

Fall 2024 Rural Roundup



From Team New Rural Project <info@newruralproject.org>
To Steve Johnston <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>
Reply-To <info@newruralproject.org>
Date 2024-11-27 10:01



Dear Steve,

The start of Fall was marked by the launch of our Beauty Salon Conversations: C.U.R.L.S. program in Scotland County. The community's response was incredibly enthusiastic, with each session over capacity. This reaffirms the strong desire among rural residents for programs that foster connection and provide a safe, supportive space.

In late September, Hurricane Helene devastated our neighbors in Western North Carolina. We were heartened by the outpouring of support from across the state and country, as neighbors and strangers came together to help. New Rural Project was driven to support our neighbors by partnering with New North Carolina Project on their efforts to get much-needed supplies directly to the community.

This Fall edition of the Rural Roundup focuses on NRP's September and October activity. [In our email last week we gave a brief summary of our electoral work and the wins of most of our endorsed candidates.](#) In our end-of-year wrap-up next month, we'll give you a little more insight into our GOTV work in the last days before the election and how we are looking forward to 2025.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

With gratitude,

Cynthia L. Wallace
Executive Director
New Rural Project

FYI - Tuesday, December 3 is #GivingTuesday. We'd love your support this year.

SUPPORT US FOR GIVING TUESDAY

[LISTENING](#)



Our **C.U.R.L.S** program launched in Scotland County on three consecutive Sundays in September to an overwhelming community response and packed sessions led by Program Assistants, Kia Smith and Tia Thomas with support from Executive Director, Cynthia Wallace! We're grateful to **Shea Pennington** for chairing the program and hosting us at her Ego'z Hair Salon in Laurinburg.

Our first session centered on the piping-hot topic of the season: civic engagement. The ladies were able to talk to local officials from Laurinburg town council about participating in the political process, inspiring many to attend city council meetings and even cast their first votes!

Our second session focused on mental health and wellness, with distinguished mental health professionals to discuss taking care of ourselves and pouring into our own cups. Our final session boasted a fruitful conversation on entrepreneurship with Scotland C.U.R.L.S chair **Shea Pennington** and local businesswoman **Myquel Wheat** where participants explored purpose-driven business ideas and built lasting connections.



Through exercises and meaningful discussions, these aspiring entrepreneurs discovered how their ventures could strengthen our community.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

On September 7, Cynthia attended the "Clergy with a Mind to Work" event held at the Robeson County African American Cultural Center in Lumberton and hosted by Debra Graham and **Araminta Ross Legacy Circle**, long-time partners of New Rural Project. This event was focused on energizing faith leaders on their important historical and current role in helping to **Get Out The Vote**.

Exciting speakers included DNC Chairman Jaime Harrison and former NC Representative Rev. James Gailliard. Cynthia also spoke to attendees about the upcoming Scotland C.U.R.L.S. session and the volunteer and paid opportunities to canvass with NRP in nearby Scotland and Hoke counties.



On October 23, **Organizing Director Nisea Moses** and **Communications Fellow Eric Reeves**, headed to Wingate University to introduce students to grassroots organizing through neighborhood canvassing! The students left with an energized spirit to continue engaging in their community, with some even leading their own voter engagement efforts!

Trunk & Treat at the Early Voting Polls

On Sunday, October 27, New Policy & Program Director **Caroline Sumpter** and Program Assistants **Kia and Tia** decorated car trunks at the polls in Hoke and Scotland counties! They were onsite to answer questions, distribute materials, resources, and of course, candy to the adults and children making their voices heard.



ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT

Canvassing

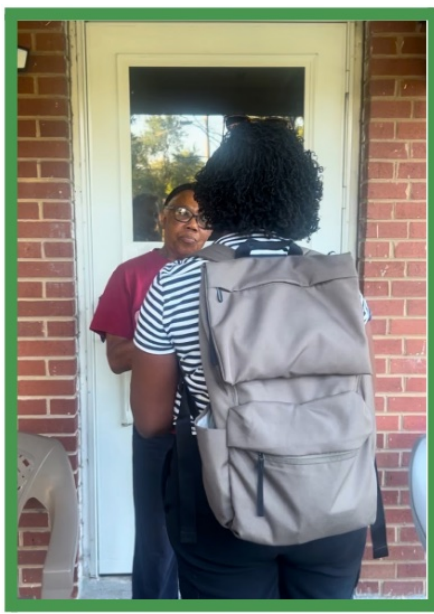


Continuing our August work, four days a week each week in September, we continued knocking on doors listening to rural voters' top issues and making sure they knew the dates of the upcoming election, about the NC voter photo ID law and absentee ballot rule changes.

Our Organizing team which included our organizing director, organizers, and lead canvassers, participated in and led the efforts of our canvasser teams working hard to hit our 35,000 door-knock goal.

In October, we increased our canvassing to five to seven days a week as we transitioned our conversation on the doors to focus on making a voting plan, providing specific early voting dates, times, and location information, and sharing information about the candidates running for office in their area with a focus on NRP- endorsed candidates.

