

# Understanding the Drivers of Health in Rural Communities to Strengthen Rural Relevance of Programs, Policies, and Research

Communities Joined in Action  
Annual Conference  
April 24, 2019

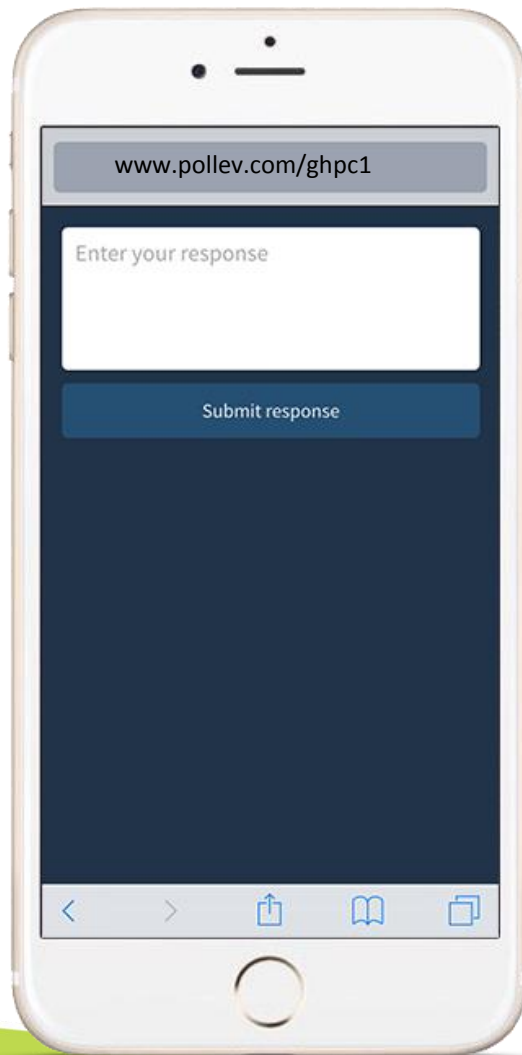


ANDREW YOUNG SCHOOL  
OF POLICY STUDIES

# Today's Objectives

- Build a shared understanding of drivers associated with rural health challenges
- Reflect on how representatives from local, state, and regional levels can fully engage rural communities in the design of program, policy, and research initiatives
- Consider approaches used by rural communities to adapt and tailor efforts to fit local context and needs
- Identify opportunities to be leveraged to impact rural health

# Participating with Poll Everywhere



[www.pollev.com/ghpc1](http://www.pollev.com/ghpc1)

Or

Text GHPC1 to 22333 to join

**One word that comes to mind when you think of rural.**

# Content Background

- GHPC's 20 years of rural experience
- Review of work of Rural Research Centers
- Topical research in the areas of:
  - Health Disparities
  - Economic Trends
  - Insurance Coverage
  - Healthcare Access
  - Rural Culture
  - Built environment
  - Education
  - Technology

# Content Background

- **Jim Macrae**, Former Acting Administrator, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, HRSA
- **Judy Monroe**, CEO, CDC Foundation
- **Alan Morgan**, Former CEO, National Rural Health Association
- **Tom Morris**, Associate Administrator, Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
- **Gary Nelson**, Executive Director, Healthcare Georgia Foundation
- **George Pink**, Professor and Sr Research Fellow, Sheps Center, UNC at Chapel Hill
- **Rick Wilk**, Regional Administrator – HRSA Region V, Office of Regional Operations



# GEORGIA HEALTH POLICY CENTER

*Integrating research, policy, and programs to advance health and well-being*

- Research center - Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University
- Provides evidence-based research, program development, and policy guidance locally, statewide, and nationally
- Celebrated 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015
- Worked with over 1,000 community initiatives across U.S

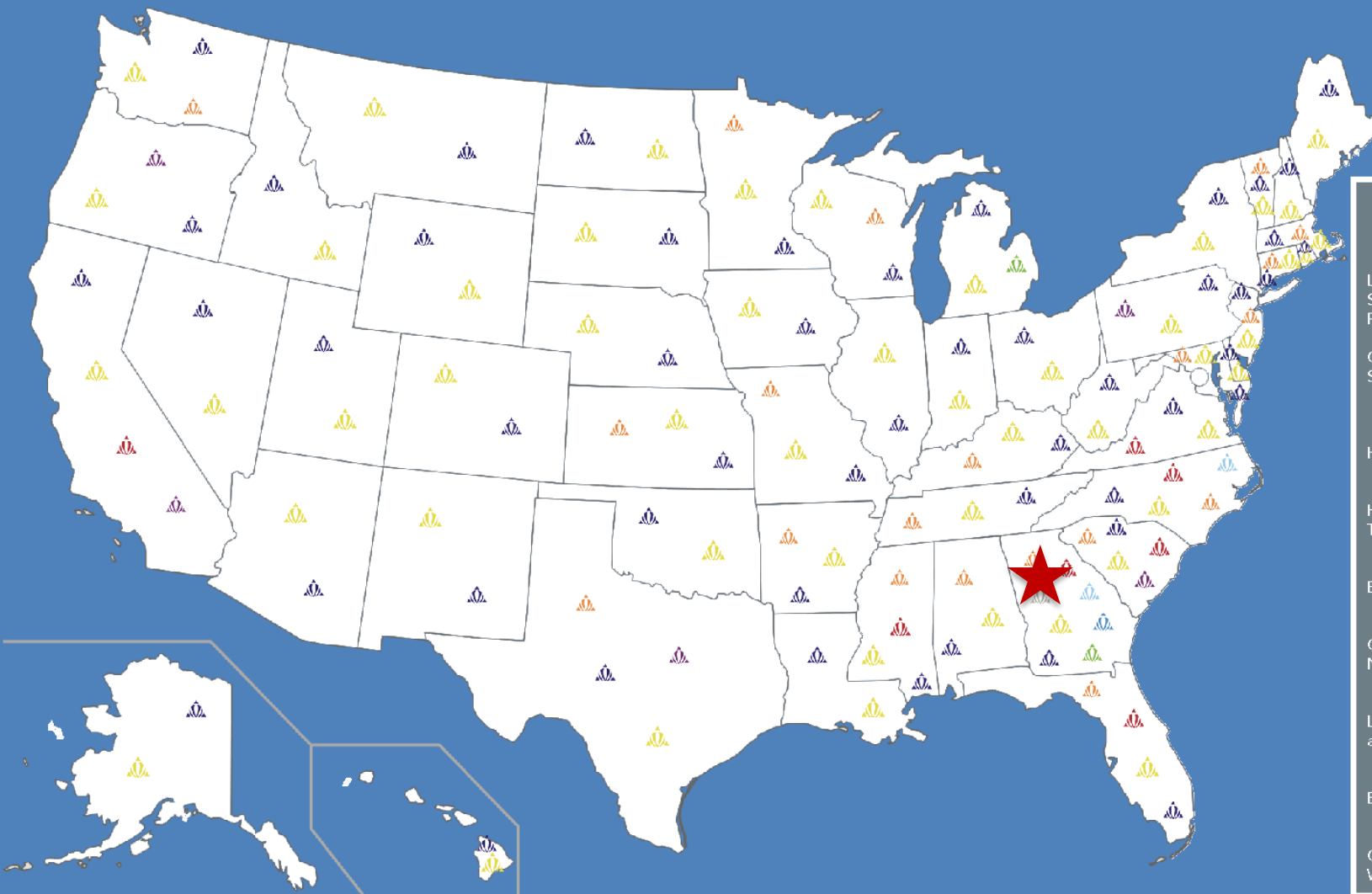


# GHPC Support to Communities

- Federal Office of Rural Health Policy
  - Tailored technical assistance provided to improve program strategies, build local system capacity, and sustain collaboratives and services
- National Coordinating Center: RWJF Bridging for Health
  - Financing innovations for population health
- Center of Excellence in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health
  - Workforce development, data utilization, evaluation
- SCALE Initiative
  - Support communities to develop capability to improve health and spread effective community-driven approaches to build a Culture of Health
- Georgia SHAPE Program
  - Sustainability of school physical activity and nutrition programming
- Georgia APEX Program
  - School-based mental health programs



# WHERE WE WORK



## A SAMPLING OF GHPC PROJECTS

Leading Through Health  
System Change  
Planning Tool



Community Health  
Systems Development



Health in All Policies



Health Care Reform  
Translation



Bridging for Health



Community Health  
Needs Assessments



Long-Term Services  
and Supports



Behavioral Health



Child Health and  
Well-Being





50 shares



### Rise in suicide rates haunts rural areas

THE PULSE | October 9, 2017 | Andy Miller 0 Comments

#### FEATURED

### Rural Texas hospitals closures a rising concern

From Staff Reports | Aug 19, 2017



Daily Sun FILE photo



Members of Arizona's Sonoma-Elgin Fire Department participate in a training exercise in the desert. Photo via the University of Arizona Center for Rural Health

### WHILE LOWER IN HEALTH RANKINGS, RURAL COUNTIES STILL HAVE ADVANTAGES

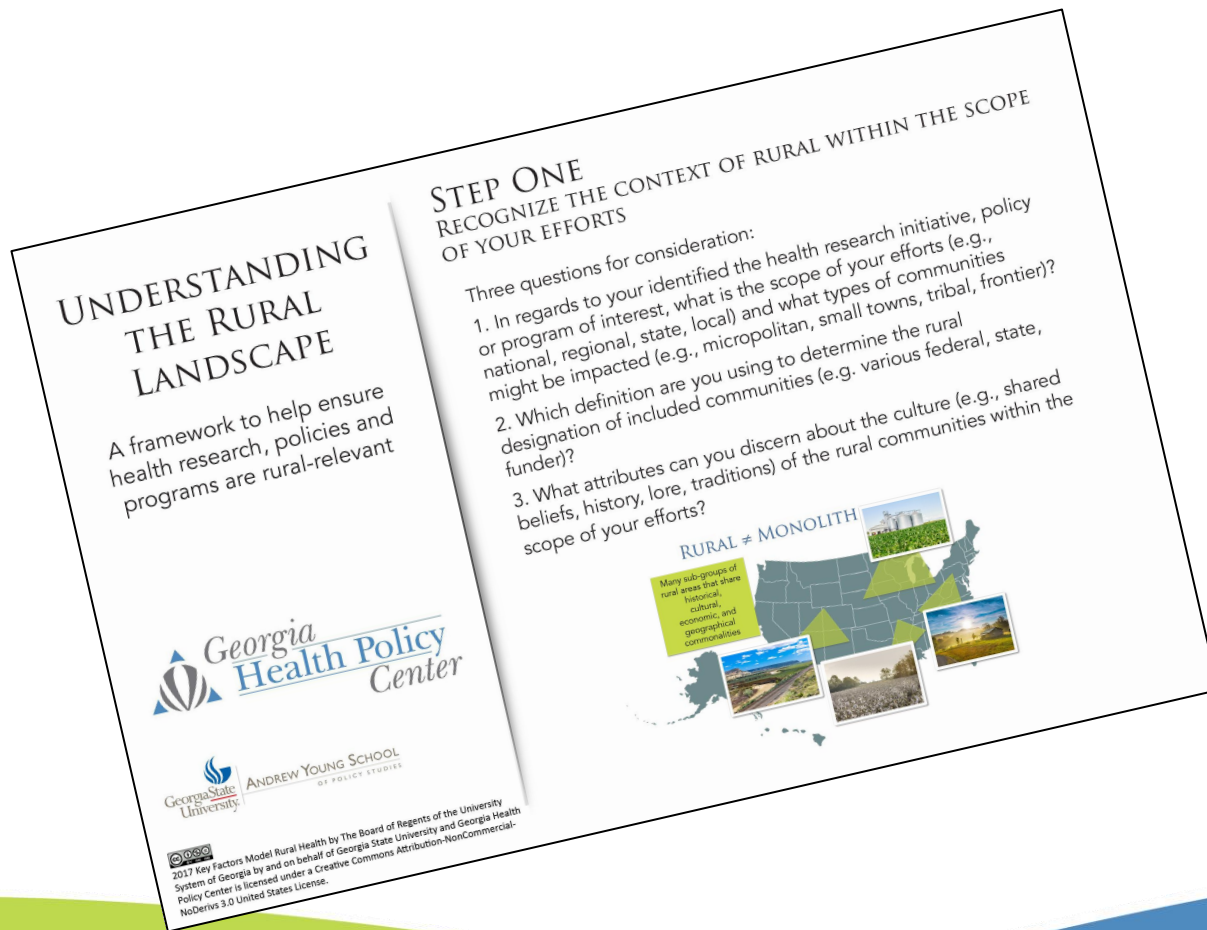
By Tim Marema | November 15, 2017 |

[Print article](#)

The annual County Health Rankings show that smaller communities are more likely to score near the bottom of the pack in certain health measurements. But small communities' personal relationships and informal structures can be a strength when it comes to working on health policy, says a community health organizer.

# MISSING THE MARK: THE NEED FOR RURAL-RELEVANT PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND RESEARCH

# A Framework for Understanding the Rural Landscape



## 3 Step Process

1. Recognize context of rural within scope of efforts
2. Consider influence of key rural factors in planning
3. Consider impact of macro-trends, system strengths and challenges

# Rural Assets

- There are important strengths that lead to innovation in rural settings. These include:
  - The resilience of rural communities as they work hard to solve their own problems.
  - While they may have fewer people in numbers, the community often has a collaborative, multidisciplinary approach to solutions.
  - Learning lab for translating evidence-based practices into rural settings and for cultivating approaches that work in lower-resourced communities

# Is this Rural?



Pop. 196,741 (2014)

No



Pop. 5,331 (2014)

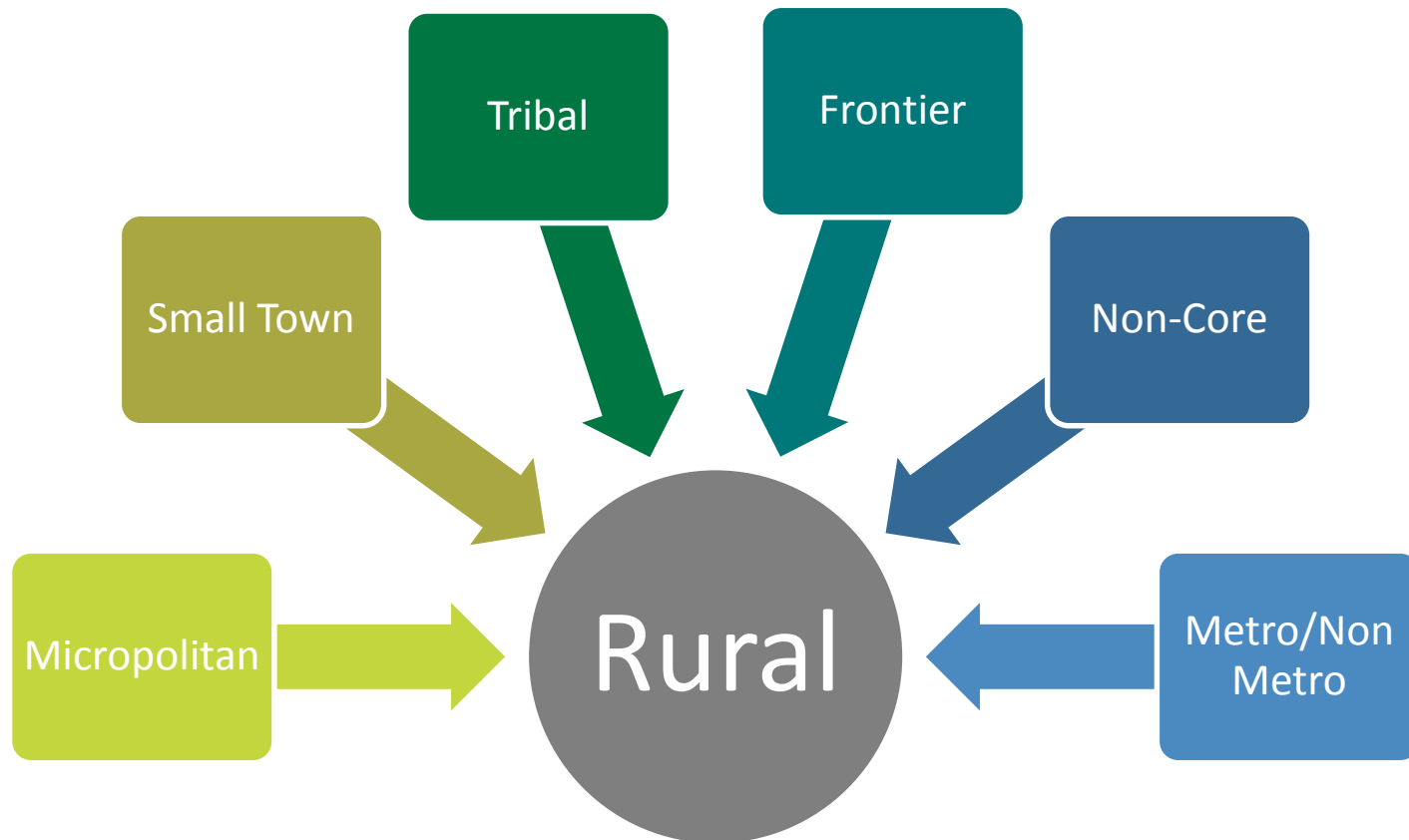
Yes



Pop. 19,211 (2015)

