

TOGETHER
WE ARE BETTER

SERVE
—  —
CONNECT

Igniting Positive Change Through Police+Community Partnerships

serveandconnect.net

OUR STORY. OUR MOVEMENT.

How do we effectively tell the story that tragedy can sometimes lead to empathy? How broken people and neighborhoods can become whole again once they grow in trust?

How do we make it known—in every possible way—that communities willing to embrace collaboration, communication, and compassion can dramatically improve the outcomes of the people who live there?

How can we help write stories of unity and hope?

TOGETHER.
There Is Hope.

*It's not you and me
or us and them. It's
all of us... working
together to build
safer, happier, more
resilient communities
where everyone
thrives.*

Kassy Alia Ray
Serve & Connect Founder and CEO

WALKING IN SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOES.

Serve & Connect was born from tragedy. Its founder, Kassy Alia Ray, established the organization following the death of her husband, Officer Greg Alia, who was shot in the line of duty in 2015.

Kassy and Greg's son, Sal, was just six months old.

The timing of this misfortune was nearly as devastating as the tragedy itself. When Greg was killed, the nation was in crisis. You couldn't turn on the news without seeing another officer-involved shooting or an officer being shot. Social media fueled the growing divide and trust began to crumble in neighborhoods and communities nationwide.

Despite overwhelming grief, Kassy chose empathy over hate. When she was called to face her husband's killer in the courtroom, she put herself in his mother's shoes. All of the hopes and dreams Kassy still had for Sal were likely the same hopes and dreams the mother of her husband's killer had once had for him.

Thus, in the midst of heartbreak, Kassy chose an uncommon path with an unexpected message.

Since then, **Serve & Connect** has been dedicated to strengthening communities by bridging the divide between police officers and the citizens they serve.



Serve & Connect is on a mission to ignite positive change.



FINDING COMMON GROUND.

Human nature creates common ground.

Regardless of background or zip code, it's human nature to want our families and communities to be safe. It's human nature for parents to want their children to thrive. And, it's human nature to seek security, love, and connection with others. However, polarization across our country threatens our ability to achieve these shared goals.

Motivated by a passion to create positive synergy in divided communities, **Serve & Connect** uses common ground to shift mindsets and eliminate misconceptions.

Our research-informed programs are designed to develop a new generation of leaders and to help communities adopt realistic goals for effective collaboration. Once implemented, these shifts can drive additional improvements in community safety, economic development, and general well-being.



Serve & Connect uses common ground to stimulate transformation.





BUILDING BETTER NEIGHBORHOODS.

For decades, television and movies have given us picture-perfect neighborhoods with tree-lined streets, well-kept homes and vibrant parks. In reality, these neighborhoods don't exist for everyone. What does exist are communities plagued with high rates of poverty and crime where homes and schools are in disrepair and children are too scared to play outside. Even when resources are directed toward helping to improve these areas, distrust and disconnection often prevail.

A recent survey of 8,000 police officers by the Pew Research Center indicates 8 in 10 officers believe the general public doesn't understand the risks and challenges of their jobs. At the same time, related research exposes the lingering effects of trauma experienced by people in communities of color following highly publicized police shootings. This divisiveness threatens the safety and well-being of everyone.

How can we turn things around? How can we build better neighborhoods?



Serve & Connect improves community safety by uniting diverse viewpoints and skill sets.

DEVELOPING STRONGER CONNECTIONS.

Small acts of kindness go a long way toward building trust in broken communities and planting seeds of hope for future transformation.

Serve & Connect's formula for change, deployed through a growing collection of outreach programs, establishes powerful connections among community members, leaders, organizations and police in hopes of empowering them to develop a shared voice, vision, and action plan.

"This thing really is an empowerment movement," said Dean Slade, a community partner working with **Serve & Connect's** neighborhood initiatives. "It's not about us. It's about empowering people to use the resources available, and in return, become assets in their own communities."



