formal participation in the RTT Collaborative requires an annual fee of **\$2500***. These funds support an administrative infrastructure for the entire cooperative of rural programs, in addition to many benefits including:

- Reduced Conference Fees
- Promotion among medical students
- Technical assistance by phone or. upon request for an on-site visit, at a reduced fee
- Shared research
- Faculty development
- Assistance with matters of accreditation

*Programs-in-development should contact [Dr. Randall Longenecker](#) regarding their particular circumstances, adapting your participation and fees to your particular program needs.



If you have items you would like to be included in the next edition of this newsletter, please submit these ideas by August 1 to Dawn Mollica at mollicd1@ohio.edu.

Participating Residency Program Spotlight

Full Name: Family Medicine Rural Training Track — Colville

Location: Colville, WA

Contact Information: Leslie Waters M.D., Colville RTT Site Director, Spokane Family Medicine

Email: leslie.waters@providence.org

Website: <http://dev.spokane.wsu.edu/sthc/family-medicine-residency/ruraltt.html>

What makes your program unique and different from others?

The Colville RTT was the first Rural Training Track in the USA, making it the longest continuously running RTT. We have done pioneering work in executing a longitudinal Family Medicine Curriculum. We train residents in full spectrum family medicine, including C-Sections, Endoscopy, ED, Hospital Medicine and Outpatient Medicine. Our residents quickly became involved in the community and historically about 1/3 have remained in Colville after graduation.

What do you want people to know about your program?

Last year we doubled our first year class from one resident to two; by 2018 we will have four residents on site (two second year and two third year residents). This will enable us to increase our paid faculty from 0.5 FTE to just above 1 FTE. It doesn't sound like much, but paying faculty at a rural location is a major roadblock to program enhancement

What do you see as the biggest advantage of participating in the RTT Collaborative?

I love meeting other people from across the country who are involved in training residents for rural practice. It is such a rich environment for sharing strategies and getting excited about new methods of teaching. When there is a site visit, it is great to see how other residencies are meeting the challenges involved with rural training.

Is there anything else you would like to say about your program?

Spokane Medicine will be hosting the next RTT Collaborative Conference April 11-13, 2018. We hope to include a visit to the Colville RTT, as well.

Participating Medical School Program Spotlight

Full Name: Ohio University Rural and Urban Scholars Pathways (RUSP)

Location: Athens, OH

Contact Information: Dawn Mollica

Email: mollicd1@ohio.edu



The Rural and Urban Scholars Pathways program (RUSP) at the Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine at Ohio University is a unique participant of the RTT Collaborative. Dr. Sharon Casapulla, the Director of Education and Research for RUSP, explains that the program's mission and goal is to "help prepare students to be effective in practice in rural or urban underserved settings." RUSP was established in 2013 is currently a co-curricular program for students, supplementing their regular academic content. A unique aspect of RUSP that it functions as an integrated pathway, both rural and urban, hence the name of the program. Casapulla explains the logic behind this stemmed from the assumption that whether one works in an urban or rural setting, many of the skills one needs to possess in order to be successful in either place are common to both. "Clinicians in both settings are likely to face similar challenges and opportunities, even though the context is different," says Casapulla. More than that, "Students change their minds." Students may come into the program focused on urban practice, but realize while participating in the program that they are more inclined toward working in a rural community, and vice versa. The program allows for this flexibility and change and helps students see the challenges and benefits of practice in either setting.

This flexibility is one of the attributes that makes it such a strong program, Casapulla believes. One way in which the flexibility has been helpful has been with the workshops that RUSP offers its students on the weekends. The topic of these workshops are based on student feedback and timely concerns. Another part of the flexibility of the program is that students can enter and leave at any time. Casapulla explains, "We have students that may join in their second year, third year, fourth year...whenever they decide they want to be a part of this, we welcome them." Over four years only five students have left, and the 84 students who participated this year represent ~10% of the total medical student body.

There are five key components of RUSP: Clinical Jazz sessions, workshops, coaching, scholarly activity and summer immersion. The Clinical Jazz sessions are 90-minute small

group problem-solving and critical thinking opportunities for students. This is a monthly occurrence with two facilitators, one of whom is a clinician and one a non-clinician. As mentioned, workshops are offered on weekends on various topics of importance for those going into rural and underserved workforce. Each student is assigned a coach with whom they are expected to meet at least twice a year. This coach is someone who has been a practitioner in a rural or underserved setting who can provide advice and mentorship. Students are also encouraged to participate in scholarly activity, where they can ask a research question and either create or participate in a project answering this question. These scholarly activities range in topics and are normally based on the student's own interests. Lastly, RUSP asks its students to spend six months out of their four years in a rural or urban underserved community to shadow physicians that work in these settings. These immersion periods begin during the first summer with funding from RUSP.