It Depends

# CLASSIFICATION TYPES





# Rural ≠ Monolith

Many sub-groups of rural areas that share historical, cultural, economic, and geographical commonalities



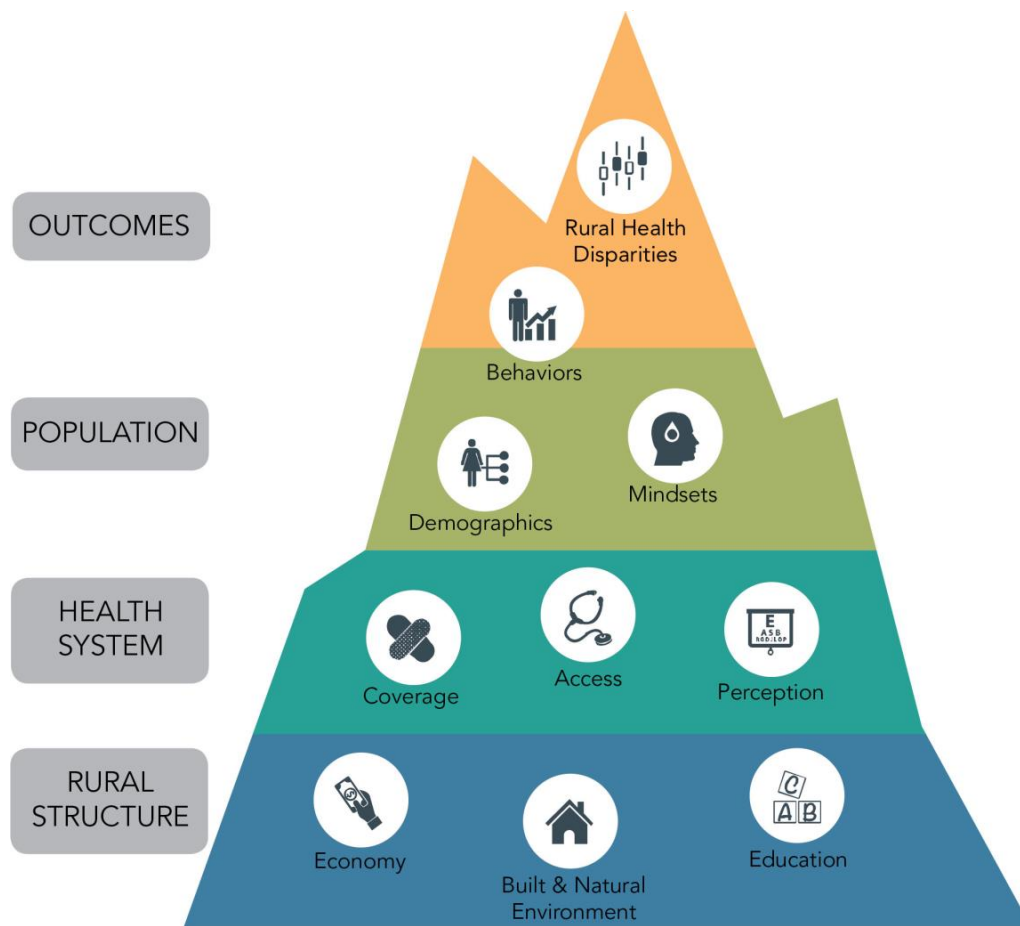


A large, leafy tree with a thick trunk and dense green foliage dominates the right side of the frame. The background is a misty, sun-dappled forest with a path leading into the distance. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

# Key Factors in Understanding Rural

A model to consider how factors influence the health outcomes in rural communities.

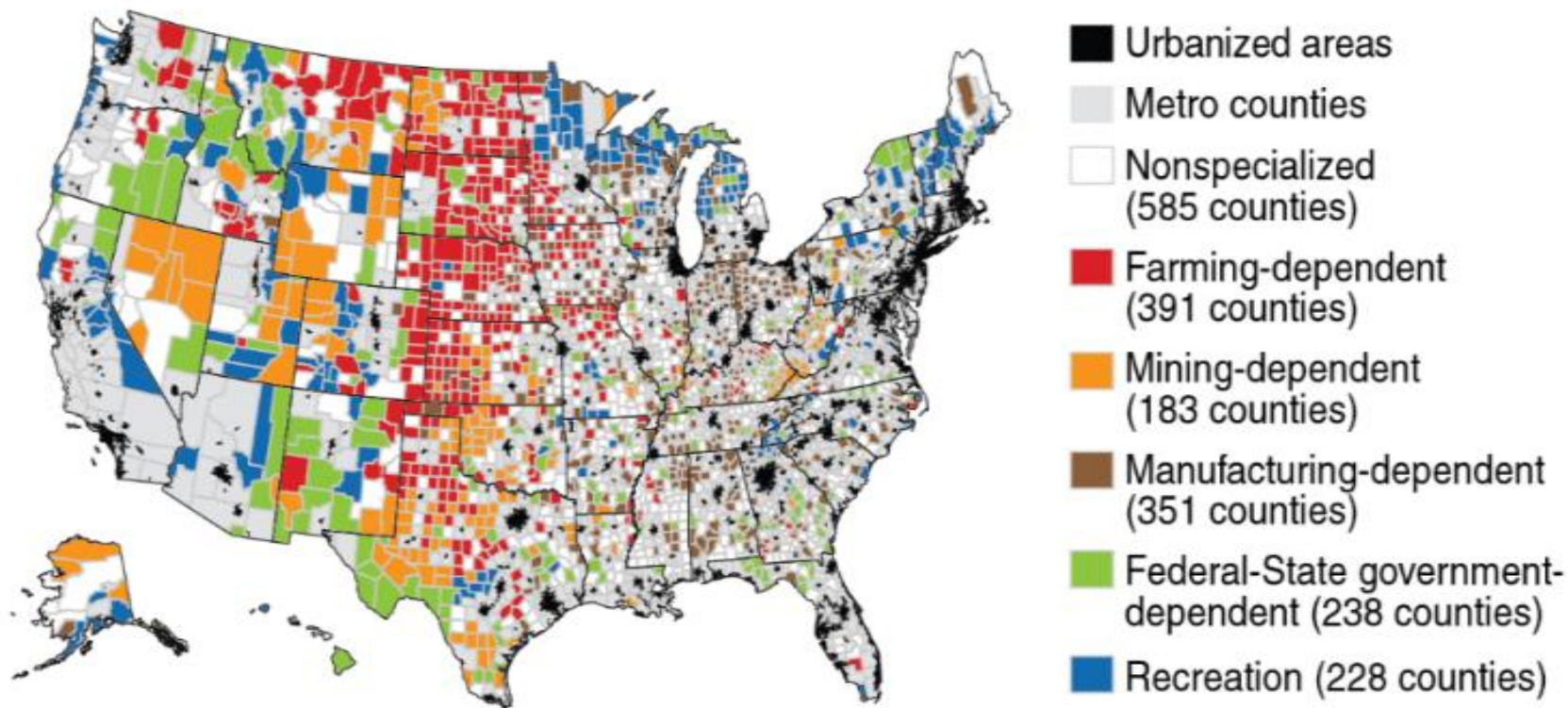
# A Model Of Key Factors Affecting Rural Communities





# The Economy

Rural counties vary in their economic structure with marked regional differences

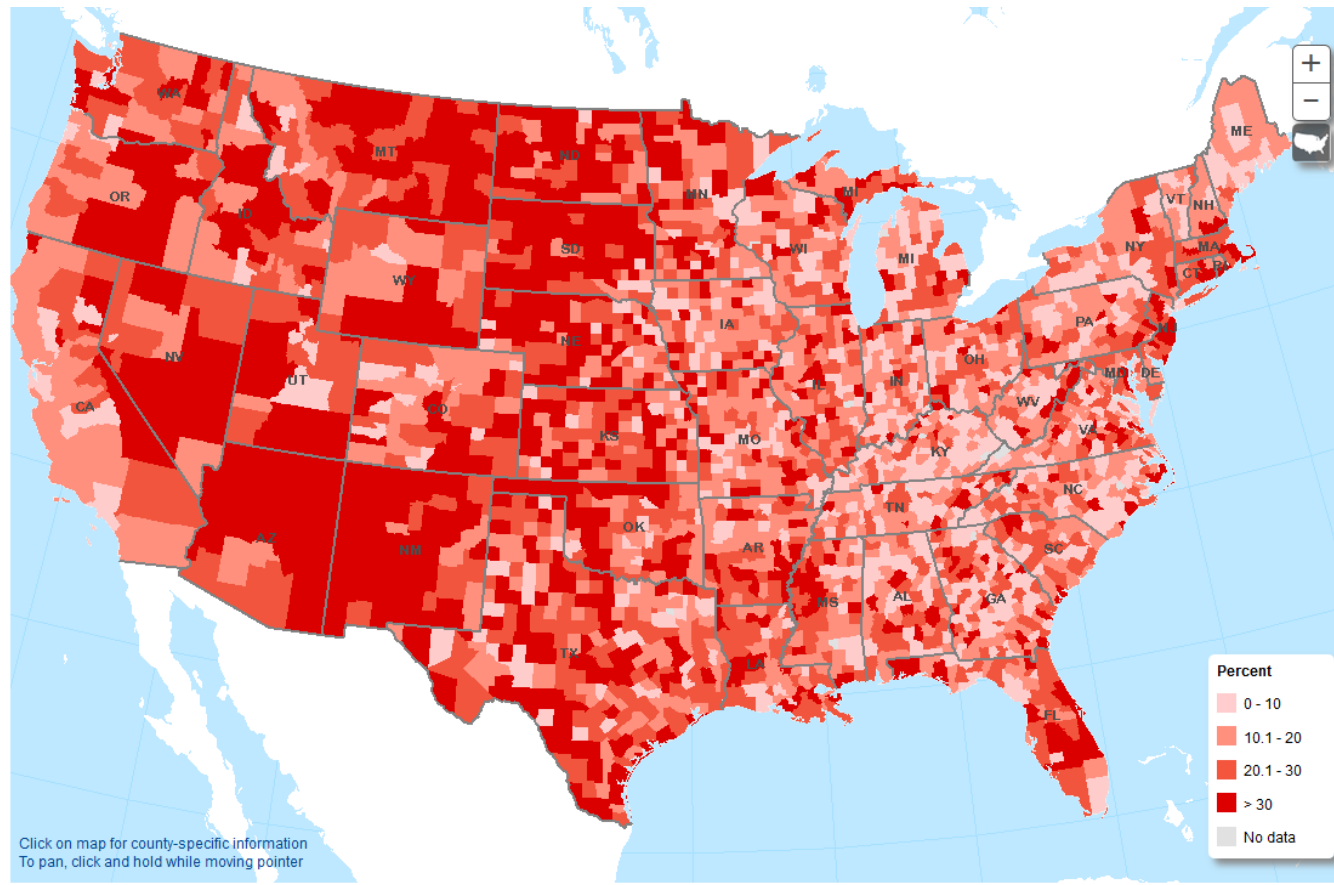


Note: The 2015 county typologies use data from 2010-2012. See footnote 1.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

# Built & Natural Environment

## Population, low access to store (%), 2015



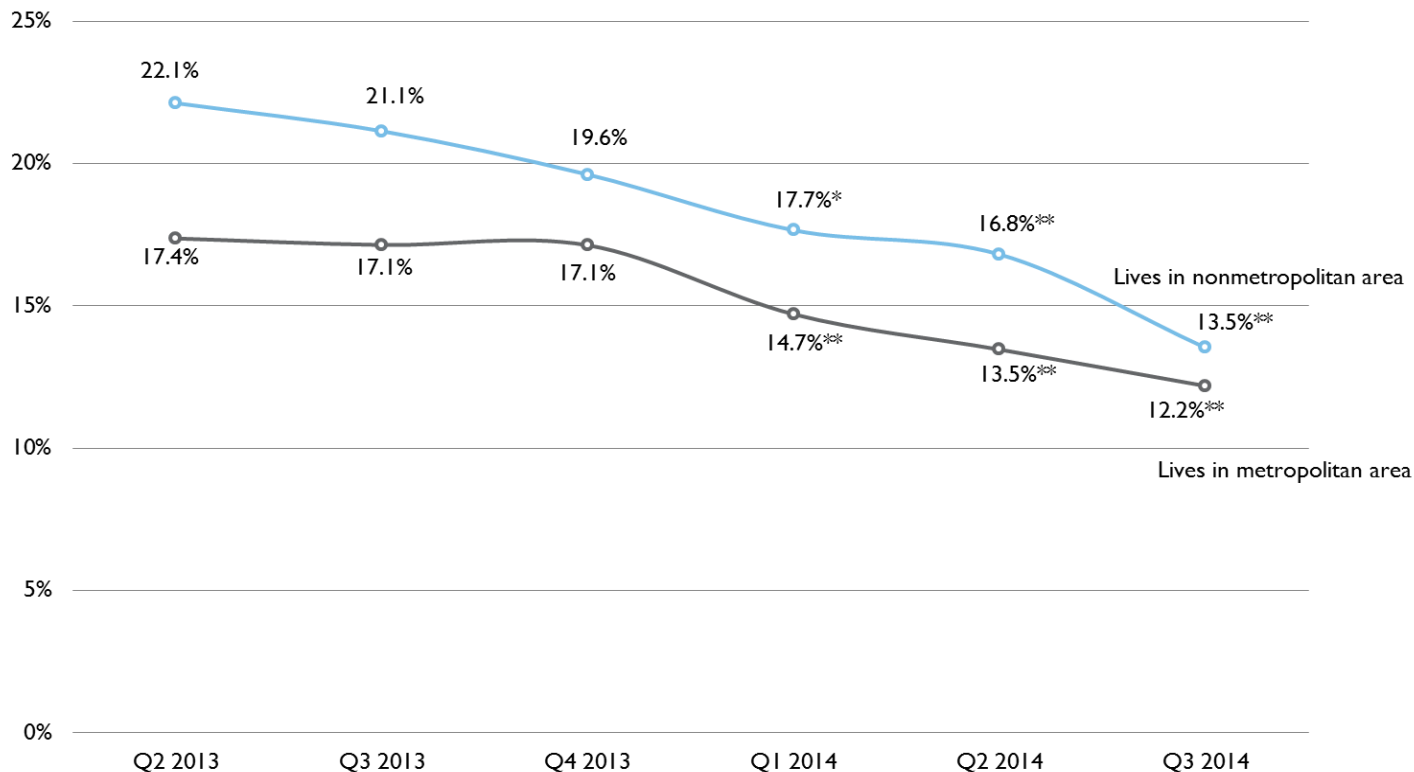
# EDUCATION

## U.S. COLLEGE COMPLETION GAP, RURAL VS. URBAN



# Health Care Coverage

**Figure 1. Trends in Uninsurance for Adults Ages 18 to 64, by Residence in a Metropolitan Area, from Quarter 2 2013 to Quarter 3 2014**

