

Rural Organizing Project's Roots & Wings Oral History Project

NHN MicroFunding Progress Report
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The Rural Organizing Project (ROP) is a statewide nonprofit based in Scappoose, OR. ROP developed during the early 1990s, when rural and small-town Oregonians formed homegrown groups and campaigns to stop the proliferation and passage of discriminatory, anti-gay ballot measures. In the two decades since, ROP has helped break rural isolation and provided support to some fifty local, volunteer-run Human Dignity Groups that work to advance democracy and justice across the state.

ROP's Roots & Wings Oral History Project seeks to document and analyze ROP's 20-year history of grassroots organizing in rural and small town Oregon, through the voices of those who have shaped ROP and been changed because of it. To date, we have collected over 80 hours of archival quality audio and video material from several dozen narrators representing groups in over 20 of Oregon's 36 counties. Together, these narratives provide insight into a largely under-documented aspect of Oregon's social and political history. They speak not only to ROP and its member groups' history, but also to the unique experiences of rural Oregonians, particularly those marginalized from dominant culture: pioneers of rural Oregon's LGBTQ communities, Vietnam war veterans and conscientious objectors, people of color, immigrants and their allies.

We are committed to making these narratives and this history **accessible to a broad audience**, through **varied strategies**. Towards that end, and with the support of an NHN MicroFunding grant, we've curated and edited a collection of audio (and some video) interview excerpts for sharing in public listening events and online. Here are some of the ways that we are sharing these narratives:

- In June, we published "[A History of LGBTQ Organizing in Rural Oregon](#)" - a new **multi-media timeline** featuring several of the excerpts.
- In October, we invited participants in the [Oregon Archives Crawl](#) to listen to the interview selections as they visited our table.
- In December, we will share several excerpts as part of [Exploring the Progressive Countryside](#) - a **community discussion on social justice organizing in rural communities**, organized by the Social Justice Fund Northwest.
- We are currently developing a **Roots & Wings project website**, to be launched in early 2015, which will include the full collection of audio and video excerpts from the oral history interviews, together with essays, archival documents, photos, and other materials related to ROP's history of organizing in rural and small town Oregon.