

Winter Newsletter

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NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH DAY RURAL COMMUNITY STAR

On November 20th we recognized National Rural Health Day. During that time we celebrated the Power of Rural, by thanking the people that kept Maine's small towns strong. We honored rural health care providers, organizations, and community partners who make a difference every day and are committed to helping rural Maine thrive. On Rural Health Day we honored a Rural Community Star. This year's awardee is Franklin County Health Community Coalition, (HCC). The HCC is one of the nation's oldest health coalitions. It is renowned for grassroots public health initiatives. While serving a rural population of nearly 30,000 across a region of mountains and lakes, HCC is a vital link to healthcare services for underserved residents. HCC is a non-profit under MaineHealth's Center for Health Improvement. In addition to programs, they partner with community based organizations and businesses. One of their most rewarding accomplishments was establishing a peer-led Commu-

nity Recovery Center. They saw nearly 2,000 visits, a new dedicated space and expanded to 40 hours weekly. By working with the Office of Rural Health for grant application support, they were able to secure several federal grants instru-

mental in expanding several of their key programs. HCC has shown that rural health is vital in supporting communities and the people that live there.



Nicole Breton with Senior Program Manager Kat Whitney and Clinical Program Manager Karen Garland-Kidder, accepting the award during NERHA's annual conference.



~3RNET Corner ~

Is your facility enrolled to post job opportunities on 3RNET.org? If not, here are some benefits

- The RHPCP does not charge rural facilities to enroll on 3RNET to post their jobs
- 3RNET holds monthly website trainings to show you new features and strategies for recruiting to rural
- Free resources on recruiting and retention
- Every October—December, 3RNET offers the '3RNET Academy' which is a biweekly webinar series with various recruitment and retention strategies. The RHPCP sponsors this academy so all enrolled facilities in Maine can attend for free—**Keep an eye out for a registration code being announced soon.**
- Weekly referrals of candidates interested in coming to Maine sent directly to you

If you are interested in enrolling in 3RNET, please visit www.3rnet.org and click on register employer in the upper right corner. Please let me know if you have any questions.



3 R N E T

Serving rural & underserved communities nationwide for 30 years.

~Rural Resource Guides~

On your 3RNET Dashboard you have access to multiple Recruitment and Retention Guides that 3RNET Develops. These guides are all under the R4R Resource Center (see image below).



These resources include:

- All four parts of the Recruiting for Retention Guide
- Factors to Market your Community
- AI Prompts for HR Teams
- Workforce Programs
- Multigenerational Workforce Guide
- Rural Specific Resources
- And more!

~Make 3RNET more Effective~

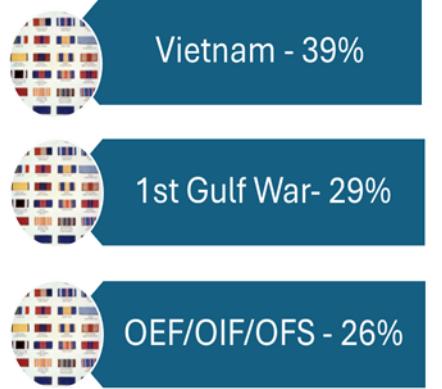
- Check 3RNET Tuesday afternoons. Automatic referrals come to your account every Tuesday.
- Reach out to any candidate you are interested in quickly. With such a competitive climate, we want to catch providers' eyes quickly.
- When deactivating an opportunity, please let us know if you filled that opportunity and from where you sourced your candidate. If you let us know where you sourced your candidate from, it helps us to show the effectiveness of this website and the difference it can make.

~MAINE VETERANS GRANT 2025~

The Veterans Grant, named Somerset 337, was established to address the underserved veterans of Somerset County, through the provision of an integrated care model of care coordination, using community paramedicine and telehealth in collaboration between local emergency management services, the critical access hospital, community primary care agencies and the Maine Veterans Administration Hospital-TOGUS and its CBOC's.

Maine has the highest rate of rural veterans in the nation. 65% of rural areas lack services due to multiple challenges. This program will work within the community of veterans to help them gain easier access to health care. With the aid of telehealth and mobile health care access, many of our veterans will be able to have a better quality of care than they had previously.

Maine has been awarded a Rural Veterans Health Access Program (RVHAP) grant for Somerset County which is funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Somerset County is very rural. With only 12.9 people per square mile, the county also has a high number of older veterans. According to the Defense Manpower Data Center in January 2025, the county was home to an estimated 37 remaining World War II veterans and 185 who served in the Korean War. The chart above shows the percent of Somerset veterans who served in combat in other overseas conflicts.



The 26% includes individuals who participated in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF 2001-2014), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF 2003-2014) and Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS, 2014-2021). These numbers include approximately 100 National Guard members and reservists as well as those service members who were active duty.

