



Reintegration Support Network

2025–2026 Annual Impact Report

Investing in Mentors. Transforming the Lives of Community Youth.

Mission Statement: RSN is a community that embraces, empowers, and inspires youth and emerging adults who need support.



RSN 2025/26 Mentor Cohort: back row: left to right, **Joshua Boyd, Jaylyn Phillips, Darren Sanders**, Front row: left to right, **April Barber, Linda Brandariz, Saisha Joshi**

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Letter from the Executive Director

Dear RSN Community,

Thank you so much for your continued investment in the Reintegration Support Network (RSN). Reflecting on our past program year, I am reminded of the encouraging words a participant shared with his peers during a community meal: "things get better." He wanted to inspire his peers going through similar experiences by sharing his own hope. This year has been one of growth, learning, and important evolution for RSN—and it has reinforced something we have known from the beginning: **strong relationships are at the heart of meaningful change.**

Over the past year, we have continued to see the impact of our Wellness Skill-Building Program as young people work alongside mentors to identify their strengths, build wellness skills, pursue their own meaningful goals, and connect with resources and opportunities in their communities. At the same time, we have seen growing demand for the kind of individualized, relationship-centered support RSN provides. Young people and families are navigating increasingly complex challenges related to mental health, substance use, justice involvement, and the many social and environmental factors that shape their well-being. The need for trusted, consistent, and compassionate support has never been clearer.

In response, RSN has made an important shift in how we think about our work. **We are investing not only in the young people we serve, but in the people who walk alongside them.** This year marked a continued focus on strengthening our Mentor Development Program—the foundation that makes our direct service model possible. We are building more intentional systems for recruiting, training, supporting, supervising, and developing mentors, including individuals who bring relevant lived experience. We believe that lived experience can create powerful connections, but we also know that effective mentorship requires preparation, ongoing learning, reflection, and support. By investing in our mentors, we are investing in the quality and sustainability of the relationships at the center of our work and preparing our mentors to be peer support professionals in the healthcare or recovery field.

This evolution represents an exciting next chapter for RSN. Our vision is to develop our mentor development program into a strong and sustainable workforce development program equipped to meet the unique needs of youth and emerging adults while creating a model of mentorship that can grow alongside the communities we serve. We want every young person who connects with RSN to have access to a trained mentor who is prepared not simply to offer advice, but to listen, understand, encourage, challenge, and walk alongside them as they define and pursue their own goals.

None of this work happens alone.

To our **mentors**: thank you for sharing your time, your skills, your compassion, and, when appropriate, your lived experience. Your willingness to show up consistently and build authentic relationships makes an immeasurable difference.

To the **young people** we serve: thank you for trusting us and allowing us to be part of your journeys. Your strengths, resilience, honesty, and willingness to grow continue to shape and improve our work.

To our **community partners**: thank you for opening doors, sharing resources, creating opportunities, and helping us build a community where young people can belong and thrive.

And to our **donors and funders**: thank you for believing in RSN and investing in this work. Your support allows us not only to provide services today, but to build the systems, relationships, and people that will make those services stronger and more sustainable tomorrow.

As we look to the future, RSN is committed to continuing to grow thoughtfully and intentionally. We will strengthen our Mentor Development Program, expand opportunities for mentor training and professional development, deepen our partnerships, improve our ability to measure and communicate impact, and continue working toward reaching more young people and families across our region.

We believe every young person deserves the opportunity to build a healthy, meaningful, and hopeful future—and that no one should have to navigate that journey alone.

Thank you for being part of the RSN community and for helping us build a stronger foundation for the future.

With gratitude,

Terence Johnson
Executive Director
Reintegration Support Network

Our Mission, Vision and Aspirations

Our Mission:

RSN is a community that embraces, empowers, and inspires youth and emerging adults who need support.

We serve youth and emerging adults who experience challenges related to:

- substance use
- mental health
- justice involvement

Vision & Aspirations

Vision:

RSN envisions local communities supporting, inspiring, and empowering youth in all forms of recovery.

CORE VALUES & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Youth First

RSN will keep the best interests of the youth first and avoid any strategy or practice that could make them feel more threatened or burdened or undermine their personal power and self-determination.

Authenticity of Voice

Authenticity of voice through its connections to and accurate representation of diverse voices of youth as part of communities of recovery. RSN seeks to have the majority of its directors, staff and volunteers be self-identified members of the local communities of recovery including their families, friends, allies and professionals. RSN seeks to give voice to personal stories as living proof of the transformative power of recovery.

Diversity and Inclusivity

RSN strives to include, hear and embrace people representing different styles and lengths of recovery as well as diversity by age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and political

and religious affiliation. RSN seeks to give voice and support to this diversity in its outreach and education, advocacy and recovery support.

