

Intergenerational Wellness Retreat with QC Family Tree
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This past spring, the NBA's Mental Health Initiative in partnership with [QC Family Tree](#), one of NBA's Incubate partners, worked together to create an intergenerational wellness retreat that encouraged healthy character and identity formation for all ages.

The inspiration for the retreat was to engage character development and provide an opportunity for attendees to think through what parts of their personal identities are intentionally chosen, cultivated, protected and celebrated. Knowing that identity and character development occur over a life time, it was especially important to acknowledge and take advantage of the variety of participant ages spanning from 8 to 65 years old.

Comprised of 27 participants of diverse spiritual backgrounds and age, each person in the group had a sibling or family relative present, making for an intimate and transparent intergenerational and familial experience. We focused on acknowledging our character strengths, crafting our own narratives about ourselves, learned how to protect our self-concept and engaged the idea of grounding our identities in "things eternal." Through strategy games, yoga, a spaghetti tower challenge, a dodge ball tournament, and a trip to the Asheboro zoo, the group grew to know one another as well as their selves, nature and how to take agency in crafting and communicating who they think they are and want to be, to the world around them.

Message from Co- Founder Helms Jarrell:

"I am very grateful for NBA's support of QC Family Tree's Spring Retreat," Jarrell says. "We could not have gone to the zoo without NBA support. Seeing the animals, playing together, and discussing the characteristics of the animals afterward was a highlight of the retreat."

She continued, "Angela's leadership was outstanding. She brought deep and meaningful insight to the group and was able to convey the importance of protecting your character traits in ways that the youth could understand and relate to. I loved how Angela talked about how our circumstances may change, but our character doesn't have to. We are empowered to choose who we will be and we are empowered to protect our character."

Early on in the weekend, I asked participants to describe themselves using character attributes. At first, it was hard for our young people to do this, but Jarrell had an experience with one person that showcased the growth that happened throughout the retreat. "When the younger participants described themselves, they would use words that described their roles in life or their relationships to others. For example, one young person said, 'I am an athlete.' I asked them to describe their character at the beginning of every session. By the last session, this young person was able to identify 'I am loyal. I am strong.' This was a big shift and a meaningful moment for me, as his leader," said Jarrell.

QC Family Tree, like all of our [incubate partners](#), is a Disciple-related health and social service organization that has entered into a partnership with NBA through a Memoranda of Understanding. Aligned with the mission of NBA, QC Family Tree is an innovative, diverse organization that offers youth leadership development programming, opportunities for affordable housing and genuine community relationship building and cultural development for the local neighbor community in which they reside.

NBA was so glad to have spent some time making meaningful connections and impact with our friends at QC Family Tree.

As the health and social services general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the National Benevolent Association partners with congregations, regions, general ministries, and a variety of Disciples-related health and social service providers to create communities of compassion and care. Founded in 1887 by six women responding to the needs of the day and on their doorsteps, for more than 130 years the NBA has continued to serve "the least of these." Learn more at www.nbacares.org.