

**ART FOR
JUSTICE
FUND**

Art for Justice Fund Directory

2017-23 Individual & Organizational Grantee
Partners, Board of Directors and Staff



Artists Jesse Krimes, Russell Craig, Mary Baxter, Jared Owens and Marcus Manganni at Craig's first solo show at Malin Gallery. Photo by Xavier Hadley.

Dear Community Members,

The intention of this Directory is to provide a tool by which Art for Justice Fund grantee partners can learn about one another's extraordinary art, advocacy and direct service efforts to disrupt mass incarceration and undertake ongoing collaboration. We are also circulating the Directory to the Fund's donors and potential supporters in hopes of galvanizing more resources for this important work.

We know this Directory can only capture a static moment in time, and consequently, will not remain up to date in terms of contact information. Despite best efforts in asking grantee partners to write/review text for their respective pages, we did not receive feedback from everyone. Please accept our apologies for any inaccuracies or omissions in these descriptions.

Special thanks to Michael Winikoff for his hard work in designing this tome; to Jeff Hoover for his careful editing; and to Maya Trinka for being the organizational / creative heart of this project.

Most of all, we hope this Directory captures the unique and powerful alchemy of artists, advocates and organizations who've joined together to secure shared safety for all. It is their leadership, creativity and passion that offers hope of a more just future.

With profound gratitude,

Art for Justice Fund Team



A long-standing member of the Incarcerated Children's Advocacy Network, Jose Burgos now leads Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth's efforts to end juvenile life without parole sentences in Michigan. Photo by Jane Kratochvil.

Individuals



Healer Emani Davis and writer Marlon Peterson at the Fund's final convening in Phoenix, Arizona. Photo by Maurice Sartirana.

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Billy Almon

Astrobiofuturist, storyteller, inventor

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Billy Almon (he/him) describes himself as an “astrobiofuturist,” which he defines as a person who explores solutions to improve human experiences on Earth and in space. His aim is to help the next generation of inventors, designers, scientists, and engineers design the future they wish to see.

Almon’s training began in architecture at Howard University but deepened into biomimicry at Arizona State University. He went on to apply his training in biomimicry in the corporate sector, but then began using his skills and interests to address issues of social justice. For example, at a conference organized by the Nature Lab at the Rhode Island School of Design, Almon presented his studies of different animals’ reactions to perceived threats and discussed how these solutions could be applied to human biology in order to reduce violence against communities of color, specifically within the context of police shootings.



Billy Almon sharing his work.

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Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter

Visual artist, filmmaker, musician

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Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter (she/her), also known as ‘Isis Tha Saviour’, is an award-winning artist, originally from Philadelphia, who creates socially conscious music, film, and visual art through an autobiographical lens. Baxter’s incarceration has shaped the direction of her art and practice since her release more than a decade ago. She was arrested during the ninth month of her pregnancy. Given no water or food, the extreme stress she experienced included being shackled to a hospital bed for 43 hours before giving birth.

Baxter’s powerful work offers a critical perspective on the particular challenges women of color face in the criminal legal system. Her art has been exhibited at venues including MoMA PS1, the African American Museum in Philadelphia, Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, Ben & Jerry’s Factory in Waterbury, VT, and Studio 525 (as part of HBO’s *The OG Experience*) in New York City. Baxter is a Right of Return Fellow, a resident of Silver Art Projects, and a winner of a Soros Justice Fellowship.

In 2021, Baxter received the Frieze Impact Prize for her work *Ain’t I a Woman*, a multi-media installation chronicling her life before, during and after incarceration. Per Baxter, the piece prompts the viewer to ‘reexamine present day laws, policies and procedures that compound the intersections of motherhood, reproductive justice, crime and punishment. It gives a personal face to the cruel and unusual punishment pregnant women undergo while incarcerated, utilizing solution-based storytelling and policy reform to articulate a shared vision for abolition.’



Video still from Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter’s *Ain’t I a Woman*



Michelle Browder

Artist, activist, non-profit leader

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Michelle Browder (she/her) is an artist, activist, and non-profit leader. Her *Mothers of Gynecology* monument in Montgomery, AL reclaims the history of the enslaved Black women who underwent non-anesthetized medical experimentation by Dr. James Sims in the late 1840s in Montgomery. The monument portrays the only three women whose names were recorded in Sims' experiments: Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsey. The identities of other enslaved women who suffered under Sims are unknown.

