



Rooted in Hope, Growing Toward Change.

Generational poverty is like a mythical tree with roots that stretch deep into history, passing on its burdens from one generation to the next. With the right support and opportunities, we can trim those roots, allowing new growth and a future full of promise.

2024
Annual Report

Our Mission

The Fountain of Youth Program's mission is to change mindsets and confront barriers that contribute to systemic poverty.

Trees of Transformation

Each of us is like a tree, carrying the potential to grow, thrive, and inspire. Our roots are the foundation—our families, our experiences, and the communities that shape us. For some, those roots run deep and strong, providing stability and nourishment. For others, they may be shallow or damaged, struggling to draw the strength needed to stand tall.

Our branches represent the paths we take and the opportunities we reach for.

They stretch outward, exploring new possibilities, learning from challenges, and connecting with others. And then there are the leaves—the fruits of our labor, the dreams we realize, and the hope we share with the world.

At Fountain of Youth, we believe everyone deserves the chance to strengthen their roots, grow their branches, and let their leaves flourish. Some may start with broken roots or fragile limbs, but with

care, guidance, and support, they can still become magnificent trees, standing tall and inspiring others.

Together, we form a forest of strength and possibility. By nurturing ourselves and each other, we ensure a future where everyone can grow toward the light and thrive.

Read the 2024 success stories of the participants below.



Jerry Russell
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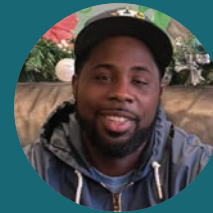
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Caprice's Story

CAPRICE JONES

FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

At just 10 years old, I vividly remember life on the west side of Chicago—a place where dreams felt as fleeting as the promises of better days. My mother, with her unwavering love and quiet resilience, once assured me that she'd buy me a pair of name-brand shoes. To a fifth grader, those shoes meant everything. Among my peers—mostly Black and Hispanic—status wasn't defined by grades or kindness but by having the latest gym shoes and trendy clothes. Without them, you became a target. And I wasn't one to stay silent when ridiculed. I fought back.

My mother, stretched thin by the weight of raising me, my sister, and my newborn brother on public assistance, promised she'd get me those shoes when her check arrived. I clung to that promise, my excitement mounting with each passing day. But when the time came, our harsh reality overshadowed my hopes. There simply wasn't enough money.

I left school that day. Aimless and angry, I walked until the police found me and brought me home. Soon, my rebellion turned into action. I started stealing shoes, then shoplifting, trying to fill the void that had been left by unmet dreams. By 12, I was selling crack cocaine in my community, chasing a sense of power and validation I couldn't find elsewhere.

The money and the illusion of control were intoxicating, but they came at a cost. I distanced myself from the innocence of childhood, adopting the persona of a gang leader while struggling to understand who I truly was. Deep down, I craved connection and purpose, but the layers of poverty, racism, and broken expectations wrapped around me like chains.

It wasn't until I was 32 years old, sitting in the stark loneliness of a prison cell, that I began to confront the choices that had defined my life. Reflection wasn't easy. The



mirror of my past was filled with faces I had hurt, opportunities I had squandered, and a child within me who had never healed. But in that stillness, I found something I'd been searching for my entire life—hope.

I realized that the change I yearned for wouldn't come from anyone else. It had to come from me. Letting go of my past—my gang ties, my anger, my defiance—wasn't just necessary; it was freeing. Slowly, I started to see the man I could become. I learned that disappointment wasn't my enemy—it was a teacher. And the first lesson was this: I had to forgive myself.

As I pieced together my identity, I uncovered a powerful truth about my name. Caprice—a name that once felt foreign—came to symbolize sudden change. It was a quiet voice in the darkness, urging me to embrace every part of who I was and to let that acceptance fuel my transformation.

Today, as a mentor in the Fountain of Youth program, I share my journey with young people who stand where I once stood—at a crossroads. I encourage them to dream, to fight for their future, and to break the cycles that threaten to hold them back.

