

# Code Switch Annual Report 2022-2023



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Code Switch: Restorative Justice for Girls of Color

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# Introduction



Founded in April 2020, during the COVID quarantines and at a time when the nation was forced to grapple with increased racial justice mobilization, Code Switch has grown from a team of 9 to an ever-expanding community whose work has impacted at-promise girls and young women across the Southern Nevada Valley. We comprise a multigenerational mentorship community working to improve the academic outcomes, self-efficacy, civic engagement, emotional awareness, and mental wealth of Black Girls and their non-binary peers. We address the academic and wellness gaps that they experience by providing them with the mentored support they need to feel supported, thrive, and achieve. We also provide them with opportunities to grow and advance as leaders and change-makers within their schools, workspaces, and communities.

We believe that Black girls and non-binary people should be able to thrive in K-12 schools and actualize post-secondary goals and dreams with the same institutional, financial, and socio-emotional support, mentorship, and opportunities as other students. Driven by research indicating that Black girls are 5-7X more likely to be pushed out of school and into poverty and prison pathways due to exclusionary discipline and other systemic barriers, we have committed ourselves to eradicating these barriers. We work to eradicate exclusionary and punitive discipline in K-12 schools and decrease the number of Black girls pushed out due to these policies. We also work to increase the number of Black girls who have access to culturally affirming restorative justice practices and other healing engaged mental health supports while in school. Finally, we work to strengthen the pipeline of Black women leaders providing mentorship to Black girls that their mentorship may help influence and develop an equally viable pipeline of girls and young women poised to create and lead positive social change for future generations.



# A Message from Our Code Switch Leaders



Over the past year, our focus on supporting the academic, socio-emotional, and mental wellbeing of Black Girls and their non-binary peers remained clear. Situating our work in a vision of schools as spaces where Black girls can show up as their whole selves, achieve and thrive, we began by convening our youth leaders for a strategic planning and healing retreat. We listened intently to what they had to say, so we were better prepared to make changes in our programming to address their needs. We heard girls say that they desire a safe space and sense of community. Spaces where they can learn more about themselves, racial justice, and how to combat the challenges they face in K-12 schools. They also want to be supported with mentorship and accountability from people who both look like them and understand their lived experiences. Finally, they want access to the same opportunities made available to their peers with different life circumstances than their own.

Armed with this knowledge, and taking into consideration the present economic realities of the girls and non-binary people we serve, we expanded our Overachievers Education Fund, to provide the financial support needed to access education goals they otherwise might have missed out on. We also launched our Transformative Justice Educator Fellowship to position Black Women Educators as critical mentors equipped with the knowledge and resources needed to stop school pushout and open college, career, and entrepreneurial pathways for our girls instead. We strengthened the curriculum for our Sankofa Sister Circles based on their feedback, and were able to provide mentorship for 36 mentees this year - more than double our impact in previous years. Our leadership and team also evolved to meet the growing needs of the Code Switch community, and we welcomed our first restorative justice interns. Finally, we began our transition to a youth-led, collaborative leadership model, and positioned our board members, all of whom are Black/Women of Color, to help guide the organization's work. Their strategic input and oversight has been absolutely invaluable. Our 2022-2023 program year began on a high note, with us becoming the recipient of the New Schools Venture Fund Racial Equity grant. We also added a Tides Foundation 'Advancing Girls Rights' grant to our portfolio at the beginning of 2023, and we have been hard at work using both of these philanthropic investments to expand our capacity. Our future is bright and we look forward to continuing to serve our ~~community hand in hand with all our committed partners, volunteers, donors, and most important~~ of all - our sisterhood

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# Priority Goals

**Our work is guided by four pillars - critical mentorship, restorative sister circles, youth-led advocacy, and youth participatory action research or YPAR. Each is complexly interrelated. All four helped define and shape the work we engaged to actualize the three Equity and Justice Goals (EJG) informing the targets we prioritized for the 2022-2023 program year.**



## Priority EJG 1

Expand our reach and presence within the community by partnering with local education and nonprofit organizations that share our commitment to racial justice for Black Girls, and whose work aligns with our values.



## Priority EJG 2

Launch an Educator Fellowship and strengthen the Youth Justice Fellowship by increasing direct engagement with local schools and expanding direct mentorship contact with girls in elementary and middle school.



## Priority EJG 3

Create a sustainable operating infrastructure by collaboratively developing and clearly defining our youth-centered board structure and adopting written leadership policies and practices for budgeting, programming, & HR.

# 2022-2023 Highlights

July 2022 - June 2023

*Our work is guided by four pillars - critical mentorship, restorative sister circles, youth-led advocacy, and youth participatory action research or YPAR.*



## **EJG 1 Expand Reach and Presence**

Our community grew over 50% - from 12 mentees to 36 across 3 states and 7 schools, at the elementary, middle, and high school level, including connecting scholars to a diverse network of 15 professional women mentors. We also grew community partnerships to include 13 local organizations and saw our following on Instagram increase, growing from an audience of 600 to 817 followers.

## **EJG 2 Launch Educator Fellowship**

We successfully launched a Fellowship for K-12 Educators, providing 5 school and community based professionals with a stipend, curricular support, and coaching as they learned to facilitate restorative circles in a K-12 school and/or community-based setting. 27 girls negatively impacted by the harmful effects of exclusionary discipline, poverty, and racial discrimination received mentorship through site-based sister circles facilitated by our Educator Fellows.