Independence, Partnership and Collaboration

RSN is not part of the legal system, the courts, a treatment program or a specific religious group or faith and does not endorse a particular path to recovery. This independence gives RSN the ability to freely partner on a variety of levels with other organizations and individuals that are able to contribute to the recovery of youth with a wide variety of circumstances, needs and styles of recovery. RSN is thus able to serve as a bridge between diverse communities of recovery, the addiction treatment community, governmental agencies, the criminal justice system, the larger network of health and human services providers and systems and the broader recovery support resources of the extended community.

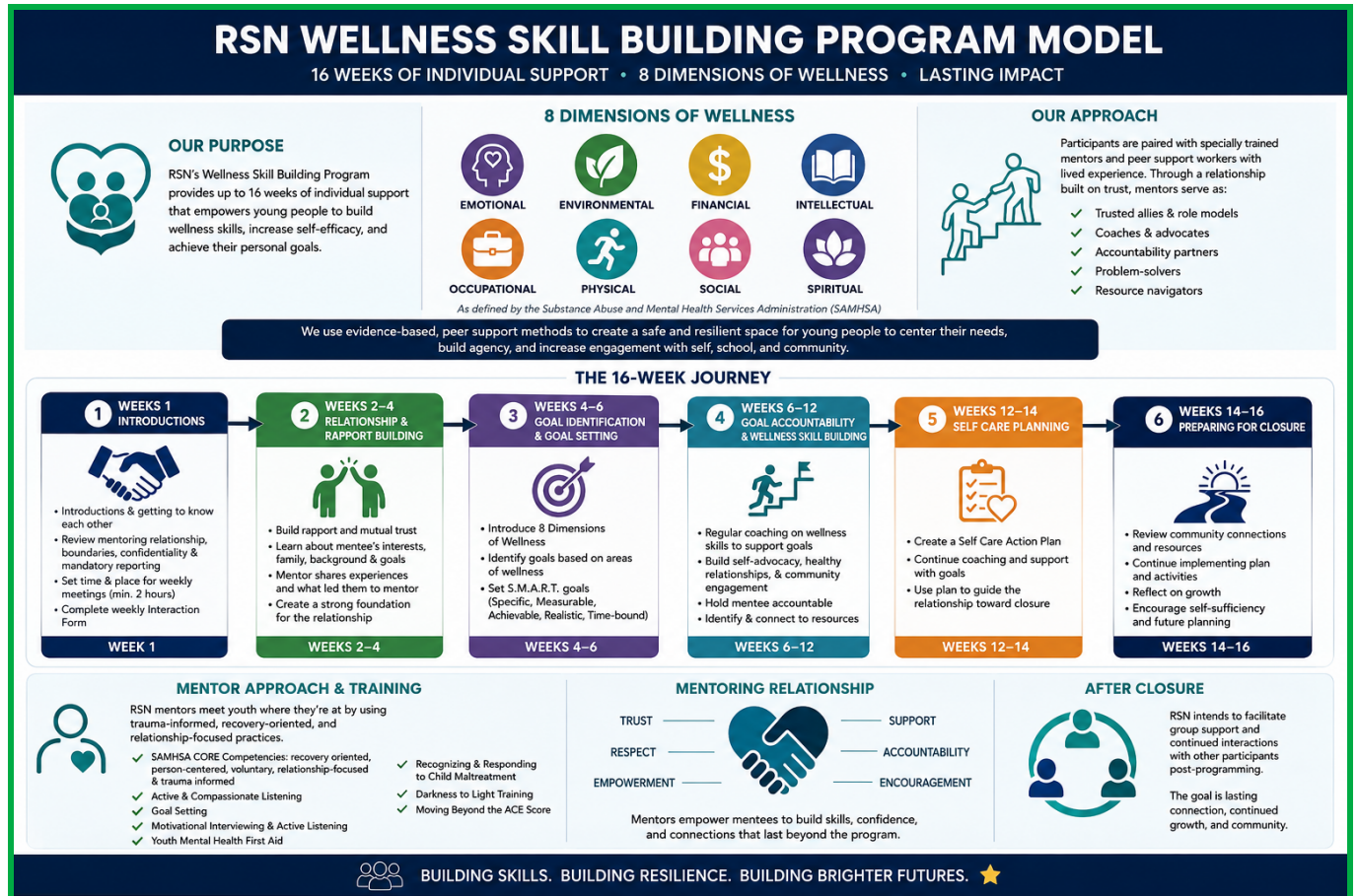
Our Wellness Skill-Building Program

RSN's Wellness Skill Building program consists of up to 16 weeks of individual support to youth and emerging adults (ages 13-20) impacted by substance use, mental health challenges and, or justice involvement. The program focuses on building skills in 8 dimensions of Wellness:

Emotional, Environmental, Financial, Intellectual, Occupational, Physical, Social, and Spiritual as defined by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The program utilizes evidence-based peer support methods designed to create a safe and resilient space for young people to center their needs and build agency while increasing their engagement with self, school, and community.