I think of my life like a tree, weathered by storms and scarred by the elements. My roots once tangled in rocky soil, struggling to grow. But even trees in the harshest conditions can find new ground, sending out fresh roots into richer earth. With patience, care, and persistence, those roots grow stronger, and from them, new branches emerge, reaching toward the light.

My story is proof that even in the darkest forests, we can rise, flourish, and one day provide shade and shelter for others.

Generational poverty

is like a tree with stunted roots—unable to anchor itself, it struggles to grow, and its leaves wither before they can truly thrive. At Fountain of Youth, we focus on nurturing the roots, providing a strong foundation through education, life skills, and mentorship.

These roots support growth, allowing individuals and families to break free from the cycle of poverty.

The leaves represent the transformation we see when people are empowered to succeed—a vibrant, thriving community reaching toward a brighter future. This annual plan is our road map to strengthening those roots and fostering growth, one life at a time. Together, we can help every branch flourish.

Core Program

Partners in Change

- THREE-PHASE PROGRAM
- 60 DAYS FOR EACH PHASE
- WEEKLY 1-ON-1 MEETINGS



Partners in Change is the Fountain of Youth's core program, featuring a three-phase process lasting 60 days for each phase. Willing participants commit to one-on-one weekly meetings. For many, the program is a long and difficult process, but our evidence-based timing toward the lasting mindset change we wish to create is essential.

Every journey is unique, which is why our program is designed to tailor itself to each participant's specific challenges by setting SMART goals. This year has presented significant challenges for everyone, but no group has faced tougher hardships than those living in poverty.

As we continue to walk forward in our mission, we remain steadfast in our commitment to our values and goals. Every step we take is guided by our vision for a brighter future, where collaboration and innovation drive our success. Together, we will overcome challenges, embrace opportunities, and strive to make a positive impact in our community. Let us keep moving forward with determination and purpose, knowing that our collective efforts will pave the way for a better tomorrow.

RealTalk

RealTalk, a weekly support group, offers participants the tools and resources they need to find restoration, healing, and prosperity through self-discovery. During the sessions, a new topic is introduced, and the group engages in an open discussion to encourage participants to express their thoughts and learn from each other's insights.

The support group takes place every Tuesday evening from 5-6:30 pm at the Fountain of Youth's office.



Community in Change

Uniting for Collective Empowerment

Our Community in Change program offers humane education through local experienced facilitators. The goal is to challenge Community in Change participants to better understand what it's like to live in generational poverty and the barriers that prevent a change in mindset. By walking in step with Partners in Change participants, Community in Change aims to address topics such as knowledge of self and others, citizenship, and education to raise awareness of societal and generational poverty barriers.





Special Events

Great Give Day May

The Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque is excited to present Great Give Day, our annual online giving event, to connect non-profits and donors across our seven-county region. Great Give Day inspires community members to come together for 24 hours to celebrate and support local non-profits. Great Give Day is on May 21st, 2025. Make a lasting impact in one day!

Giving Tuesday December


This year, Giving Tuesday falls on December 2nd, 2025. It generally kicks off the charitable season and year-end giving. Giving Tuesday harnesses the power of social media and encourages people to donate their time, talents, and resources to pressing local and global challenges

Transforming the Future September

Transforming the Future is our largest fundraiser of the year. It features a live and silent auction, heavy hors d'oeuvres, and drinks! Enjoy a night of amazing speakers.

Generational Poverty Month December

This month, our staff and board of directors recognize the urgent need to eliminate generational poverty locally. We invite our community members to join us in addressing this issue collaboratively in our own community.





SUCCESS STORY

Jerry Russell

Jerry has successfully completed Phase 1: Knowledge of Self and Others. During this phase, he learned to take responsibility for his actions, focus on the positives, and take risks to achieve success. He has shown great motivation and has started a Culinary Arts class. Jerry is also close to finishing his time at the halfway house.

In Phase 2: Financial Literacy, Jerry mastered skills such as budgeting, saving, utilizing resources effectively, and building his credit. He discovered that he doesn't have as much debt as he initially thought. Since beginning Phase 2, Jerry has completed his Level 3 program in the halfway house and is now participating in day reporting. He has moved into our transitional house, completed a Culinary Arts certificate with NICC, and is celebrating 7 months of being clean and sober.

