

INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS: TRUE GRIT- RESILIENCE IN FOOD BANKING



Left: Food Bank of Northeast Georgia Member Conference attendees. **Right:** Resilient Northeast Georgia Program Manager Meredith Lysaught delivering the CRM training.



In October 2023, the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia hosted its annual member conference in Jefferson, GA. The conference brought together representatives from the food bank's 211 distribution agencies, garnering a presence that spanned across all 14 counties served. At the conference, attendees had the opportunity to attend break-out sessions to learn more about food banking, distribution policies, and their role as a distribution agency.

This year's conference featured two introductory sessions of the Community Resiliency Model (CRM), focusing on the importance of trauma-informed care practices in personal and professional settings. Delivered by the Athens Area Community Foundation's program manager Meredith Lysaught, the sessions sought to teach attendees more about nervous system regulation, imbuing them with resiliency and self-care skills that could be applied in food banking situations. The members left the session with an improved awareness of trauma, access to tangible skills for everyday life, and connections to the Resilient Northeast Georgia coalition's network of resources and partners active in trauma-informed care.

Overall, the session reached a more diverse slate of attendees than previous CRM trainings. Attendees represented a range of rural communities and sectors that the Resilient Northeast Georgia coalition has struggled to reach in the past, opening the door for future collaborations and a stronger partnership with the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia.