



ROXBURY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
**SOCIAL IMPACT
CENTER**

**CORY JOHNSON
PROGRAM**

Fostering Growth, Education, and Trauma Healing

2024 Report



ANALYSIS AND REPORT BY SEED IMPACT

A LETTER FROM OUR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is my sincere pleasure to greet you and introduce myself. My name is Krystal Pegram, and I am honored to be the new Executive Director of the **Roxbury Presbyterian Church Social Impact Center**. Having joined the Social Impact Center in the summer of 2024, I am moved by the mission of the organization and excited to lead such a talented, dedicated, and passionate team committed to facilitating healing and strength in the face of trauma.

In 2024, the RPCSIC continued the work of serving the Roxbury community, walking alongside those in various stages of their healing journeys and exploring new avenues to expand our reach and deepen our impact. **Our signature program, Can We Talk...®** celebrated 10 years of life-changing service! We reached across the world as our founder and former Executive Director, Rev. Liz Walker, accompanied by Rev. Dana Baker, traveled to Palestine to hold sessions with locals in the region. We witnessed firsthand the universal impact of our trademarked model and were a part of the hand of God reaching across language and cultural divides to express His love, compassion, and care for all His children.

As we expanded our global footprint, we also spread our artistic wings! We were honored to co-host our first **Arts Activation Conference, Harmony and Healing**, in partnership with **Berklee College of Music**. This event saw over 300 attendees of national and local artists, non-profit organizations, community stakeholders, and creatives from across the city of Boston.

The RPCSIC has experienced incredible success and growth over the past years. To increase our service capacity and position us to connect more directly with our community, we added new members to our incredible team. We hired Duney Roberts as our new Administrative Operations Assistant. We brought on Kathleen Brittan as our Director of Development and hired Phillip Reason to lead our newly created Department of Clinical and Community Supports.

As we face an uncertain future in an ever-changing cultural landscape, our mission and commitment to spreading hope, joy, and healing are more vital than ever. In these dark times, the light of hope shines forth with excitement for 2025. We continue to offer programs that are **spiritually grounded, community-based, artistically infused, and clinically supported**. We have expanded our artistic program offerings and revamped the “**Reimagining our Stories**” program. We will provide more access by expanding our **Community Companion team** and our **Community Trauma Healing Specialists**. We are also thrilled to pilot a mentorship and aftercare program for our youth and young men who have been a part of our **Youth Exchange** and **Young Men’s programs**. And there is so much more to come!

While traumatic events can occur anytime, anywhere, and to anyone, we know that healing doesn’t just happen. Healing takes courage. It takes faith. It takes patience. It takes work. And it needs support. Like me, you share an earnest desire to see the healing of our nation and our world. As we continue to strive to love as God loves, words cannot express our deep gratitude for your continued support for the work of healing. We celebrate with you in triumph, grieve with you in loss, march with you for justice, and stand with you in hope.

Yours in harmony and healing,



Krystal Pegram
Executive Director

LOVE, COMPASSION, AND COMMUNITY

Guided by the **principles of love, compassion, and community**, the **Roxbury Presbyterian Church Social Impact Center (RPCSIC)** serves as the 501(c)(3) non-profit extension of the **Roxbury Presbyterian Church (RPC)**. RPCSIC's dedication to these values has enabled them to create programs that spiritually uplift, artistically enrich, and clinically support the Roxbury, Massachusetts, community and its neighbors.

In 2014, Rev. Liz Walker, then Pastor of the **Roxbury Presbyterian Church (RPC)** and Executive Director of the Social Impact Center, recognized the urgent need to address the pervasive trauma resulting from violence, racial injustice, social inequality, and economic disparities within the community. Driven by this imperative, she founded the **Cory Johnson Program for Post Traumatic Healing**, named in honor of a promising young church member whose life was tragically cut short by violence in 2010. Since its inception, the **Cory Johnson Program (CJP)** has provided weekly trauma support to approximately 1,800 individuals annually, focusing on community-driven approaches to foster healing and recovery from various sources of traumatic stress, such as violence, poverty, and racism. Through this comprehensive approach, participants are empowered to tackle the multifaceted effects of trauma on their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

The success and impact of the **Cory Johnson Program** led to the development of the **Can We Talk... (CWT)** program, which has expanded the reach of RPCSIC's trauma healing initiatives nationwide. Initial funding for these vital programs was generously provided by **Partners HealthCare**, supporting two years of life-changing work for individuals affected by trauma.



OUR APPROACH

Provide a safe **PLACE**

- Welcome everyone in all the ways they identify
- Offer programs that are free and drop-in without the need for referral, and anonymous
- Serve as a 'second responder'
- Offer spiritually integrated mental health support
- Connect with the treatment plans of traditional medical service providers

Be an abiding **PRESENCE**

- Support individual & collective healing
- Community Companions who are trusted peers and trauma survivors themselves
- Community Trauma Healing Specialist offering in-person advocacy and referral support
- Available outside of typical work hours

Support the trauma healing **PROCESS**

This 2024 Impact report, compiled and analyzed by SEED Impact, highlights the following core offerings of the **Cory Johnson Program**:

Men's Trauma & Recovery Support Group	Young Men's Group
The Exchange (Teens)	Reimagining Our Stories
Mother's Support Group	Roxbury: Can We Talk...®

This report analyzes our unique model of offering touchpoints. **Touchpoints are defined as an individual engaging with a program multiple times or in various ways.**

The annual report features both numerical and qualitative data gathered over the year. The RPCSIC Cory Johnson Program utilizes [SEED Impact's Theory of Change on Its Feet™](#), an adaptable framework emphasizing the alignment of daily actions with long-term goals to create lasting change. Through evaluating three result categories: **Expected-to-See**, **Like-to-See**, and **Love-to-See**, this approach focuses on three core components:



PROVIDE A
SAFE **PLACE**



BE AN ABIDING
PRESENCE



SUPPORT THE
TRUAMA HEALING
PROCESS

The Theory of Change on Its Feet™ model bridges the gap between our objectives and our real-world impact through a tracking system covering fund development, new hires, roles and responsibilities, visibility, networking, and engagement data points. Close monitoring of these indicators allows us to enhance our impact within the community more effectively. The community-driven methods promote **healing** and **recovery** from various forms of traumatic stress, such as **violence, poverty, and racism**. Such as violence, poverty, racism, and grief and loss. This holistic approach empowers participants to address the diverse aspects of **trauma** on their **physical, mental, and spiritual health**.



MEN'S TRAUMA & RECOVERY

SUPPORT GROUP

The Men's Trauma & Recovery Support Group

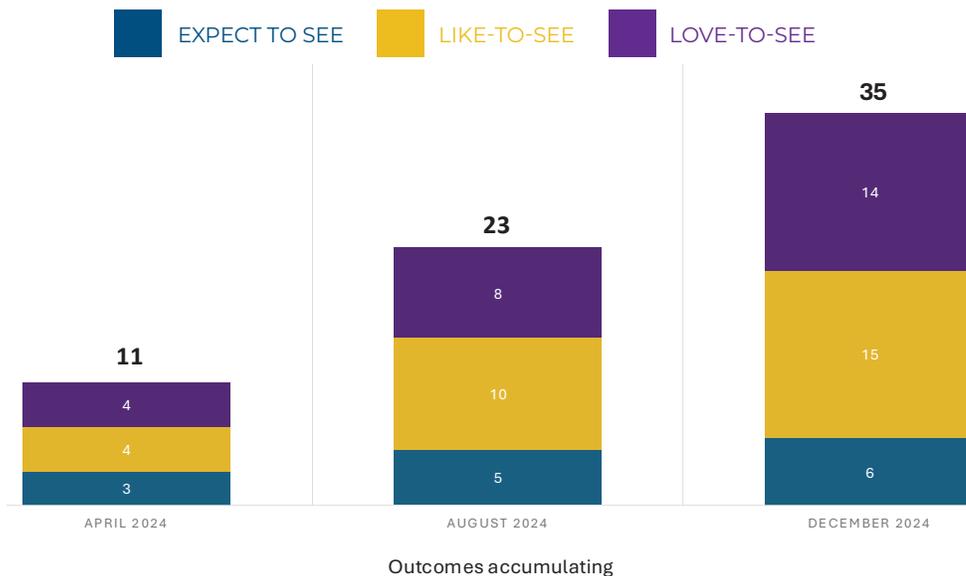
offers a dedicated virtual space for men of all ages to come together, reflect, and share their experiences on a variety of challenging subjects. Under the guidance of recovery specialists Prentice Crowell and Doug Lomax from employees both of RPCSIC and Boston Public Health, this program component nurtures a supportive environment.

