



# Case Document

## Problem Statement

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Last year, Tennessee prisons released 549 Hamilton County residents from custody to the community (TDOC, Statistical Abstract, 2018, Extrap.). Although this is a relatively small segment of the total offender population, it has a disproportionate effect on public safety. In fact, according to a recent Bureau of Justice Statistics report, 5 in 6 prisoners will be arrested within 9 years of their release. They are arrested an average of 5 times each. And more than half of these arrests happen after most recidivism studies end (i.e., years 4 through 9). This pattern of failure accounts for an estimated 2,745 arrests in the Chattanooga area every year, significantly undermining public safety and well-being.

Except for a small release center for incarcerated women operated by The Next Door, several private providers of sex-offender treatment, and just one halfway house, there are no specialized services for released prisoners in the Chattanooga area. By comparison, there are 7 halfway houses in Knoxville, 15 in Memphis, and 25 in Nashville – where there are also numerous nonprofit organizations dedicated to prison reentry as well as state-funded community resource centers and day reporting centers.

In a city that is internationally known for collaboration and transformation, the absence of prisoner reentry services is a distinct reality that does not reflect the sense of place that is Chattanooga. It is unnecessary. And with your help, we can correct it.

## Mission

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Everyone deserves a second chance. However, second chances can be hard to find for former offenders and their loved ones. Through grassroots efforts and community initiatives that are restorative in nature and that provide realistic hope for those who have been affected by the criminal justice system, Chattanooga Endeavors creates second chances for men, women, and their loved ones to overcome the stigma of incarceration, to regain purpose in their lives, and to build a better tomorrow for all.

We do this by providing training, counseling, and support services that remove the barriers to meaningful employment and that teach the skills needed to enter the workforce and live within the law.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY (NEXUS)

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We are developing funds to establish a new public-private partnership program (NEXUS) to manage the reentry of Tennessee state prisoners returning to Hamilton County. Participants will be identified

as they enter prison, mentored by volunteers until they are near their release, assisted with reentry planning by an interdisciplinary team, and provided programming in the community that prepares them for work, supports them in their job search, and makes remunerative work training opportunities available through an alternative staffing program.

## Goals

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A 2004 Department of Justice review of 1,611 participants in a similar program previously managed by Chattanooga Endeavors found that they were more than twice as likely to obtain employment, received wages that were approximately \$5,300 more by comparison, and were roughly half as likely to violate supervision than a control group.

Based on this experience and projected capacity, when implemented NEXUS is expected to **reduce the three-year recidivism rate of participants by 35%** with the following annual targets:

1. Mentor **210** Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC) prisoners from Hamilton County
2. Develop release plans for **315** participants in TDOC facilities (210 mentored + 105 other)
3. Provide post incarceration work readiness training to **280** participants
4. Provide remunerative work training assignments to **192** participants
5. Provide full-time employment to **224** participants
6. Provide access to full-time college to **24** participants

## Current State

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The present Case is based on our successful development and operation of a nationally recognized work-readiness training program (2000-2011). Although the program was relatively expensive to operate, almost 80% of the cost was covered by income from contracts through an alternative staffing program. For example, during the 12 months ending June 30, 2007, income from remunerative work training assignments was \$605,775 on a \$759,994 organizational budget. During that same 12-month period, we provided work-readiness training to 305 former offenders, placed 260 in fulltime employment, and provided remunerative work training through our alternative staffing program to 130. Despite our achievements, the program was not sufficiently mature to survive the economic downturn during subsequent years. Therefore, employment services were reduced and eventually terminated in 2011. However, the need for employment and other reentry services has not gone away. In fact, with a steady stream of people returning to the Chattanooga area from prison, the need has become more acute.

In reimagining our services for current realities, we have capitalized on our 30 years of experience putting former offenders to work – adding to our previous model specific programming that addresses other factors that are known to foster repeat crime. (See “Framework” below.)

Our pipeline of participants from prison is in place with Stephen’s Table operating at approximately 25% capacity – and we are raising funds now through our Alliance Campaign to complete a comprehensive planning and implementation process for the concepts summarized in this Case Document.



## Alliance Campaign

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Donations to our Alliance Campaign will be applied to the planning, design, documentation, and implementation of a comprehensive prisoner reentry strategy for the Chattanooga area that is based on our 30 years of experience in the field and the accomplishments of our work-readiness training program. This project will include strategic collaborations among community service providers and outside decision-makers — as well as a Coordinating Council to guide the project, a Citizens League to oversee the outreach to participants, and formal partnerships with Tennessee Department of Correction, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, Chattanooga Police Department, Social Work Office of Research and Public Service at the University of Tennessee Knoxville, and Chattanooga State Technical Community College.