The Wellness Skill-Building Program pairs participants with specially trained mentors and peer support workers who bring lived experience or allyship related to substance use, mental health, and/or justice involvement. Through individualized support, participants explore SAMHSA's Eight Dimensions of Wellness, build practical wellness skills, identify personal strengths and goals, develop action plans, and work toward meaningful change. Throughout the mentoring relationship, mentors serve as trusted allies, role models, coaches, advocates, and resource navigators—providing encouragement, accountability, problem-solving support, and connection to community resources that help participants build resilience, increase self-efficacy, and achieve their personal goals.

How RSN works



Year in Review At a Glance



Serving Orange and Chatham Counties — Growing to Reach Alamance and Durham.

Building Stronger Mentors

Strong mentors create stronger outcomes.

At RSN, we believe the quality of the mentoring relationship is central to the impact of our Wellness Skill Building Program. Our mentors are more than contractors—they serve as trusted allies, role models, coaches, advocates, and resource navigators for youth and emerging adults ages 13–20 impacted by substance use, mental health challenges, and/or justice involvement.

Many RSN mentors bring lived experience related to recovery, mental health, justice involvement, or other experiences relevant to the young people they serve. RSN values this lived experience as a source of wisdom, connection, and understanding while also recognizing that lived experience must be supported by training, supervision, and ongoing skill development. Our goal is to ensure mentors can thoughtfully draw on their strengths and experiences while maintaining appropriate boundaries and providing safe, ethical, youth-centered support.

Developing Mentors for the Realities of the Work

RSN's Mentor Development Program goes beyond traditional one-time volunteer training. We invest in mentors throughout their involvement with RSN through screening and onboarding, foundational training, individual supervision, interactive mentor meetings, ongoing skill development, and a supportive community of practice.

Mentors develop skills in evidence-based and evidence-informed approaches including Motivational Interviewing, trauma-informed care, recovery-oriented and person-centered practices, strengths-based goal setting, youth-centered problem solving, and resource navigation. They also learn to apply SAMHSA's Eight Dimensions of Wellness to help participants identify strengths, build skills, pursue meaningful goals, and increase connection to their communities.

Our approach recognizes that mentors become stronger through training, practice, reflection, and support. Each mentor receives individual supervision and participates in monthly mentor meetings that provide opportunities for interactive learning, consultation, group supervision, and skill development. Mentors also participate in a peer community of practice where they can share experiences, learn from one another, problem-solve challenges, and celebrate successes.

From Mentor Development to Youth Impact

The ultimate purpose of investing in mentors is to strengthen the experience and outcomes of the young people they serve. When matched with a participant, RSN mentors meet for at least

two hours each week for up to 16 weeks, providing individualized support centered on the participant's strengths, goals, and priorities.

Through these relationships, mentors help young people build wellness skills, strengthen self-advocacy and self-efficacy, develop healthy relationships, connect with community resources, and work toward goals that are meaningful to them. Rather than directing a young person's path, RSN mentors walk alongside them—providing encouragement, accountability, problem-solving support, and connection.

Our investment in mentors is an investment in every young person they support. By preparing, developing, and sustaining skilled mentors, RSN is building the foundation for stronger relationships, more responsive services, and lasting impact.

Specialized Training

Feature training topics, including monthly mentor meetings:

- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Motivational Interviewing
- Ethics & Boundaries
- Cultural Humility
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Confidentiality and Mandatory reporting
- Building Trust and Rapport
- Responding to Crisis and Setting Boundaries
- Assessing Suicidal Ideation
- Self Care
- Mentorship and Closure
- Motivational Interviewing
- Defining the mentor relationship

