In August, 2010, the Inasmuch Foundation and the United Way of Central Oklahoma convened a “small group of thoughtful, committed citizens” called the Oklahoma County Collaborative from over 25 nonprofits, community funders, and government agencies, to address the rate at which we incarcerate women in Oklahoma. A year later, ReMerge had been created and in September of 2011, ReMerge accepted its first participant into the program.

Those first months of planning set the stage for the future of ReMerge. This group recognized the importance of working with mothers of minor children to break the cycle of intergenerational incarceration and poverty. They also recognized the barriers these women faced when raising children alone and developed a program to remove those barriers.

Many of those original agencies have worked alongside us for the past five years to provide services to these women, including: safe and sober affordable housing; low cost health and dental services; education and employment opportunities; evidence based models of trauma informed treatment for mental health and addiction; transportation; legal aid services; probation and parole supervision; as well as parenting, education and support. We remain collaborative by utilizing our community resources to create opportunities for success for our ReMerge mothers and their families.

Our future is bright because of our history. ReMerge is proof that providing a high quality, individualized, and collaborative alternative to incarceration works. Our work together has strengthened our families, our communities, and brought much attention to the need for continued criminal justice reform in our state. As we celebrate our 5th birthday, I want to express gratitude to the members of the Oklahoma County Collaborative. Your work has “changed the world” for these mothers and their children!

With sincere gratitude,
Terri Woodland
ReMerge Executive Director

P.S. To learn more, visit ReMergeOK.org
P.S.S. To provide a second chance for mothers, give at ReMergeOK.org/donate

Meet One of Our Mothers

At 34 Shenita was an addict. She lived in a state of chaos, out of control, hopeless. She wasn’t living by her values. She was isolated. She had lost herself.

And then. Arrest. For drug possession. A felony.

Facing prison and losing her children, Shenita got a second chance when she entered ReMerge. Now, for over 12 months, Shenita has been sober. She has been reunited with her daughters, ages 7, 8, and 16. She is in the last phase of the program and set to graduate in January.

ReMerge has taught Shenita structure and how to manage her life. As she says, “This program gave me a sense of purpose again. I feel that I can share my experience with the other women in this program and give back what was given to me.”

She has built a positive support system through resources in the community such as church and 12 step groups. She credits ReMerge for her involvement in these groups and her newfound ability to ask for help.

Today, Shenita attends Rose State College and is employed full-time as a dispatcher/office assistant for Chem-Can Services. The future is bright for Shenita. “I want to graduate with an accounting degree, provide for my children, become involved in my community, and make a difference in the world.”
Thank you to our generous donors!*

*Donations received October 1st, 2015 - September 30, 2016

ReMerge Individuals Supporting Empowerment (RISE) is a group of young professionals dedicated to supporting the mission of ReMerge: living in community awareness, engaging with participants, and fundraising.

Hillary Burkholder & Julia Jernigan, co-chairs

To join RISE, please contact Meagan Gaddis: mgaddis@ReMergeOK.org 405.208.7204

Community Partner Spotlight

United Way of Central Oklahoma leads the effort to address our community’s most significant problems by raising funds to support partner agencies who provide direct services to our most needy individuals and families in our community. United Way hired the first ReMerge staff and has supported our efforts along the way by providing office space, IT and HR support, and by advocating for our mission.

Thanks for lending us your space, support, and most importantly, your belief in the work of ReMerge. Being part of United Way has added credibility and brought much positive attention to our work!

NorthCare is a leading provider of integrated behavioral health services for Oklahomans living with mental illness, trauma, and addiction. ReMerge has been very fortunate to have NorthCare serve as our treatment partner from the very beginning, providing trauma informed services to help our ReMerge participants learn to live a life in recovery, become mothers to their children, and become productive community citizens. Our program was embedded within the NorthCare campus until recently, when NorthCare moved to their new location. NorthCare will continue to serve as our treatment provider, coming on site to provide group and individual counseling for our ReMerge participants.

Thank you NorthCare for providing evidence based, trauma informed treatment to ReMerge participants and for being an amazing partner with ReMerge!

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ReMerge was presented an award for self-sufficiency at the 2016 ONE Awards held by the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits!