

May-June 2024 Rural Roundup



From Team New Rural Project <info@newruralproject.org>
To Steve Johnston <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>
Reply-To <info@newruralproject.org>
Date 2024-06-29 10:00

The New Rural Project's
Rural Roundup
Monthly Newsletter

Dear Steve,

Throughout the Spring, New Rural Project was busy planting the seeds of rural engagement. With extreme gratitude for your support, we celebrated our third anniversary (April 6, 2024) with a grand birthday party on April 29th! We couldn't have made it this far without you. You'll see more scenes of our "3 Cheers for 3 Years" event at the end of our Rural Roundup.



So much is at stake this year and your support of our mission is more important than ever. Meeting folks where they are and helping to empower them through the electoral process will result in better representation and strengthen our democracy as rural voters realize the power of their vote.

[**If you didn't get to support our birthday to propel our work forward, you can still support us.**](#)

DONATE HERE

We also celebrated National Volunteer Month in May, recognizing that volunteers are the backbone of our organizing work in rural communities. We are excited to have our volunteers help us reach even more rural voters as we march toward the important election this fall.

VOLUNTEER WITH US

As always, thank you for your support.

With gratitude,

Cynthia L. Wallace
Executive Director
New Rural Project

LISTENING

We were so excited that the national organization, **Rural Democracy Initiative (RDI)**, asked to spend a day with NRP, its partners, volunteers, and program participants to get closer connected with NRP's rural area and our work. This great day occurred on Monday, April 22. RDI, the first organization to support New Rural Project with a significant grant in 2021, spent the day with us starting with a breakfast at Uptown Yolk in Charlotte, NC that included NRP Staff, board members, and local donors.



We also learned more about the history of Mecklenburg County and its surrounding rural counties during a personal tour of the Levine Museum of the New South.



All of our friends from RDI, including their Executive Director Sarah Jaynes, and NRP team members continued down Highway 74 to Marshville, NC (the home of NRP's first vaccine community events in 2021) so that RDI could listen to the community members impacted by NRP's work.

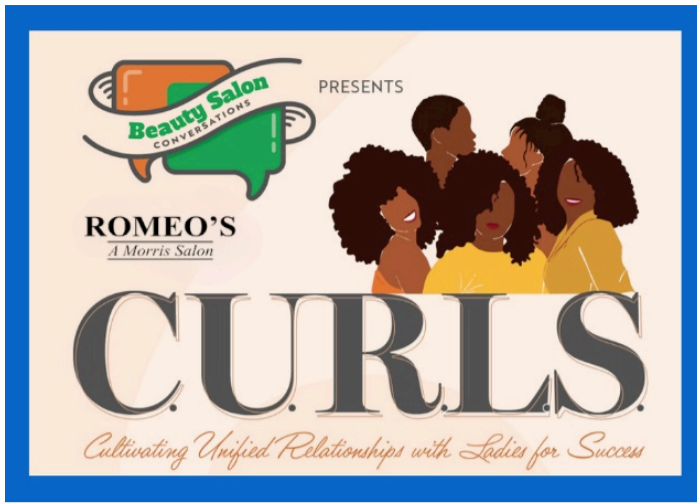
At the Marshville Community Center, **Town Manager Franklin Deese and Community Engagement Coordinator Lakeysha Medlin** led a spirited conversation about the future projects that will improve the town.

Our friends from RDI then joined us for a luncheon and information session at our partner Common Heart's Marshville location. Lunch participants included volunteers and past graduates and chairs of our Union and Anson counties F.A.D.E. and C.U.R.L.S. programs.

Folks shared their heartwarming personal stories and discussed the impact of NRP on their communities. RDI's day concluded with a tour of lovely downtown Marshville led by **F.A.D.E. graduate and Marshville Parks and Recreation Director Allen Jackson**.



UPCOMING



We can't wait to bring the heat and the tea to **Romeo's Salon** in Raeford in July! We are excited that Hoke County-born and raised **Tia Thomas** has joined New Rural Project as a program assistant to lead this next **Beauty Salon Conversations: Cultivating Unified Relationships with Ladies for Success (C.U.R.L.S.)** program in Hoke County. Please help us get the word out and share this [REGISTRATION LINK](#) with all the women of Hoke County!

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

On Saturday, April 20, **Alexa Roberts**, Program Director, was joined by **Kia Smith**, Program Assistant, and **Jarvis Peguese**, Anson County organizer, at the Caraway Center-sponsored annual *Fathers Need Their Sons Health Fair* at Little Park in Wadesboro.

The team provided information to community members about the new healthcare options available to Anson County residents through the expansion of the NC Medicaid program, spoke about the importance of the upcoming election, and let people know that we will soon be hiring canvassers.



HOLLA! Center 5K

With one or two walkers, NRP has participated in our partner the **HOLLA! Center's** annual 5K race in Morven, NC since 2021. But on May 18 in HOLLA!'s eighth annual 5K, we fielded an eight-person team for the first time! This vibrant community event attracted participants from Anson County and beyond and the same was true of the NRP 5K team, which was comprised of folks from several of NRP's focus counties.



ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT



We're looking for a **Regional Organizing Director**. Could it be you or someone you know?!

Responsibilities will include helping to execute our multi-county strategy, coordinating communications with NRP partner organizations and community stakeholders, and helping to plan community events and focus groups.