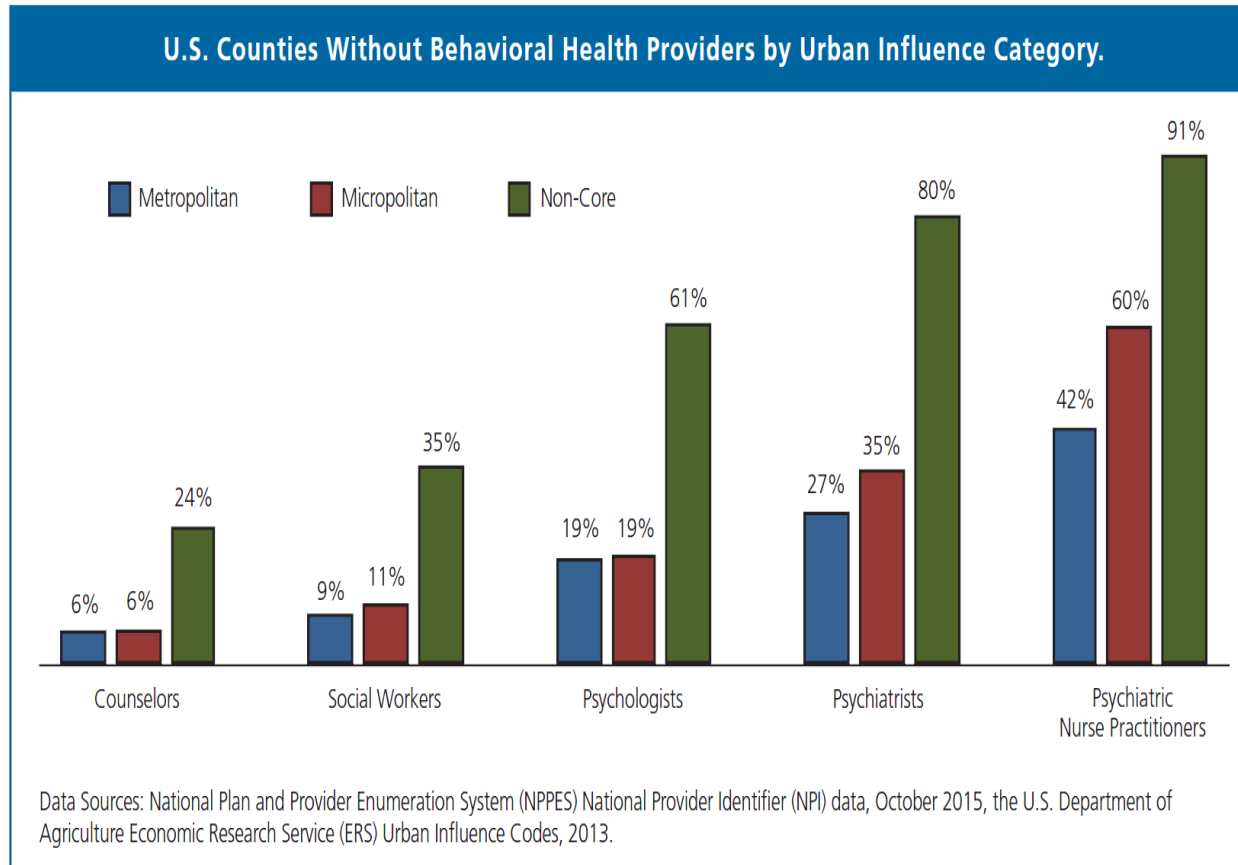


Source: Health Reform Monitoring Survey, quarter 2 2013 through quarter 3 2014.

Note: Estimates are regression adjusted.

\*/\*\* Estimate differs significantly from quarter 3 2013 at the 0.05/0.01 levels, using two-tailed tests.

# Access to Health Care



Source: WWAMI Rural Health Research Center. *Supply and Distribution of the Behavioral Health Workforce in Rural America*. Data Brief #160, September 2016



# Perception versus Reality

- Perceptions of:
  - Rural setting
  - Rural health care system



# Demographics

- Rural residents on average:
  - Older
  - Higher poverty
  - Less diverse
  - Lower educational attainment (post-HS)
  - Lower earning potential



# Mindset

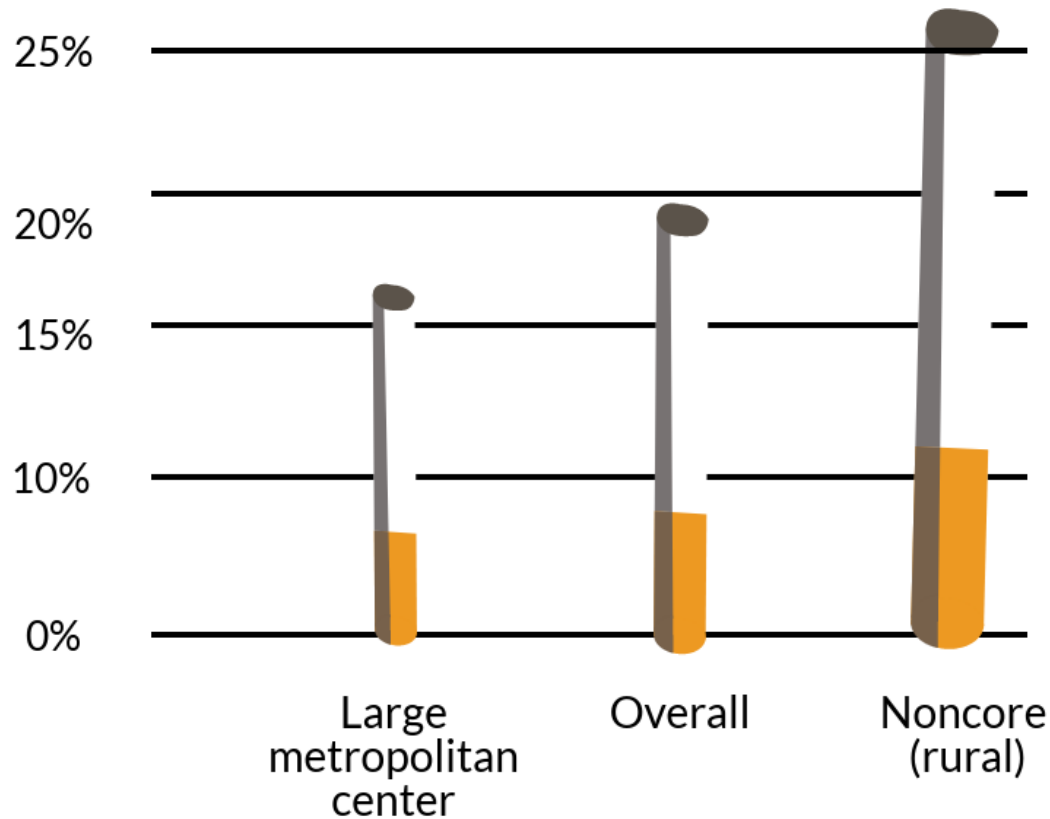
"mindset" {noun}

*a set of beliefs or a way of thinking that determines one's behavior, outlook and mental attitude.*

- Shared values and culture
- Self-reliant
- Community oriented
- Cautious of outsiders

# BEHAVIORS

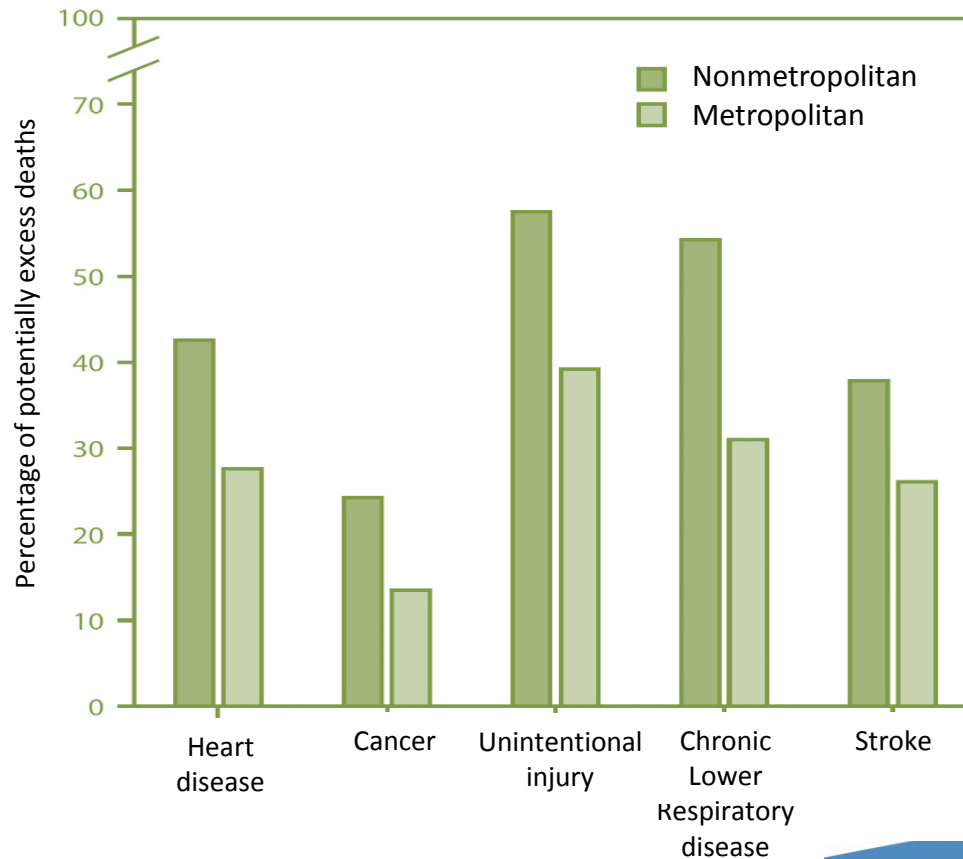
Smoking rates are higher in rural areas.



