

RIGHT MOVES FOR YOUTH
2023-24

ANNUAL REPORT



The Right Moves for Youth theme for 2023-2024 was: **“Mission-Focused. Vision-Aligned.”** This means that everything we did centered on our mission to support students making the most of their education, connections, and opportunities. This annual report reveals how RMFY continues to do this well after 35 years. We relaunched our beloved March Madness Basketball, Cheer, and Step Tournament! Our student Ambassadors celebrated their leadership and reminded us of the value of temperance, justice, wisdom, and courage with a trip to our nation’s capital. We served 19 middle and high schools where students built strong supportive relationships, experienced colleges, and explored workplaces! These efforts are core to our mission, provide invaluable experience for our young people, and set us up for a better future.

To be vision-aligned means looking ahead to our overarching goal of continuing to provide excellent student support with best practices that are nationally recognized to produce measurable results. This vision is only possible with strong community partnerships. We renewed our shared commitment with our schools and began the gradual implementation of an earned revenue strategy that will increase capacity and serve more students. We strategically partnered with other youth-serving organizations and corporate supporters to bolster our alliances, share best practices and, ultimately, increase opportunities for the next generation. Finally, growth in our 2025 Giving Society this year demonstrates the commitment of our students is matched by an equally strong commitment from our community.

To sum it up, it was a great year! We celebrate our accomplishments with deep gratitude and awareness that this work is only possible with your support. And as always, we welcome any opportunity to deepen our relationship with you, our RMFY Family!

With Gratitude,



Sabrina N. Gilchrist

Sabrina N. Gilchrist
Executive Director



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Ethan T. Smith
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Program Overview

In-School Small Group Mentoring

Right Moves For Youth (RMFY) is a school-based, youth development and student support program helping students develop the skills to succeed in school and in life.

4-Pillar Model

- Educational Attainment
- Social-Emotional Well-Being
- College & Career Readiness
- Leadership & Civic Duty

Key Outcomes:

- Place of belonging and connectedness
- Improve social and emotional well-being
- Increase high school graduation rate and having a plan after high school
- Increase experiences and life skills



Examples of Curriculum Topics:

