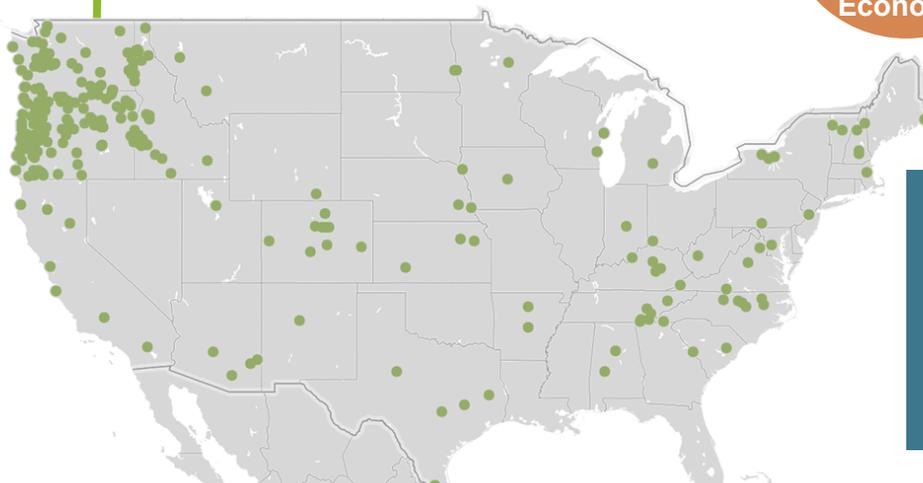
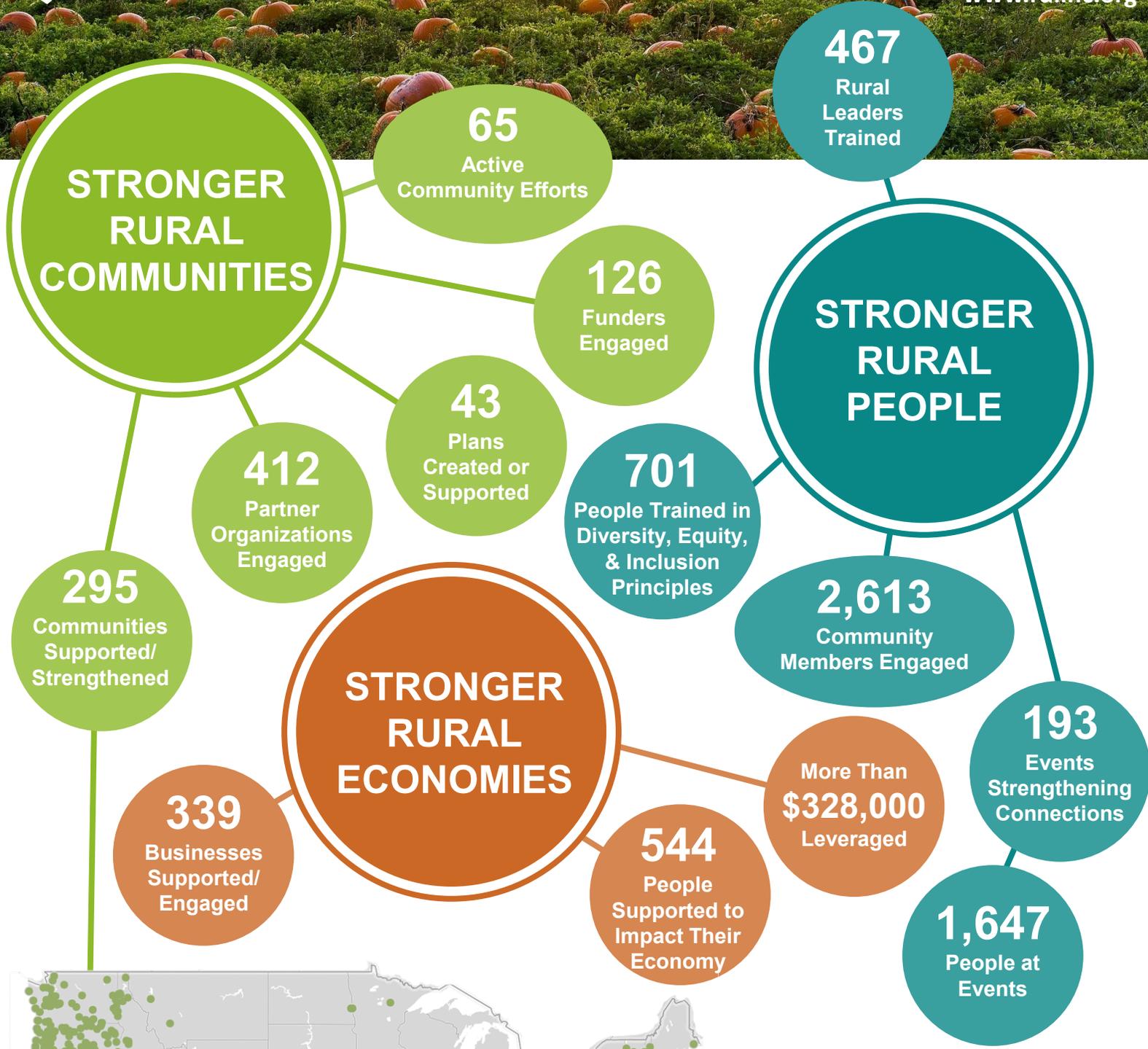


# RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Q3 2021 - YEAR TO DATE



[www.rdiinc.org](http://www.rdiinc.org)



Through our programs in the Pacific Northwest, along with the national RuraLead initiative and other events, we worked alongside partners and participants from across the U.S.

## Seeing Diversity in Rural: Smashing Small-Town Stereotypes

In September, RDI convened 120 participants for the most recent webinar in our ongoing series of Community Conversations, focused on seeing the diversity in rural. National civil unrest has elevated awareness of rural diversity and has surprised many who think of rural places as monolithic and interchangeable. Before we can talk about race and other differences in rural places, we must first recognize that diversity exists. Panelists Tiffany Monroe (Co-Chair, Governor’s Racial Justice Council) and Kasi Allen (Director, Learning & Knowledge Management, The Ford Family Foundation) illuminated the diversity of our small towns during a discussion of equity and inclusion in rural places. If you missed the conversation or would like to revisit it, [click here to access the recording](#). Thanks to Oregon Humanities, The Ford Family Foundation, and Association of Washington Cities for supporting the Community Conversations webinar series.



Tiffany Monroe



Kasi Allen

*“There are other places where visibility can be provided: helping folks run for their local school boards and communities, helping them have leadership positions, helping them speak at county commissioner meetings...having that voice present. Additionally, hiring people of color, whether they're from those communities, or bring in talent from other spaces, recruit and retain people in these rural spaces that are of color or have a strong foundation or that lens...putting equity first and foremost, no matter what. That is an amazing way to provide leverage, like we are out here.” – Tiffany Monroe*

*“For this work to have an impact across rural spaces, we need to bring people together and support conversations that focus on belonging, on inviting people in, and investing in this sort of shared learning, rather than othering and calling people out... I do believe that in order for the kind of change that we want to see to happen, it's going to be person by person, and community by community. And we're going to be changing hearts and minds.” – Kasi Allen*

## Community Leaders Make a Difference in the Lives of Veterans Transitioning Out of Homelessness

With a goal of serving veterans, participants of the latest White River Plateau Rural Leadership cohort in Pierce County, Washington, created their community Green Thumb project to grow fruit, vegetable, and herb gardens around the Orting Veterans Tiny Home Village. Cohort members placed both ground-level plots and hanging garden baskets around the community, which provide visual appeal and will be a source of fresh food for veterans transitioning out of homelessness. Thanks to The Russell Family Foundation for their support of the Rural Community Leadership Program.