Mentor Spotlight: Linda Brandariz



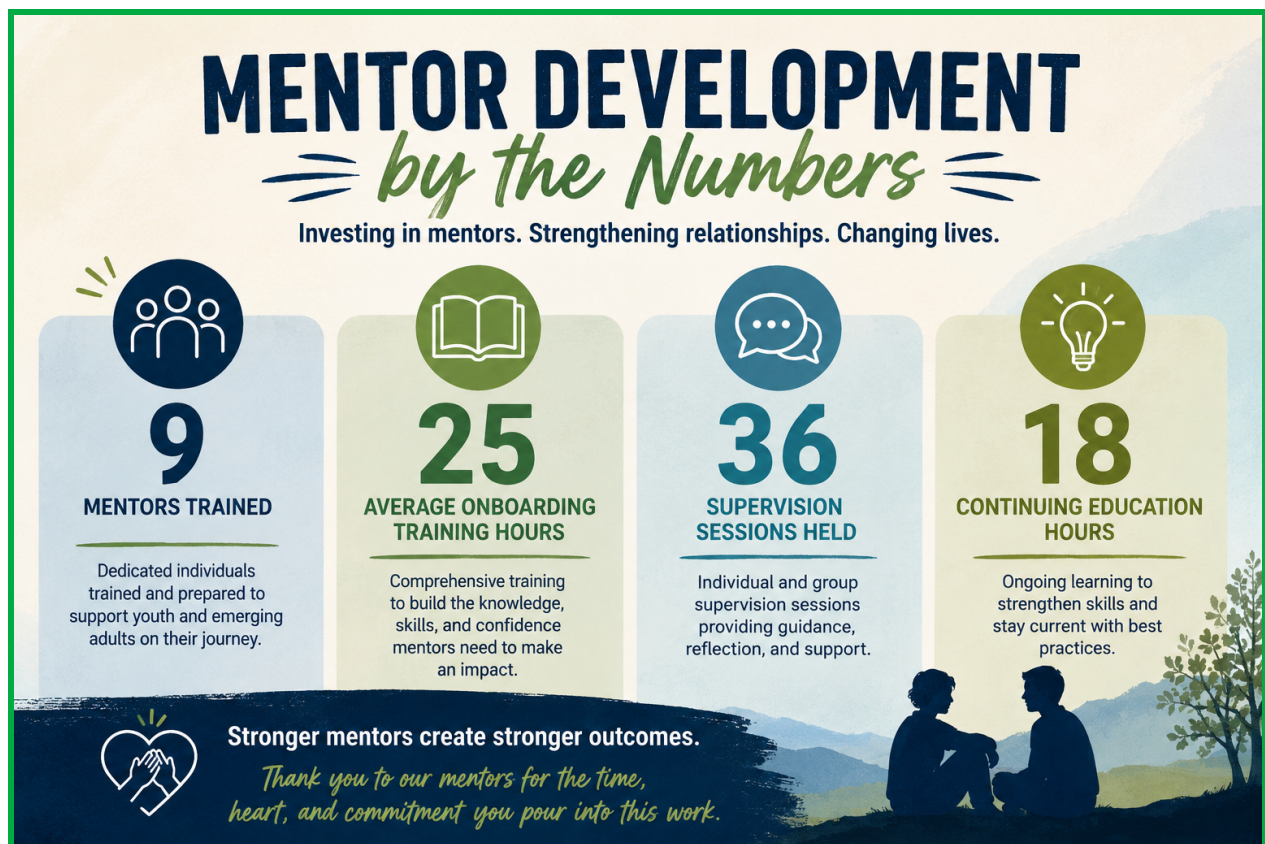
Linda's extraordinary dedication to RSN's mission and her profound impact on youth make her an exceptional mentor. Linda is a certified recovery coach who joined RSN's Mentor Development Program in March 2021. Since joining RSN as a mentor Linda has provided 383.5 hours of intensive, one-on-one mentoring to 11 young people involved in—or at risk of involvement in—the juvenile justice system. Navigating system involvement requires extraordinary patience, and Linda

consistently meets every youth with enthusiasm, curiosity, and deep personal commitment.

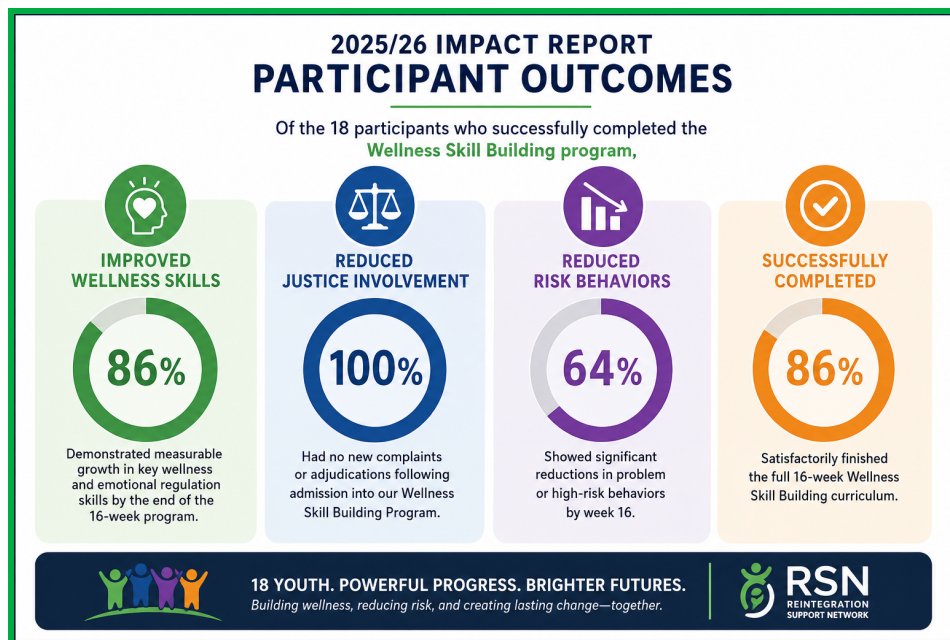
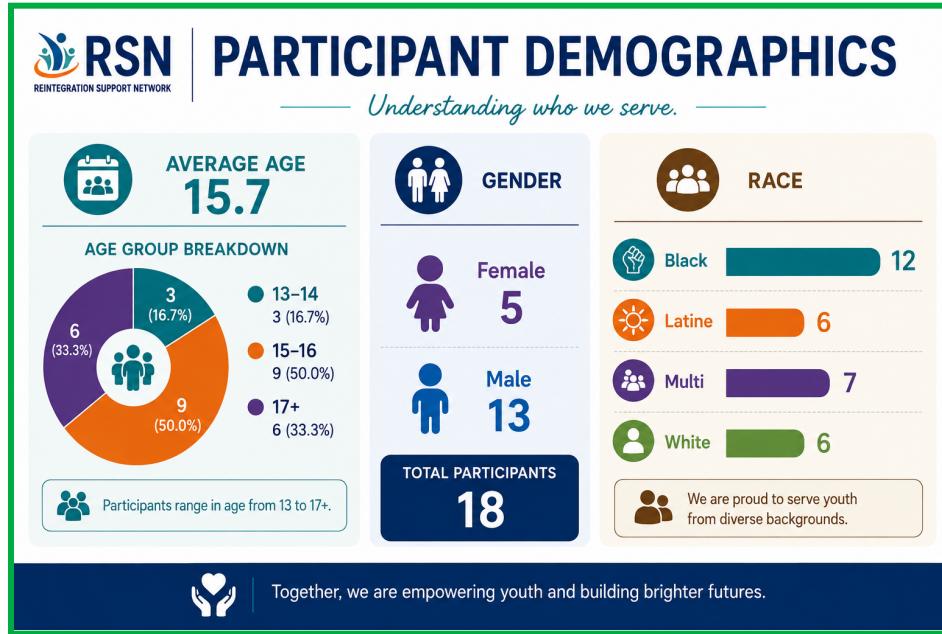
What truly sets Linda apart is her embodiment of lifelong learning and her commitment to cultural humility. She thoughtfully combines years of professional training with her own lived experience, continually refining her practice to meet the individual needs of each young person. This adaptability was powerfully demonstrated in her work with a participant who was initially very reserved and cautious about opening up. Recognizing the systemic barriers and real-world dynamics involved in cross-racial mentoring, Linda approached the relationship with deep humility, patience, and self-awareness.

