A bright future is rootEd in a strong education.

The Challenge to Address

At a time when 80 percent of jobs that pay middle class wages require more than a high school diploma, postsecondary education has never been a greater differentiator in a student’s future success and livelihood.¹ This reality has profound implications for rural communities and small towns, where fewer than 30 percent of adults hold a bachelor’s or associate’s degree.² Changing these odds for rural students isn’t just a moral imperative, it’s an economic necessity. Yet only 5% of philanthropic funding goes to rural communities.³

What is rootEd Alliance?

Launched in 2018, rootEd Alliance is a collaborative philanthropic effort to create more prosperous futures for students in rural America by providing them with advice, exposure and access to college and career opportunities. rootEd invests in and partners with rural communities to implement a holistic model that unlocks the potential of rural students, from high school through college graduation. We have seen through our early impact that with the right supports, rural students can succeed in pursuing a postsecondary education and a career that will earn them a family-supporting wage.
The rootEd Model

rootEd provides partner organizations with start-up funding, data tools, and intensive training to place dedicated college and career advisors in high schools and community colleges. Advisors support students through critical, data-informed milestones - such as FAFSA completion and college visits - shown to increase students' likelihood of enrolling in postsecondary education.

rootEd Alliance high schools

Texas
Alice, Aransas Pass, Bangs, Clyde, Coleman, Eula, Gilmer, Gladewater, Leverett's Chapel, Overton, Sinton, Snyder, West Rusk

Tennessee
Lawrence County, Loretto, Summertown

Missouri
Branson, Clinton, Forsyth, Hollister, Republic, Reeds Spring, Union

1 Anthony P. Carnevale, Artem Gulish, and Jeff Stroll, Educational Adequacy in the Twenty-First Century, The Century Foundation (May 2, 2018); Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith, and Jeff Stroll, Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020, Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce (June 2013)
2 Rural Education: Educational Attainment, USDA Economic Research Service (August 20, 2019)
While postsecondary enrollment rates have declined nationally, rootEd has demonstrated significant impact within only its first year. We have accomplished this by implementing rigorous data systems and partnering with organizations that are embedded in and trusted by the communities we serve.

In its first two years, rootEd has reached over **5,000 rural students** in more than a dozen rural high schools.

Postsecondary enrollment increased in the first year by **9 percentage points** in the high schools where we work, compared with a national decline in postsecondary enrollment.

rootEd students have accessed more than **$5 million** in financial aid, an average of $5,300 per student.

More than **20% of college-bound students** said they would not have enrolled in college if not for their rootEd advisor.
rootEd Alliance is made possible by a group of family business owners and individuals, including the Trott Family Foundation, Steward Family Foundation, Emily Rauh Pulitzer, Barbara and Andy Taylor and the William T. Kemper Foundation, among others. This collaborative effort was borne out of BDT & Company’s commitment to building impactful social projects that bring donors together around big ideas that are underresourced and overlooked by the philanthropic sector, with great need and great potential for impact.

For more information, please visit rootEdAlliance.org