Jerry completed Phase 3: Health and Wellness, where he learned to manage his eating habits, avoid overeating, and use less dressing and seasoning in his meals. He is also beginning to understand how his mental health can impact his interactions with others and has started counseling. Since starting Phase 3, he has finished his IDAP classes, gained full custody of his daughter, maintained a job for 7 months, achieved 9 months of sobriety, and is actively participating in ASAC training.

Jerry has completed PP1: Career and Professional Development. In this phase, he learned the importance of proactively seeking opportunities, managing new responsibilities, avoiding complacency, and maintaining professionalism in workplace communications. He successfully transitioned out of the Transitional Living House and has moved into his own apartment. He is now 1 year clean and sober and is signed up for Culinary Arts Tier 2.

Finally, Jerry completed Post Partners 2: Financial Literacy. Throughout this phase, he learned to avoid overspending on non-essentials, maintain a balanced budget, and stay on top of his bills. As a result, he has been able to fully furnish his apartment.



SUCCESS STORY

Paul Newman II

Paul successfully completed Phase 1: Knowledge of Self and Others, where he gained an understanding of empathy and made commendable progress in developing his empathetic skills. He has learned more about his own emotions and how to express them positively. Paul is focused on maintaining consistency and building strong, positive relationships. Since beginning the program, he has developed a meaningful relationship with his daughter. Celebrating 4 years and 3 months of sobriety, Paul remains optimistic about his future.

In Phase 2: Career and Professional Development, Paul expanded his knowledge of soft skills, workplace culture, and barriers. He has embraced an open-minded approach to learning new things at work. As a result, he has secured a position at Dittmer Recycling, moved into his own apartment, and fully furnished it.

Paul has also completed Phase 3: Financial Literacy. He learned the importance of saving money for unexpected expenses and how to create and stick to a budget. He has successfully managed to pay his bills on time.

Giving

- Through our membership drive for monthly giving, we raised \$17,110.
- We successfully raised \$122,102 in 2024 from our Transforming The Future fundraiser.
- With support from the DRA, we purchased a van that allows us to transport participants to and from work daily.
- We've partnered with Greater Dubuque Development and NICC to transport students to and from school to remove the transportation barrier for the Peosta-only programs.



SUCCESS STORY Jeff Stonehocker

Jeffrey Stonehocker joined our program while in prison in 2023. He was released in July 2023 and since then he has completed all phases of Partners In Change, has maintained a living wage employment career opportunity, has been promoted, bought a vehicle, maintains a bank account, is participating in our ICARE housing program where he is renting a house, reconnecting with his teenage son, and building relationships with his entire family after 7 1/2 years of incarceration. Jeff continues to volunteer for any opportunity to help in the community. Jeffrey will be alumni status in less than 1 month.



