

## [ Rebranding: RISE ]

### **In a Sentence |**

A collaborative branding project for RISE, which is a high impact initiative to end poverty in the High Country of North Carolina by building relationships, resources and awareness in the community.

### **In A Paragraph |**

RISE (Relationships Intended for Self-Sufficiency and Empowerment) equips people who are struggling financially with access to the opportunities, education, and relationships they need to become self-sufficient. One out of every four people in Watauga County are experiencing poverty, this organization is providing weekly training sessions for people wishing to better their situations, they then are partnered with mentors from the community who point them to contacts and resources that can help them build the future they want for themselves and their families. We plan to design them a brand and materials that reflects what they are reaching for.

### **Context |**

#### **Research :**

CirclesUSA is a national program designed to help people reach self-sufficiency and for the first part of their journey, Circles of the High Country was licensed under them and gained knowledge, training and support from the established program. However, as the local chapter dug its roots deeper in the High Country, with regular classes in Watauga County and teaching students at Crossnore School and Blue Ridge Academy in Avery County, they have allowed the program to grow and transform according to local need and culture. In order to better accommodate this growth, the program has chosen to re-brand and become an independent local entity, called RISE. They've been established a little over three years.

RISE training brings together about a dozen individuals or families- called RISE Leaders- who are motivated to improve their lives. Collectively they have had as many as 25 participants cycle through. Presently they have 12 people involved with four leaders and allies. They attend 12-16 weekly training sessions, where they learn what it takes to get ahead, set goals, and develop plans for achieving those goals. After that, they are matched with volunteers-called Mentors- who offer friendship and understanding, and who point them to contacts and resources that can help them build the future they want for themselves and their families. Ongoing meetings provide support and in-depth information on topics RISE Leaders identify as important to them, such as financial planning, job training, interview skills, how to find safe and affordable housing, and access to realistic health care options. They are trying to get a class together 2-3 times a year with 12-15 people for the course

**Cont. Research :**

titled *Getting Ahead in a Just Getting By World*. *Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin' By World* is a book and a 45-hour workshop that helps individuals in poverty build their resources for a more prosperous life for themselves, their families, and their communities.

They sum up the goal of the project and what they want the participants to gain in this paragraph: "Economic success for RISE participants is not the only essential outcome of our work. We want to change perceptions at the community level, reduce barriers encountered by people trying to move out of poverty, create new relationships across racial and economic barriers and create new policy at the local, state and national levels that demonstrably enhances opportunities for citizens to become self-sufficient."

Most local businesses in the high country like FARM cafe, Hospitality House, Hunger and Health Coalition, etc. all work together to combat the issue of poverty making the idea of competitors slim to none. The main recruitment is done through Hospitality House and from speaking to non-profits in the community. They need to recruit more for the upcoming January course.

Here is a detailed account of one of their meetings we participated in:

It starts out with a free meal that's donated from local restaurants that they share together and they talk about the "good and the new" of their weeks, not to focus on the bad things going on in life right now. From there one of the mentors teach a life skill, which that week specifically was how to change a tire. We not only looked at car manuals but also went out to a car to practice it. Afterwards we came back inside to do a meditation session, something they had learned the week before at a separate location. Following the meditation we discussed how it could benefit us in our day-to-day lives. We also then went over how to be an active listener and the benefits of paraphrasing. In this experience we talked about individual encountered that could benefit from this technique. At then end, we talked about who we appreciated and why at the meeting. This experience helped us better understand the organization and their vision.

**Audience :**

There are three separate target audiences: participants, donors, and volunteers. The clients are people that want to make an active difference in their community and that are experiencing poverty. This age range is specific to 19-50 year olds. They target individuals as well as families.

**Tone |**

The tone will be empowering and inspirational to create a hopeful outlook on how participants can and will change the course of their lives.

## **Deliverables |**

Because RISE is no longer part of the national organization and are in need of rebranding. Currently their logo is the same logo as before with slight modifications to the text. They would like to have a new identity so as not to confuse future and current participants. They realize their name is a mouthful and are willing to be recognized by the acronym of RISE because it embodies their mission and core values of rising out of poverty. Upon our meeting with Susan Jones, the program coordinator, she gave us a clearer vision for what she would like the logo to embody. The current colors of the logo do not support her vision and she believes they are too muted and dark, they would like to be more uplifting and light to go along with their name. The company wants to incorporate the use of hands to communicate the message of working together and supporting one another, we plan on working with them to make sure the logo embodies their ideas.

In addition to these improvements, the organization also needs help creating a new website to showcase their services. The website is a necessity because they depend on donors from the local business community to provide education, training, and monetary support. We plan to make the website into three separate portals; one for donors and one for community members wanting to participate and one for volunteers. Within the website there will be a schedule outlining meeting times as well as facilitating the meals being donated. There will also be a spot on the website for people to sign up to volunteer. Between the three portals there will be different language as to communicate to the different audiences.

They are also in need of marketing and promotional materials to give prospective participants at fundraising events, we would produce pamphlets and other materials as needed.

## **Next Steps | Spring Semester |**

- Monthly meetings with Susan / Marti & Todd
- Attend weekly sessions
- Mood board & mindmap logo design and symbolism
- Typography, color theory
- Promotional materials
- Mockup Website

## **References |**

<http://www.circlesusa.org/>  
<http://www.hosphouse.org/>