



Stirring Up Success: A Partnership with Mel's

At RSN, we know that resilience grows stronger through community—and thanks to a generous partnership with Mel's Commissary & Catering, that growth has been on full display this spring. Melody and Al Bowers, owners of Mel's, offered a five-week culinary program to nine of our youth participants, providing hands-on lessons in healthy cooking, kitchen skills, and personal wellness. The course culminated in a special meal prepared by the youth for their mentors and families, celebrating not just their culinary talents but their personal growth.

This collaboration is part of RSN's wellness-building skill program, which supports young people facing challenges related to mental health, substance use, or justice involvement. With a focus on the 8 Dimensions of Wellness developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), we create healing-centered, youth-first environments that foster confidence, connection, and life skills.

We invite you to join us in providing this collaborative, innovative, community-drive work with your support this June:

- **[Make a tax deductible donation to support RSN.](#)** RSN is on pace to serve twice as many youth this year and we are at an all time high in youth matched with mentors!
- **[Join us on June 29th for Mel's Fish & Chips event.](#)** Continuing to go

above and beyond for RSN, Mel's will be donating 10% of the event's proceeds to support RSN's youth programs.

So please give today, share with your networks, and help stir up real change for our youth. Your continued participation will make a lasting difference for RSN and the youth we serve.



Programming & Training Highlights

Building a Brighter Future: RSN's Expanded Support for Chatham County Youth!

For the past two years, RSN has been engaged in Chatham County, connecting with youth-serving organizations to understand the services and, most importantly, the needs of our youth and families.

We're excited to announce that our efforts are growing! Thanks to the support from the Chatham County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, RSN is expanding its impact to serve even more youth and families in Chatham County.

This summer, we're onboarding a new [Program Manager](#) and dedicated mentors who will be instrumental in launching our youth wellness skill-building program. We anticipate kicking off this program in September, ready to provide essential support to youth and their families as the new school year begins.

Thank You to Lucy Battle

Our Director of Programs, Lucy Battle, has transitioned from her role to pursue a new educational chapter. Lucy was central to RSN, shaping our programs and ensuring their success. Her energy and passion for recovery and peer support will be missed in our work.

Lucy's work at RSN made a real impact. We are grateful for her leadership in helping us train and supervise more than forty mentors, who delivered thousands of hours of support to the youth and families we serve. Thank you, Lucy, for your dedication. We wish you success in your new journey.

We are currently in the process of hiring an [Interim Director of Programs](#) to start in July.

Welcoming our Summer Intern: Jordan Baum



Please join us in a warm welcome and thank you to **Jordan Baum**, who has joined RSN as our Human Services summer intern.

Jordan is an undergraduate at UNC-Chapel Hill with a Bachelor of Arts in Education, concentrating in Human Development and Family Science, Family Life Education. During her internship with RSN from May through July 2025, Jordan will be providing valuable administrative and logistical support to our direct program staff across all areas of our Skill Building program. Additionally, she will be assisting with the planning and coordination of family-focused enrichment activities.

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work with an organization that supports adolescents' mental health and well-being, and that provides me with valuable experience to carry forward in my journey toward becoming a mental health professional.

Mentor Highlights

Welcome our new mentor, **Darren Sanders**! Darren is a medical student at UNC School of Medicine with a strong focus on psychiatry, youth advocacy, and mental health equity. His background, including personal experiences with the justice system and witnessing the impact of untreated mental illness, has shaped a deep understanding of the barriers to care. Darren is committed to supporting justice-involved youth and will bring compassionate, trauma-informed care to empower young people in our community.



[Meet all our mentors online.](#)

Meet the Board

As we shared in the Spring eNewsletter, we are pleased to announce eight new leaders joined our RSN board of directors back in March (you might have also seen our posts on Facebook or LinkedIn). As a small nonprofit, we rely heavily on the talent and time of our board to help achieve our vision and mission. We are grateful to these incoming leaders: Andrea Hussong, Chris McQuiston, Kimberly Guess, Lori Jones, Shalisa Clifton, Soyini Abdul-Mateen, Tanneshia Dukes, and William Vanhook. Below we've highlighted the remaining four members of the new class.