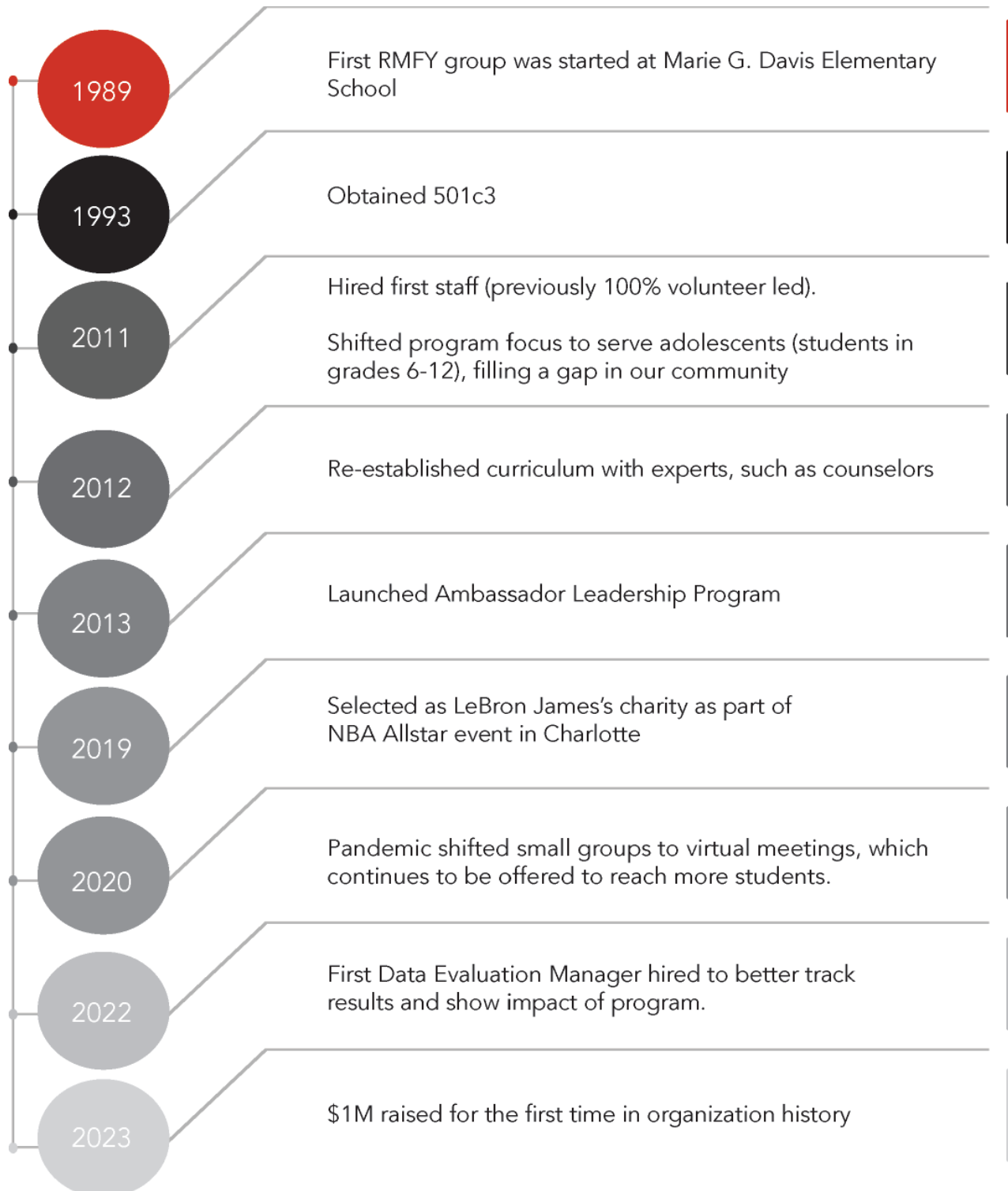
- Coping strategies
- Confidence and Character
- Decision-making and avoiding triggers
- Increasing positive thoughts about themselves
- Student futures beyond high school



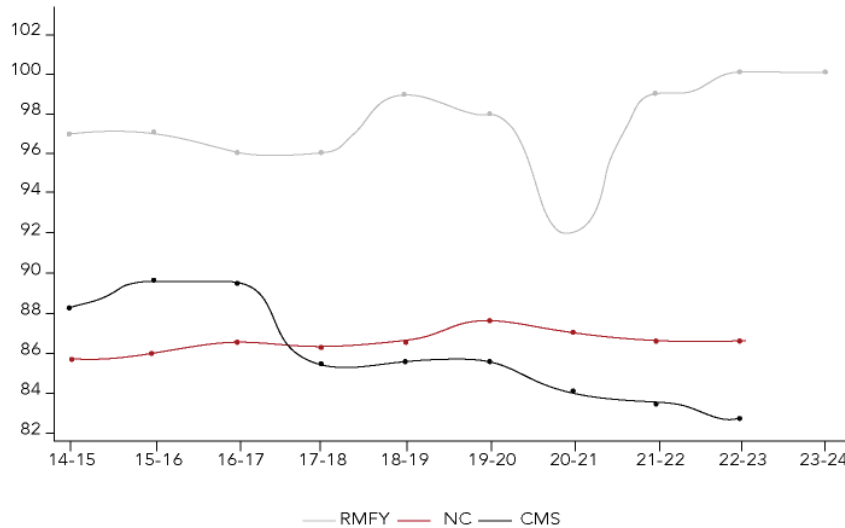
Ambassador Leadership Program

Ambassadors is an out-of-school time leadership development program by application only for up to 30 students. Each year a new project focus is picked, such as financial literacy, podcasts, nonprofit and community programs, etc, in partnership with subject matter experts. Students are led in a monthly exploration of a leadership or civic duty topic which culminates in small group presentations and a 3-day service learning trip.