Twelve men came together to engage in a safe and supportive environment where they shared personal

experiences related to **trauma, addiction, and loss.**

Through reflection and open dialogue, they found solace in connecting with others who had faced similar challenges, fostering a sense of understanding and mutual support.

The goal is to empower men in their personal healing journeys by fostering **open dialogue** and **mutual understanding** within a safe and compassionate online setting. Their progress is tracked through three stages.



2024 Performance Data

109%

increase in touchpoints from April to August

52%

increase in touchpoints from August to December

218%

increase in touchpoints from April to December



"I'm no longer alone in my grief"

Impact of Cumulative Touchpoints

EXPECT TO SEE (Navy)

Men benefit from recognizing a shared trauma experience **6**

LIKE-TO-SEE (Gold)

Men value the safe space and support of others **15**

LOVE-TO-SEE (Purple)

Men co-create/co-lead activities and engage other men **14**

THE EXCHANGE -

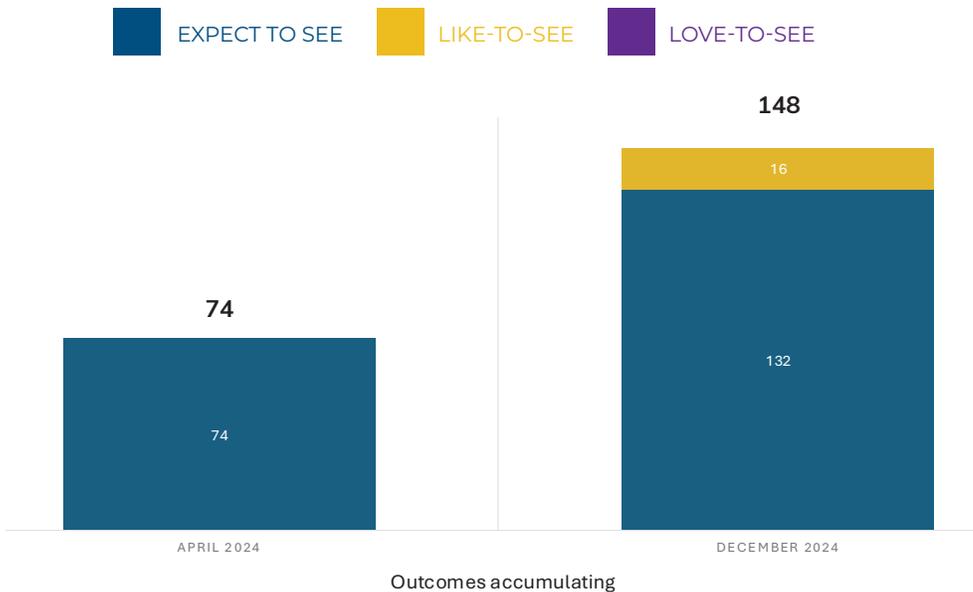
CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUTH ON MENTAL WELLNESS

Launched in July 2022 in partnership with the YMCA of Greater Boston, **The Exchange - Conversations with Youth on Mental Wellness** is a program designed to foster an environment of support and self-expression for young individuals aged 13 to 17. This initiative provides a safe space for the youth to engage in various activities that encourage **creative expression, self-discovery, and emotional exploration, fostering strength and personal growth.**

Under the facilitation of Danielle McFarlane and Yolanda Cooper, alongside the support of a mental

health professional, The Exchange offers a platform for **listening, learning, and leaning on community resources.**

Seventy-five youth, aged 13 to 17, took part in The Exchange - Conversations with Youth on Mental Wellness, a program that facilitates discussions on mental health and provides a secure environment for participants to engage in various activities. These activities encourage **creative expression, self-discovery, and emotional exploration, fostering strength and personal growth** among the youth.



2024 Performance Data

233%
increase in touchpoints from April to December



Impact of Cumulative Touchpoints

EXPECT TO SEE (Navy)
Youth attend, engage, and return to program at least three times **132**

LIKE-TO-SEE (Gold)
Youth grow in trust and vulnerability **16**

LOVE-TO-SEE (Purple)
Youth serve as leaders and Ambassadors attracting others to the program **0**



THE SUPPORT GROUP FOR MOTHERS WHO HAVE LOST CHILDREN

The support group for **Mothers Who Have Lost Children** is a monthly virtual gathering. This group provides a compassionate and understanding space for mothers who have experienced the loss of a child in any form, including violence, accidents, miscarriages, or adoption.

By **sharing their experiences** and **emotions** with others who have endured similar heartache, participants can find **solace, strength, and support** as they navigate the profound grief that comes with the loss of a child. This community serves as a reminder that no mother has to face this difficult journey alone. The Support Group for Mothers Who Have Lost Children brought together **one hundred** women aged 25 to 48.



Impact of Cumulative Touchpoints

EXPECT TO SEE (Navy)

Mothers benefit from recognizing shared trauma **22**

LIKE-TO-SEE (Gold)

Mothers value extra support, leaning on each other both in and outside of the group **11**

LOVE-TO-SEE (Purple)

Mothers connect monthly co-create/co-lead groups and engaging others **18**



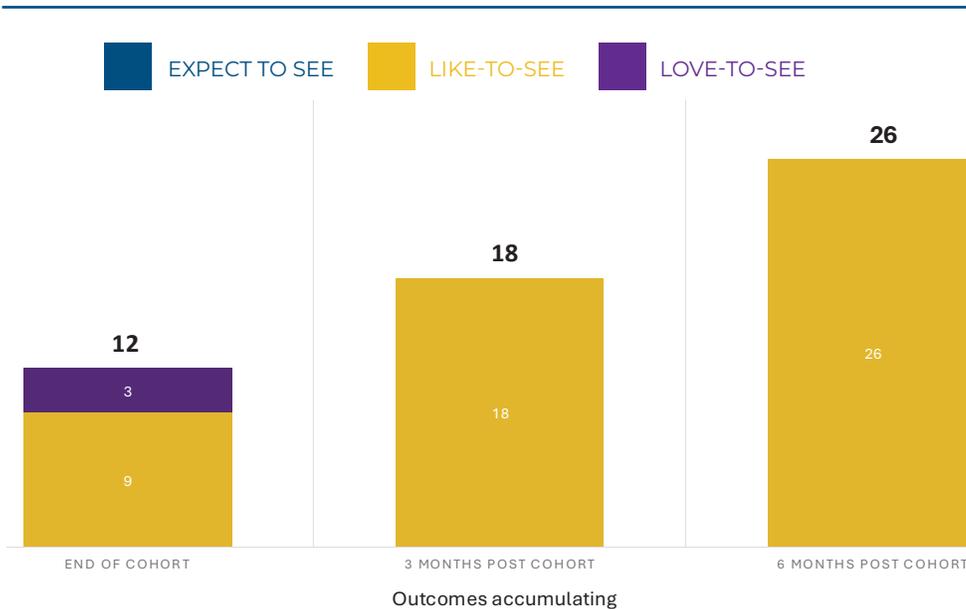
“After losing my baby, I found comfort and support in the Mother’s group. They helped me cope with the pain. They reminded me that while the hurt may never fully go away, it will become easier to manage over time. Their advice was to treasure the good memories, even if they were brief, and to be thankful for the moments we shared together. Though it can be painful to recall these memories, I’m grateful for the time we spent together, and I’m honored to still be part of Shondell’s life and her group.”



