



R.O.C.C.
Roseville Outreach Community Corp.

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2023

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends and Supporters of the
Roseville Outreach Community Corporation,

The heart of the ROCC beats with a rhythm of service, dedication, and an unyielding hope for a future where every person in our community thrives. As Executive Director, it's an honor to witness the power of collective action fueling this vision.

This past year brought both celebration and challenge. Thanks to your generosity:

- Children spent an impactful summer at the Princeton-Blairstown Center, building not just STEM skills, but the leadership potential within them. Imagine those children returning home a little taller, ignited with self-discovery.
- At ROCCFest IV, music touched hearts and minds. Our youth saw themselves reflected in world-class artists like Alvester Garnett, were trained by dedicated and gifted music educators, and given the opportunity to play alongside professionals, proving that passion, creativity, and excellence lives not only in Newark but within them.
- The joy of a good book opens doors for countless youngsters through Shari's Book Club partnership with Sussex Avenue Elementary School. Every time a child falls in love with reading, another barrier on the path to success starts to crumble.

While these victories make us proud, the needs of our community persist. That's why the ROCC's work – addressing hunger, empowering youth, caring for seniors, and confronting social injustice – cannot waver.

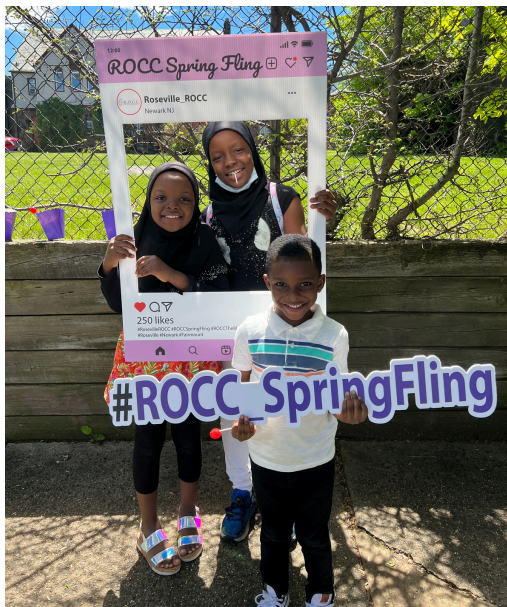
Each of us – those we serve and those who generously support them – hold a piece of the puzzle to create a community where everyone can find opportunity and reach their full potential. Your kindness, your advocacy, and your ongoing partnership are indispensable.

With deep gratitude and an unwavering commitment to our mission,

Rev. Touré Marshall
Executive Director,
Roseville Outreach Community Corporation (ROCC)

2ND ANNUAL SPRING FLING 2023

Our 2nd Annual Spring Fling was held on Saturday, May 6, 2023, and was an amazing way to celebrate Spring for the Fairmount Community. In 2022, our Spring Fling featured Endea Owens who brought her jazz bandmates for the community day. We closed off Roseville Avenue from Interstate Route 280 to Sussex Avenue for the event. However, in May 2023, we chose to close Sussex Avenue from Roseville to West Market Street to cause less disruption to bus routes and car travel on this main thoroughfare. In this more compact area, more than 100 neighbors and friends gathered to celebrate spring.



To the rhythm of the drummers from Orange High School, we had an old-fashioned line dance as each marched, dance, jumped, and showed off their steps to the beat of the drum. Rev. Marshall showed us his majorette stepping routine from JC Smith College, and children danced in the street. Games and activities, treats and tricks, music, food and fun, made this day a spring fling as we reveled in the warmth of the sun with neighbors and friends. Plans for Spring Fling 2024 are underway for the 3rd annual Spring Fling to once again make May's Spring Fling a welcoming way to say, Hello, Spring! We welcome you!

PRINCETON BLAIRSTOWN CAMP CENTER



In winter of 2022, William McDermott, retired NJIT Executive Director of Development introduced the ROCC to Princeton Blairstown Center Summer Bridge Program Leaders Mark DeBiasse, Director of Programs and Holly Lynn, Program Manager through Kenneth Myers. In 2023, we were able to experience the typical overnight 1-week interactive camp experience, thus, fulfilling our goal to offering the STEM Camp experience to 16 Newark teens. The program primarily focuses on STEM and integrates literacy through journal writing. It is so much more than that: opportunities for personal development, leadership, collaboration and problem- solving and fun make the week an experience of a lifetime for participants.

Now that we are beyond the challenges of COVID, we were able to recruit students from Sussex Ave. School, as well as expand to another Fairmount neighborhood School- 13th Avenue and churches in the area. PBC delivered on every promise and were easy to work with throughout the planning and execution of ensuring Newark Youth from ROCC could attend.

PRINCETON BLAIRSTOWN CAMP CENTER

ROCC Partnership and Planning

We began organizing in January 2023, after signing the formal MOU agreement with Princeton Blairstown Center and the ROCC Board. The ROCC Board formed its planning subcommittee -Kenneth Myers and Dr. Gayle Griffin – to recruit participants including chaperones and organize logistics. From our 2022 planning experience we felt we were well equipped to prepare and organize the week.

Again, we partnered with Sussex Avenue School, recruiting the rising population of grades 5-8 and now we had a power-point recruiting tool that was personalized with pictures from the summer 2022 experience. We also solicited students from local churches – Elmwood, Elizabeth-Weequahic, and First and Trinity South Orange. We posted the notice of camp on the PNENJ website. In addition, through a Fairmount neighborhood contact, we solicited students from 13th Avenue School. In total, 16 students attended PB in 2023- 12 boys and 4 girls. The additional challenge for PB was to ensure there was a staff person who spoke Spanish so that students for whom English is their 2nd language could attend.

