



## 2024 Annual Report





# FOREWORD

Dear RCA Supporters,

As we reflect on 2024, Rural Community Alliance has deepened its commitment to rural communities through civic engagement, youth empowerment, education, and rural health initiatives. This year, we helped register voters, informed communities about key ballot issues, supported future educators, and strengthened local leadership networks.

Our work would not be possible without the dedication of our team, partners, and the rural residents we serve. We are excited to share our 2024 achievements and look forward to an impactful 2025.

Thank you for being part of this journey!

Sincerely,

Candace Williams  
Executive Director  
Rural Community Alliance



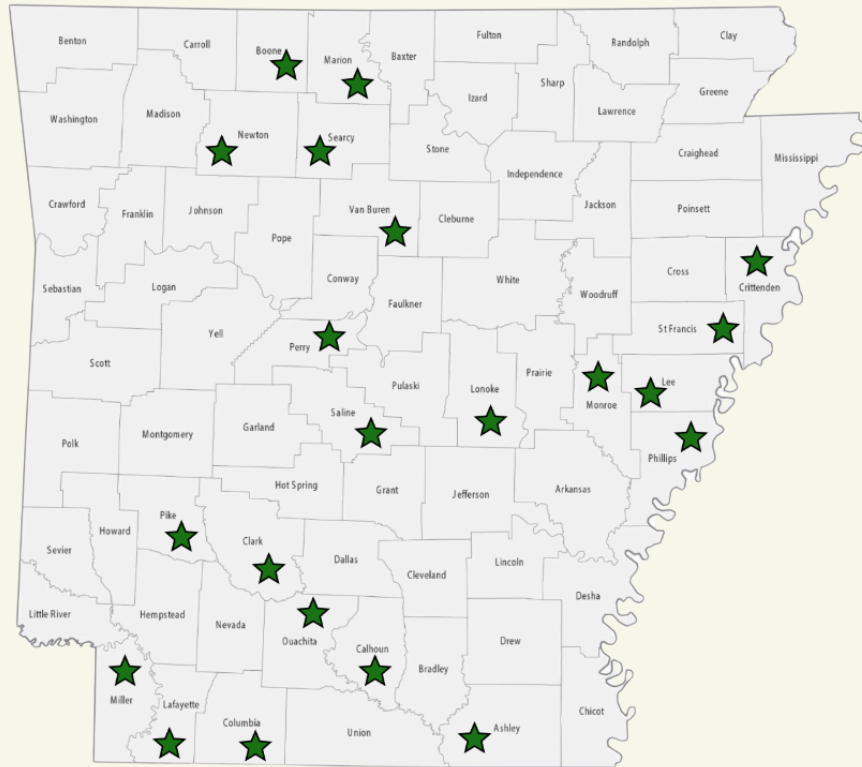
## MISSION

The mission of Rural Community Alliance is to empower people in rural communities to effect change by creating opportunities in education, community and economic development, and youth empowerment to improve quality of life and place.

## VISION

Rural Community Alliance members have a vision for just and thriving rural communities that offer access to an excellent education, economic opportunity, and rewarding quality of life to all residents.

# WHERE WE ARE



**Rural Community Alliance operates across all regions of the state, focusing on initiatives to revitalize communities, support public schools, foster regional collaboration, and advance RCA's statewide policy work.**

- Ashley
- Boone
- Calhoun
- Chicot
- Clark
- Columbia
- Crittenden
- Hot Springs County
- Lafayette
- Lee
- Lonoke
- Marion
- Miller
- Monroe
- Newton
- Ouachita
- Perry
- Phillips
- Pike
- Saline
- Searcy
- St. Francis
- Van Buren



# BOARD



**Paulette Lawson, President**



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**Diann Epps, Treasurer**



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# STAFF



**Lincoln Barnett**  
**Delta Regional Director**



**Tanya Broadnax**  
**Southeast Regional Director**



**Matt Grandon**  
**North Central Regional Director**



**Candy Webb**  
**Youth Network Coordinator**



**Candace Williams**  
**Executive Director**



# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## Civic Engagement & Voter Education

- ✓ **Engagement Drives** – RCA helped register new voters, assisted registered voters in verifying their status, and provided educational materials on Arkansas November 2024 ballot issues.
- ✓ **Podcast Episode on Ballot Issues** – We partnered with The Cooperative Extension for a special episode discussing the 2024 November ballot initiatives, ensuring rural communities had the information needed to make informed decisions.

North Central Regional Director Matt Grandon at an Engagement Drive, sharing information on the 2024 Election and registering voters.





# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## Youth & Education Initiatives

- ✓ **5 Scholarships Awarded** – RCA provided scholarships to five outstanding rural youth to support their college and career goals.
- ✓ **Afterschool and Summer Initiative** – Partnered with four communities to provide afterschool and summer opportunities for youth.
- ✓ **Community Schools support** – Partnered with Dermott School District and Marvell-Elaine School District to help implement community schools strategies.
- ✓ **Youth Engagement Programs** – We hosted workshops, learning journeys, and community engagement activities to empower young leaders.
- ✓ **Solar Eclipse 2024**– Partnered with Cosmic Picture to participate in youth-led citizen science investigations leading up to and during the April 8, 2024, total solar eclipse.

Summer Initiative in Elaine



Culinary learning journey with youth to North Central region





# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## Rural Health & Community Well-Being

✓ **Health Awareness & Outreach** – RCA conducted rural health initiatives focusing on access to resources, wellness education, and support for local health programs.

✓ **Collaborations with Health Organizations** – Strengthened partnerships with rural health advocates to address community needs.

Rural Community Alliance's Health Outreach Volunteer, Sylvia Halliburton checking glucose, blood pressure, oxygen saturation levels, and weight at health outreach events.





# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## Rural Health & Community Well-Being

✓ **Launched FoodCorps in Dermott and Marvell-Elaine School District** – Two FoodCorps members began serving in August 2025 in RCA Partner School Districts Dermott and Marvell-Elaine.

✓ **Provided Back-to-School Hygiene Kits** – RCA distributed over 200 hygiene kits to youth throughout the state at back-to-school events in August 2025. The Kits included toothpaste, a toothbrush, deodorant, and body wash.

Dermott FoodCorps Member, Ebony Broadnax working with students as they make applesauce. (Right) Picture of the hygiene kit.





# 2024 HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## Leadership & Organizational Development

- ✓ **Rural Leaders Network Planning** – RCA engaged in strategic planning sessions with Rural Leaders Network to enhance leadership training and support for rural advocates.
- ✓ **Capacity Building for Local Leaders** – Provided training and resources for community members to take on leadership roles in civic and educational spaces, sponsored CDI training for startup nonprofits.

Rural Community Alliance partnered with a housing advocacy organization to hold a housing focus group in Chicot County, included members in strategic planning, and met with Bread for the World representative and Arkansas Congressman Rick Crawford's office to discuss the Farm Bill.







## CONNECT WITH US!

**Facebook: Rural Community Alliance**

**Youtube: thenewruralarkansas**

**Twitter: TheNewRuralAR**

**Instagram: TheNewRuralAR**

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