SUPPORT GROUP FOR YOUNG BLACK MEN

The **Support Group for Young Black Men** is a collaborative program between the RPC Social Impact Center and the Horton Keller Center in Chattanooga, TN, launched in 2022. This initiative brings together five young men from Boston and five from Chattanooga, aged 21 to 35, to engage in a 12-week virtual discussion series via Zoom.

These weekly discussions focus on various topics relevant to young men of color, such as understanding trauma and its effects, exploring social identity, promoting healing, building healthy relationships, fostering community support, and prioritizing self-care.



Participants who complete the program receive a \$500 stipend, and the cohorts have the opportunity to visit significant landmarks like the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama.

The Support Group for Young Black Men provided a safe space for **12 participants** to engage in weekly discussions.

Impact of Cumulative Touchpoints

LIKE-TO-SEE (Gold)

Young men form strong, supportive relationships. Some are identified to facilitate future cohorts **26**

LOVE-TO-SEE (Purple)

Young men attend bi-annual field trips/retreats focused on mental wellness and healing **0**

2024 Performance Data

50%

increase in touchpoints
from End of Cohort to
3 Month Post Cohort

44%

increase in touchpoints
from 3 Month Post Cohort
to 6 Month Post Cohort

116%

increase in touchpoints
from End of Cohort to
6 Month Post Cohort





REIMAGINING OUR STORIES

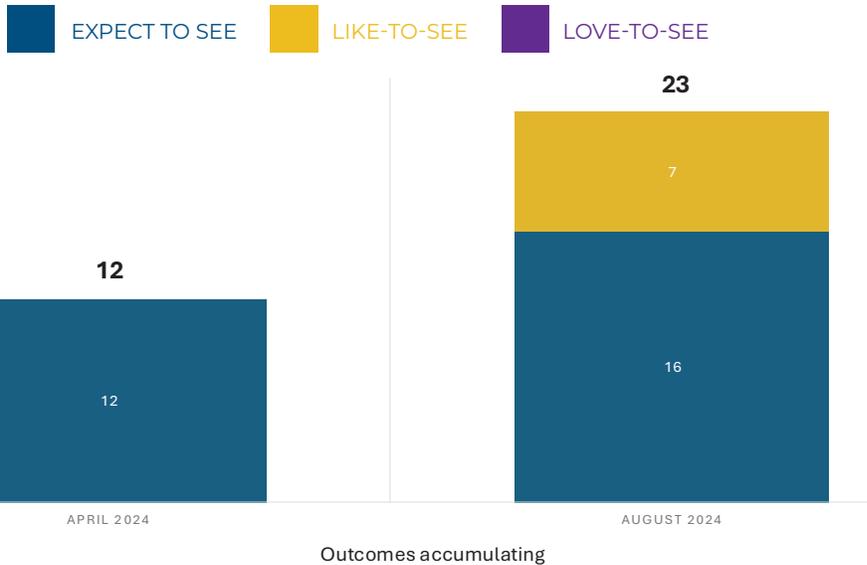
Reimagining Our Stories is an in-person program at the Roxbury Presbyterian Church Social Impact Center. This program recognizes the unique power of art in facilitating personal healing while connecting individuals with their inner selves and the world around them.

Eleven members embarked on a journey of **self-discovery** and **healing through creative expression**. Reimagining Our Stories empowers participants to embrace the therapeutic benefits of **artistic expression, fostering strength, personal growth, and a sense of community**.

This program provides individuals with an opportunity to:

1. Articulate their feelings
2. Reframe their personal narrative
3. Encourage self-reflection

By focusing on creative expression through **writing, visual arts, music, and movement**, participants have a safe space to **explore and process their emotions, rediscover their strength, and embark on a healing journey**.