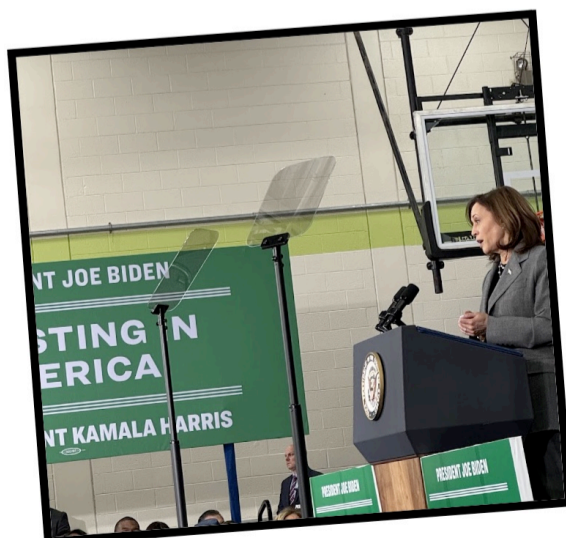
If you'd like more information, click [here](#).

In July, we'll also be hiring canvassers to help us have those very important "front porch conversations" with the folks in Anson, Hoke, Scotland, and Union counties through November. [Keep checking our website for those future job opportunities!](#)

OTHER UPDATES

Inflation Reduction Act Investments

On April 4, **NRP Board Chair Doug Wilson** and **NRP Executive Director Cynthia Wallace** joined others in Charlotte to hear **Vice President Kamala Harris** and **EPA Administrator Michael Regan** announce \$20 billion in awards through the Inflation Reduction Act's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. These awards will expand access to clean energy, tackle climate change, and lower energy costs for communities nationwide.



Celebrating NRP's Third Anniversary!

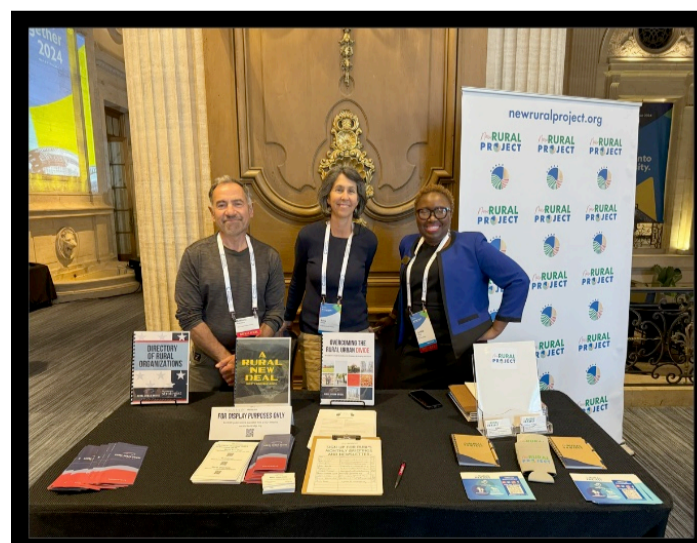
On Monday, April 29, NRP held its "Three Cheers for Three Years" birthday fundraiser! The event was held at the home of former **Charlotte, NC Mayor Jennifer Roberts** and we had a good celebration even as we recognized the tragedy that had occurred earlier that day with law enforcement.



Garrett Snuggs (NRP's first Barbershop Conversation Chair) inspired us as he discussed his journey from NRP-led civic education in his barber school in 2022 to becoming Wadesboro Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem in 2023. Also on our short program was **Jordan Lopez** who we met doing his rural-focused work as a policy analyst for Hometown Strong covering several of NRP's focus counties. At 26, Jordan is poised to become the second youngest person serving as an NC State Representative when he assumes office in 2025!

Council on Foundation Building Together 2024

Executive Director **Cynthia Wallace** was invited by **Anthony Flaccavento** and **Erica Etelson** from **Rural Urban Bridge Initiative** to join them as co-facilitators of a workshop in Chicago at the 2024 "Council on Foundation's Building Together: Leading Collaboratively Across Differences" conference from May 6-9. **Building Together** is the council's sector-wide event for philanthropic leaders who want to develop strategies and skills to bridge differences and counteract toxic polarization.



Over 75 people attended each of the two sessions where Anthony, Erica, and Cynthia spoke about bridging the rural/urban divide, from identifying the issue to suggesting active solutions.

Important Dates for North Carolina's November 2024 General Election

In 2024, with new district maps and new election laws from legislators in Raleigh, it will be more important than ever to ensure that we expand our work to ensure all rural North Carolinians are **ready to vote**. Go to the [North Carolina State Board of Elections website](#) to see what's on the North Carolina ballot for the 2024 general election and more!

**North Carolina
2024 General Election Dates**

- Sept. 6, 2024:** County boards of elections begin mailing absentee ballots to eligible voters who submitted an absentee ballot request form.
- Oct. 11, 2024:** Voter registration deadline (5 PM)
- Oct. 17, 2024:** In-person early voting begins; same-day registration available
- Oct. 29, 2024 -** Absentee ballot request deadline (5 PM)*
- Nov. 2, 2024:** In-person early voting ends (3 PM)
- Nov. 5, 2024:** GENERAL ELECTION DAY
- Nov. 5, 2024:** Absentee ballot return deadline (7:30 PM)*

* Note: Voter registration & absentee voting deadlines are different for military & overseas citizen voters.

New **RURAL
PROJECT**

Thanks for reading! We appreciate you!

Team New Rural Project

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