The Maine Rural Health Veterans Access Program project, Somerset 337, has been named to acknowledge the number of years since the county was founded (1688) and the military service of its citizens since its important role in the American Revolution to the present.

The project has a single focused program goal: *to develop a community-driven model program to improve the health of veterans living in rural Somerset County through the expansion of access to services.* Somerset Public Health will be serving to lead the project and work with all organizations and agencies who seek to advance this important mission and use innovations like telehealth, community para-medicine or other veteran peer assistance programs.

~Maine Rural Health Guide~

A new tool for Rural Health, the Field Guide was created to help inform, inspire, and encourage connections among people and organizations who want to improve the health and well-being of people and communities in rural Maine.

The Field Guide is an easy to use resource that includes:

- Projects in your region or a topic of interest.
- Ways to connect with people behind projects.
- Getting ideas for new or expanded initiatives
- Information on funding sources
- Details on the depth, breadth, and impact of rural health activity in Maine

The State Office of Rural Health in the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control and Prevention led the development of the Guide and is partnering with the New England Rural Health Association to design and host the Guide website.

Some of the topics to be found on the website, include Oral Health, Healthcare Access, Tele-health and Emergency Medical Services. When choosing a topic, you are guided to studies and information that gives you an idea of the information that helps to keep municipal leaders, citizens, and other members of the community informed and to help make decisions that better benefit the medically underserved in the rural areas.

Call For Projects: Share What Works:

We know there are many health care heroes who are working every day to improve the quality of and the access to health care in their communities throughout Maine. This is your opportunity to collaborate with others and share the strategies you have used and what you learned along the way. Whether the strategy is a small pilot project or a long-running program, we want to hear about it! Projects from clinics, EMS, public health programs, community organizations, tribal health leaders, educators and health care professionals are all welcome.

The hub is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.meruralhealthfieldguide.org. You can also scan our QR code:



NRHA

~Resources~

- The Rural Recruitment and Retention Network ([3RNET](#))
 - Recruitment and retention resources
 - Free Job Board
 - Annual 3RNET Recruitment and Retention Academy
- HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy ([FORHP](#))
 - [The Targeted Technical Assistance for Rural Hospitals Program \(TTAP\)](#)
 - [The Rural Health care Provider Transition Project \(RHPTP\)](#)
 - [The Rural Hospital Stabilization Pilot Program](#)
- The Maine Health Access Foundation ([MeHAF](#))
 - [Responsive Grants Programs](#)
 - [Discretionary Grant Program](#)
 - [Meeting Support Program](#)
 - Reports and Research

Net-

- The National Rural Health Association ([NRHA](#))
- The New England Rural Health Association ([NERHA](#))
 - [The New England Rural Health Association Rural Data Analysis Dashboard](#)
- The [Rural Health and Primary Care Program Website](#)
 - Funding Opportunity Announcements
 - Rural Health Updates
 - State Workforce Program Updates
 - Upcoming Webinars and Events
 - Other Rural Health Resources
- The [Rural Health Information Hub \(RHIhub\)](#)
 - Find Funding Opportunities
 - Rural Data
 - An online library
 - Articles on Rural Health Issues
- [The Rural Health Research Gateway](#)
 - Anything related to Rural Health Research
 - Webinars
- The United States Department of Agriculture ([USDA](#))
- Dental Directory
 - The Maine CDC, DHHS, Oral Health-Health Program
 - MaineCare Provider Directory
- Maine Rural Health Field Guide



~Tallo~

Tallo is a website that targets middle schoolers through early college students and provides them with career exploration tools that match students to potential careers, students can work on building skills, and they even offer some scholarships to students.

Teachers at schools can also request a speaker from Tallo to speak virtually in their classroom to showcase a certain career.

Students enroll in the website and can view job opportunities that facilities post and they can start discussions with those facilities.

The Rural Health and Primary Care Program partners with Tallo to work with facilities in Maine to enroll in Tallo so that they can get their opportunities posted and start conversating with future providers.

For more information on [Tallo](#), go to tallo.com



~Staffing Changes at the RHPCP~

The RHPCP is pleased to welcome Glenn Damon. Glenn will be the Rural Health Workforce Coordinator. He spent eight years as a technical writer-editor for the federal CDC journal, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. He has worked in many positions developing plans and documentation for private companies and the military. While his parents are Maine native, Glenn hails from Rhode Island. He moved with his parents back to Maine at the age of four.

At 18 he started college at the University of Southern Maine and later transferred to Georgia Southern University. He has lived in the south primarily until returning to Maine in 2024. He is looking forward to working with the Rural Health and Primary Care program team and making a difference in rural health. We are glad to have him with us. If you have any questions for him, you can reach him at Glenn.Damon@maine.gov.

Comments or Questions?

Feel free to email us at ashley.pomerleau@maine.gov

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