Impact of Cumulative Touchpoints

EXPECT TO SEE (Navy)

Participants practice creative self-expression **16**

LIKE-TO-SEE (Gold)

Participants experience healing through creative expression **7**

LOVE-TO-SEE (Purple)

Participants build complications of their healing journey stories **0**

2024 Performance Data

92% increase in touchpoints from April to August



"I felt support and empathy from people who look like me"



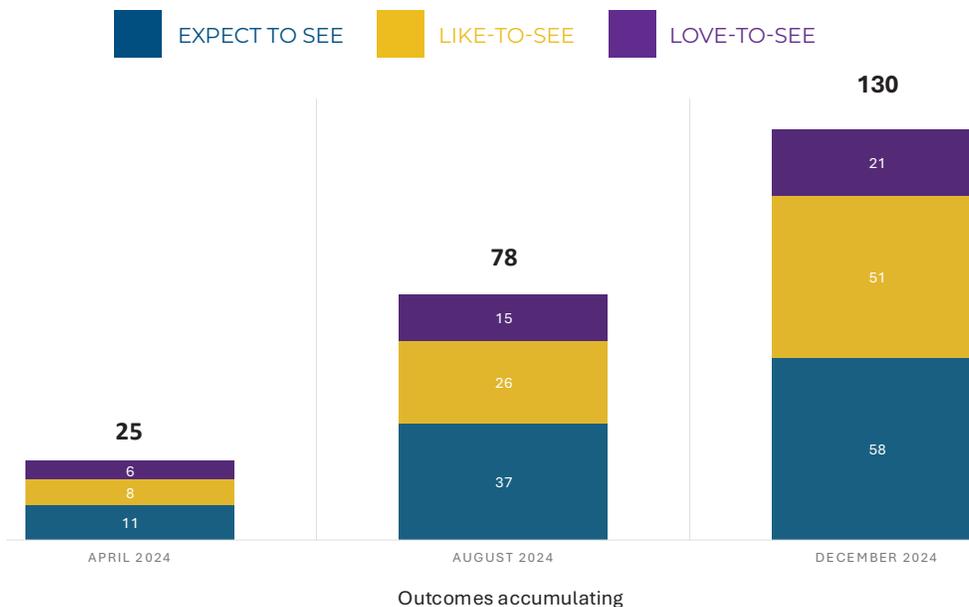
CAN WE TALK...® ROXBURY

COMMUNITY SHARING ON TRAUMA AND HEALING

Can We Talk... Roxbury: Community Sharing on Trauma and Healing is a weekly program alternating between in-person and online. This program offers a secure and supportive environment where individuals can share their personal experiences of **trauma, loss, grief, and hope** through various forms such as **spoken word, poetry, or song**.

Can We Talk... Roxbury emphasizes both **individual and community healing**, and its success is made possible by the presence of community companions for peer support and mental health professionals for clinical guidance. Local artists contribute to the program by offering creative expressions to open and close each gathering.

Can We Talk... on Racism and Healing is a monthly Zoom gathering that began in 2020 following the death of George Floyd, specifically addressing the community's need for a space to process the traumatic grief and stress caused by **systemic racism** and **diversity issues**. The program has since continued to hold space for individuals to share their experiences and engage in constructive dialogue surrounding the impact of racism on mental health and overall well-being. This platform fosters a supportive environment where participants can find **solace, validation, and resources** to navigate the emotional complexities of racism, promoting healing and understanding.



One hundred twenty-seven community members participated in Can We Talk...® Roxbury: Community Sharing on Trauma and Healing, which provides a safe and supportive platform for individuals to share personal experiences of trauma, loss, grief, and hope through spoken word, poetry, or song.

