

## Rosa Bryant's Story

I am a native of Raleigh N.C. My parents moved to Baltimore Maryland when I was eleven years old, and there is where I graduated from high school.

As a high school student I started hanging with the wrong crowd and indulging in alcohol and drugs. As a young adulthood I moved back to Raleigh and continued to affiliate with negative people. Later I began using hard drugs which brought about criminal behavior and that landed me in jail more times than I care to count. Prisons and jails became my second home. I became a revolving door to prison, with no direction. I lost focus on what was important in life (me, living, morals, values, etc...). My unhealthy choices were high prices to pay.

Each time I found myself in prison I would get involved in programs to keep busy but still not realizing that I had to change my way of thinking and that was something I did not know how to do. I was hardhearted and too stubborn to ask for help. But one day as I lay on my bunk and looked at my surroundings I realized I was tired of this life style and I wanted to change. I wanted a chance at life and a relationship with my children and family. As I cried I got on my knees and cried out to God with all the sincerity I had in me. He heard my cry and answered my prayers. I began asking for help and the staff of the facility encouraged and enrolled me in classes and drug programs.



Today I am a college graduate of Shaw University (Cape Program) with an Associates degree in Business Management and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology. I have certifications in Character Education, Upholstering Furniture, Safe Serv (food service), DART 24 and DART 48 (drug programs). I also got involved in writing classes, the Write On Time (writer's group) and CHAINS (creating hope and inventing new stories), taking the message of my incarcerations and how my life was turned around to different churches and schools. I have written several plays, skits, and screenplays. My first play was performed during my incarceration and many dignitaries came to see the play.

When it was time to be released I had so many fears even though I had a support system, I was afraid of failure. The morning of my release at 4:30am I got on my knees and told God I was safe here (prison) and too afraid to face society. I heard His voice loud and clear "Continue to trust Me" and there is where my new beginning started with coming home.

I am now the founder and CEO of a non-profit organization named RAGS (Reaching Artistic Goals Successfully). The name RAGS was given to me a very long time ago but of course the time was now to bring it to full circle. RAGS mission is to deter youth from deviant behavior through the mediums of performing arts.

My past life is now a testimony and a message to carry to the young people that they do not have to make the same choices and mistakes I made. I have put together programs for the youth to encourage, uplift and direct them in a positive and safe environment. I have been blessed with some great people that stand beside me in my visions and work.

### **R.A.G.S. Productions (Reaching Artistic Goals Successfully)**

RAGS mission is to deter youth from deviant behavior through mediums of performing arts. To read more about the Founder, Rosa Bryant, and her story, click [here](#) for a pdf file. To read the RAGS Productions pamphlet, click [here](#). To read a recent Triangle Tribune article on Rosa and her personal story, click [here](#).

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