Right Moves For Youth History – Celebrating 35th Anniversary!



10 Years of Impact



When positive relationships are formed through Right Moves For Youth they continue past high school. RMFY Alumni continue to stay connected by volunteering, attending events, and donating. Richard and James are RMFY Alumni shown in the photo above.

11,249
Students Served 2014 - 2024

“

Thank you for giving me hope.
I want to do magical things
with my future.

James Jones, RMFY Alumni from Myers Park High School and currently working for Lowe’s Companies, Inc. in technology.

Right Moves For Youth has always meant a lot to me. I had a great support system from people who wanted the best for me and were willing to help me achieve my best.

Richard Isom, RMFY Alumni from Myers Park High School and owner of Isom Heating and Cooling.

”

2023-2024 Program Results



19 Schools Reached
in-person and
a virtual small group



82%
Students with No
Suspensions



768
Number of RMFY
Group Sessions



805
Total number of
students served



26
Students in the
Ambassadors Leadership
Program



79%
Students decreased
their suspension rate or
report no suspensions



5
College and
Career Building Opportunities



45
Small
Groups



72%
reported positive outcomes
(increased prosocial behavior)



78%
reported a decrease
in risky behavior



100%
of RMFY Seniors identified
pathways to college and/or
career options

Graduation Rate

100% of RMFY Seniors graduated

67% - Attending a 4-year institution

23% - Attending a 2-year institution

7% - Entering the workforce

3% - Entering the military

Improving Youth Social and Emotional Well-Being

Student Social-Emotional Results Before and After Receiving RMFY Intervention

Measurements

■ Pre- Test

■ Post-Test

Unable to become enthusiastic about anything



Confidence to attend college



Confidence to do well in school



Confidence to manage emotions in a healthy way



Find it difficult to work up the initiative to do things



Thoughts about consequences to actions



Experiencing symptoms of Anxiety



0 20 40 60 80 100



Impact Stories

"A lot of kids like me"



Brandon found friends in Right Moves For Youth who aligned with his own values.

In 8th grade, a classmate in Right Moves For Youth suggested Brandon consider joining the after school program. Brandon was a student at Whitewater Middle School and his RMFY Program Specialist Mr. Gibbs agreed he'd be a good candidate for the program. "A lot of the kids were kind of like me, so I was like, 'Hey, you know what? There are a lot of kids who are basically kind of like me,' so I was like, 'Okay, well, I'm going to be over here with these guys.'"

Brandon's mother, Nerissa, says Brandon was always quiet, a bit shy, and steered clear of other kids involved in drama or trouble.

Nerissa says Right Moves For Youth has given Brandon a place to be his own person, find his voice, and create an identity with a supportive community. **"Just being his mom alone makes me proud. But I feel like some of my proudest moments came from him being a part of this program,"** Nerissa explained.

"I'm grateful that he was chosen, and I see so much difference in him. This program has really given him the opportunity to step out and try and think, and honestly, I feel like without this program, he probably would still be kind of laid-back, kind of reserved. But now, him doing this, it has taught him so much, and he's more outgoing. He's always been a great kid, but RMFY program has definitely shown him so many things and given him so many opportunities that a lot of kids just don't really get all the time. So I'm grateful for the program."

"This is what Right Moves does. It made me more understanding, too, because Right Moves just got me on stage a lot, so I say, yeah, that's what Right Moves did. It changed my life, but it made me realize that it's okay to be different. You just got to—just don't feel ashamed of it, because I get put down a lot, but

I don't care."

Brandon said Right Moves For Youth leaders and mentors understand young people, create a space where they can express themselves, and support the unique ways each young person shows up. He excelled so much in his second year of the program he was selected as an Ambassador of Excellence. "They talk to you like an adult. They know that you can figure things out. They know that you're smart enough to know what's right for you. They're just kind of supporting you in figuring it out," he said.