RUSP is primarily made up of a "small core management team that helps make it the strong program it is," Casapulla says. "We communicate daily. We have formal meetings, but we also have ongoing communication regarding issues that come up and changes that we need to make." They also have numerous connections to faculty that help develop the program. Faculty members participate as coaches and as Clinical Jazz facilitators. "We don't do it all ourselves. We connect to other people that are already doing this work and bring it together."

As many participating programs would agree, being a participant in the RTT Collaborative proves helpful in many circumstances. For RUSP, Casapulla says that the biggest advantage of participating in the RTTC is the accessibility of people who have expertise. She explains that it's one thing to wait and meet with individuals at a conference to ask questions. It's another thing entirely to have immediate access to an email listserv where you can reach a group of expert colleagues who can answer questions or discuss new ideas. It also helps that the RTT Collaborative is administratively anchored in the Office of Rural and Underserved Programs at Ohio University.

The connections that students make through RUSP are one of the main components that Casapulla emphasizes. RUSP has students across all four years and has about 20 in each class, with a consistent 20 coming in every year as well. Casapulla says that they have managed to maintain connections with a few students even as they go into residency. She says, "This speaks really highly of the program and the connections our students make with the faculty here." As RUSP continues to grow and develop, Casapulla says, "I hope to continue to strengthen the connections that we have with students once they leave and I want to find ways that we can make sure every student has opportunities to connect back to the program."

To find out more information about RUSP, visit <https://www.ohio.edu/medicine/about/offices/rural-underserved-programs/programs/pathways-programs.cfm>

NIPDD Rural Scholarship

2017-2018

The RTT Collaborative Board and the cooperative of rural programs the Collaborative represents is happy to offer two scholarships for the National Institute for Program Director Development fellowship program, continuing the scholarship program initiated under the RTT Technical Assistance grant program for the past 6 years and extending it to eligible individuals in any rural program (not just RTTs), The NIPDD programs is described further at <http://www.afmrd.org/page/about-the-nipdd-fellowship>, including this year's schedule of the three in-person sessions that are a part of the program.

This RTT Collaborative scholarship includes the \$5,500 cost of fellowship registration only. Recipients are responsible for their own travel and lodging costs throughout the year and their programs are responsible for providing release time to attend the required sessions. The NIPDD registration fee does not include registration for The RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting (see below).

Application materials

To apply please forward the following to longenec@ohio.edu:

A letter of application, addressing eligibility criteria, making the individual case for your receiving this scholarship, and agreeing to the required deliverables below

Letter of support from responsible individual (preferably the DIO in your institution) promising you release time to fulfill the meeting requirements for this fellowship

Applicants will be notified of their eligibility by July 1, 2017, so that they can apply to NIPDD in early July.

In choosing the recipients of this scholarship, preference will be given for:

1. Physician faculty from an actively participating program in The RTT Collaborative
2. Program Director, PD in development, Site director, or Associate PD of any rural program (see definition)

Expectations/Deliverables:

Applicants selected for this scholarship must **apply to NIPDD** when applications to NIPDD open in early July 2017 and must be accepted into the program. The RTT Collaborative will then pay the registration fee.

Recipients of this scholarship are expected to **attend all required NIPDD sessions and complete NIPDD requirements** for 2017-2018

Recipients must provide to The RTT Collaborative a copy of both the financial project and the academic project that are required for successful completion of the NIPDD fellowship, and are expected to **attend and present their academic project at The RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting** in Spokane, WA, April 11-13, 2018.

Scholarship recipients qualify for a reduced registration fee to The RTT Collaborative meeting and in addition are eligible to apply for any stipends that may be available.

Deadline for application: Extended to **June 22, 2017**

For more information or questions about the application process, or to apply, contact Dr. Randall Longenecker, Executive Director of The RTT Collaborative at longenec@ohio.edu.



Another faculty Development Opportunity - Courtesy of Rural PREP

Rural programs will receive a calendar invite in the next week or so to participate in a webinar July 27, from 1-2 PM Eastern Time, on "MicroResearch" sponsored by Rural PREP (the collaborative for Rural Primary care Research, Education, and Practice), which Dr. Longenecker will be hosting as associate director for Rural PREP. We will announce an opportunity for residents to fund research projects. We'd love to have you and your residents and faculty join us!

Please visit www.ruralprep.org for additional information about Rural PREP, including research funding support.

Other Information

Need Travel and Meeting Support?

In case you missed it, if you are making a research or scholarly presentation at a health professions education related conference this year, visit www.ruralprep.org regarding a travel and meeting stipend of \$1,000. You or one of your faculty, students or trainees may qualify!

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Faculty Development Webinar

Online

July 29, 2017, 1:00 to 2:00 PM Eastern Time

This inaugural event, sponsored by Rural PREP, will focus on microresearch. Visit www.ruralprep.org for more information.

National Conference

Kansas City, MO

July 29-31, 2017

The RTT Collaborative will have a booth and conduct a Saturday morning student breakfast roundtable at this annual student and resident event sponsored by AAFP. Look for a list of RTTC participating programs who are exhibiting at the conference, as a download from the mobile meeting app for Booth #1133.

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