

Greetings All,

I am pleased to welcome you all back to embark on another successful year here at SRCAA, Inc.

Oftentimes I reflect on my tenure here and cannot help but smile and be thankful for the strides we have made, especially over all our challenges. As we closed 2023, I made the statement that we are a resilient group, family, and agency, and I meant every word. I truly believe that each of us is here for the purpose of serving above ourselves, and you prove that every time you show up to serve our community.

I appreciate each one of you and all your contributions to this agency because I realized long ago that no one job is more important than another. No one person is bigger than this organization. It takes our collective efforts to make this agency what it is.

As we begin navigating our way through 2024, please be reminded that there is much work ahead, many lives awaiting positive change, and our community is relying on us to show up. I believe in you; I believe in the work we do; and I know from personal experience what this agency can achieve in the lives of those we serve. In closing, I thank you all in advance for all you are going to do to make 2024 a wonderful year for our agency!

Sincerely,
Dione Adkins
Chief Executive Officer



The Importance of Mentoring Programs

National Mentoring Month is an annual initiative recognized for the full month of January. A time dedicated to raising awareness about the power and impact of mentoring while honoring the contributions of mentors and encouraging individuals to become mentors themselves. During this month, communities, organizations, and schools across the country come together to celebrate the impact of mentoring and promote the expansion of mentorship programs.

This month we recognize the *"Men of Action"* program. Sponsored by the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc., the program mentors fathers and father figures in our communities and provides guidance and resources for participants to be better role models. The program has many online and in-person activities planned for 2024.



Image taken during Men of Action celebration for fathers. Circa 2023

Poverty Awareness Event Planned

The first agency event for 2024 will be the Poverty Simulation on February 21, 2024.

The purpose of this Simulation is to increase awareness about the complexities of poverty in North Carolina. This interactive tool provides a four-week window into the lives of North Carolina's low-income families and the struggles faced to overcome barriers of joblessness, homelessness, crime, illiteracy, and the lack of quality childcare. Additionally, the training provides participants with tangible strategies for resourcing/supporting the community.

During the simulation, 60-80 participants assume the roles of up to 26 different families facing poverty and 20-25 additional participants/volunteers will enact the roles of service providers (preferably persons who have faced or are facing poverty) for a grand total of 80-105 participants.



SALISBURY-ROWAN COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC
POVERTY SIMULATION

Date: February 21, 2024
 Location: West End Plaza, 1935 Jake Alexander Blvd., Salisbury NC
 Time: 10:15am -2:00pm (Lunch will be provided beginning at 1:00pm)

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Shara Dearmon is currently Director of Center Operations for our Head Start and Early Head Start locations. Shara will soon be approaching 12 years of service with the **Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc.** One of her favorite pastime hobbies is making custom homemade crafts. Also, during her leisure time, she likes watching **“The Woman King,”** an action-adventure movie based on the true events of female warriors that protect the Kingdom of Dahomey in West Africa.

“Like Water for Chocolate” by Laura Esquivel is a favored novel Shara loves to read. When it comes to food and favorite dishes, Shara states that she enjoys various foods and not limited to a specific category. Likewise, she has no specific beach to visit as her favorite destination. As long as she’s on the beach sand, she’s happy.



What is most fulfilling about working for SRCAA, Inc? *“Knowing that I am making a*

positive impact on the future, one staff member, one family member, and one child at a time.” -Shara Dearmon

“The resilience of the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc. is a direct result of you, our valued employees. Your dedication, commitment and service to this agency is most appreciated, and we would like to take this time to recognize and celebrate you.

-Dione Adkins
 Executive Director

SERVICE RECOGNITION

Kenneth Click	41 Years
Ayesha Badge	16 Years
Erica Scarlette	13 Years
Bettina Cherry	27 Years
Jasmine Harris.....	11 Years
Marisol Ruiz.....	7 Years
Elena Banuelos Pinzon	4 Years
LaNette Chunn	4 Years
Maya Candy	2 Years
Sammitria Pinckney.....	1 Year

“Let us be mindful that within a new year are new days! This year we have 366 days! Make a resolution to make each day special! -Happy New Days!”

SERVICE OF COMMUNITY TOP PRIORITY

In the aftermath of the unprecedented health crisis faced by our community and our entire nation due to COVID-19, the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc. continues making the service of the community top priority, from providing early childhood education through our Head Start/Early Head Start Program or tuition assistance for employment skills training through our Self-Sufficiency Program, we are dedicated to helping people, help themselves

HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM: The comprehensive child development program is designed to meet children and family needs, providing a solid foundation for the child and parent to grow together. The primary goals of the Head

Start/Early Head Start programs are to provide the best child development practices for children birth to five years of age. Head Start provides a comprehensive child development program that addresses the physical, cognitive, mental, social, and emotional development of prenatal, infants, toddlers, and preschool participants. The program services Rowan and Davidson counties.

FAMILY SERVICES: This Self-Sufficiency program assists those who choose to make a change in their life. For families and individuals enrolled in this program, the agency provides comprehensive supportive services to secure employment or increase their income, obtain education and /or vocational training, make better use of their income, obtain and maintain standard housing, and build a strong work ethic. The program services Rowan and Cabarrus counties

Cream Cheese and Herb Stuffed Chicken

Start 2024 with a healthy recipe that's also tasty. This Cream Cheese and Herb Stuffed Chicken is a fresh, flavorful, low carb dinner recipe that's great any time of year. The chicken breasts are seasoned with salt and pepper and stuffed with cream cheese, garlic, dill, chives, and parsley. They're then seared and baked to perfection!

Ingredients

4 oz 1/3 less fat cream cheese, softened to room temperature
1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley
1 tablespoon minced fresh dill
1 tablespoon minced fresh chives
2 garlic cloves, minced
4 (6 oz each) boneless, skinless chicken breasts, (24 oz total)
Salt and black pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil

Directions

Pre-heat the oven to 400. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

In a mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese with the parsley, dill, chives and garlic and mash together using a spatula until mixed.

Place the chicken breasts on a cutting board. Using a sharp knife, slice the breasts from the side (creating a top and bottom) almost all the way through. Open each breast at the slit. Divide the cream cheese mixture evenly amongst the four breasts and spread across the surface of one side (leaving the other half empty to fold over the filling). When all four breasts are topped on one side, fold the empty half over the filling to make a stuffed breast. Sprinkle each stuffed and closed breast with salt and pepper, flip



them over and sprinkle the bottom side as well.

In a large skillet, add the oil and bring over medium-high heat. Working in batches of two at a time so as not to crowd the pan, add the stuffed chicken breasts to the pan and cook for about 1-2 minute(s) until the bottoms are seared golden. Flip the breasts and cook for another minute on the other side to do the same. Transfer the breasts to the prepared baking sheet and place in the pre-heated oven. Bake for 30 minutes until chicken is fully cooked inside.

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