As Brandon looks forward to his Sophomore year and considers what extracurricular activities he'll get involved in, he and Nerissa know Right Moves For Youth will be one. "They're preparing him for the real world. They're my support system. They're helping him, guiding him through the world. Showing him so many things. Like, those college tours that they go on, you know, I'm going to be honest, I'm a single parent, I would love to do some of those things, but some of those things that I just can't do."

"I feel like it definitely helped him, like, social and emotional," Nerissa explains. "I remember I said to him, 'Brandon, you spent your freshman year being by yourself. Can you try to talk to somebody sophomore year?' And he said, 'Listen, I'm not talking to anybody that we don't have anything in common.' He said, 'Interest matters I'm not going to force anything.'"

Nerissa smiles as Brandon confidently describes his Freshman year lessons through Right Moves For Youth. When his voice trails off a little, she adds in, "I feel like it taught him, like, to be okay with who you really are. You know, who you truly are. And he doesn't try to fit in with any one but himself. He's only in competition with himself, how he can be a better person."

Everyone has a voice

Middle school years are filled with change, transitions, and growth for young people and as they find their way in the world, it's important to provide positive options for them to explore.

"You want to make sure that you focus on every child as much as possible. Right Moves For Youth gives us a different way to do that with some of our kids," says Alexander Graham Middle School Assistant Principal Loreanne Harris who volunteers her time to coordinate the program at her school.

With 1,200 children in her school, Mrs. Harris says it's impossible for CMS staff to meet all the needs that arise, academically, socially, and emotionally for every child and their family. "We can't do it all by ourselves. There is just so much need in one building, let alone all the schools that we have in CMS. **It's so important for us to have the program,**" Harris said.

"Students come in and they're not just there to learn the academics. They're there to learn about everything socially that they're going to need in life. We have them for so many hours a day, but we can't do it all. We just can't. So, when you have different opportunities like Right Moves for Youth, for some of our students, it makes such a big impact, beyond academically, because they want to make sure that they're doing what they should be, or they feel better about doing what they're supposed to be doing."

Harris says that is part of the secret formula that leads to success. "Right Moves for Youth knows what works



because they've been doing it so long," Harris said. "We sit together, and we work with our counselors for each grade level and our administrators for each grade level, as well as our teachers, to determine which students we would like to have that opportunity to be in that program. Our School Resource Officer is part of the group when they come out once a week."

At Alexander Graham Middle, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders have access to Right Moves for Youth's weekly in-school programming and outside school experiences.

"It's about building those relationships so that students have these opportunities to be in contact with other students they probably wouldn't have the opportunity to be in contact with. They can really build those connections with other staff, and they find opportunities for leadership, just have a voice. We want to provide that space for them to be able to speak and feel like they're heard."

Many of the long-term benefits of Right Moves For Youth are immeasurable benefits that change the course of a young

person's life. Mrs. Harris reflects on one student whose parent died during the school year.

"She was in the program since sixth grade, she continued in the program in seventh grade, and she had a parent pass away. We were reaching out to her, reaching out to the family, but she's not saying much."

"It was so important to her that she met with Mrs. Ennis and the Right Moves For Youth group to talk about what she was going through and just have a very open conversation."

"Just knowing that child and how closed off they can be, that was really powerful."

Mrs. Harris has seen growth and maturity at different levels among her Right Moves For Youth students and knows the organization has a winning formula vital to her students' well-being. "Socially and emotionally, because they have this group that they are talking through different issues as they come up. But also behaviorally, because different students know someone's going to be checking in and that's important to them."

Life changing results measured beyond numbers

"Everything gets measured," says John Bragg III, a financial advisor for more than 30 years. "If you're looking at the quarterly result, Bank of America or Nvidia, you get measured. And I think it can be harder in an organization where we don't point to exact results." Often donors and corporate sponsors seek numerical data on results. While increased graduation rates and reduced expulsions can be measured, John has experienced first-hand as a volunteer with Right Moves For Youth since the early 90s, the real outcomes are measured beyond numbers.

