

WE RISE INTERNATIONAL

NEWSLETTER

FALL NEWSLETTER 2021

Our Mission

Empowering the World
with Health and Hope

Our Values

Interconnection, Equity, Respect,
Compassion, Innovation, Resilience



The Heart of We Rise International

We believe that every community has strengths to combat the problems that face the world today. Neighbors lift up neighbors. Strangers help each other. Working with communities of all sizes, we empower people of all backgrounds to maximize their strengths and respond to their health struggles – together.

SPREAD
THE
WORD!

Upcoming Events



November 20th and December 4th Churches Care (CC) Lancaster PA II

(Cohort 2) training event will welcome up to 20 new churches into the 18 month training and support program. 18 CEU hours provided for PA pastors, social workers, counselors & nurses.

CC Philly coming Feb 26 & March 5, 2022!

December 12 - Gifts that Give Hope

Come connect with our team and buy gifts that support We Rise at this annual Lancaster PA Christmas Craft fair that supports non-profits!

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 1	Upcoming Events
Page 2	We Rise - in the World
Pages 3	Things to Celebrate
Page 4	Gifts that Give Hope - African style
Page 5	Support We Rise - Change Lives

WE RISE - IN THE WORLD

Executive Director Janelle Bitikofer presents Mental Health Webinars for U.S. Churches of the Brethren:

In summer/fall 2021 We Rise E.D. Janelle Bitikofer led two webinars for the U.S. Nationwide Churches of the Brethren. Hosted by the [Churches of the Brethren](#) and the [Anabaptist Disabilities Network](#), the webinars provided mental health education and discussed strategies churches can use in "Providing Mutual Support when People experience Mental Illnesses and Addictions."

Stan Dueck, co-coordinator of Discipleship Ministries for the Churches of the Brethren, said "Janelle Bitikofer's June webinar... was so engaging, and viewers had so many questions, that we (offered) a part two (September 2021)." Approximately sixty leaders and representatives from churches across the east and midwest U.S. attended.

Articles on mental health and COVID-19 published

We Rise E.D. Janelle Bitikofer's articles with tips on mental health, adolescent mental health, and supporting each other during COVID-19 were featured in Summer / Fall editions of the *Currents* magazine of Atlantic Coast Mennonite Conference, and *Messenger*, the magazine of the Church of the Brethren.



If you missed the webinar events you can watch the June video recording by clicking here:

"Providing mutual support when people experience mental illnesses or addictions"

COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS

We've had the privilege to collaborate with these and other great organizations in 2021.



The Streetlights book, a mental health and addictions resource for Christians is available on Amazon.com, bn.com, target.com & bookstores across the U.S. and Europe.

Expressing our Gratefulness

It's almost Thanksgiving. At We Rise International we are so grateful for you. Thanks to your financial donations, volunteering, and partnership we have been able to support people struggling with mental health and addiction needs during COVID-19, and provide support for faith communities, and for health and mental health first responders who are addressing increasing needs.

We're also excited to have maintained our U.S and international partnerships and started new ones, and are celebrating several new initiatives. Look for more news on these in future newsletters.



Thank You

Things to Celebrate

- In Summer 2021 we provided an online event that helped U.S. front line responders cope with their pandemic trauma.
- In Summer 2021 E.D. Janelle Bitikofer met with health and mental health professionals in the Dominican Republic. They expressed enthusiasm to partner with We Rise to develop mental health and addictions trainings for their local faith communities.



Dr. Moronta, MD, We Rise E.D. Janelle Bitikofer & Dr. De Peña, MD, MPH, Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic, July, 2021.



WELCOME 2021-22 MILLERSVILLE INTERNS!

We Rise International is delighted to have welcomed three social work interns in 2021-22 through our partnership with the Social Work Department at Millersville University in Lancaster, PA.

Social Work Senior Jen Klinger

(photo not available) interned 23 hours per week from June-August 2021 with We Rise. She established a collaboration with Brethren Village Retirement Community in Lancaster, PA, and worked with a volunteer team of retired women there in support of our African Diabetes Bags initiative. Thanks to Jen, Brethren Village Volunteer Coordinator Joanna Rudisill, and the talented women from Brethren Village who are volunteering their time to make the Diabetes Bags initiative a success!

Graduate Students Jaime Keesey and Dawn Watson

are interning at We Rise for the 2021-22 university academic year. Jaime is working alongside We Rise Research and Logistics Coordinator Janel Long on program monitoring and evaluation, logistics, and other aspects of the Churches Care Program. Dawn is working alongside Exec. Director Janelle Bitikofer on outreach, volunteer coordination, and various mental health initiatives. Welcome Jaime and Dawn!



Dawn



Jaime

**WE RISE AFRICAN PURSES & DIABETES BAGS
TRAVEL FROM NIGERIA & KENYA TO PENNSYLVANIA
TO FEATURE AT GIFTS THAT GIVE HOPE**

Here's a Christmas Gift idea for someone you love. In support of We Rise International's work, two female fashion design entrepreneurs -- one from Kenya and the other from Nigeria -- have designed bags made from beautiful African fabrics for us to sell in the U.S, to raise awareness about the work of We Rise.

The fair-trade fabric purses from Nigeria, and Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes Supply Kit Bags from Kenya, are made from eight beautiful patterns of African fabric purchased in African street markets and sewn by women's small businesses in Nairobi Kenya and Jos Nigeria. They were designed and sewn specifically for We Rise International.

Check out and purchase the purses and diabetes bags at the We Rise International stand at the [Gifts that Give Hope Alternative Gift Fair, Sunday, December 12, 2021, 10-3pm](#), in Lancaster, PA. Or contact us at Outreach@weriseinternational for info on how to purchase them online!



Designer Lorna Anupi of Nairobi, Kenya poses with the Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes Bags she and her team designed for We Rise International. The beautiful and useful African bags not only support We Rise, but provide a fair living wage for the African women in Kenya and Nigeria who sew them.



BOOST THE HOPE: SUPPORT WE RISE INTERNATIONAL

Your donation to We Rise International changes lives:

\$40.00 provides a Clinical Consult with a licensed mental health and addictions counselor to help faith leaders support someone in their community who is struggling with a mental illness or addiction.

\$150.00 provides training for 20 health or mental health first responders or pastors who are providing support for their community's increased COVID-19 mental health and addictions needs.

A business, individual, or monthly donation of any size helps

We Rise stay available to provide trainings and support to community groups on mental illnesses and addictions whenever asked. In 2021 we regularly provided trainings when requested by universities, churches, non-profits, mental health family support groups, and other community leaders who reached out to us.

I'm so excited that people in North Carolina, New York City, Pennsylvania, Ohio, the Dominican Republic, and elsewhere want to collaborate with We Rise to increase support for people experiencing mental illnesses and addictions. We receive a lot of invites, but of course funding is needed to make these opportunities a reality. Your financial support makes a huge difference -- helping us empower people experiencing a mental illness or addiction to live healthy and hope-filled lives!

Our tiny team can't do it without you. Thanks so much for your support! - Janelle Bitikofer

**We Rise Int'l is a 501c3 Nonprofit.
All donations are tax deductible**

A Tax Exempt 501c3 Letter is available upon request. More than 90% of We Rise Int'l funds go directly into our programs helping people and communities.



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