

QUARTLERLY NEWSLETTER - September 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Executive Director	2
2018 AAFP National Conference	4
NIPDD Rural Scholarships	5
Participating Program and Collaborative Updates	6
Participating Program Spotlight	7
Save the Date	8
Other Information	9



Photo courtesy of: R Longenecker

As summer green fades to gold, we reflect on this season of growth and get ready to turn over a new leaf. Read on to hear more about what we’ve been up to at the RTTC, and learn about some exciting upcoming events, including the 2019 RTT Collaborative Annual meeting.

If you aren’t already a participating program, we welcome you to join this important cooperative. See **Page 6**, or visit our [website](#).

CONNECT WITH US!



www.rttcollaborative.net

Message from the Executive Director



A Sole Beacon or an Organic Community

RTT Collaborative Newsletter – September 2018

Some days I come to work feeling very alone. I feel overwhelmed by the refractory nature of shortages in the rural physician workforce. I hear of medical schools offering free tuition in the hopes of solving the lack of student interest in primary care, in spite of more than a decade of firm evidence that medical debt appears to have little influence over students' career choices. Our leaders in academia and government don't seem grounded in the evidence we already have, and I read their official reports every week, reports that fail to mention the strong evidence that now exists for education and training in rural places. Like the prophet of old, I worry that "I am the only one left" to speak truth to power!



RTTC Annual Photo Contest: Honorable Mention – Submitted by Jennifer Arnold, Minneapolis, MN

The image of a lighthouse has often comforted me – it's solitary beauty, its solid rock footing, and its steadfast functioning through any storm. As a rural educator, I want to be a beacon of certainty anchored in solid evidence in the face of today's chaotic healthcare landscape. I want to be a guide to my students, a leader in my community, a trusted source of information about rural residencies. But just

because I can't see any other lighthouses from where I sit some mornings does not mean there are none. According to Wikipedia, there are at latest count 18,600 lighthouses around the world!

I am a student of metaphor and yet, perhaps like many of you, it's easy for me to forget that metaphors reflect only one possible frame on reality. There are other lights, many of them stars; there are other shores. And then of course, there is that grove of trees that represents The RTT Collaborative – our logo. Our logo is a proclamation that none of us stands alone – we stand and grow together. Interestingly, not unlike a lighthouse, it actually proved quite useful in directing students at National Conference last month to all things rural around the exhibit hall. But it also frames our approach to the rural workforce challenge in a more organic and relational way. We are a living and resilient community – we are lighthouses who can communicate, even visit each other!

The RTT Collaborative, like any good lighthouse, considered showing the way and taking the lead in applying for the Rural Residency Planning and Development (RRDP) Technical Assistance Center grant last month (see page 6). It quickly became apparent, however, that as a small and lean non-profit we did not have the resources. Nor were we large enough to, as a HRSA grantee, weather a storm of regulations and a blizzard of reporting requirements that has sunk ships much larger than ours! Receiving this award would have quadrupled our budget and could have single-handedly taken The RTT Collaborative in a direction that, as a largely self-funded cooperative of programs, we may not have wanted to go. In the end, the Board agreed that although we could provide our expertise as needed and as negotiated to whomever was applying, we did not want our "co-op" to be "co-opted." Instead, as an organization tackling the challenge of rural GME, we will simply align with whomever wins the award. Hopefully the grantees under this program will join our band. We will continue to "grow our own," but not on our own; we will do it together, within our own group of peers and with others.

As you go about your work today, draw inspiration from, but do not get trapped in, a metaphor. A metaphor is only one frame. Any one picture is only a snapshot in time. Be of good courage, we are not alone, and when you emotionally find yourself in that place, look for the reframe!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randall Longenecker". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid.

Randall Longenecker MD
Executive Director

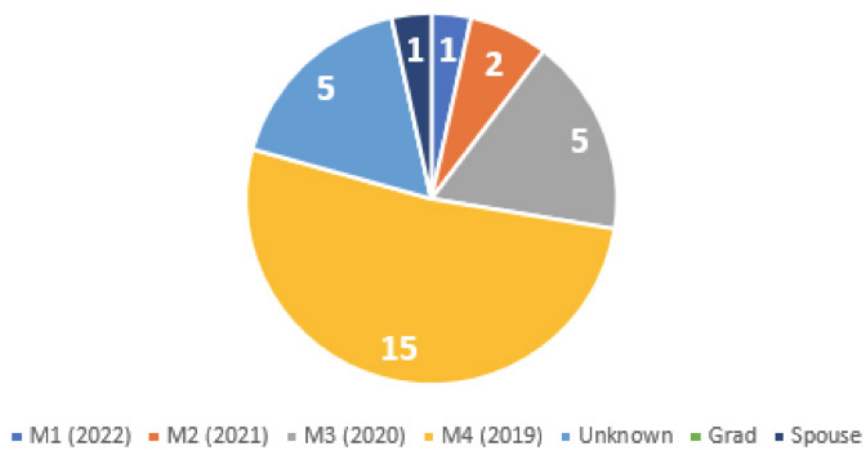
2018 AAFP National Conference

NIPDD Rural Scholarships 2018 - 2019

Highlights

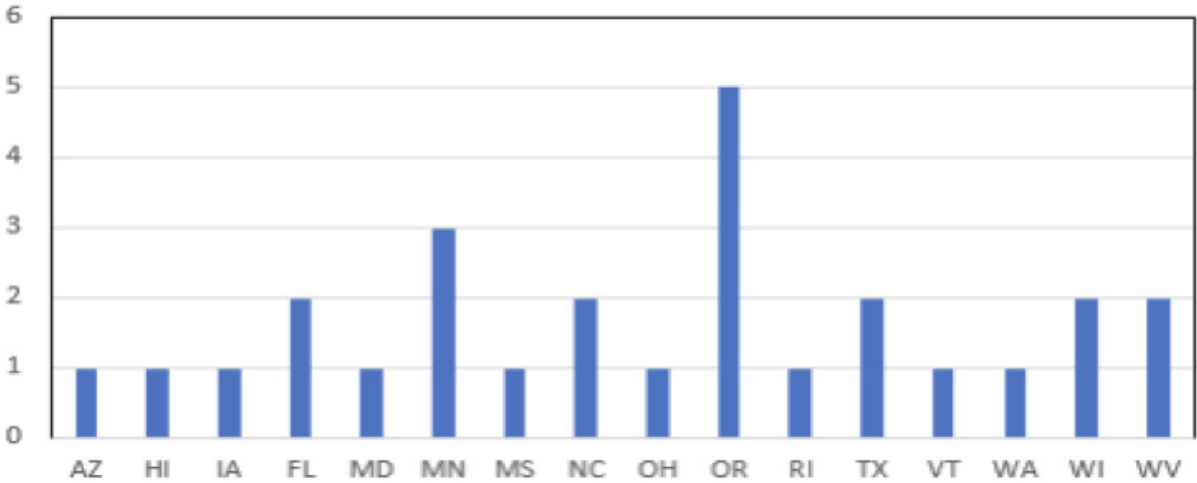
The RTT Collaborative sponsored a booth in close proximity to Rural PREP and 3RNet to create a rural presence at the 2018 National Conference in Kansas City. On Saturday, August 4, the Wisconsin Collaborative for Rural GME (WCRGME) and RTTC co-sponsored a rural student breakfast and focus group at Hotel Phillips. The purpose of the focus group was to encourage networking among rural interest students and gain their perspectives on what students want from rural programs, The RTTC, or a cooperative of rural programs. The NRHA provided a complimentary one-year membership to students who visited the RTTC booth and/or attended the breakfast.

Medical School Graduation Year



Some of the feedback gleaned from students who attended the breakfast include, students need a comprehensive list of programs and how they define rural training; they need to know about career opportunities for spouses/partners; it would also be helpful to have videos available for students to view (a day in the life of...) or testimonials from patients of rural residents. The RTT Collaborative plans to use the suggestions to help become the place where students look for all their rural needs.

State Represented by Students



Recipients

The RTT Collaborative is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2018-2019 NIPDD Rural Scholarships.

Congratulations to:



Craig Burrows, MD
Program Director
Morehead, KY



Virginia Hernandez, MD
Assistant Program Director
Silver City, NM



Valory Wangler, MD
Program Director in Development
Gallup, NM

As scholarship recipients, they will have an opportunity to engage with and learn from seasoned program directors, family medicine educators, and other family medicine leaders throughout the year.

The RTT Collaborative scholarship includes the \$5,500 cost of registration for the National Institute for Program Director Development fellowship program. 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. Read more about the NIPDD fellowship program [here](#).

Participating Programs and Collaborative Updates

Don't Miss Out!

Join a network of individuals and programs dedicated to sustaining health professions education in rural places! To learn more about The RTT Collaborative or to become a participating program, please visit rttcollaborative.net/join-the-movement/

Formal participation in the RTT Collaborative requires a minimal annual fee of \$2,500*. The fees help to support an administrative infrastructure for a co-op of rural programs, in addition to many other benefits including:

- Reduced conference fees to the RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting
- Promotion among medical students
- Technical assistance by phone or on-site visit upon request, at a reduced fee
- Shared research
- Faculty development
- Assistance with matters of accreditation

If you have yet to pay your participating program fee for academic year 2018-2019, please contact Dawn Mollica. *Programs-in-development or those interested in forming a statewide consortia should contact Dr. Randall Longenecker about adapting your participation and fees to fit your particular program needs.

Legislative and Rural Residency Grant Update

S3014, the bill establishing an alternative payment mechanism for graduate medical education in rural places ("RAP-GME" or "rural GME bill") was introduced in the Senate by Senator Cory Gardner (R) of Colorado as the "Rural Physician Workforce Production Act of 2018." The bill was referred to Senate Finance and is now co-sponsored by Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith (R) from Mississippi and Senator Jon Tester (D) from Montana. The text of the bill is available from the Library of Congress, and by creating an account you can register for updates. For a two-page description of this rural GME innovation, please visit: <https://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/events/fmas/BKG-RuralGraduateMedEdInnovation.pdf>

The call for proposals from HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce and Federal Office of Rural Health Policy for a Rural Residency Planning and Development (RRDP) Technical Assistance Center closed August 22, 2018. By September 30 this \$2.4 million award will be announced, and the successful applicant will work with HRSA to finalize the process for awarding individual RRDP grants to developing rural residencies in family medicine, general internal medicine, and psychiatry. The details of that grant program are yet to be defined, but a call for proposals is to be issued and awarded in FY19 (October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019).

Participating Program Spotlight

North Colorado Family Medicine Residency Programs

Located in the charming surrounds of northern Colorado, the North Colorado Family Medicine Program is comprised of five separate residency programs, two of which are rural and one that provides students with a rural focus. As a whole, the North Colorado Family Medicine Program strives to provide excellent training for physicians planning to practice full-spectrum family medicine in any setting.

The two rural Participating Programs, found in the remote communities of Wray and Sterling Colorado, provide resident physicians with all of the knowledge and experience they need to thrive in rural practice. In fact, approximately 60% of their graduates go into rural practice upon graduation and approximately 50% are able to get cesarean section privileges without needing a fellowship. In Wray, every single graduate since its inception in 1992 have gone into rural practice.



Photo Courtesy of [Wray Resident Recruitment Video](#)

For David Smith, MD, Program Director, the task of starting and maintaining these programs has not always been easy. After a successful 6 years of practicing medicine on a remote Air Force Base in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Dr. Smith found his true love, teaching. Eventually, Dr. Smith opened up 3 separate rural training track programs in Wisconsin. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the three Wisconsin programs eventually closed. However, refusing to accept defeat, Dr. Smith began his program in Colorado. With his wisdom and the guidance of the RTT Collaborative, the North Colorado Family Medicine Program is able to bring on 11 resident physicians per year.

"I have found the RTTC to be a tremendous resource for support, education and collaboration," said Dr. Smith "I have greatly enjoyed my relationship with the RTT Collaborative and organization and people."

For more information on this participating program, visit our [website](#).

Save the Date

2019 RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting

Addressing the Health of the Public in Rural Places

Hilton Garden Inn Auburn Riverwatch
14 Great Falls Plaza, Auburn, ME 04210
May 15-17, 2019



Community responsiveness is an important domain of competence in rural practice. Whether as a comprehensive primary care clinician wanting to address the care of his patients in community context, a part-time medical director at the health department, or a volunteer member of a community health advisory board, rural physicians and other primary care professionals must be prepared to wear many hats. Conducting community needs assessments, accessing public health resources for our patients, and working in the community to improve options for exercise and nutrition – all are important skills for rural practice.



Great Falls Balloon Festival, Lewiston/Auburn, ME

Photo Courtesy of <https://blog.cuddledown.com/2012/08/17/up-up-and-away/>

Join us in exploring the implications for health professions education and training in rural places. Attendees are also invited to participate in a pre-conference research Design and Dissemination Studio, and those who do so will be eligible for a \$500 travel and meeting allowance, courtesy of Rural PREP, the collaborative for Rural Primary care Research Education and Practice.

Stay tuned for further details – a call for proposals (late-October), information regarding travel and meeting allowances, and a preliminary agenda. Registration generally opens just after the first of the year.

Other Information

Need Travel and Meeting Support?

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 allowance of \$1,000. You or one of your faculty, students or trainees may qualify!



Upcoming Meetings and Events:

NAPCRG
Chicago, IL
November 9 - 13, 2018

Rural Medical Educators' Conclave
Columbia, MO
February 20 - 22, 2019

RTT Collaborative Annual Meeting
Lewiston, Maine
May 15 - 17, 2019

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

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