"A kid that did go to college as opposed to a kid that stayed in college. A kid that was able to interview for a job well thanks to Right Moves to get into a school or to get a certain job. You know, those things are course changing in someone's life."

Every Tuesday, John leaves work a little early and reports to Phillip O. Berry High School as a volunteer with Right Moves For Youth where Antwain Peay is the program specialist. "I get to talk to the kids one-off here and there. 'How's work going? What's your resume look like?' Some brought their resumes in and I've helped them brush it up a little bit. That has been something where I felt like I did make a bit of a difference."

Frida Guerrero-Ochoa is a testament to how mentors move the dial just enough for life-long impact. Of 2,400 students, Frida is the only Levine Scholarship winner in Charlotte winning a \$115,000 scholarship to attend UNC-Charlotte. As a participant of Right Moves For Youth since her freshman year, John Bragg is part of her journey. "Mr. B has been a great influence in my life. From the very beginning, he has shown how much he cares. He would constantly ask me about my college application process, academic record, extracurricular involvement, and would ask for updates on any college or scholarship news. He would listen, encourage me, and offer support any way he could. He shared resources on where I could find more scholarship opportunities. Mr. B always believed in me, showed up when he could, genuinely cared, supported me, and provided encouraging words."

It's suggested that children and young adults have at least five adults in their life who provide a healthy, supportive, and encouraging relationship. "The schools are growing. Our community is growing. And our donations also really need to follow that same pace. It's hard being a young person and figuring life out without examples and support and help and resources," he said. Donations and support fuel Right



Moves For Youth and allow the organization to provide trained adult mentors to meet with students once a week for hour-long sessions. Mentors provide guidance and support to help students develop the skills and knowledge they need to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. **"Everybody starts somewhere. But with the positive encouragement and reminders to do the right thing, make good decisions among your peers and within your family, everyone can move forward with that,"** John said.

For students like Frida, whose parents immigrated from Honduras, there were extra barriers. "Coming from an immigrant and hardworking family has pushed me to seek for opportunities that many others cannot have. There were several challenges and sacrifices along the way, but looking at the end goal and countless possibilities lying ahead of me is what always kept me going. It is in the overcoming of the obstacles that I realized that I was and I am capable," she said. "Having adults in my life like Mr. B is really beneficial in the sense that I know I have someone there to support and encourage me. He always brings positivity into any conversation and tries to help however he can. I know that if I have questions, exciting news, or am seeking for opportunities that Mr. B will gladly be there. Many times I can motivate and push myself towards opportunities but it is a great feeling to know there is someone who will celebrate your accomplishments, believes in you, and will guide you."

John concurs. "Just pointing them in the right direction and giving them that little encouragement to head in the right direction. And Right Moves For Youth has a proven track record of helping kids make good decisions."

Events



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Thank you Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office, and Charlotte Fire Department for helping to make this event possible!



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Thank you Dr. Crystal Hill, Superintendent, and Jennifer Moxley, Sunshine Media Network!

Special Events



Awards Ceremony 2024

Sponsored by Bank of America

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This special event recognizes students of the year, volunteers of the year, and other recognitions. Congratulations to Officer Michelle Brcik, the David Scheppegrell CMPD Volunteer of the Year, Deputy Shana Webber, the Rodney Collins Sherriff's Officer of the Year, and WBTV, the J. Frank Bragg Community Leadership Award recipient.



Ambassador Leadership Program Presentation Night and trip to Washington D.C..

The Ambassador program culminates in a final event where students present their final projects to an audience. This year's theme was Stoicism and students studied wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice. Thank you to CFD Division Chief (Ret.) Kelvin Brim for helping to facilitate this year!

