



PARTICIPANT HANDOUTS

CHAMPS Healthy Communities Spotlight Series: The Coffee Break Project: Supporting Mental Health in Ranching and Agricultural Communities

Thank you for attending today's training. By doing so, you are strengthening the ability of your community-based and patient-directed health center to deliver comprehensive, high-quality primary health care services.

Presented by:

Jennifer Pollmiller, MA, [Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc.](#)

Hanna Bates, [Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc.](#)

Live Event Date/Time:

Tuesday, September 1, 2026

12:00–1:00PM Mountain Time /1:00–2:00PM Central Time

Target Audience:

This series is intended for Region VIII health center staff and key PCA contacts. The series will offer practical insights, highlight promising practices, and share lessons learned from health centers throughout the region.

Event Overview:

This session provides an overview of Valley Wide Health System, Inc.'s Coffee Break Project which is a community-driven model supporting farmer/rancher mental health and emotional well-being.

CHAMPS Archives

This event will be archived online. This online version will be posted within two weeks of the live event and will be available for at least one year from the live presentation date. For information about all CHAMPS archives, please visit <https://champsonline.org/events-trainings/distance-learning/online-archived-champs-distance-learning-events>.

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Description of CHAMPS

Community Health Association of Mountain/Plains States (CHAMPS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting all Region VIII federally-designated Community Health Centers so they can better serve their patients and communities. Currently, CHAMPS programs and services focus on education and training, collaboration and networking, workforce development, and the collection and dissemination of regional data. Staff and board members of [CHAMPS Organizational Members](#) receive targeted benefits in the areas of business intelligence, networking and peer support, recognition and awards, recruitment and retention, training discounts and reimbursement, and more.

For over 40 years, CHAMPS has been an essential resource for Community Health Center training and support! Be sure to take advantage of CHAMPS' programs, products, resources, and other services. For more information about CHAMPS, please visit www.CHAMPSonline.org. The Happenings box in the middle of the CHAMPS home page highlights the newest CHAMPS offerings, while the CHAMPS Membership box on the lower part of the home page lists current benefits for CHAMPS Organizational Members.

Speaker Biographies

Jennifer Pollmiller is the Director of Community Outreach for Valley-Wide Health Systems, Inc. In that role, she oversees the Farmworker outreach program as well as the media for The Coffee Break Project. She has been a rodeo athlete her entire life, and now resides in Manzanola, Colorado where she raises quarter horses, collects donkeys, and helps her husband on the farm and ranch. As a mental health advocate, she is passionate about community engagement, finding creative ways to connect people and overall improving the lives of rural Coloradans.

Hanna Bates serves as the Agricultural Outreach Coordinator for The Coffee Break Project, a Valley-Wide Health Systems initiative. The program has gained national recognition for its continued work helping people in rural communities connect with one another, build peer support, and access needed resources. Hanna has held this role for five years and continues to support farmers, ranchers, and community members across the region by connecting them with services offered through Valley-Wide Health Systems and partner organizations. She also helps promote C.O.M.E.T. training throughout Colorado and nationally. A lifelong resident of Otero County in Colorado's Lower Arkansas Valley, Hanna grew up rodeoing, participating in local 4-H clubs, and ranching. Hanna lives on her family ranch and farm in Manzanola, Colorado, with her husband and two daughters. Over the years, her family has raised specialty seed crops, goats, chickens, cattle, horses, and alfalfa. Today, they operate a small alfalfa bale-growing operation and a small chicken operation that produces laying hens and replacement hens.



2026 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES SPOTLIGHT SERIES

July 7: Navigating the Aging Journey and Our Healthcare System
Shawna Yates, DO

August 4: Integrating Psychiatry into Primary Care
Marshal Ash, DO

**September 1: The Coffee Break Project: Supporting Mental Health
in Ranching and Agricultural Communities**
Jennifer Pollmiller, MA and Hanna Bates



The Coffee Break Project: A community-driven model supporting farmer/rancher mental health and emotional well-being



Presented by: Jennifer Pollmiller, MA and Hanna Bates



What we will cover today:

- What is Rural Stress
- Building Advisory Groups
- Adopting COMET
- Communication to the Audience
- Resources Already Available

The projects supported by the Coffee Break Project

- Ag Advisory Councils
- COMET
- Valley-Wide's Farmworker Program



Valley-Wide
Health Systems, Inc.