Serve & Connect establishes meaningful connections that lead to change.



HOW YOU CAN HELP.

To infuse positive change in more communities, we need more help, which is why we're launching **Together. We are Better.**, a two-year fundraising campaign with an \$850,000 goal designed to increase our impact through the delivery of quality programs and services.

Our goals include:

- Serve 30,000 people
- Serve 7,500 families
- Provide 10,000 boxes of Greg's Groceries
- Impact 23 S.C. counties
- Add 6-8 COMPASS Communities

Serve & Connect is a 501c3 organization. All gifts are tax-deductible. We accept cash, check, credit card and stock.

Gifts can be made online at serveandconnect.net by calling **803-760-7617** or by mailing a check to **PO Box 6840, Columbia SC 29260.**

"When police are able to truly understand the needs of the community, we are better equipped to serve the community."

Lt. Robert Calby
Columbia Police Department



Serve & Connect needs your support.

HOW YOU CAN IGNITE CHANGE.

Serve & Connect ignites positive change through a customized process with five distinct practices.

OFFICERS SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES



Police are the front-line to communities in need. Our Compassionate Acts initiatives provide officers with valuable resources. Our programs include, but are not limited to:

Greg's Groceries – Equipping police officers with non-perishable food items to share with people in need.

Warm for Winter – Equipping police officers with winter coats, hats and gloves to share with people in need.

COMMUNITIES SUPPORTING OFFICERS



Loyal support of law enforcement and the valiant work police officers perform daily is one way we can lead by example. Our efforts include, but are not limited to:

Tragedy Response – Raising money to assist families of fallen officers.

Feed an Officer – Providing meals to active duty police officers.

Knight of Honor – Our annual celebration recognizing excellence in community service.

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS



To increase social capital in under-resourced neighborhoods, we partner with local organizations to host family friendly events annually, such as our signature gatherings **Daddy & Me**, **Bountiful Harvest**, and **Farmday Funday**. Tailored to meet the unique characteristics of every community, each event reaches an average of 500 people.

NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSFORMATION



COMPASS is a comprehensive, evidence-informed approach to promoting community safety, resilience, and well-being. By implementing our four-phased strategic formula, **COMPASS** enhances community strengths and improves outcomes for all... one neighborhood at a time.

SPREADING CHANGE



Serve & Connect uses local impact to drive national change. Through vocal leadership and evidence-based strategies, we're building a movement that reinforces **Together. We are Better.**

Your support is essential to our movement. Your donation will make programs, services, operations, and aspirations possible.

Join the Change



CREATING BETTER TOMORROWS. TOGETHER.

What would it feel like if we all stood together?

Serve & Connect is committed to creating better tomorrows by helping communities build trust, optimize collaboration, and foster a shared sense of pride. Our programs train emerging leaders to become role models and equip them with the skills and tools necessary for improving communication and establishing positive interaction among neighbors. It's not easy work, but it's important work.

Here's how we can spread change together:

- Lean in to what's uncomfortable.
- Start a conversation and seek to understand.
- Listen more; trust more.
- Share the power.
- Remain hopeful.

The work we're doing is work of the heart.

Join the Change

TOGETHER
WE ARE BETTER

OUR FOUNDER & CEO.

Under the leadership of Kassy Alia Ray, **Serve & Connect** has grown from a hashtag to a national movement for change.

Kassy has received significant recognition and numerous awards for her efforts and has been a featured speaker at local, regional and national events. She's been interviewed on *The Today Show* and has a TEDx Talk, "Let Love Lead."

She earned her Master's in Clinical-Community Psychology from the University of South Carolina and is working to complete her doctorate. She is the proud mom of Sal and recently married Mitch Ray.

"When we work against one another, everybody loses. When we work together, over common ground, we make neighborhoods safer places to live, work, and thrive."

Kassy Alia Ray
Serve & Connect Founder and CEO





Join the Change.

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