Rather than taking his initial hesitancy personally or forcing a rigid framework, Linda was open to approaching the relationship differently. She remained steadfast, adapted her communication style, and consistently showed up as a reliable, supportive ally. By the conclusion of their time together, the participant shared overwhelmingly positive feedback, officially naming Linda as one of the key adults in his corner. By building authentic trust across racial, systemic, and generational lines, Linda does not just mentor—she transforms lives, models true resilience, and leaves a lasting impact on the youth and families of our community.

Mentor Development by the Numbers



Impact on Youth & Families



Every Number Represents a Young Person receiving support!

Wellness in Action

Wellness in Action: The Eight Dimensions of Wellness

At RSN, we use **SAMHSA's Eight Dimensions of Wellness** to help young people think about wellness as more than the absence of illness or problems. Wellness encompasses the many interconnected areas of life that contribute to health, purpose, fulfillment, and quality of life. Through mentoring, young people identify the areas they want to strengthen and set goals that are meaningful to them.

Emotional Wellness

Understanding and managing emotions, coping with life's challenges, and building healthy relationships.

Young people develop skills to recognize their emotions, manage stress, identify their strengths, and seek support when they need it.

Environmental Wellness

Creating safe, healthy, and supportive spaces to live, learn, work, and grow.

This includes developing an awareness of how our surroundings affect well-being and identifying environments and resources that promote safety, comfort, and connection.

Financial Wellness

Building the knowledge and skills to manage resources and work toward financial stability.

Young people explore financial goals, responsible decision-making, budgeting, and resources that can support their current and future needs.

Intellectual Wellness

Growing knowledge, creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking.

Young people are encouraged to explore their interests, consider different perspectives, develop new skills, and discover opportunities for learning and personal growth.

Occupational Wellness

Finding purpose, satisfaction, and meaning through work, education, volunteering, and other meaningful activities.

For young people, this may include exploring careers, developing employment skills, pursuing education, identifying interests, and imagining a future that reflects their goals and values.

Physical Wellness

Caring for the body through movement, nutrition, sleep, healthcare, and other healthy habits.

Young people identify realistic ways to care for their physical health and develop habits that support energy, resilience, and overall well-being.

Social Wellness

Building meaningful connections, a sense of belonging, and supportive relationships.

Mentors help young people strengthen communication and relationship skills, identify sources of support, and build connections with people and communities where they feel valued and understood.

Spiritual Wellness

Exploring meaning, purpose, values, and what gives life a sense of connection and significance.

Spiritual wellness is personal and may involve faith, beliefs, values, nature, creativity, reflection, or other sources of meaning and purpose.

Wellness Is Personal

There is no single definition of wellness—and there is no single path to achieving it. SAMHSA emphasizes that the eight dimensions are **interconnected**, meaning that changes in one area can affect other areas of life.