Why it's Important

- In the United States, suicide was responsible for nearly 48,824 deaths in 2024.
- Provisional data shows the rate fell further to **13.7 per 100,000** (48,824 total deaths) in 2024, marking roughly a 4% decrease from the 2022 peak. Final validated multi-year tracking through 2026 continues to evaluate whether this downward trend is sustained.



<https://www.cdc.gov/ruralhealth/Suicide.html>

What Causes These Stressors in The Ag Industry?

- Farmers have said the long and varying hours they work trying to keep their business going despite low returns leaves little time for socializing, relaxing, or spending time with their family.
- Other challenges include a lack of social opportunities, geographical isolation, and poor rural broadband access
- The general feeling that the public has a limited understanding of what is involved in farming and the array of challenges farmers face in producing food and managing the countryside.



Culture and Stigma Prevent Care



The Agricultural mindset and values alone may get in the way of access to care.

Valley-Wide's Farmworker Program



Mobile Unit Offerings

- Health Screenings
- Glucose Monitoring
- Education
- Scheduling Assistance

Since we began tracking closer, June-September 2024 alone, we helped nearly 2,000 people through our mobile units.

BUILDING AG ADVISORY GROUPS

- Community designed;
- Community driven (can be region specific);
- It is culture specific;
- It is sustainable and easily replicable;
- There are both Gatekeepers and Investors (not \$)



Developed BY and FOR rural communities:

- Based on evidence from rural people
- Developed by researchers and rural community members
- Includes a very intentional set of questions and guidelines – not random questions.

WELLNESS

VULNERABLE SPACE

CRISIS

Someone
headed towards
crisis

You are here.
Be "the other
person."

Community-based safe venues
for emotional expression

Mental Health First
Aid, Crisis Hotlines,
Law Enforcement

Integrated Community Behavioral Health



A Few of Our Efforts So Far



**DO YOU LOOK AFTER YOUR
NEIGHBORS AS CLOSE AS
YOUR CROP OR HERD?**



The background image is a landscape photograph. It shows a vast, flat field of tall, green and yellow grass in the foreground. The field extends to a distant, flat horizon. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds, some of which are illuminated from below by a low sun, creating a warm, golden glow. The overall atmosphere is serene and contemplative.

Questions?

Some of Our Favorite Resources:

www.facebook.com/CBPco

www.Valley-widehealth.org/the-coffee-break-project

<https://agrability.colostate.edu/> The vision of AgrAbility is to enhance quality of life for farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural workers with disabilities, so that they, their families, and their communities continue to succeed in rural America.

<http://www.caamhpforhealth.org/>: Behavioral health vouchers for farmers, ranchers, and rural community members. Good for up to six sessions with a licensed, CAAMHP certified counselor. The program is ag-friendly, remotely accessible, and anonymous.

<https://www.caamhpforhealth.org/family-addiction-workshop>: These workshops provide a supportive environment where parents and other adolescent care givers can work together with a licensed behavioral health professional to identify available resources, learn about addiction, grow in constructive parenting styles specific to addiction, and create safety plans.

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/taxonomy/term/365>: Rural Development USDA is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. Through our programs, we help rural Americans in many ways.

<https://ranchmanagement.com/succession-assets-vs-management/>: Who controls what? How are business decisions made? How do we help the outgoing generation step aside with confidence?

<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/farmer-mental-health#understanding-concerns>: Tons of links to other sites, research, and peer-reviewed sources.



Our Line is Always Open.

The 988 Colorado
Mental Health Line
offers free, confidential,
24/7 emotional support.

Call / Text 988 or
Live Chat at

988Colorado.com

988

Colorado
Mental Health
Line

Contact Us

www.facebook.com/CBPco

www.Valley-widehealth.org/the-coffee-break-project

Jennifer: Pollmillerj@Valley-WideHealth.org

Hanna: BatesH@Valley-WideHealth.org



Thank you for joining us for the third session in the Healthy Communities Spotlight Series!

To view the **event archive** of this and other past CHAMPS events, visit:
<http://champsonline.org/events-trainings/distance-learning/online-archived-champs-distance-learning-events>

To learn about other **upcoming CHAMPS events**, visit:
<http://champsonline.org/events-trainings/distance-learning/upcoming-live-distance-learning-events>

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