Ambassadors who successfully complete the program have the opportunity to attend a service learning and cultural immersion trip. This year, students and volunteers visited Washington D.C.



Strategic Alliances



Partners

Bragg Financial Advisors
Charlotte Fire Department
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police
Department
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
Mecklenburg County Sheriff's
Office

Collaborators

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The Spokes Group

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Carolina Youth Coalition
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E2D
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Girl Scouts Hornet's Nest Council
Project One
Road2Hire
SportsBiz Careers
The C.W. Williams Community
Health Center, Inc.
The Children's Alliance of
Mecklenburg County
Time Out Youth

“

RMFY has taught me how to reach my potential.

”

Kedawmie, 10th grade

2025 Strategic Vision Update



Fortify Program Services

We are excited to share significant progress in fortifying our program services. Our team has drafted manuscripts for peer-reviewed journal submissions, showcasing our innovative approaches and impactful outcomes. Additionally, our evaluation manager has excelled in tracking stronger Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), providing us with valuable insights to continually refine and enhance our programs.



Increase Resources

We have successfully launched a pilot of our earned revenue strategy, marking a pivotal step toward financial sustainability. Alongside this, we have expanded our fund development team, enhancing our capacity to secure essential resources and support for our mission.



Identify and Secure Strategic Alliances

In response to the evolving needs of the community, we have engaged with youth-serving partners to align our efforts more closely. This has led to the continuation and establishment of new Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), strengthening our collaborative network and amplifying our impact.



Increase Schools and Students Served

We are proud to report that we have met our target of serving 20 school sites ahead of schedule. Furthermore, we have retained all Program Specialists, ensuring continuity and stability in our service delivery. Our team has also curated and delivered a consistent and informed curriculum, benefiting the students we serve.

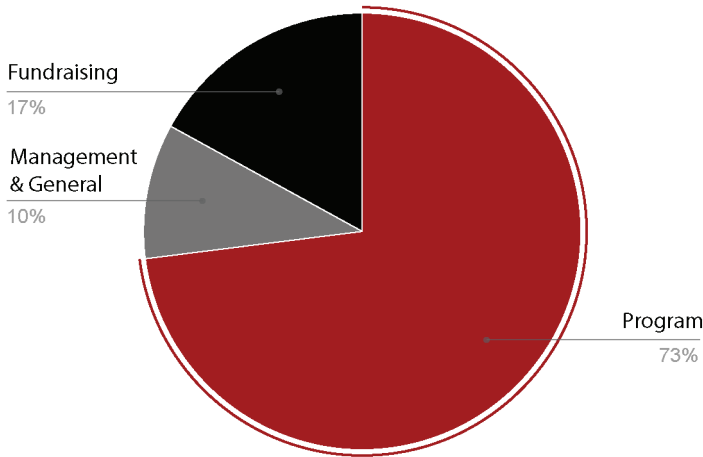
We are grateful for the continued support and dedication of our team, partners, and community as we work together to achieve our strategic goals and make a lasting difference in the lives of the youth we serve.

“ My favorite thing about RMFY is the bond we build every time we meet. RMFY has taught me how to communicate with people better. ”

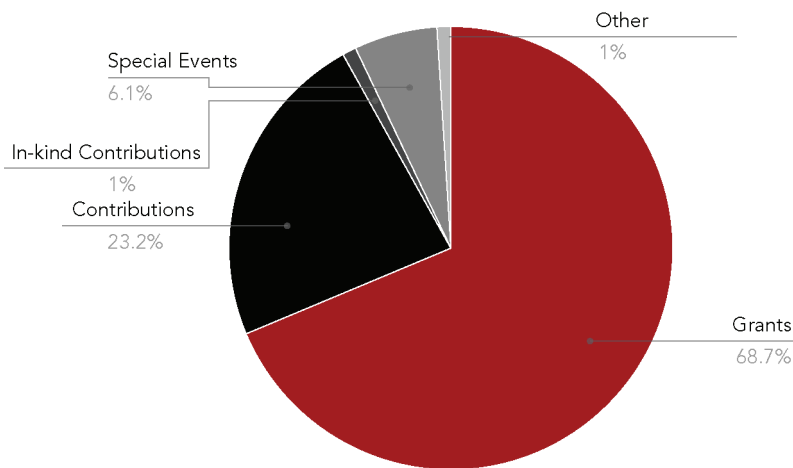
Jordan, 10th grade

Financials and 2025 Society

FY23 Expenses*



FY23 Revenue



THANK YOU 2025 Society Members!