Through art, Browder has found her voice and a new way of fighting systemic racism, including demanding unflinchingly accurate history. In addition to being an artist, Browder started More Than Tours, a business providing educational tours for underserved students in communities of color. One of its main objectives is to help young people discover their voices and identities through history and art. In 2020, Browder launched the More Up Campus program, We Create Change Alabama (WCCA), an initiative that provides art therapy for formally incarcerated persons and families suffering trauma from gun-related violence.



Michelle Browder's *Mothers of Gynecology*

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Mahogany L. Browne

Writer, organizer, educator, non-profit leader

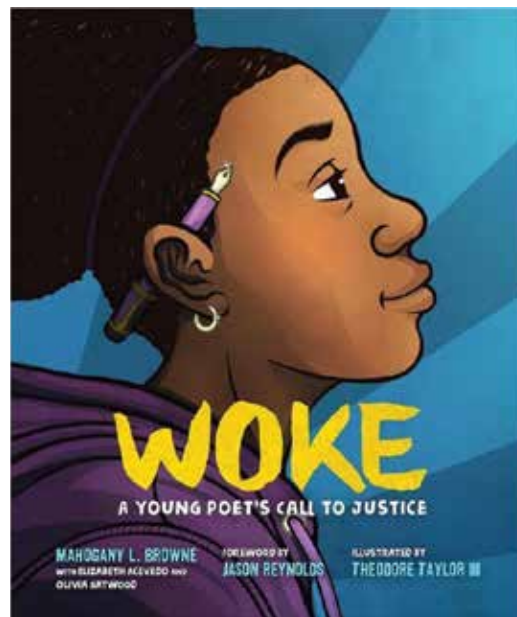
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Mahogany L. Browne (she/her) is executive director of JustMedia, a media literacy initiative designed to support and amplify the work and voices of criminal justice leaders and community members. Her approach is informed by her background as a writer, organizer, and educator. She is the author of several books, including *Chlorine Sky*, *Woke: A Young Poet's Call to Justice*, *Woke Baby*, and *Black Girl Magic*. Another published book, *I Remember Death By Its Proximity to What I Love*, is a long form poem responding to the impact of mass incarceration on women and children. Based in Brooklyn, she is the first-ever poet-in-residence at Lincoln Center and the founder of the diverse lit initiative *Woke Baby Book Fair*.

Browne is a recipient of the Fund's Bearing Witness Fellowship, to enable talented writers to complete projects that speak to the human cost of mass incarceration. Through an Activating Art and Advocacy grant, Browne also received support from A4J to explore the intersection of mass incarceration and voting rights through interviews with community organizers fighting voter suppression and individuals directly affected by disenfranchisement, including people whose rights were supposed to be restored as a result of Florida's Voter Rights Restoration Act of 2018.



Cover of Mahogany L. Browne's *Woke: A Young Poet's Call to Justice*

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Francisco Cantú

Author

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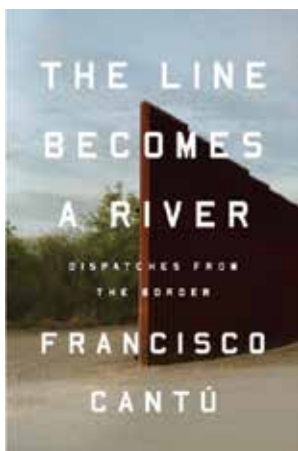
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Francisco Cantú (he/him) is a writer and translator whose works include *The Line Becomes a River*, a memoir detailing his time working as a U.S. Border Patrol agent from 2008–2012. His book is a haunting account of the normalized brutality that takes place inside many law enforcement organizations. It is also a highly personal one, as he considers what it means to have participated in dehumanizing enforcement practices while charting a personal course toward the rejection and repair of violence.

Since leaving the Border Patrol, Cantú's writing and translations have been featured in *The New Yorker*, *Best American Essays*, *Harper's*, and *Granta*, as well as on the radio program *This American Life*. A lifelong resident of the Southwest, he now lives in Tucson, AZ, where he coordinates the Southwest Field Studies in Writing program at the University of Arizona, a residency that fosters work at the intersection of border justice and environmental issues. Since 2018, he has volunteered with migrant advocacy groups to support migrants incarcerated in for-profit detention facilities through visitation, correspondence, and accompaniment programs. In 2021, Cantú helped launch the DETAINED project at the University of Arizona, a community archive that collects oral histories of formerly detained migrants.



Cover of Francisco Cantú's
The Line Becomes a River

Tameca Cole

Artist

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Tameca Cole (she/her) is a lifelong resident of Birmingham, AL. She entered the prison system at a young age but always with a hopeful attitude that a better future lay ahead. During her incarceration, she spent significant time in trade school to bolster her reading and job readiness skills. She attended creative writing classes sponsored by Auburn University, which inspired her to become an artist.

Reconnecting with her creative side changed the course of her life. Cole believes that art and writing have allowed her to address her personal demons in a way that does not cause harm to others while providing an outlet to express what she refers to as “the cruelty of [my] incarceration, injustice, and experiences with racism.”

Cole’s work serves as an educational tool, personal weapon, and catalyst for change. She was one of the artists featured in *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Incarceration*, an exhibition that debuted at MoMA PS1 in September 2020 before touring the country.



Tameca Cole's *Dark Chaos/The Aftermath*



Courtney Cone

Multidisciplinary artist

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Courtney Cone (she/her) is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice delves into and confronts trauma through dark and irreverent humor. Utilizing a variety of media – painting, sculpture, ceramics, video, and performance – her current work explores the visceral ramifications of inhabiting a female ‘body’ in the prison system. Cone was born, raised, and incarcerated in Texas. About her experience, she says, “Incarceration severed my autonomy. I became property of the state – an object. While serving time, I relied heavily on humor to keep my sanity. I also discovered artmaking as a way to communicate with the outside world. Drawing enabled me to share what I experienced and offered an escape from the grim reality of prison.”

Cone graduated with a bachelor of fine arts (BFA) degree in painting from Texas State University and received her master of fine arts (MFA) degree in art from California Institute of the Arts. She has taught studio art courses at Austin Community College and is a current faculty member at Texas State University.

Cone received support from the Fund to produce a new body of work that initiates coalition building among women, LGBTQ+ and non-binary people (both free and incarcerated) in two Texas metropolitan areas, Austin and San Antonio. The project, ‘Our Bodies’, is centered around community forums and workshops with advocacy groups and justice organizations. A primary aim is to raise awareness among allies in the “free world” about the threats to bodily autonomy that people inside face (especially trans women and non-binary persons) by highlighting their experiences and voices. The goal, according to Cone, is to increase empathy and public interest in what she sees as a large-scale deterioration of human rights in our society.



Courtney Cone's *Gutbucket*



Monica Cosby

Artist, poet, writer

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Monica Cosby (she/her) is a mother, feminist, poet, performing artist, and activist. She is from the Uptown neighborhood of Chicago and comes from a long and rich tradition of activism. Cosby's life and work have been shaped and informed by the communities she has belonged to, including the community of artists, scholars, and mothers with whom she was incarcerated for 20 years and whose survival was and is an act of resistance against a system that would dispose of them. Since coming home, Crosby has collaborated on several art installations and exhibitions, and designed curricula used in classes and groups in prisons and on university campuses.

Support from the Fund is being used by Cosby for her ongoing performance art project, *Acting OutSide*, which connects currently and formerly incarcerated women with outlets in the performing arts. This is all part of Crosby's goal of creating a network for justice system impacted women and femmes, both inside and outside, to share their creative work.

A4J's support is intended to help to finance *Acting OutSide*'s production of *On Condensation and Expansion*, by covering expenses such as rehearsal and performance space, technical equipment, and wages for participants. This production is a continuation of Cosby's theater work that began in prison. To prepare participants, Cosby is organizing a series of creative workshops to inform the production. By using performance art and storytelling, this performance art piece aims to address the misleading and harmful labeling of people as "violent".



Theater poster for *bruised but not broken*, from Monica Cosby's *Acting OutSide* project

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Russell Craig

Artist

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Russell Craig (he/him) is a multi-media artist from Philadelphia, now living in NYC. He is the co-founder of the Center for Art and Advocacy, the first national fellowship dedicated to supporting formerly incarcerated artists. A self-taught artist who survived nearly a decade of incarceration after growing up in the foster care system, Craig creates art as a means to explore the experience of over-criminalized communities and to reassert agency after a lifetime of institutional control. He is an alumnus of Mural Arts of Philadelphia's Restorative Justice Guild.

With support from the Fund, Craig released *Dark Reflections*, a series of portraits of people most impacted by the criminal legal system and its consequences. The subjects for these portraits were presented as they appeared in national headlines or trending on social media platforms, to highlight the urgency in addressing criminal justice failures. The portraits were featured in his first solo exhibition in 2022 at Malin Gallery in New York City, also titled *Dark Reflections*.