At RSN, mentors help young people identify **what wellness means to them**, recognize their strengths, set personally meaningful goals, and take practical steps toward greater well-being. The goal isn't perfection or balance across every dimension. **It's helping each young person build the knowledge, skills, relationships, and confidence to create a life that reflects their own goals and values.**

RSN's Wellness Skill-Building Program uses the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA's) Eight Dimensions of Wellness as a framework for individualized goal-setting and skill

development. The framework is adapted from Swarbrick's wellness model and is presented by SAMHSA as part of its Wellness Initiative.

Participant Success Story

Participant K was referred following a situation that resulted in justice system involvement, along with concerns related to anxiety, depression, trauma, school engagement, and social relationships. Through consistent mentoring grounded in trauma-informed practices, the mentor built a trusting relationship that encouraged the participant to open up about challenges he typically kept to himself. This trusting connection allowed the mentor to provide early intervention when the participant experienced setbacks with school attendance and periods of family stress. Together, they developed practical strategies to improve school attendance, establish routines, identify supportive adults at school, and strengthen healthy coping skills. Over the course of the mentoring relationship, the participant demonstrated increased self-reflection, improved help-seeking behaviors, and greater willingness to discuss difficult emotions and future goals.

Wellness is Communal - RSN Enrichment Events

Throughout the 2025–2026 program year, RSN facilitated three community-focused wellness events—generously sponsored by the Boulé Foundation, the Epsilon Gamma Boulé (Chapel Hill, NC) of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, Essential Partners, and the Orange County Partnership for a Drug-Free Youth. These events aligned with SAMHSA's 8 Dimensions of Wellness to foster belonging and strengthen the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive well-being of both current mentees and program alumni. By leveraging community as a vital protective factor, these enrichment activities allow mentor-mentee pairs to deepen their one-on-one relationships within a broader group setting, engage alongside peers, and build meaningful connections with supportive local organizations and community members across our service area.

Event highlights included our Annual **November Gratitude Gathering** designed to celebrate the RSN community as a whole, including mentors, participants, staff, the organization's Founders, board members and community members who all contribute to the wellness initiatives supported by our programming.

In April, RSN participants, parents, and mentors participated in a **Community Scavenger Hunt** designed to help participants learn more about available resources in Orange County. Participants and mentors were divided into two teams and followed a series of clues, with each clue leading them to their next destination. At each location, participants scanned a QR code to learn more about the organization or resource and its importance to the local community.

The Scavenger Hunt included visits to the [Inter-Faith Council for Social Service \(IFC\)](#), [The ArtsCenter](#), [The Strayhorn House](#), [Missions on Main](#), [The Drakeford Library Complex](#), and [Dialogue for Supporting Communities \(DSC\)](#), all located in Carrboro, NC. The activity provided a

fun, interactive way for participants to build community connections while increasing their awareness of local resources and support systems.

In June, RSN partnered with the [Marion Cheek Jackson Center for Saving and Making History](#) in Chapel Hill to host their monthly **Community Cooking Day** event. The partnership created opportunities for RSN's participants to build connection and wellness through shared food and community. **Community Cooking Day** typically centers on a community member or group who shares a recipe, ingredient, or food tradition that is meaningful to them and leads participants in preparing a dish to enjoy together.

The experience is intentionally collaborative and participants helped prepare ingredients, chop vegetables, cook, and share a meal while learning from one another. Community members were invited to use the experience to share their **culture, interests, work, or lived experiences**, creating opportunities for connection and mutual learning.

Community Partnerships



This year, Executive Director Terence Johnson was selected for the Launch Carolinas Leadership Accelerator Program, sponsored by The Duke Endowment. This multi-year initiative bridges non-profit leaders and philanthropic funders across North and South Carolina to advance trust-based grantmaking and create systemic solutions for under-resourced communities. Participating in Launch Carolinas strengthens Terence's leadership while positioning RSN to expand its strategic network, secure vital funding connections, and drive long-term community impact.

"Being part of Launch Carolinas gave me the opportunity to build meaningful relationships with funders across the region, moving beyond traditional power dynamics to better align our common goals and understand their funding approaches," shares Terence. "As the leader of a small but mighty non-profit, navigating complex organizational challenges can often feel isolating. Through this program, I gained a trusted network of 11 non-profit peers and 12 funding partners who offer guidance, shared wisdom, and support."