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). Health-Related Behaviors by Urban-Rural County Classification — United States, 2013. *Surveillance Summaries*. 66(5); 1-8. Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/ss/ss6605a1.htm#T1\\_down](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/ss/ss6605a1.htm#T1_down)

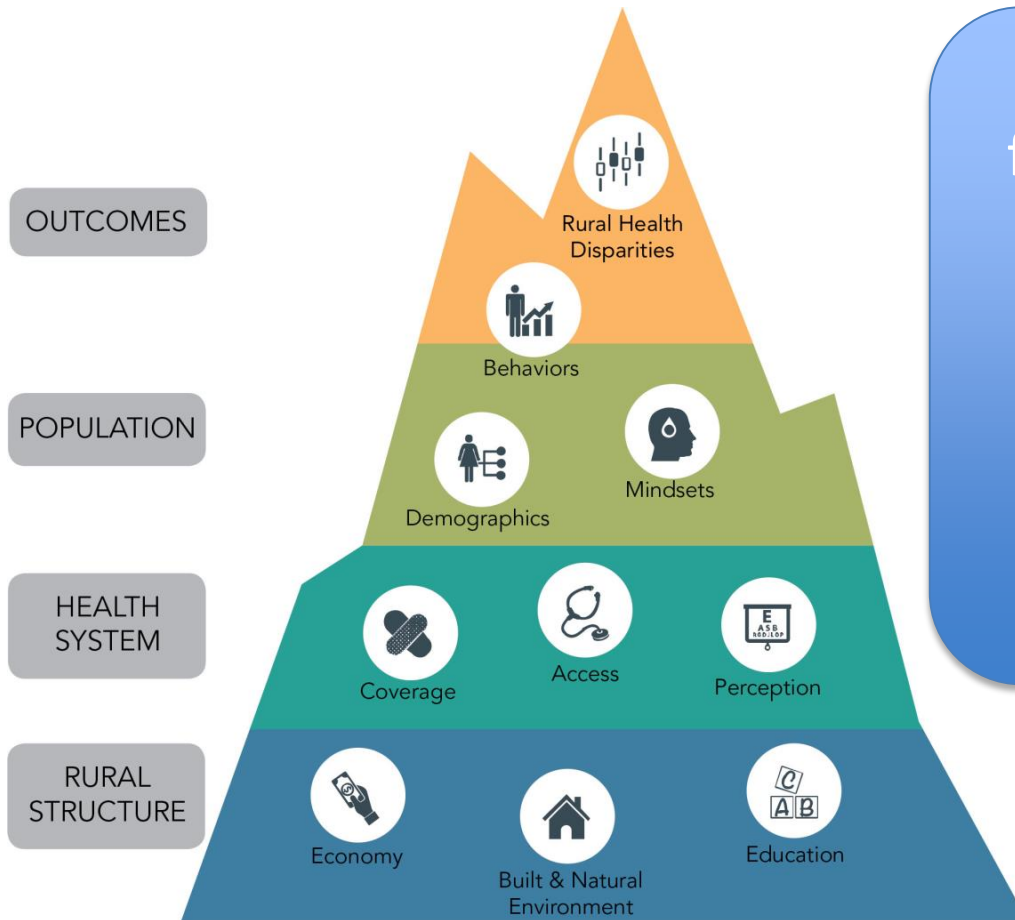
# RURAL HEALTH DISPARITIES

Percentage of potentially preventable deaths for the five leading causes of death in rural and urban areas, United States in 2014.



Source: Moy et al. (2017). Leading Causes of Death in Nonmetropolitan Areas – United States, 1994–2014. *Surveillance Summaries*, 66(1);1–8. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/ss/ss6601a1.htm>

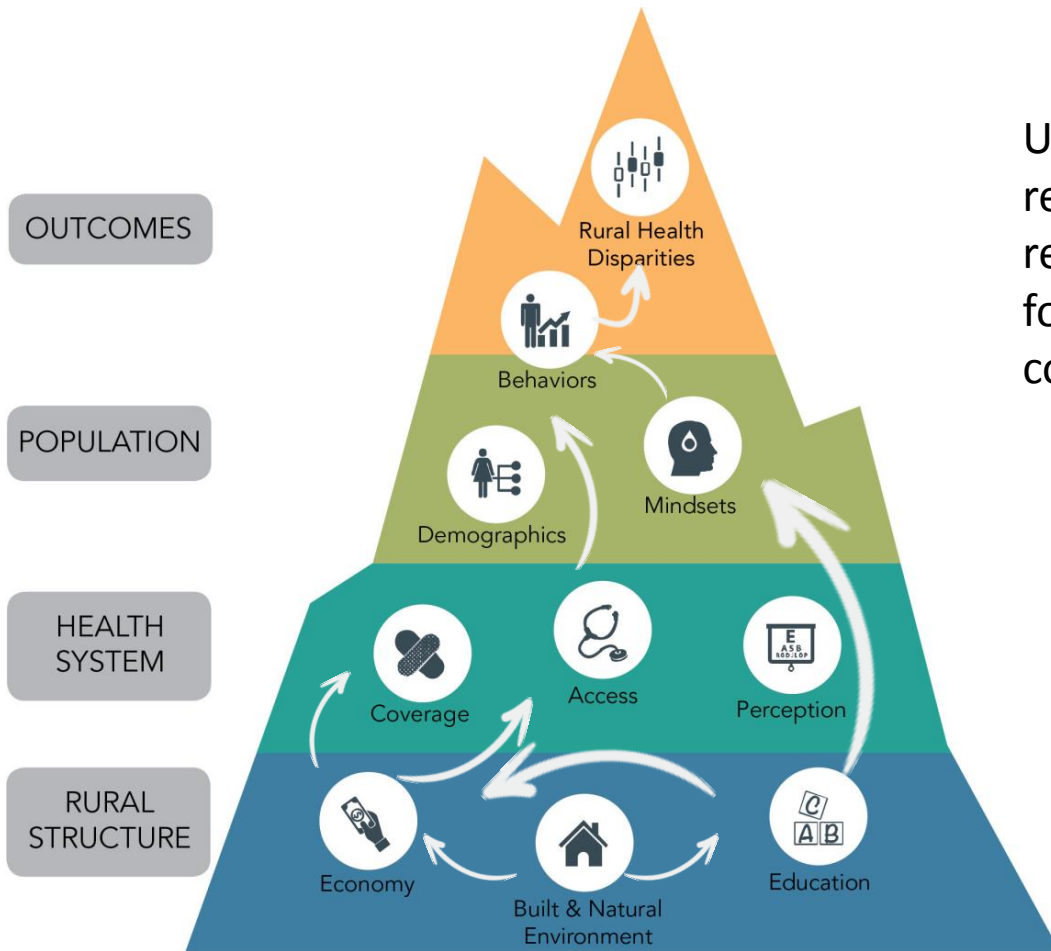
# A Model Of Key Factors Affecting Rural Communities