The goal for our Alliance Campaign is \$82,000.

## Comprehensive Services

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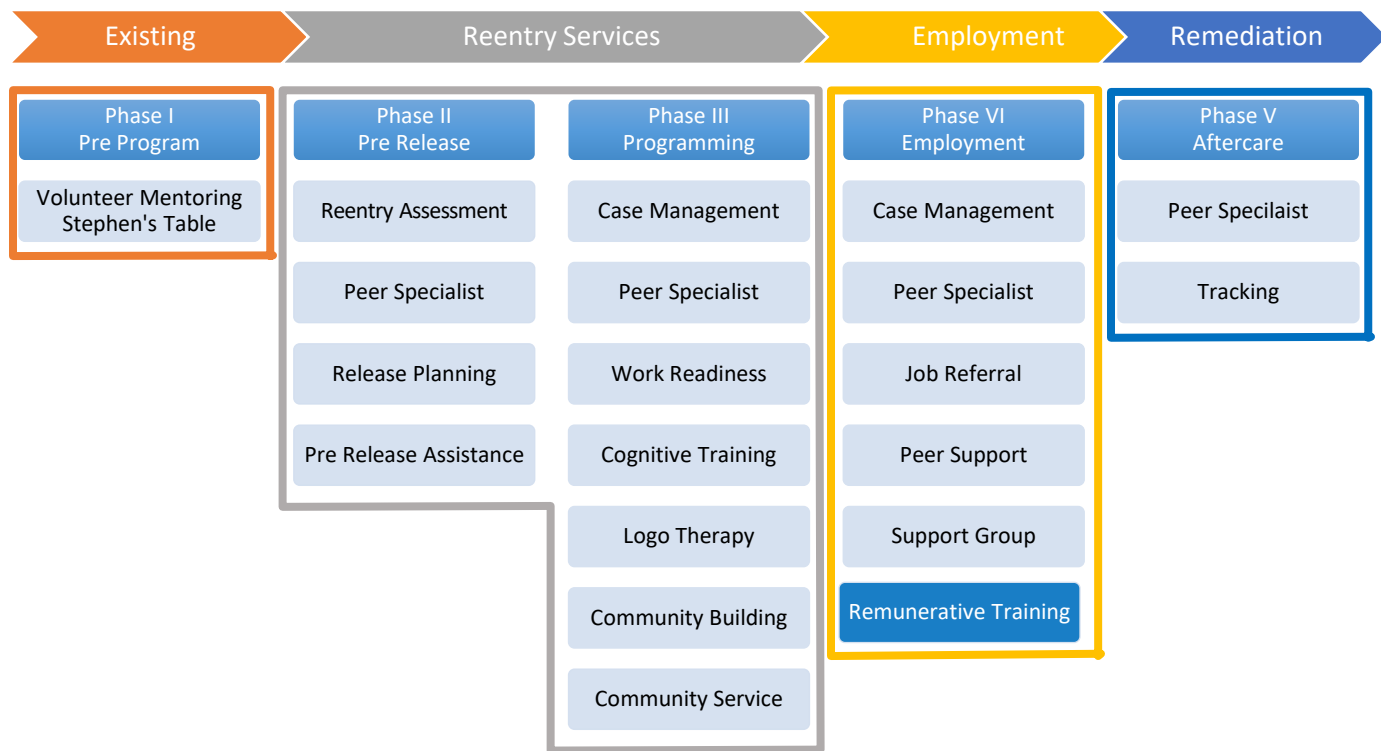
To many people, the relationship between crime and employment is a matter of common sense. However, research tells a more complicated story. Those who remain crime free after prison, in general, have more positive attitudes about employment, get along better with their coworkers, and are more receptive to supervision than their re-offending peers. Not only do these characteristics contribute to success on the job, they are deeply rooted in dispositions that are known to reduce criminal behavior. Punchy slogans like “better off working” and “nothing stops a bullet like a job” are quick to engage the popular imagination – however, evidence about what really works points in a different direction. If they don't already possess characteristics that distance them from crime, it is unlikely that former offenders will develop them on the job.

The propositions that will form the training model to be developed for the present project are based on Chattanooga Endeavors' thirty years of experience assisting former offenders to enter the workforce, mounting evidence about what drives crime, and nearly a century of research on the common factors impacting change efforts in counseling and training programs (see “Framework” below).

