

Ship Community Outreach  
105 E. Lee St.  
Raleigh, NC 27601

NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 27, 2021

CONTACT: Anna Pickens, Communications Director  
919-200-5699, annapic@live.unc.edu

#### SHIP COMMUNITY OUTREACH HAS BIG PLANS FOR ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROGRAM

Raleigh, NC- Ship Community Outreach has big plans for expanding the organization's Anti-Trafficking Initiative. In January of 2021, Ship Community Outreach's executive director, Aleece Spalding, partnered with Anissa McNair to establish Ship Community Outreach's first anti-human trafficking program. In less than a year, the program has served dozens of women who are trying to escape sex trafficking and abuse, and it is continuing to grow.

Although the term "human trafficking" is often associated with sex trafficking, McNair, the new director of the Anti-Trafficking Initiative, works with women who have suffered from [both sex trafficking and forced labor trafficking](#).

In 2019, North Carolina was [ranked 11<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states](#) in cases of reported human trafficking. This is attributed partially to North Carolina's highway system, the demand for cheap labor in the state, and an increase in gang activity. Homeless individuals, women, children, people of color, and members of the LGBTQ community experience increased risks of labor and sex trafficking.

According to McNair, the Anti-Trafficking Initiative takes a "boots on the ground approach" to build relationships with trafficked women and assess their most urgent needs. After relationships are established, Ship Community Outreach provides support and resources to help women escape abusive situations.

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## ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROGRAM

After a successful first year of running the Anti-Trafficking Initiative, Ship Community Outreach is looking to expand. Spalding discussed Ship Community Outreach's plans for establishing an anti-trafficking center.

"We're trying to establish a day center where women can go to be safe, and to get away from the craziness of the streets and have counseling," Spalding explained. "It would be a clean, safe place to stay and to be able to ponder what it would be like to change their conditions, to take steps towards that, and then have people to support them in that journey."

Spalding hopes the center will be housed next to Ship Community Outreach's transitional employment center. Her goal is to open transitional employment classes to trafficking victims to help them to establish stable careers and incomes after escaping trafficking.

### **About Ship Community Outreach**

Ship Community Outreach was founded in 2010 by Pastor Chris Jones to support underserved communities in southeast Raleigh. The program provides community members with reliable access to food, health care, tutoring and vocational support. Ship Community Outreach's initiatives include a subsidized grocery store, a food distribution center, a free weightlifting room, transitional employment initiatives and anti-trafficking initiatives. For more information or to sign up to volunteer, visit the [website](#).

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