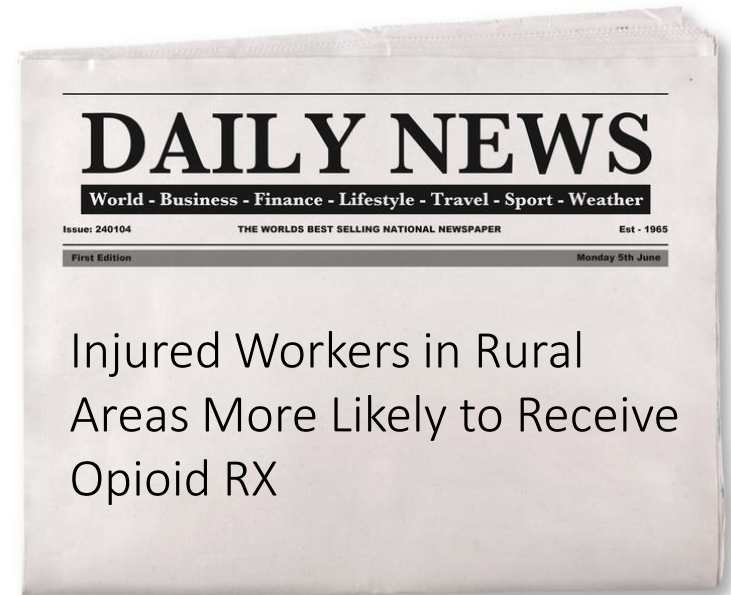
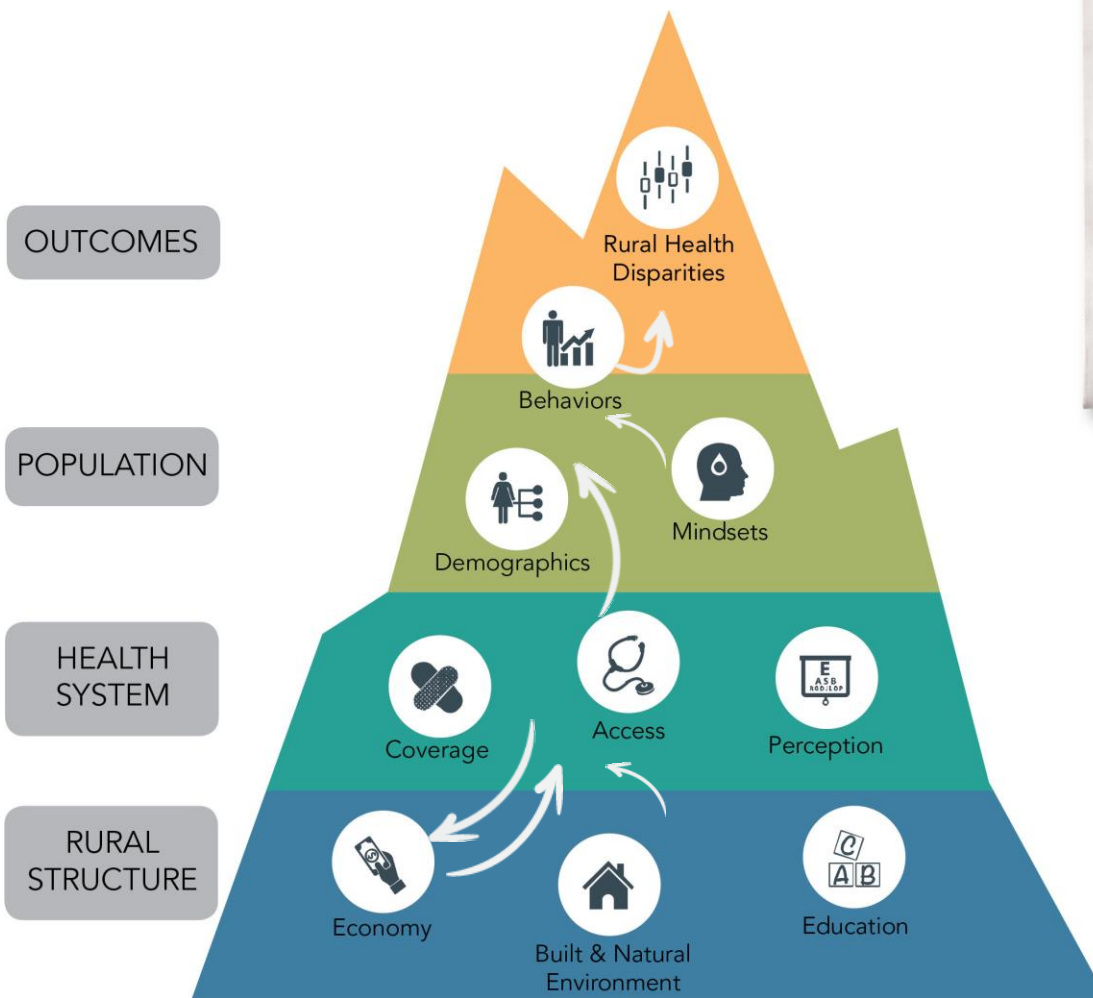
What are two factors you feel would be important to consider to enhance your rural perspective?

# Interconnectivity

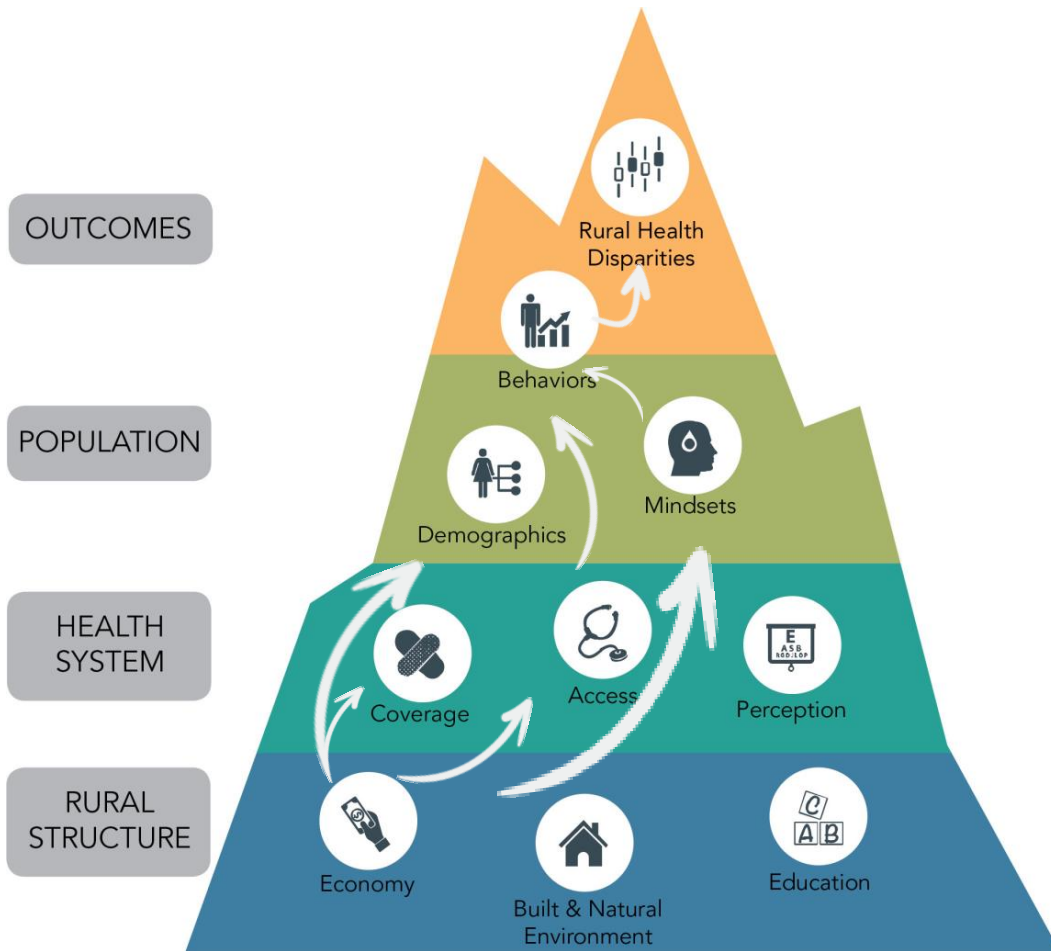
Understanding the rural landscape requires the ability to recognize the relationships among the key factors for the given scope of rural communities.







“Feedback Loop”



“Time to Impact”

A large, leafy tree with a thick trunk stands on the right side of the frame. The background is a misty, rural landscape with rolling hills and a path leading into the distance. The overall atmosphere is serene and natural.