Through our Stephen's Table program, volunteers establish early contact with Tennessee prisoners from Hamilton County – both developing the pipeline of participants and acting on research that demonstrates that preserving social bonds between prisoners and their hometown reduces recidivism (Phase I). As prisoners enter their final 6 months of incarceration, the relationship established by volunteers is transferred to a professional team which includes a case manager, peer specialist, and parole or probation officer to develop a release plan (Phase II). Participants are released to a combination of case management services to address external influences and training programs which directly address five criminogenic factors – namely, antisocial cognition, antisocial companions, substance abuse, lack of employment, and antisocial recreation (Phase III). When they are work-ready, participants are either referred to unsubsidized employment opportunities with participating employers or they begin remunerative work training assignments with Chattanooga Endeavors. Alternatively, they may enroll in college. Remunerative work training assignments are managed to match the level of services with the level of risk in order to transition participants to the traditional job market in the safest and most efficient way possible (Phase VI). After participants either obtain full time employment or opt for full time education,



services are reduced to periodic tracking by case managers and informal support by peer specialists (Phase V).



## Collaborations

The Tennessee Department of Correction, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, and Chattanooga Police Department – along with a research partner at the University of Tennessee and more than a dozen community service providers – have agreed to collaborate with Chattanooga Endeavors to establish the comprehensive reentry services summarized in this case. In addition, we will collaborate with (a) Chattanooga State for manufacturing and OSHA certifications, (b) a close network of employers for remunerative work training, (c) Homeless Coalition for case management, (d) New Horizon Church for donated office and program space, and (e) a business services firm (TBD) for bookkeeping and payroll administration. Service referrals will be made as needed to various providers including Volunteer Behavioral Health, CADAS, Chattanooga Housing Authority, The Partnership, Educational Opportunities, Signal Centers, and Community Kitchen.

## Framework

The training model developed is based on the experience of Chattanooga Endeavors assisting former offenders enter the workforce, compelling evidence-based practices which recommend focusing interventions on at least three of the eight most serious criminogenic factors, and nearly a century of research on the four common factors impacting effective helping services.



Contemporary research on recidivism has focused on eight factors that facilitate repeat crime. Gone are the days when reentry programs provided a single intervention. We know now that effective programs address at least one of the top four “criminogenic” factors (antisocial personality, antisocial cognition, antisocial peers, and family or marital stress) and at least two more (substance abuse, unemployment, lack of education, and antisocial leisure or recreation).

Nearly a century of research has demonstrated that the effectiveness of change programs has little to do with what distinguishes one approach from another. Instead, what makes them effective is almost all about what they have in common: (a) They address external factors in the life and environment of their participants, which contributes approximately 40% to the variance in outcomes; (b) they build strong helping alliance, which contributes approximately 30%; (c) the technique or model used achieves its stated goal, which contributes approximately 15%, and (d) they create hope or expectancy with their participants, which also contributes approximately 15%. Both our model and the way we allocate funding aligns with these “common factors.”



## Budget

Our budget shows startup and three full years of income and expense estimates based on previous experience managing a similar program.

Income during this period is a mix of individual gifts, foundation grants, event participation, government appropriations, and venture revenue from remunerative work training contracts with area employers. Our model relies initially on foundation and government support which is replaced over time by individual gifts, event participation, and venture revenue from remunerative work training contracts through an alternative staffing program.

Startup costs are to develop the partnerships, procedures, and funding needed to implement the NEXUS model. Personnel is added in stages over two years with peer specialists under contract for services as needed. Bookkeeping, payroll, and other non-core functions are outsourced.

The focus during year one is to establish reentry services in Hamilton County. The focus during year two is to establish remunerative work training contracts with area employers. The contribution margin from these contracts is listed in our budget as Venture (net). This income partially offsets grant funding beginning in year two and is one of two major components of our sustainability plan. The other is the establishment of an endowment so that we can manage for future economic downturns that will negatively affect remunerative work training contracts.

