



Photo by Maggie Kane

Profile: Rakia Reeves

Rakia Reeves has lived in Peoplestown all her life, with her mother and father having lived in the neighborhood since she was born. She loves Atlanta for the many opportunities to get involved in grassroots collaborations and describes Peoplestown as family oriented, where people and organizations work together to shape and enrich the neighborhood. Rakia went to school and earned a degree that allowed her to return to Peoplestown to work on social, cultural, and academic programs for youth and families. At the Emmaus House, a nonprofit organization that has shaped her personally, she describes her dedication to keep these programs going and delivering the types of services that the kids really need:

I am very dedicated to the quality of support and resources these kids need to be better in life. My organization does a lot of things for the social aspect within my community. We help with ID's, vouchers for food to eliminate the food burden that can often be difficult for families. We also have a parenting class focused on mindfulness, healthy food, emotional and social well-being. We do a community supper and allow anyone from the community to come in and get food on the first Monday of every month.

Rakia has been able to build strong and trusting relationships in Peoplestown and she's committed to staying and becoming a future leader for the community.

Because Rakia understands her community's needs and strengths, she wants the BeltLine to connect people and communities with a transit system that brings about social and retail-type connections that would lead to more jobs and more opportunities for people in the neighborhoods. She recognizes that it is important to keep areas of the neighborhood affordable and avoid pushing out residents, like her elderly parents who live on a fixed income, displacing them from the community they love and worked so hard to build. In addition to defending long-time residents of Peoplestown from displacement, she says that it is vitally important to maintain neighborhood character and values:

This is our neighborhood, we have been here, and we need to make sure it is focused around us and that our views and decisions are being interpreted into whatever decisions are being made about our community. So it is very important to me that our values and ways are not being shut out by someone else's and how they think things should be.