ROCC assumed the responsibility for transportation for students and held a Parent Orientation for families prior to camp attendance. This helped parents know more about what to expect and to explain camp rules such as no cell phone use during the day. Releasing their cell phones meant students attention was fully engaged in activities. What was interesting to note is that they did not miss the cell phones at all. They were engaged into the evening with board games, chess tournaments, talking to one another and we suspect just being tired from the day's activities.

PRINCETON BLAIRSTOWN CAMP CENTER

Dr. Griffin reported that parents called her each evening because they had not heard from their children even though they had access to their phones in the evening. Since I was present each day, I was able to assure parents that their child was engaged and happy, well-fed, and enjoying the week's activities.

Our greatest challenge for preparing for camp was arranging chaperones. Fortunately, Ken Myers agreed to chaperone the boys, and Darlyn Blaney arranged a contact for a chaperone for the girls who was excellent – Anisha Able – a Bloomfield College sophomore. She was perfect for this experience and interacted beautifully with the girls.

Recommendations

This is a program worth pursuing for the ROCC, because it provides educational enrichment, personal development, and new experiences for our targeted population. Given the challenges we faced in summer 2022 with an off-site camp, the on-site camping experience was all that was promised and more.

Recruitment

The biggest challenge of this program is recruiting families and children, who are committed to attending the program. Our concerns that parents might be hesitant to allow the students to attend for the week, can be dismissed. For the children who attended, their parents fully supported their participation. We expanded recruitment to other churches and schools in the neighborhood and that outreach allowed us to recruit sufficient students for 2 cabins. We also started recruitment earlier – March and now realize we should start even earlier- in January 2024.

PRINCETON BLAIRSTOWN CAMP CENTER

Although we did recommend a registration fee, we did not ask for a fee and on the Monday morning we were to leave, we were only missing 1 student. So, the refundable registration fee was not necessary.

We believe that networking with others was a strength for the success of the PB camp recruitment. We expanded to other schools and churches and we had a good group of students who bonded as a group and behaved well.

Conclusion

I think the experience of fulfilling our intent to take students to PB Camp proved once again that ROCC can make things happen! Once again, excellent planning, lessons learned, connections to the community, team work by the ROCC board showed we are capable of successfully executing and achieving the projects we plan.

Our ROCC mission is to provide a stabilizing anchor in a changing community through outreach. We are committed to addressing vital issues – hunger, youth development, senior care and social justice to improve the lives and social fabric of this community we serve. As optimists, we are anchored in Nelson Mandela’s quote, *“I never lose, either I win, or I learn”*. Well, we believe we win and learn from everything we do. We think that sentiment is apropos PB Camp 2023 experience. People in our community are thirsty for positive outlets for their children, they just may not have the resources, and the ROCC is in position to fill some of those gaps. Let’s continue in the business of filling gaps.

To God Be the Glory.
In His Service,
Ken Myers and Gayle Griffin

ROCC FEST IV



ROCCFest IV “Living Out Loud! Celebrate the Rhythm of the Drums”

ROCC presented its 4th Annual Jazz Gospel Concert & Student Workshop featuring Alvester Garnett and Alvester Garnett’s Artworks Ensemble on September 30, 2023. Our signature event of the year, once again thrilled the Fairmount community and its youth with the sound of music to soothe the soul.

Recognizing that this year was the 50th anniversary of Hip-Hop, we channeled our roots in rhythm, the pulsating beat that echoes the heartbeat of our Creator. Our ancestors used the beat of the drum for so many purposes – to announce, to call together, to celebrate, to remember. They remind us that jazz – a uniquely African American music form - continues to bring us together as we celebrate the universal language of music.

The jazz musicians for ROCCFest IV were outstanding artists: Regina Carter- Violin, JD Allen- Tenor Saxophone, Santi Debriano- Bass, Brandon McCune- Piano and Alvester Garnett- drums.

ROCC FEST IV



Each a celebrity in his or her own right brought their “A+” game to the concert with a collection of original sacred and secular music that highlighted their virtuoso performances. The concert was a listening delight for the audience.

The highlight of ROCCFest IV is always our invitation to youth musicians to personally interact with the professional musicians. We are fortunate to recognize the Orange Public School music students for their continued attendance at all four ROCCFest concerts. This year, the Orange High School Band attended the workshop. They performed a classic jazz piece learning 3 notes, improvised on their instruments, and learned music tips to motivate their musical skills.



ROCC FEST IV



During the intermission, we also had 4 high school students recite original poetry and we shared ROCC's programs that represent how we center ROCC's mission on the quality of life in our community. We always want to remind the community that their support helps us achieve our mission to serve its residents.

ROCCFest IV costs were underwritten by donations, ticket sales and grants. We were fortunate to receive grants from Prudential Community Foundation, LISC Greater Newark, Victoria Foundation. This signature fundraising event allows us to support our program activities during the year. All ROCC Board members participate in the planning, logistics, and preparation. We look forward to bringing this Annual Evening of Jazz for the community residents and their friends to their neighborhood in the Fairmount section of Newark.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rev. Touré Marshall, Executive Director

Raymond Robinson Jr., President

Kenneth Smith, Vice President

Darlyn Blaney, Secretary

Kenneth Myers, Treasurer

Victoria Andrade

Cheryl Glaspy-Myers

Gayle Griffin, PhD

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