Income	START-UP	TOTAL YEAR 1	%	TOTAL YEAR 2	%	TOTAL YEAR 3	%
Individuals	\$ 46,500	\$ 76,250	9%	\$ 123,750	11%	\$ 175,000	13%
Foundations	\$ 35,500	\$ 525,000	59%	\$ 425,000	38%	\$ 150,000	11%
Government	\$ -	\$ 245,000	28%	\$ 245,000	22%	\$ 80,000	6%
Events	\$ -	\$ 40,000	5%	\$ 80,000	7%	\$ 120,000	9%
Venture (net)	\$ -	\$ -	0%	\$ 252,467	22%	\$ 853,667	62%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 82,000</b>	<b>\$ 886,250</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 1,126,217</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 1,378,667</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
Regular personnel	\$ -	\$ 390,667	49%	\$ 537,000	45%	\$ 537,000	43%
Benefits and taxes for regular personnel	\$ -	\$ 103,775	13%	\$ 161,100	13%	\$ 161,100	13%
Professional & consultancy	\$ 33,100	\$ 60,000	8%	\$ 60,000	5%	\$ 60,078	5%
Payroll administration	\$ -	\$ -	0%	\$ 54,938	5%	\$ 85,408	7%
Peer specialists & other consulting	\$ -	\$ 42,400	5%	\$ 111,200	9%	\$ 130,400	10%
Program expenses	\$ 19,800	\$ 11,895	1%	\$ 21,960	2%	\$ 25,620	2%
Indirect expenses	\$ 13,236	\$ 58,600	7%	\$ 80,550	7%	\$ 80,550	6%
Occupancy, supplies & related	\$ -	\$ 117,200	15%	\$ 161,100	13%	\$ 161,100	13%
Public relations	\$ 9,500	\$ 14,400	2%	\$ 14,400	1%	\$ 14,478	1%
Evaluation	\$ 5,528	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%	\$ -	0%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 81,164</b>	<b>\$ 798,937</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 1,202,248</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 1,255,734</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Net income minus expenses</b>	<b>\$ 836</b>	<b>\$ 87,313</b>		<b>\$ (76,032)</b>		<b>\$ 122,932</b>	
<b>Cash position</b>	<b>\$ 836</b>	<b>\$ 88,149</b>		<b>\$ 12,118</b>		<b>\$ 135,050</b>	
<b>Participation</b>							
New participants served in work readiness training		\$ 130		\$ 240		\$ 280	
New participants served in remunerative training		\$ -		\$ 168		\$ 192	
<b>Venture</b>							
Remunerative training contract income	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 2,450,000		\$ 4,270,000	
Remunerative training payroll & related expenses	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 2,197,533		\$ 3,416,333	
Net income minus expenses	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 252,467		\$ 853,667	



## Governance

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Chattanooga Endeavors is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization with operations exclusive to Chattanooga, Tennessee. The organization is governed by a self-perpetuating, volunteer Board of Trustees with reserved powers assigned to a class of members called the Fellows. The Fellows consist of an equal number of ordained clergy members and ex-prisoners and structurally protect and preserve the organization's essential character and original identity as both Christian and as grassroots. With an emphasis on principles of social justice, the organization engages a highly qualified staff to deliver credible services to eligible beneficiaries regardless of their religious affiliation and in keeping with its long-standing policy of non-discrimination.

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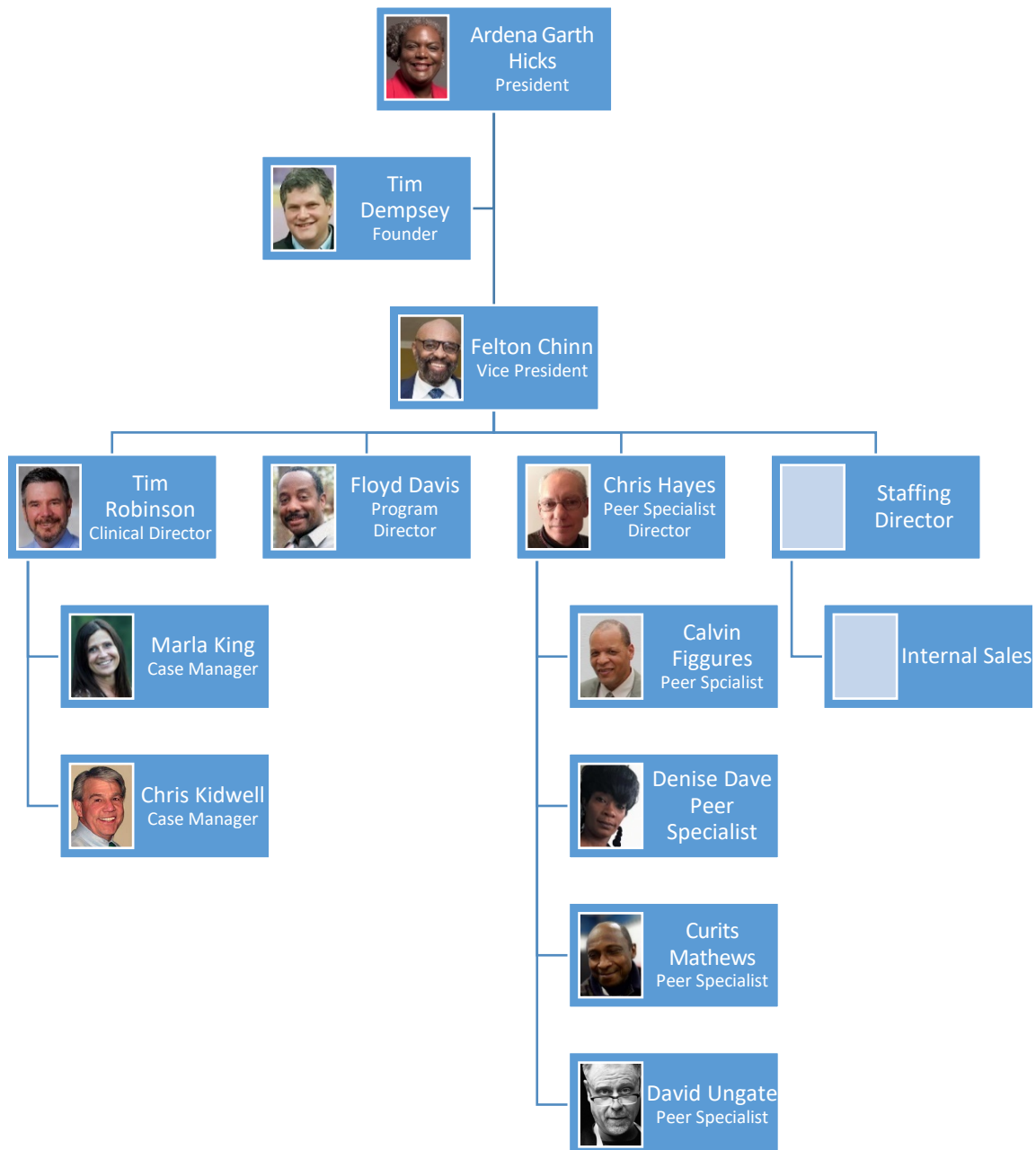
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## Staff

