

## Note from the Executive Director

The quarter kicked off with a focus on strengthening and celebrating rural interests and efforts, particularly through the **Rural Oregon Day** and **Rural Forward** events as community members and partners convened to create momentum for rural places. We continued two **Rural Community Leadership** cohorts in Milton-Freewater in Spanish and English, and provided economic and community building support in dozens of communities in OR, WA, ID, and Northern CA through the **Main Street Economic Vitality** program and sector development. We delivered **Spanish-Language Trainings** in childcare business (WA and OR), personal finance and investment (Southern OR), and grant writing (with a virtual series in OR and WA). We conducted a **Grant Writing Training** geared toward small rural nonprofits in Klamath County, OR, and our focus on youth continued with a student collaborative in the Columbia Gorge region.

## Rural Partner Highlight

RDI hosted Rural Oregon Day in partnership with the **Oregon Rural Support Partners** network and the **Center for Women's Leadership** with attendees from across the state. Honing advocacy skills, meeting with representatives, hearing compelling stories, and making connections gave attendees the tools and inspiration to make change at home as we work to shift rural interests from the periphery to the center. "This work is unfolding in powerful ways, and is positively impacting my work in my local community."



## Student Belonging Benefits Communities

As a follow up to **Latino Youth Leadership** sessions that we conducted in the Columbia River Gorge area, RDI convened regional partners with a focus on developing strategies for systems-level changes to support Latino and tribal student belonging. Participants from across the region represented diverse sectors including K-12 education, community-based organizations, and youth development programs. The group identified strategies including prioritizing relationship building, integrating authentic cultural representation in program leadership, pursuing collaborative funding models, and centering students. Partnerships were formed, strategies were developed, and there was a collective recognition that creating belonging for Latino and tribal students isn't just an educational imperative, it's a community transformation that benefits everyone.



**778**

Rural People Engaged



**78**

Small Towns and Rural Regions Across OR, WA, ID, & Northern CA Served



**\$204,278**

Directly Invested in Rural Communities



**81**

People Increased Community Leadership Confidence and Skills



**32**

Latino and Youth Participants in Leadership Trainings



**88**

People More Comfortable Managing Finances



**92**

Businesses Have Better Access to Support



**33**

Businesses Started  
Including 3 Childcare Businesses

“ When students see themselves with value and dignity, the possibilities truly are endless. ”

~ Regional Partner Meeting Attendee