SUCCESS STORY Rebecca Pline

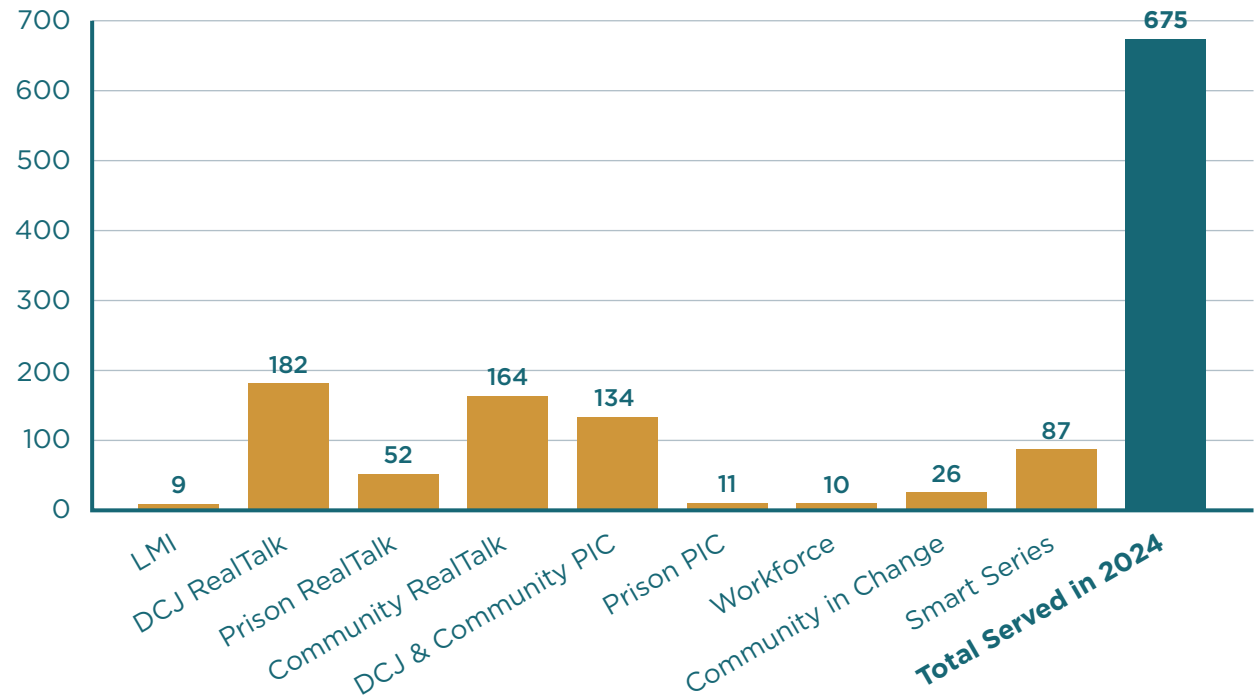
Rebecca Pline has successfully completed Phase 1 of Partners in Change. She has resumed her longtime career as a stylist, maintained her home ownership, and transformed her relationships with her children. Rebecca continues to thrive in new challenges by consistently applying the principles and skills she developed through her disciplined self-development process.

Statistics

\$240,000 Administration Costs

1,775 People Served Since We Opened

\$3,900
Total Cost for Someone to Go Through 6 Months of Our Program



SUCCESS STORY Henry Smith

Henry has successfully completed Phase 2 of the Partners in Change program and is excited to start a new job driving a local 18-wheel truck for Prairie Farms. He is set to begin Phase 3 at the next Health and Wellness session. In addition, Henry completed Phase 3 of Partners in Change, with Health and Wellness as his primary goal. Throughout his journey, he has accomplished many significant things and is committed to leaving a positive impact on the world. He truly is a legacy leaver!



SUCCESS STORY Jessica Scholtes

Jessica Scholtes successfully achieved Level 3 in the Elm Street facility program and has moved out of the halfway house. She is now living in her son's home, where they have established a mutually beneficial arrangement, with a long-term goal of securing her own apartment. Additionally, Jessica has regained her driver's license, marking the first time in two years that she has had it.

Future Plans

Thanks to the support of our donors, the community, and our staff, The Fountain of Youth Program has experienced remarkable growth over the past 7 years. We are truly grateful for these achievements and appreciate the faith and trust they represent. We understand that this trust comes with responsibility, which is why much of our future planning focuses on being good and sustainable stewards of that trust.

Steps Included:

- Investing in continuous improvement in our program offerings.
- New program manager position to oversee all aspects of program development and execution to ensure consistent, high-quality results for participants.
- Improve our data capture and analysis.
- Further develop and execute clear and consistent documentation of processes and programs.
- Enhancing relationships with supporters and partners.
 - Thorough integration of our CRM and communication platforms.
 - Commitment to consistent and open communication with supporters and the community
- Seek State and Federal Funding to enhance our organization's development.



SUCCESS STORY

Tony Wallroff

Tony has successfully completed several phases of personal and professional development. In Phase 1, Knowledge of Self and Others, he learned to regulate and control his emotions, building healthier relationships in the process. Since starting the program, he secured a job at Anderson Windows, which has led to improved connections with his wife and kids. He feels more clear-headed and is making better decisions.