# Macro-trends & Rural Adaptation and Innovation



# Macro-Trends in Rural America



**Shortage  
of skilled  
workers**



**Technological  
Advances  
and  
Disruptions**



**Perceptions**

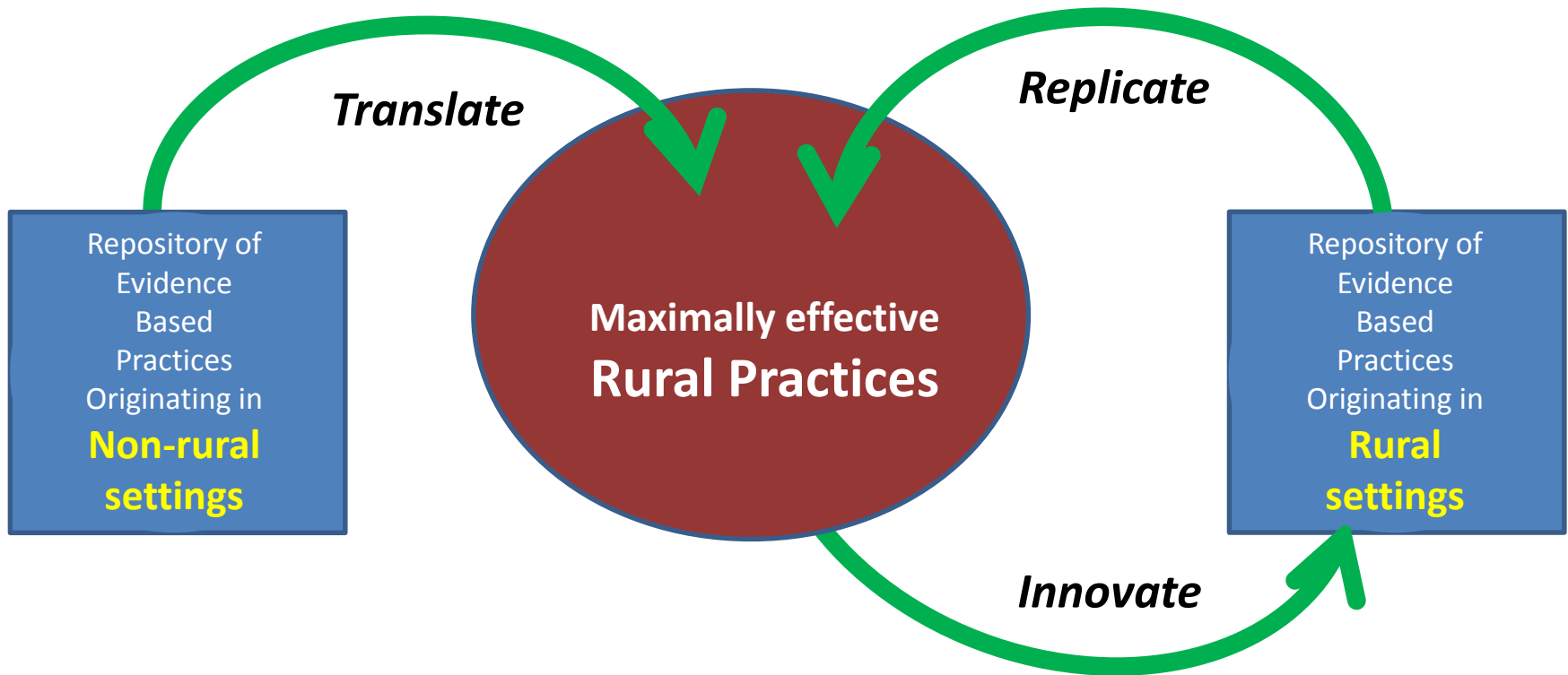


**Impact of  
Federal  
Policies  
and  
Programs**

# Innovating in Rural

Types of Adaptations	Examples
<b>Program Content</b>	Adjustments to time period to increase participation and retention
	Additional focus areas/ services added to existing program to maximize impact
	Alignment of approach/strategies with federal/state policies
<b>Modes and Setting</b>	Delivery of programs/services
	Location of where services received
<b>Addition of Wrap-around Components</b>	Convening of collaborative cross/sector partnerships
	Focus on coordination and follow-up tailored to individual needs

# Three critical pipelines...



# 3 Step Framework

## UNDERSTANDING THE RURAL LANDSCAPE

A framework to help ensure health research, policies and programs are rural-relevant



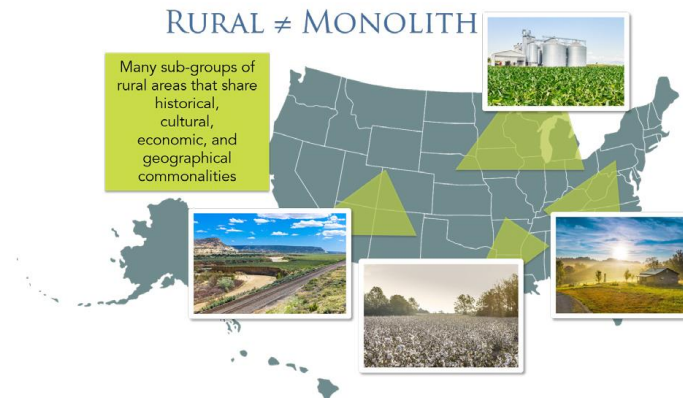
2017 Key Factors Model Rural Health by The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia by and on behalf of Georgia State University and Georgia Health Policy Center is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 United States License.

## STEP ONE

RECOGNIZE THE CONTEXT OF RURAL WITHIN THE SCOPE OF YOUR EFFORTS

Three questions for consideration:

1. In regards to your identified the health research initiative, policy or program of interest, what is the scope of your efforts (e.g., national, regional, state, local) and what types of communities might be impacted (e.g., micropolitan, small towns, tribal, frontier)?
2. Which definition are you using to determine the rural designation of included communities (e.g. various federal, state, funder)?
3. What attributes can you discern about the culture (e.g., shared beliefs, history, lore, traditions) of the rural communities within the scope of your efforts?

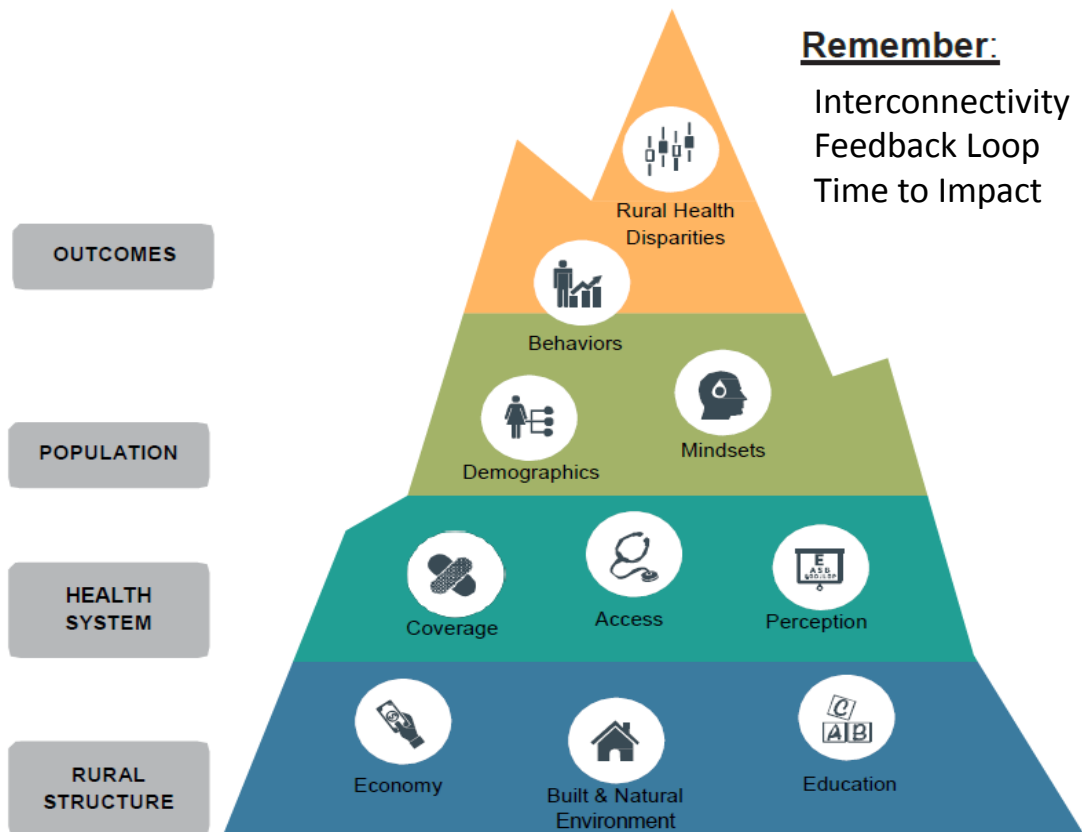




# 3 Step Framework

## STEP TWO

CONSIDER THE INFLUENCE OF RURAL KEY FACTORS IN PLANNING YOUR EFFORTS



## STEP THREE

CONSIDER THE IMPACT OF MACRO-TRENDS, SYSTEM STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

1. How are macro-trends shaping key factors in rural communities and how might that impact the design of your research, policy or programs?

### Macro-trends:

- Shortage of skilled workers
- Perceptions of rural communities
- Disruptive technology
- Impact of federal programs

2. How do system strengths and challenges of rural communities impact the design of your research, policy or programs?

# Reflection

Given your particular vantage point, what does this content spark for you as you think about ensuring the rural relevance of your work?

- Implementer?
- Researcher?
- Policymaker?
- Funder?

# Questions/Comments?



# THANK YOU!

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