Shalisa Clifton

Shalisa Clifton is a dedicated mental health advocate



working at The University of North Carolina at Chapel-Hill. With certifications in Adult Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health First Aid for Veterans, Shalisa is committed to equipping individuals and communities with the skills to recognize and respond to mental health challenges. A graduate of Winston-Salem State University and Texas Tech University, where they earned their master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, Shalisa brings a strong academic foundation to their work in mental health support and

education. Passionate about breaking the stigma surrounding mental health, Shalisa strives to empower others through knowledge, compassion, and advocacy.

Soyini Abdul-Mateen

Soyini T. Abdul-Mateen is a mother of three adult children and a proud bonus mom to a cherished daughter—a role that has deepened her lifelong commitment to fostering belonging, growth, and second chances. A natural mentor and advocate for inclusivity, Soyini has dedicated her career to creating communities where people feel seen, supported, and inspired to grow. Her work as an IT consultant reflects this ethos, blending technical expertise with a heartfelt drive to transform systems—and lives—for the better. She currently serves as Founder & Chief Consultant for Brilliant Corners Innovations. Soyini is honored to contribute her voice, vision, and passion for human-centered solutions, helping RSN create pathways where every young person can thrive.



Tanneshia Dukes



Dr. Tanneshia Dukes is a dedicated educator, advocate, mother, and wife with a strong commitment to improving educational outcomes for all students. Dr. Dukes has held various roles and worked in several school districts – diverse experiences that have deepened her passion for promoting equity and ensuring access to quality education for every student. Currently, Dr. Dukes serves as the Executive Director and Lead Consultant at Dukes & Associates Consulting Firm, offering a range of services aimed at empowering educational institutions, policymakers, and leaders. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Greensboro College, a Master's Degree in School Administration from North Carolina A&T State University, and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from High Point University.

William Vanhook

As Financial Analyst for Charter Success Partners, William Vanhook is an experienced financial professional specializing in financial analysis, reporting, and regulatory compliance. With a CPA certification and over a decade of experience, he has worked with not-for-profit organizations, contractors, and small businesses. His expertise includes budgeting, financial forecasting, and ensuring regulatory compliance. He has held roles at national and regional CPA firms, delivering impactful insights that drive financial stability and transparency. He is adept at leveraging his analytical skills to support decision-making and advance organizational goals. William holds a Certificate in Accounting from Muhlenberg College and a BA in History from the University of Virginia.



Welcome Shalisa, Soyini, Tanneshia, and William! Thank you for your leadership of RSN. [You can meet our entire board on our website.](#)

Recent Awards



**THANK YOU,
RSN Investors!**

RSN is experiencing significant program growth, particularly in Orange County, and is on pace to serve twice as many youth this year. Since July 2024, we have received 25 referrals and supported 13 participants in Individual Skill Building. We recently received several awards from local government and foundation partners in reflection of our model's success and the urgent need for our services in Orange and Chatham counties.

Chatham County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council has made a significant commitment to support expansion of our Individual Skill Building and Enrichment Activities in Chatham County.

Similarly, **Orange County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council** has also awarded us a grant to support our growth in Orange County. We are also recipients of funds from the **Orange County Opioid Settlement**, which will be aimed at integrating harm reduction principles and providing overdose prevention training to staff and mentors in addition to continuing to implement our Family Resilience framework. Finally, we are grateful to **Coastal Credit Union Foundation** who will partner on expanding our financial literacy enrichment activities and further empower us to expand our reach. **These funders are helping ensure more young people have the tools and support to thrive, and we are grateful for their investments in RSN.**

Reintegration Support Network
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