

Building Networks & Leadership

with women in rural communities



Issue 3 2020

100 in 100

The Breakfast Club
Webinar Series

The Reading Room
Monthly Series

Women in the Spotlight
Cheryl Hills

100 in 100

Join us as we launch one of our signature programs, "**100 in 100**". We will be bringing rural women together in 100 gatherings in 100 communities/areas across the state of MN to research existing formal and informal networks of rural women while identifying opportunities and connecting local women to each other. Our goal is to ignite action in community, leadership, civic engagement, rural entrepreneurship and more.

We are excited to announce the kick-off of our first pilot project of "100 in 100" in Northwestern Minnesota. This project was made possible through funding from the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs and the Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships at the University of Minnesota.

Let's continue Building the Network for this pilot project. Please help us and complete this [contact survey](#) and share to friends and colleagues you have in NW Minnesota.

We want to celebrate and support ALL women in connecting, developing new and stronger relationships, and building leadership together. Together we will grow and learn so much from each other— starting in a virtual space that you can access from your own home.

COVID: The Women's Recession

Breakfast Club Webinar

Wednesday, November 18th @ 8:30 am Central

Register in advance for this meeting [HERE](#).

What makes women in rural MN especially vulnerable to current economic change caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

Please join 100 Rural Women for a conversation about the economic impact of COVID on rural women. Three panelists will be sharing what makes women in rural MN especially vulnerable to current economic challenges. They will then describe efforts to improve and create more entrepreneurship and invite collaboration on an emerging research project on how employment, home-based businesses, and incomes have been impacted by the economic disruptions.

Panelists joining us are Brigid Tuck, Rani Bhattacharyya & DeeDee LeMier, members of the Community Economics team at UMN Extension.

The Reading Room

This month, we officially launched our book club program, **The Reading Room**. We are excited to be creating a community devoted to uplifting rural women creators. For session one we are reading *Heartland* by Sarah Smarsh.

We will be meeting monthly. Our next meeting is Wednesday, December 9th at 7 pm. Join us to discuss *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich. Click [here](#) to learn more about getting involved in the next session! We are using a forum attached to our website to discuss the book, ask questions, and engage virtually.

Election Day Voting Recap

Check out our [ZOOM recording](#) for our discussion with election expert Tracey Chase, Township Clerk in Marcell, MN. We discussed a variety of topics including the roles of election judges, what to expect at the polls on Election Day, how important it is to VOTE and to assure your vote is counted.



Meet Our Board Members & Interns!

Learn more about our amazing board of directors and their work to help us keep this organization going [here](#). Thanks to: Terri Foley, Rachel Juritsch, Benya Kraus, and Erica Bjelland.

Also get to know our awesome interns helping to build 100 Rural Women [here](#). Thanks to: Hannah Lepper, Jazlynn Smith, Breanna Ohl, Hannah Angle, Alexa Jo Schafer, Megan Weilandt, Xandra Okori, Breanna Bahr, Annabelle Sachs, and Natalie Tyler.

Cheryal Hills

Executive Director, Region Five Development Commission

Jazlynn Smith



In the summer of 2020, one of our interns was able to sit down with Cheryal and get to know her. She discussed her highs and lows, inspirations, and even advice she would offer to a former self.

"Showcase leadership through relationship."

Cheryal identifies herself as professionally diverse. She owned a low-voltage company for over 30 years with her husband, ran a non-profit builders association, was a hospice nurse and has been with Region Five Development Commission (R5DC) since 2006. R5DC is a regional unit of government serving five counties in Central MN through 5 lending programs, transportation initiatives, community planning, renewable energy, broadband, local foods, welcoming communities projects/programs and more.

Check out Cheryal's spotlight profile and Q & A [here](#). And learn more about Cheryal and her work with R5DC [here](#).

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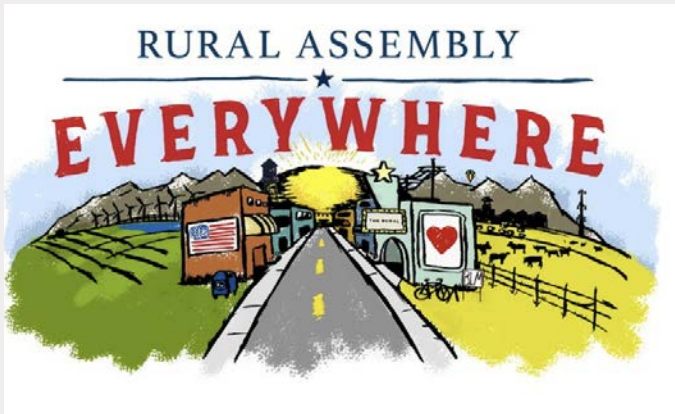


From our Rural Partners



Sponsored by Extension, the Greater Mankato Diversity Council and other supporters, the 2020 Rural MN Equity Summit will focus on the theme of “Building equity by becoming anti-racist.” Taking place Nov. 16-17, the virtual summit offers speakers, breakout discussions, networking opportunities, learning circles, practical tips and ideas, and sources of inspiration.

[Read More and Register...](#)



Rural rockstars and small-town superheroes gathered virtually over five days last month.

Rural Assembly Everywhere was a virtual festival for the curious and the critical, the listeners and the connectors. It’s geared toward rural allies, neighbors, and admirers. The goal of Rural Assembly Everywhere is to create an experience that will **inform**, **entertain**, **inspire**, and **demonstrate** how we belong to each other. Benya Kraus, Executive Director of Lead for America and 100 Rural Women Board Member, presented and facilitated a discussion with Sarah Smarsh, Author of Heartland.

Learn more at ruralassembly.org/everywhere.



Check out the presenters, conversation starters and content from the Broadband 2020, annual broadband conference (inaugural online format). Here are links to individual sessions, in reverse chronological order: [Broadband 2020: Connected We Stand](#)