- Kevin Elzer & Susan Binnie
- Teresa & Irving Brenner
- Danielle Buckins
- Ruthye Cureton Cooley
- Charlie & Susanna Dalton
- Stephanie & Russell Daniel
- Aquila Shamsid-Deen
- Don Dockery
- Caity & Patrick Donovan
- Crystal Dunham
- John & Amanda Grigg
- Roshonda & Brannon Jones
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- Gretchen & Marc Scavo
- Vicki & David Scheppegrell
- Mary Anne & Ethan Smith
- Ashley Varnado
- Caroline Wallace
- April & Thomas Whitlock
- Barbara & Scottie Wilson
- Carlos Witherspoon



To learn more about the 2025 Society scan the QR code.

*Right Moves For Youth's annual audit takes place each fall. FY24 audit information not available for this publication.

2023-24 Supporters

\$50,000-\$99,999

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 Carlos Witherspoon
 Suzanne Wittebort
 Kathryn Wysong

“ My favorite thing about RMFY is learning things that will help me in my career, RMFY has taught me that having connections and community is important. ”

Junasia, 9th grade

Thank you, 2023-2024 Program Volunteers

Program Volunteers

Angela McDuffie
 Bandreka Mackey
 Ben Ruiz
 Brandon Wiggins
 Brian Freeland
 Charles Artis
 Chris Grant
 Constance Watt
 Crystal Mcardle
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 Todd Zielinski
 Travis Nurse
 Tricia Barnes-Parkins
 Willie Ryder

Twilight 5K Volunteers

Daniela Acosta
 Isabella Araujo
 Lynn Araujo
 Justin Arnold
 Jesaiah Baldwin
 Susan Binnie
 Phillips Bragg
 Larcre Brown
 Jalaiya Bronson
 Jayla Bronson
 Maya Clamp
 Kevin Creighton
 Tanya Cunningham
 Kimberli Darling
 Sharon Davis
 Linda Deleon
 Tanisha Dixon
 Crystal Dunham
 Reynolds Ellington
 Kevin Elzer
 Betrice Gardner
 Cameron Gibson



Ana Gonzalez
 Corbin Holt
 Michelle Hopkins
 Angela Ingram
 Tom Jatulis
 Brannon Jones
 Emily Ladines
 Dan Loskowitz
 Brandon McLean
 Lisa McNeil
 Steven Moeller
 Arthur Mitchell
 Michael Nestor
 Melvin Nicholson
 Shanese Ratchford
 Egypt Ray
 Sara Regian
 Linh Rendleman
 Jackie Rivera
 Sharon Robinson
 Yananda Ross
 Yanet Salinas
 Henrietta Saunders
 Kamani Shine
 Ion Snipes
 Sheldon Snyder
 Sean Stinson
 Tammy Tevepaugh
 Allison Veltman
 Dondre Walker
 Carlos Witherspoon
 Courtney Witherspoon
 Kenny Wright

Twilight 5K Race Committee

Alexandria Johnson
 Bradley Smith
 Captain Brian Cunningham
 Carlos Witherspoon
 Lieutenant Ericka Ojaniit
 Major Sheray DeLeon
 Sergeant Johnny Oliver

Development Committee

Demetrius Wilson, Chair
 Crystal Dunham
 Don Dockery
 Stephanie Daniel
 Matt Tuchi
 Tuere Dunton-Forbes
 Lieutenant David Georgion
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