

HAPPY BIRTHDAY REENTRY HOUSE PLUS!



Anyone in the business world will tell you that one of the most important indications of success is surviving for five years. In fact, only one out of every two new businesses exist for that long. A five-year anniversary for a **non-profit for justice-involved people** may be even more daunting. Nothing to sell, no weekly specials, and no fun-filled fundraisers, or videos of cute puppies with irresistible puppy eyes, asking for a monthly support check.

On July 3rd of 2021 Reentry House Plus welcomed the first men to our house in Hillsborough! Five years later, we are proud of what we have accomplished. Here, and in the following newsletter, we will to share our journey with you all – the people who have helped make this happen.

It all began with Yokefellows!

One of the most successful programs at Orange Correctional Center is the Yokefellows listening ministry. Men and women from the outside, who have been trained and certified by the Correctional System, meet inmates who wish to participate on Tuesday nights in the Peace Center. Typically, there will be around twenty volunteers and perhaps a hundred men who gather at small tables to have open discussions about whatever might be on the minds of the men.

Often the men would want to know from me (Doug) what it was like to buy houses and then work on them for a year before selling them. Others may want to discuss their families or their hobby work at the facility like pencil art or writing poetry. I had hours of fun finding Duke fans to have energized discussions about my Tar Heels. I once made a bet that if Duke won the next Duke/UNC basketball game then I would wear a Duke hat to the next meeting, and vice versa. I lost.... but I bought a hat in the proper color with "DOOK" on it to wear at the meeting. Lots of fun!

These many hours of visits with these men cemented a fundamental fact that underneath it all, these men are people - just like you and me - with goals to become productive citizens in society. And that realization led eventually to discussions about the fact there was no reentry house in northern Orange County, and none at all with integral programs to help to train and guide the men to a successful "reentry" into society. Discussions between David Stanford and me led to the formation of a group of interested supporters, mostly made up of Yokefellow volunteers, to open a home for men.

Reentry House Plus was incorporated in October of 2019 and we received our 501(c)(3) non-profit designation in December of 2019.

Shortly thereafter we met with Will Elmore and Tommy Green, founders of SWIT (Success While in Transition). These two previously incarcerated men developed a program of lessons and steps that help men find their own path back into society through jobs, develop community with other men in reentry, and discover a new sense of self-worth.

After a failed attempt to open a house in a rented facility, we spent two years teaching these SWIT principles to men and women of Orange and Western Durham counties. During that time, we searched for a house in the Hillsborough area, while securing the donations necessary. In March 2021 - at the height of Covid - we purchased a home that could meet our needs.



Will Elmore and Tommy Green meet with two of our first residents.

By July we had purchased furniture and made the house ready for 5 men at a time- two each in double rooms and then one in a single. **Over the next five years we are proud to have worked with over 50 men who entered a program set up to guide them through a series of discussions and steps that would prepare them for "graduation" from the house in, generally, a twelve-month time.**

Frankly, in the first years we tended to have men staying for a far shorter period, and there was more turnover than intended. Then in the past two years, we had men staying longer than a year. Ultimately, three separate events coincided that moved RHP and our program dramatically forward.

- First, we discovered some hidden termite damage in the understructure of the house and determined that work on that area should include refurbishing the inside of the house with a new bathroom and painting throughout.
- Second, that work could best be done while the house was essentially empty, and so we used this time to help the men - all of whom had benefited from more than a year at the house - to find housing elsewhere.
- Third, we chose to move away from a part-time program management and hire a full-time Program Director for the house.

On February 15, 2026, we hired Bobby Harrington to be our full-time Program Director. Bobby has over ten years of experience working with justice involved men and women in a variety of capacities. So, Bobby's addition marks a new and exciting direction of Reentry House Plus for years to come.

Our next Newsletter will highlight the changes in our program since March of this year and our vision for the future.

Helping the formerly incarcerated become healthy contributing members of society, helps everyone around them. We look forward to the opportunities, challenges, and success stories in the years to come. And, we appreciate having your support on this journey. We could not do it without you!

Faithfully,

Doug Peterson

President

RHP MISSION:

Reentry House Plus is a nonprofit organization devoted to assisting formerly incarcerated people reintegrate back into the community as healthy, productive citizens. We at Reentry House Plus believe in second chances and are committed to doing our part to ensure that people receive the support, skills, and encouragement they need to rebuild their lives.

We Couldn't Provide Post-Incarceration Support Without You!

We love the growing support for RHP! Thank you for your prayers, your donations, and your time. Our residents and class participants deeply appreciate the opportunities for growth and recovery through RHP.

You can support RHP in one or more of these ways:

- Pray for our men, our class participants, our volunteers, and our Board.
- Share our news of hope and recovery by forwarding this email to friends, neighbors, and colleagues who may be interested.
- If you were sent this newsletter by someone else, you can receive future newsletters by sending us a request to reentryhouseplus@yahoo.com.
- Donate to RHP by sending a check to (P.O. Box 361, Hillsborough, NC 27278) or by clicking the **"Please Donate Here"** button below.
- Become a Sustaining Donor by committing to monthly contributions which gives us added stability. Follow the instructions after pushing the Donate button below.
- Volunteer for hands-on opportunities in the Hillsborough area by contacting us at reentryhouseplus@yahoo.com

Reentry House Plus is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all financial gifts are tax deductible.

Board officers and Members as of January, 2026

Doug Peterson, President; Ran Hamner, Vice President;
Chris Ringwalt, Secretary; Paul Triulzi, Treasurer;

David Stanford, Gates Vrooman, Cynthia Wheaton,

Bill Wagner, and Pastor Kevin Desmore

Consultants to the Board: William Elmore, Chaplain Dewey Williams of Orange Correctional Center

Monthly Board Meetings: Typically on Fourth Thursdays of every month. Email us if you would like to participate: reentryhouseplus@yahoo.com.

Website: reentryhouseplus.org

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