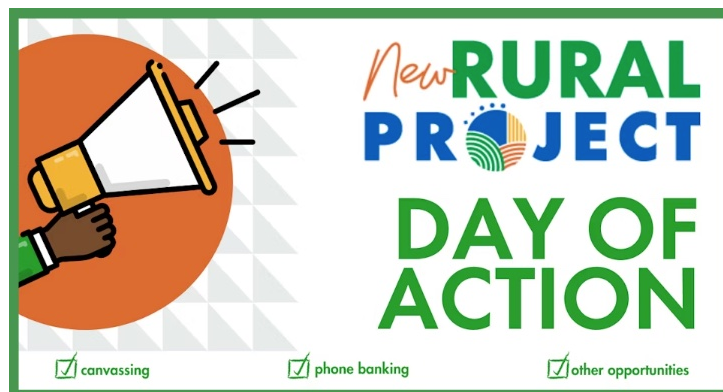




On Sunday, September 8, **New York Times journalist, Maya King**, spent time with our paid local canvassers, staff, and volunteers as we spoke with voters in Monroe (Union County) about the upcoming election and the critical issues that were top of mind.

Ms. King also spoke directly with Monroe voters to get their thoughts about voting and the importance of this moment like the Union County voter pictured here.

October "Day of Action"

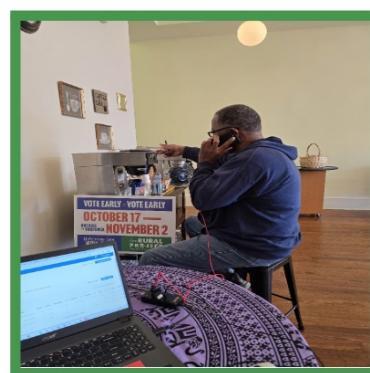


NRP's "Day of Action" on October 12 energized Union, Anson, Hoke, and Scotland counties! Organizing Director **Nisea Moses** and Organizers **Jarvis Peguesse** and **James Bailey** worked hard to plan an action-packed event that included our dedicated volunteers and other NRP staff to canvass and phone bank five days before Early Voting started on October 17.

In Union County, we were excited that women from the Charlotte Chapter of the National Alumnae Association of Spelman College made our day of action one of their Spelman Women Vote local events for the election cycle.



In Anson County, folks from Networx Anson and the Anson Branch of NAACP helped us reach hundreds of voters by phone banking. In Scotland and Hoke, our yard signs continued to be popular with voters!



Voter ID Clinic

On October 15, NRP collaborated with **VoteRiders** for a Voter ID Clinic in Laurinburg, NC. **Organizing Director Nisea Moses** and **Organizer James Bailey** led the efforts, educating community members about new Photo ID voting requirements!



Candidate Endorsements

NRP staff and board members worked for several months to develop, finalize, and vote on endorsements for the 2024 General Election. The team decided on a small number of offices on which to focus our 2024 endorsements. Candidates of all parties in each race had an opportunity to complete our endorsement questionnaire.

Built on our polling, front porch conversations, beauty salon and barbershop conversations, and community engagement, candidates who received our endorsement demonstrated a commitment to the following: 1) strongly investing in rural communities, 2) a constitutional right to a sound basic public education in NC, 3) protecting and expanding voting rights, 4) reducing crime and increasing public safety, and 5) equitable access to healthcare.

[We were excited that the candidates we endorsed are all champions who will fight for a better rural NC!](#)

OTHER UPDATES

Anson NAACP 2024 Freedom Fund Awards Banquet

On October 5, the New Rural Project team received its first award - the **Inspiring Innovator Award** - at the Anson County NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet! This recognition fuels our ongoing work to support and uplift rural communities.



Oct 10 Capital B Panel

After an August 30 interview with **Capital B**, a local-national nonprofit news organization that centers on Black voices invited Cynthia to be a panelist on the Charlotte leg of their Black Political Power Tour.





Capital B partnered with WFAE to put on two panels: one focused on the education of Black students and the other on understanding voter turnout and the impact Black voters would have in the 2024 General Election. Take a look at the deep and [insightful article](#) Capital B wrote about rural Black voters that featured NRP and quotes from Garrett Snuggs (Mayor Pro Tem of Wadesboro and F.A.D.E. Anson Barbershop Chair).

Hurricane Helene Relief

In late September, Hurricane Helene struck our neighbors in Western North Carolina and left a path of destruction. On Oct 29, NRP partnered with New North Carolina Project's efforts to deliver needed materials to the victims of the hurricane. We were honored to provide items donated by community members as well as purchase items including much-needed necessities for babies to help those in need.



[To help with ongoing needs, you can contribute to the North Carolina Community Foundation Disaster Relief Fund.](#) This fund supports non-profit community organizations in North Carolina, providing vital services to meet the needs of affected communities in the aftermath of a disaster. At this time, contributions will be used to support communities impacted by Hurricane Helene.

Don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to keep up with our activities and information about what's happening in North Carolina!

Thanks for reading! We appreciate you!

Team New Rural Project

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