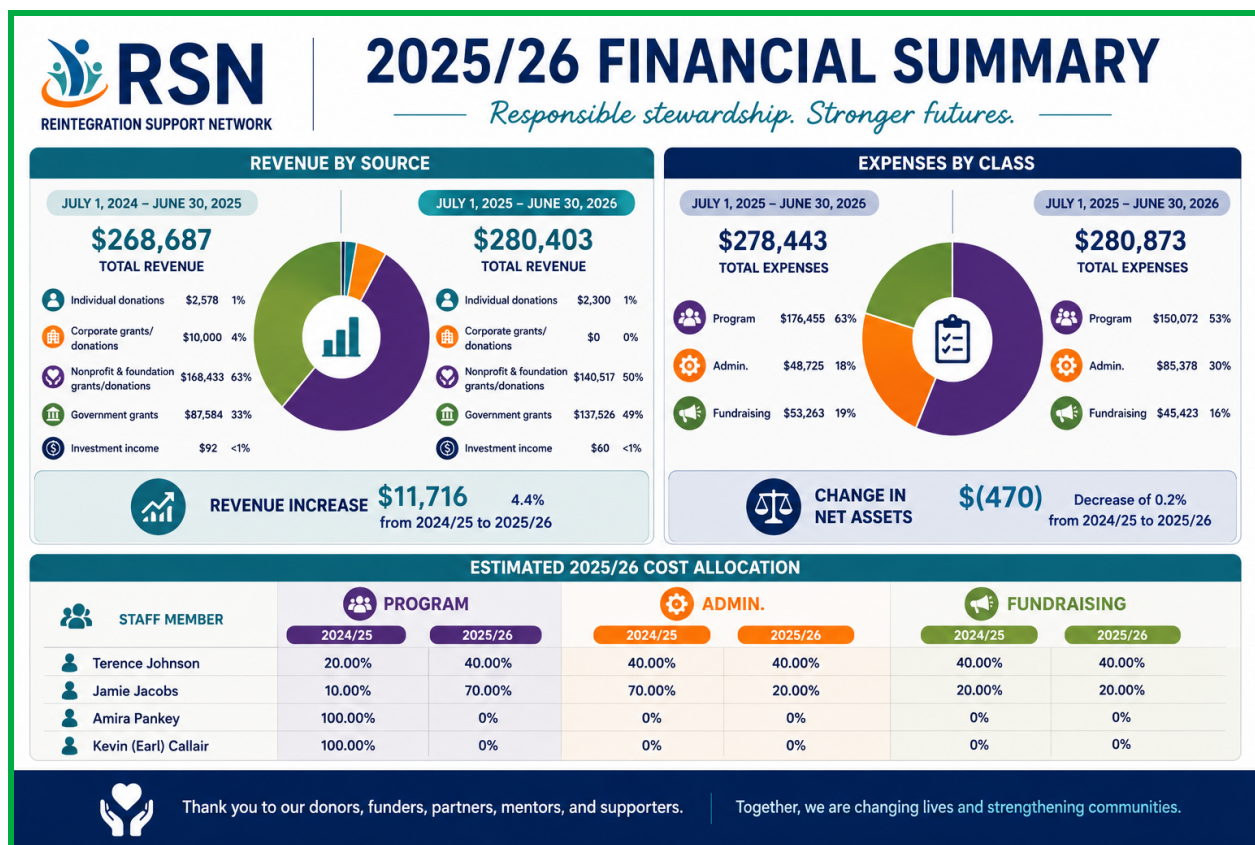
The skills, trust, and connections built through this initiative empower me to lead RSN with confidence—enabling us to intentionally expand our community impact over the coming years and drive systemic change for our youth and families."



We extend our sincere gratitude to The Duke Endowment for selecting RSN and investing in our leadership and organizational growth. We also offer special thanks to Valerie Stewart, Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, for serving as Terence's Strategic Thought Partner and building a truly collaborative, bi-directional partnership in support of youth and families impacted by substance use, mental health, and justice involvement.

Financial Stewardship

At RSN, financial stewardship is an extension of our mission. We are committed to managing every dollar entrusted to us with transparency, accountability, and care. Through regular financial oversight, appropriate internal controls, and careful monitoring of restricted funds and grant requirements, we work to ensure that resources are used effectively and strategically. Our goal is simple: **to maximize every investment in the mentors, programs, and young people at the heart of RSN's work.**



Thank You to Our Supporters

RSN's work is made possible by a community that believes young people deserve meaningful relationships, opportunities, and support. We are deeply grateful to the foundations, public agencies, corporate partners, community organizations, and individual donors who invested in our mission during the 2025–2026 program year.

Foundation Partners

We are grateful for the generous support of:

- The Oak Foundation
- Triangle Community Foundation
- Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of the Carolinas
- Duke Health, Building Healthy Communities
- The Boule' Foundation
- Launch Carolinas Leadership Accelerator Cohort
- Shared Visions Foundation

Government Funders

We gratefully acknowledge the public partners whose investment helps RSN provide services and strengthen our capacity to serve youth and emerging adults:

- North Carolina Department of Public Safety
- Chatham County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council
- Orange County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council
- Orange County Opioid Settlement Funds
- Chatham County Opioid Settlement Funds

Corporate Support

- Coastal Credit Union

Community Partners

Our impact is strengthened through collaboration with organizations and initiatives that share our commitment to healthier, safer, and more connected communities. We are grateful to our community partners, including:

- Orange Partnership for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth

Individual Donors

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the individuals who chose to invest personally in RSN's mission:

- Leshekia Mallette
- Joe McMahon
- Lauren VanHook
- Bradford Scott
- Andrea Hussong

Your Investment Makes an Impact

Whether through a foundation grant, public funding, corporate contribution, community partnership, or individual gift, **every investment helps RSN strengthen the relationships and resources young people need to thrive.**

Your support allows us to develop and support skilled mentors, provide individualized Wellness Skill-Building services, create meaningful community experiences, and continue building a stronger and more sustainable organization for the future.