Chattanooga Endeavors is a collaboration between people who have made a successful transition from prison to society and ordinary citizens. The organization uses a model of team effectiveness that centers on principles of subsidiarity, restorative justice, stewardship, and community building. Guided by action research, employees with complementary professional, clinical, and lived experience concentrate their efforts on high value outputs that promote a common purpose. The leadership consists of Ardena Garth, Hamilton County Public Defender, 1989-2014; Tim Dempsey, Chattanooga Endeavors Founding Director, 1988-2017; and Felton Chinn, US Navy, Operation Department Chief, 1974-2000.

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## Fundraising

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Funding for programs like ours usually comes from legislative appropriations or government contracts that are championed at a high-level. This was how we converted a small half-way house in Chattanooga to a nationally recognized prisoner reentry model. And it is how we intend to fund NEXUS' start-up and initial operations. However, it is not how we intend to fund ongoing operations.

The clear advantage of government funding is that just a few number – possibly just one – grant or contract is enough. The clear disadvantage is that funding priorities are subject to change with every election. Therefore, true sustainability is a near impossibility.

Although we will pursue government grants and contracts initially, we have no interest in becoming dependent on them. Instead, we will use a related income strategy to reduce our dependence in the short term – and fund an endowment to become fully independent in the long term. (A related income strategy simply means that we will operate a business that is related to our mission.)

We will continue to pursue government and private grants and contracts even after we are able to operate without them. However, funds will be for projects and not for core overhead or services.

## History

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The premise for most of our work is that helping former offenders obtain employment that leads to a liveable wage is a simple and cost-effective way to prevent repeat crime and reincarceration – provided that the negative influences in their lives are adequately addressed.

- 1988 Establishes Dismas House as the first reentry program in Chattanooga
- 1997 Launches Endeavors for work readiness training with Private Industry Council
- 1998 Initiatives Community Building Workshops with new Orleans's Project Return
- 1999 Incorporates as Chattanooga Endeavors
- 2000 Receives first BJA grant
- 2001 Closes Dismas House
- 2005 Launches CEI Works as an alternative staffing program
- 2008 Launches Stephen's Table as a volunteer outreach to prisoners
- 2011 Ends services except for Stephen's Table
- 2016 Reconfigures board to relaunch work readiness and staffing programs



## Organization Information

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Chattanooga Endeavors is a charitable organization recognized under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. To the extent allowable by law, donations are tax-deductible and will help us to continue our work to provide second chances to former offenders and their families.

For more information, contact Tim Dempsey at [tdempsey@chattanoogaendeavors.org](mailto:tdempsey@chattanoogaendeavors.org) or (423) 902-6695

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