In Phase 2, Financial Literacy, Tony gained valuable skills in managing his finances. With his job at Anderson Windows, he experiences significantly less financial stress, which has helped his family unite and thrive. As a result, they moved into their own apartment, reflecting their improved situation.

Phase 3 focused on Health and Wellness, where Tony learned to recognize and address his habits—both good and bad—and to prioritize self-care for better overall health.

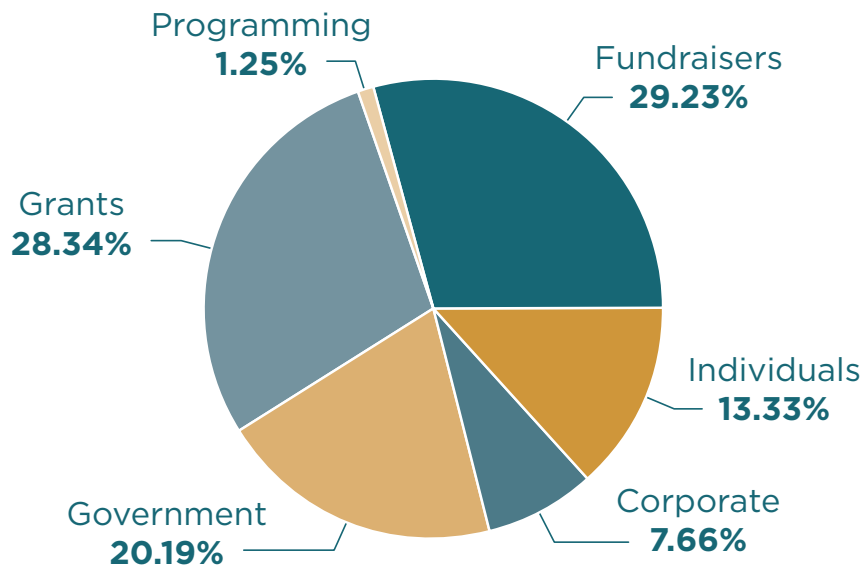
Most recently, Tony completed Post Partners Phase 1 of Career and Professional Development. He discovered the importance of building meaningful relationships and establishing healthy boundaries, as well as strategies for getting and keeping a job. He also enhanced his interview skills and created a solid financial and budgeting plan. Thanks to these efforts, he has caught up on his bills and continues to maintain his job at Anderson Windows.

Support

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your incredible support throughout the year. Your dedication and generosity have made a significant impact on our nonprofit's mission, and we are truly grateful.

Thanks to your unwavering support, we have achieved remarkable milestones and created positive changes in our community. It is because of supporters like you that we can make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

We are humbled by your belief in our mission and your commitment to helping us create a better community. Your support has been instrumental to our success, and we couldn't have achieved this without you. As we reflect on the past year and look ahead to the future, we want you to know that your support is more important than ever. Together, we can continue to make a lasting impact and bring about positive change in our community.



HOTEL JULIEN
DUBUQUE



Andy & Debi
BUTLER

*Once again, **thank you** from the bottom of our hearts for being such incredible supporters. We are so grateful to have you on this journey with us.*

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“The roots of true achievement lie in the will to become the best that you can become.”

-Harold Taylor

“So never lose an opportunity of urging a practical beginning, however small, for it is wonderful how often in such matters the mustard-seed germinates and roots itself.”

-Florence Nightingale

“Storms make trees take deeper roots.”

-Dolly Parton

“Cultivate the root; the leaves and branches will take care of themselves.”

-Confucius

“A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees.”

-Amelia Earhart

“In every forest, on every farm, in every orchard on earth, it’s what’s under the ground that creates what’s above the ground. That’s why placing your attention on the fruits that you have already grown is futile. You cannot change the fruits that are already hanging on the tree. You can, however, change tomorrow’s fruits. But to do so, you will have to dig below the ground and strengthen the roots.”

-T. Harv Eker





www.thefountainofyouthprogram.org

220 West 7th Street Suite 101
Dubuque, Iowa 52001

**And one day, its leaves unfold-
scattering seeds of hope that promise
a forest where none once stood.**