Thank you for believing in our work—and for investing in the young people and mentors who make our community stronger.

Looking Ahead: 2026–2027

Our goal for 2026–2027 is not simply to serve more young people—it is to build the organizational capacity to serve them well and sustain that impact over time.

By investing simultaneously in **our mentors, our programs, our people, our partnerships, and our organizational infrastructure**, RSN is laying the groundwork for thoughtful deepening of our impact in the region while remaining grounded in the individualized, relationship-centered approach that defines our work.

Building the Foundation for Sustainable Growth

As RSN looks toward the 2026–2027 program year, we are focused on strengthening the organizational foundation needed to responsibly grow our reach and deepen our impact. Our priorities reflect a commitment to **stronger leadership, sustainable resources, a supported workforce, effective systems, and high-quality programs.**

1. Strengthen Organizational Leadership & Governance

RSN will strengthen our Board and staff engagement in strategic planning and organizational decision-making by:

- Implementing an annual strategic planning process that meaningfully engages Board and staff.
- Strengthening Board committees, clarifying committee priorities, and developing additional ad hoc committees as needed.
- Aligning Board recruitment with RSN's governance needs and the communities we serve.
- Maintaining active financial oversight through the Board Treasurer and Finance Committee.
- Developing leadership succession plans to support organizational continuity and long-term sustainability.

2. Build Sustainable Financial & Development Capacity

To support continued program growth and long-term sustainability, RSN will:

- Strengthen and diversify revenue through multi-year grants, individual giving, corporate sponsorships, major donors, and strategic partnerships.
- Develop a consolidated, multi-program and multi-county budgeting and cost-allocation framework that supports RSN's planned growth.
- Strengthen long-term financial planning.
- Continue implementing strong financial management practices.

3. Invest in People, Infrastructure & Organizational Capacity

RSN's ability to grow sustainably depends on having the people, systems, and infrastructure to support that growth. During 2026–2027, we will:

- Strengthen staffing and succession planning to support future multi-program operations.
- Expand internship and practicum opportunities.
- Continue standardizing organization-wide planning, administrative, and operational processes.
- Develop additional staff benefits as financially feasible.

4. Strengthen Programs & Expand Impact

Mentor Development Program

RSN will continue to build the Mentor Development Program as the foundation of high-quality, relationship-centered support. Priorities include:

-
- Finalizing the Mentor Development Program logic model and program standards.
 - Expanding mentor support through enhanced monthly meetings focused on group supervision, continuing education, and peer learning.
 - Providing specialized training related to recovery and justice involvement.
 - Strengthening evaluation of mentor skill development, experience, and performance.

2026–2027 target: Support and develop a cohort of approximately 9 mentors.

Wellness Skill-Building Program

RSN will continue providing individualized support to youth and emerging adults while strengthening program evaluation, participant engagement, and capacity planning.

2026–2027 target: Engage 21 participants—15 in Orange County and 6 in Chatham County.

Priorities include:

- Refining the program logic model and evaluation framework.
- Strengthening data collection and participant feedback processes.
- Identifying resources to better support our Spanish-speaking parents and caregivers.
- Determining the participant capacity that RSN's current staffing model can effectively support in Orange and Chatham Counties.
- Strengthening community partner assessment and engagement protocols to increase access to resources for participants and their caregiver.

Enrichment & Community Connection

RSN will continue creating opportunities for participants and mentors to experience wellness **within a community through** structured and informal enrichment activities.

During the year, RSN plans to facilitate **2–3 community events** that promote one or more of the following:

- Community connection
- Collective Healing and celebration
- Mentor appreciation
- Partnership collaboration
- SAMHSA's Eight Dimensions of Wellness

Planned activities include a **November Gratitude Gathering, National Mentoring Month - Mentor Appreciation event**, and a Spring event to highlight **National Mental Health month in May**. We also support opportunities throughout the year for our mentors to facilitate informal activities such as hikes, movie nights, and other shared experiences with our youth.

How You Can Help

Ways to Give

[Credit Card](#): Give securely through PayPal.

Check: mail your check to
Reintegration Support Network
[117 West Main Street](#)
[Carrboro NC, 27510](#)

[Monthly Giving](#): Become a Sustainer with a monthly gift. Select the Make this a monthly donation check box from the [PayPal donation screen](#).

Give Through Your Donor-Advised Fund (DAF): Direct a grant to RSN from your Donor-Advised Fund using our Tax ID / EIN: 46-2369263.

Contact us with questions or other ways to make your gift.

One Caring Adult Can Change a Life

"When we invest in mentors, we invest in stronger relationships, healthier communities, and brighter futures for young people."

Contact information: **YouthFirst@rsnnc.org**

Website: www.rsnnc.org

Donation QR Code



REINTEGRATION SUPPORT NETWORK