Impact of Cumulative Touchpoints

EXPECT TO SEE (Navy)

Participants benefit, return, and encourage others to attend **58**

LIKE-TO-SEE (Gold)

Participants develop supportive relationships with one another **51**

LOVE-TO-SEE (Purple)

Participants engage in other CJP initiatives **21**

2024 Performance Data

212%

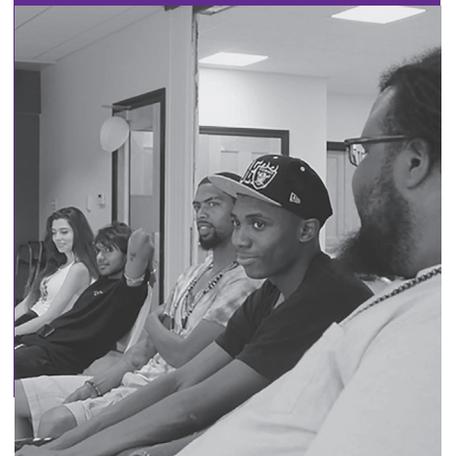
increase in touchpoints from April to August

67%

increase in touchpoints from August to December

420%

increase in touchpoints from April to December



EMPLOYEES 2024

Core Team

Kathleen Brittan,

Director of Development

Shondell Davis,

Community Trauma Healing Specialist

Debra Fitzpatrick,

Community Companion Coordinator

Tabitha Gaston,

Director of Operations

Florence Huffman,

Organization Liaison & Community Companion

Wyatt Jackson,

Expressive Arts Coordinator

Douglas Lomax,

Men's Program Support Specialist

Danielle McFarlane,

Director of Cory Johnson Program

Krystal Pegram,

Executive Director

Phillip Reason,

Director of Community & Clinical Supports

Duney Roberts,

Administrative Operations Assistant

Colleen Sharka,

Director of Replication & Trauma Education

Elizabeth Walker,

Founding Director

Extended Team

Dana Baker,

Replication Associate

Yolanda Cooper,

Community Companion

Prentice Crowell,

Community Companion

Donna Fitzpatrick,

Community Companion

Tracey Gales,

Community Companion

Sharina Jones,

Community Companion

Mekah McIntosh,

Community Companion

Lisa Quarles,

Community Companion

Barbara Rhodes,

Community Companion

Naomi Thompson,

CWT Community Engagement
Coordinator

Hope Whyte,

Community Companion

Linda Wright,

Community Companion



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IMO 3 men in my life
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Jeremy Faladreau
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IMO Sarah Ann Shaw
Joyce Foster
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CALL FOR ACTION:

As demonstrated in the preceding report, our current treatment plans often prioritize one of three elements—spiritual, artistic, or therapeutic—but our approach uniquely centers on all three aspects equally, ensuring a comprehensive and well-rounded healing experience. We have three goals to increase the impact of the Cory Johnson Program:



- 1. Fund more Community Trauma Healing Specialist (CTHS) positions**, replicating the success of our Community Companions and the Community & Clinical Supports department. These expansions are vital to our growth and ability to serve a broader population effectively.
- 2. Partner with organizations that provide therapeutic and psychiatric support**, enabling us to collaborate and integrate our innovative approach. Building strong networks and establishing accessible referral pathways are critical components of our mission, along with securing grants and funding to fuel our expansion.
- 3. Offer continued education and training opportunities** for both participants and staff, ultimately contributing to diversifying our workforce. To facilitate this growth, we are searching for resources available to our community that can provide or enhance formalized education and training.

Achieving these ambitious goals requires a strong support system. By backing our SIC Salon fundraisers and purchasing the book **“No One Left Alone”** written by Reverend Liz Walker, you directly contribute to our mission, enabling us to meet the goals above and help create a lasting impact on the lives of those affected by trauma.

Together, we can continue to build, grow, and support a beautiful, healed, and hopeful community.

Yours in service,

Krystal Pegram
Executive Director

“

“I could feel the palpable support of others in the room; [it was] incredibly powerful, it gave power to my truth. The words I chose were honored. My ability to frame what I’ve been through and what I’m going through [was] met in the spirit of love; the outpouring of support through non-verbal responses was so healing every time I spoke.”