## **EJG 3 Create Sustainable Operational Infrastructure**

We secured \$165,000 in philanthropic funding from NewSchools and invested in consultants with financial expertise to organize account funds and budgets, clean up books, file required 990 forms, and generate annual financial reports for 2020, 2021, and 2022. We are also leveraging our NewSchools Racial Equity grant to develop a strategic collaboration, impact evaluation, and multi-year fundraising plan. These projects will inform 2023-2024 goals and have an anticipated completion date of June 2024.

# More Program Highlights

In addition to successes highlighted on the previous page, we also celebrated the expansion of programming led by, and/or centering the freedom dreams of our youth/young leaders. Three of those achievements are highlighted below.

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## Highlight 1: Expand OEF Micro Grants

We expanded the number of Overachievers Education Fund micro grants awarded to youth of color in need by 50%, also expanding the community of youth and families engaged with our organization through this program.

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## Highlight 2: Pilot Trip to Ghana

We piloted a Cultural Immersion Sister Circle to help girls learn more about their history and culture, taking 12 Black girls and women to Ghana for a self love, history, & healing home going experience in Summer 2022 and 11 in Summer 2023.

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## Highlight 3: Launch Policy Advocacy

We hired two interns to lead policy advocacy during Nevada's 2023 legislative session. In addition to launching digital campaigns to educate the public about restorative justice in education, they also joined a coalition of organizations to block the repeal of laws requiring the use of RJ in schools. Though unsuccessful in these efforts, interns deepened relationships with local legislators and laid the groundwork for future policy advocacy.





# OUR IMPACT



## Alexis Rose Arellano

Overachiever Mini Grant Fund Recipient

"I'm so grateful to be receiving this award. It's really lifting a weight that's been on my shoulders, and is helping me graduate. I am beyond thankful."

## G'Yanna Perry

Youth Justice Fellowship Mentee

"With my time in Code Switch I've been able to expand my advocacy for black girls and youth who look like me and that has been the greatest reward of all."

**16**

Opportunity  
Education Micro  
Grants awarded,  
totaling \$4,000

**100**

Care bags donated  
to The Shade Tree  
shelter for women  
and girls  
experiencing  
houselessness and  
intimate partner  
violence

**21**

Values Aligned  
Community Orgs.  
partner with us in  
support of advocacy  
for girls rights

**36**

Mentees receive  
academic, socio-  
emotional,  
leadership  
development, and  
mental wellness  
support

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Code Switch is  
a 501 (c)(3)  
Nevada  
nonprofit

EIN: 85-0611214



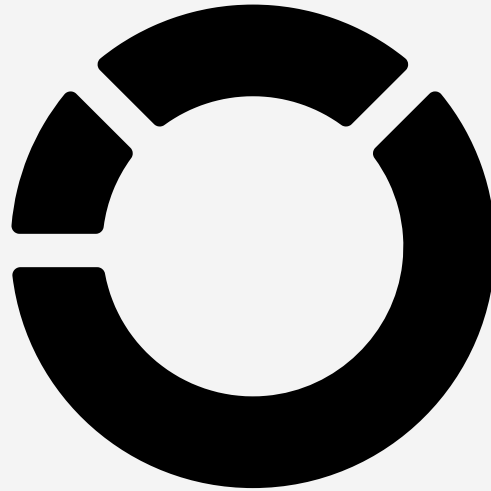
# 91%

of fiscal year  
expenses were  
program  
related

**Revenue:**  
**\$312,471.32**

Program Revenue  
\$42,188.31

Donations  
\$12,283.01

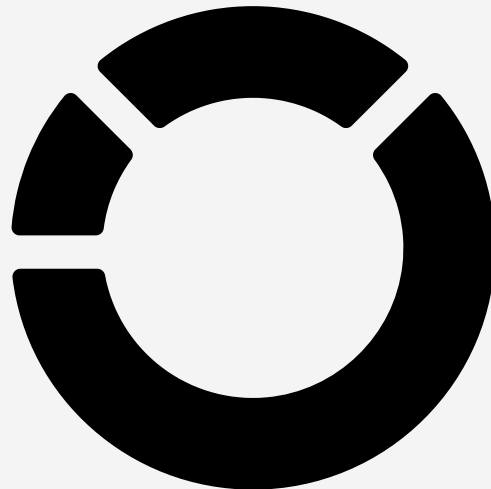


\$258,000.00  
Philanthropic  
Grants

**Expenses:**  
**\$245,787.38**

Management/General  
\$14,218.42

Uncategorized  
\$7,574.52



\$223,994.44  
Programs



# 2023-2024 Priorities

## 1 Grow Our Community

We will grow our community by establishing a membership model, recruiting 50 Black Women in year 1. This will serve as a source of revenue, expand connections community wide, and allow us to expand our reach.

## 2 Expand Partnerships

We will further cultivate partnerships with organizations and schools that share our values. This approach will help us recruit participants, foster valuable relationships for sharing ideas, and facilitate thought collaborations.

## 3 Expand Youth Leadership

We will continue to seek innovative methods to elevate youth voices within the wider community. We will support our youth leaders in diversifying their data collection techniques, broadening the scope of information and sources to accurately reflect the needs of young people.



# Acknowledgements

Without the contributions of the individuals and organizations listed below we couldn't do what we do!



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Royal Bank  
Tides Foundation  
NewSchools Equity Fund  
No Racism in Schools  
UNLV Center for  
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Bette Bowden  
Valerie Taylor  
Pam Cates-Albert  
Gina Quaranto  
Mark Jenkins  
Valerie Anthony  
Cecia Martinez  
James Fricke  
Xan Goodman  
Kath Wilson  
James L. Laudermilk  
Assembly Woman  
Shondra Summers-Armstrong  
Assembly Woman  
Erica Mosca

**We thank you for  
your continued  
support in our  
efforts to advance  
girl's rights.**

## Contact Us

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