Craig is also a recipient of two A4J Activating Art and Advocacy grants. In one, he joined with grantee partner Mural Arts Philadelphia to expand his mural *Crown* onto the east and west sides of the Municipal Services Building as part of Philadelphia's reconciliation and police reform process. *Crown* was inspired by the ongoing national movement for racial justice and is a daily reminder for public servants and elected officials of the human impact of their decisions. He also collaborated with Mahogany L. Browne on a book of art and poetry called *Wash the Dead*.



Russell Craig's *Mockery*



sheri crider

Visual artist

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sheri crider (she/her) grew up in the suburbs of Phoenix, AZ. From a young age, she experienced a dizzying cycle of addiction, homelessness, and incarceration. crider’s journey to becoming an artist took a few detours, but ultimately she received a scholarship to the University of Arizona, graduating with a bachelor of fine arts (BFA) degree in ceramics and queer theory. She then received a master of fine arts (MFA) degree in sculpture from the University of New Mexico.

In her words, the fictional spaces, objects, and images crider creates “reimagine the best and worst of ourselves.” Her work encompasses interactive sculpture and painting that engage nontraditional audiences in galleries, prison cells, classrooms, and courtrooms. crider has had solo exhibitions at the University of New Mexico Art Museum, the University of Arizona Museum of Art, and the Gib Singleton Museum of Fine Art in Santa Fe, NM. She was prominently featured in the group exhibition *Other TARGET/s* and has received support from Right of Return USA and the Andy Warhol Foundation.

crider received A4J support for several projects, including creating gouache and enamel works on paper linking colonialism and racial capitalism to mass incarceration; developing the sculptural framework for a traveling abolitionist library; and curating statewide programs that trace the intersections of immigrants, women, queer people, and the criminal legal system.



sheri crider's *Arizona, the Grand Carceral State*

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Emani Davis

Repair and healing therapy practice

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Emani Davis (she/her) is the founder of The Omowale Project, which was designed to support Black and brown justice leaders with sustainable personal and community care. Rooted in the Black Panthers' core commitment to "serving the people in body and soul," Omowale affirms this approach and effort by offering effective and nourishing personal and professional practices that enable movement leaders to self-repair, avoid burnout and address internalized (often racialized) trauma. By serving the people who serve the people, The Omowale Project offers them genuine opportunities to alleviate suffering and build capacity for themselves, their organizations and their communities.

Davis is the child of an incarcerated parent and has been directly impacted by the carceral system. Her father, Jomo Omowale, spent over three decades in prison; he was Minister of the Defense for the Black Panther Party and an Attica Brother. Davis' work is guided by her father's legacy and grounded in her training and experience as a death doula, healing practitioner and health educator. She relies on traditional and modern healing techniques, incorporating deep rest, somatics and Ayurvedic methodologies. The support offered through Omowale helps people with incarceration histories or those leading racial justice work to both understand and mitigate the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual consequences of being enmeshed in these oppressive systems.

Davis received support from the Fund to continue to build The Omowale Project through the creation of a fully resourced Forward Center (the name signaling that we are not in retreat) in California. This center is intended to serve as reparative, generative space for Black and brown individuals and organizations, offering communal and individual care.





Nicholas Dawidoff

Author

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Nicholas Dawidoff (he/him) is the author of six books, including *The Other Side of Prospect: A Story of Violence, Injustice, and the American City*, published in 2022. His first book, *The Catcher Was a Spy: The Mysterious Life of Moe Berg*, was a national bestseller. *In the Country of Country: A Journey to the Roots of American Music* was chosen by *Conde Nast Traveler* as one of the 86 all-time best works of travel literature. His biography of his grandfather, *The Fly Swatter: Portrait of an Exceptional Character*, was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. His memoir, *The Crowd Sounds Happy*, won the Kenneth Johnson Book Award for outstanding literary writing about mental illness. *Collision Low Crossers* was a finalist for a PEN book award for literary sports writing.

Dawidoff has been a Henry Luce Scholar, a Guggenheim Fellow, a Civitella Ranieri Fellow, a Berlin Prize Fellow of the American Academy, and an Anschutz Distinguished Fellow at Princeton University. His articles have appeared in *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times Magazine*. He is a member of the advisory board of the Wesleyan (University) Center for Prison Education and a member of the honorary council of the board of directors of the MacDowell artist residency program. Dawidoff is a recipient of the Fund's Bearing Witness Fellowship, enabling talented writers to complete projects that speak to the human cost of mass incarceration.

THE OTHER SIDE OF PROSPECT



A STORY OF VIOLENCE,
INJUSTICE, AND
THE AMERICAN CITY

NICHOLAS DAWIDOFF

Cover of Nicky Dawidoff's *The Other Side of Prospect*

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Sergio De La Torre

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Sergio De La Torre (he/him) has worked with and documented the manifold ways in which people reinvent themselves in the cities they inhabit, as well as site-specific strategies they deploy to move in and out of modernity. De La Torre's works are typically collaborations with his subjects and invite both intimate and critical reflections on topics related to housing, immigration and labor. Through video documentary, photography, public art, and installations, he tries to approach the lives of these individuals not as "victim-subjects," but instead, through the lens of examining the meaning of their actions in the context of shifting global conditions.

His work has appeared in events and venues including the 10th International Istanbul Biennial, the 57th Venice Biennale, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Atelier Frankfurt, Centro Cultural Tijuana, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the Tribeca Film Festival and the Festival Internacional de Cine de Morelia. De La Torre is an associate professor in the University of San Francisco's Art and Architecture Department.



The Sanctuary City Project, 2020, Vinyl banners, by Sergio De La Torre.

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Jason De León

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Jason De León (he/him) is a professor of anthropology and Chicana, Chicano, and Central American studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He directs the Undocumented Migration Project (UMP), a nonprofit collective that seeks to capture the humanity of the migrant experience, illuminate the loss of life at the United States/Mexico border, assist families looking for their missing loved ones, and highlight the growing migrant detention-industrial complex in both countries. UMP is centered around the belief that objects migrants leave behind are of great historical significance and seeks to translate archeological and anthropological data into public education and art initiatives.

De León is a MacArthur Fellow whose work specializes in border crossings and incarceration. He wrote *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail* and co-produced the documentary film *Border South*. UMP received support from the Fund to develop a participatory art exhibition that bears witness to the humanitarian crisis at the border. Titled *Hostile Terrain 94*, the project memorializes the thousands who have died in attempts to cross the Mexico/US border as a result of failed immigration policies. It includes a 20-foot map of the Arizona/Mexico border made entirely of handwritten toe tags, representing the more than 3,800 lives lost trying to cross the border. *Hostile Terrain 94* converts research and policy into an emotional experience that people can touch, interact with and learn from. The traveling exhibition is expected to be presented in nearly 150 cities globally.



Jason De León's *Hostile Terrain 94*



Dr. Baz Dreisinger

Professor, justice worker, cultural critic, writer, global organizer

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Dr. Baz Dreisinger (she/her), a professor of English at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City, is the founder of John Jay's Prison-to-College Pipeline program, which offers college education and reentry services to incarcerated students in New York State prisons. She is also the founder and executive director of Incarceration Nations Network (INN), a global network of 124 partners in more than four dozen countries that supports, instigates and popularizes innovative prison reform and justice-reimagining efforts around the world.

INN produced the film project *Incarceration Nations: A Global Docuseries*, a 10-episode documentary series about global mass incarceration told entirely by those with lived experience of the justice system worldwide. Dreisinger directed the series, which had its world premiere at the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival and has toured the world led by INN partners. Together with Hank Willis Thomas, Dreisinger and INN have been supported by the Fund to create the traveling exhibition, *The Writing on The Wall*, constructed from over 2,000 pages of writing and art by incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people across the world. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, collaborators adapted the content to be projected onto city buildings and landscapes, including jails and courthouses in Washington, DC, Mexico City, La Paz, Bolivia, and Santiago, Chile. *The Writing on the Wall* was displayed on NYC's The High Line, a prominent public park. The exhibition's scope has since expanded to include a global microfinance project for people coming home from prison, to help them establish and sustain small businesses.



The Writing on the Wall, co-created by Dr. Baz Dreisinger



Haley Greenfeather English

Visual artist

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Haley Greenfeather English (she/her) is an artist, educator, and desert Ojibwe born and raised in Albuquerque, NM. She holds a bachelor of fine arts (BFA) degree from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, NM. Greenfeather English uses whimsical graphics and brash vibrant colors to explore the oddity, humor, and contradictory aspects of humanity. Her work draws from observation, personal narrative and recycled memories to break down imposed notions of reality based on Western cultural biases.

Alongside her art practice, Greenfeather English has been an arts and education teacher for 13 years – largely with youth who are imprisoned, homeless, and historically underserved. She has taught photography, painting, ceramics, and filmmaking, among other disciplines. In the same way she observed her father using the tools of restorative justice, respect, and accountability, she now does the same – especially through deep listening and exchanging stories with her students.

Greenfeather English received support from A4J to finance and be an instructor in a series of mural making workshops that offer paid stipends for collaborating young adults. In addition, she plans to partner with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) to document, through artwork, the impact of the No Life Sentences for Juveniles Act that was signed into New Mexico law in May 2023.



Haley Greenfeather English's *Imagine*

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Jaiquan Fayson

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Jaiquan Fayson (he/him) has experienced a difficult road in his quest to become an artist. He rediscovered his childhood passion for drawing the first time he was incarcerated. Fayson is a graduate of the School of Visual Arts (SVA), an Arts Student League participant, a master's student in arts education at SVA, and a Right of Return USA Fellow. Currently, he works as a long-term substitute teacher at a school near where he grew up. Through his work as an artist and as a teaching artist, Fayson hopes to be a model for others, helping them learn how to find their individual paths with autonomy and agency.

Fayson received support from the Fund to complete his paintings that tackle contemporary social issues and cultural themes. The support also intended to enable him to secure a private workspace, and thus make it easier to work on his pieces.



Jaiquan Fayson's *Sad Muppet Sketch*

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Marking Time/Nicole Fleetwood

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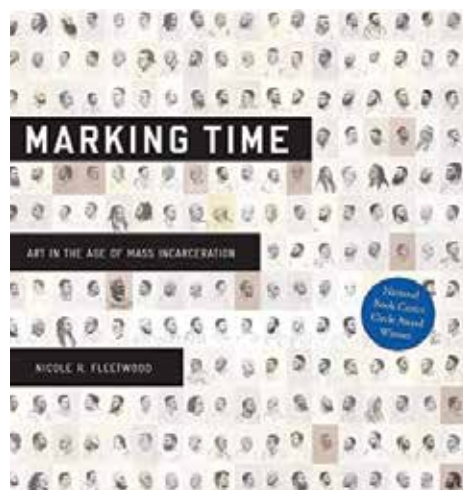
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Nicole R. Fleetwood (she/her) is the inaugural James Weldon Johnson Professor of Media, Culture, and Communication at the New York University Steinhardt School. A MacArthur Fellow, she is a writer, curator, and art critic whose interests are contemporary Black diasporic art and visual culture, photography studies, art and public practice, performance studies, gender and feminist studies, Black cultural history, and carceral studies.

Fleetwood's book *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration* is a powerful document of the inner lives and creative visions of men and women rendered invisible by America's prison system. Based on interviews with currently and formerly incarcerated artists, prison visits, and the author's own family experiences with the penal system, *Marking Time* shows how the imprisoned turn ordinary objects into elaborate works of art. Working with meager supplies and in the harshest conditions – including solitary confinement – these artists find ways to resist the brutality and depravity that prisons engender.

For *Marking Time*, Fleetwood was the winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award in Criticism, the John Hope Franklin Publication Prize of the American Studies Association, the Susanne M. Glasscock Humanities Book Prize for Interdisciplinary Scholarship, and the Frank Jewett Mather Award in art criticism. She is also the curator of the traveling exhibition of the same name, which debuted at MoMA PS1 in 2020. With support from the Fund, Harvard University Press produced a paperback version of the book to send to incarcerated people at no cost. This special edition was released and distributed before the hardcover was available to general audiences.



Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration, 2020,
by Nicole Fleetwood.



Halim Flowers

Visual artist, poet

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In 1997, at the age of 16, Halim Flowers (he/him) was charged as an adult and sentenced to 40 years to life. His experiences as a minor inside the DC Department of Corrections were captured in the Emmy award-winning documentary, *Thug Life In DC*. In 2018, while incarcerated, he co-founded the social entrepreneurial media production company Unchained Media Collective with filmmaker Kristin Adair to tell the stories of those who are directly impacted by the criminal legal system. A year later, he was released after successfully petitioning for resentencing after 22 years behind bars.

In 2020, DTR Modern Galleries began representing Flowers for his visual art practice, and his creations have been exhibited at venues including MoMA PS1 and the National Arts Club in New York City. In 2022, Flowers started his own fashion brand, releasing exclusive limited collections of streetwear designs. Flowers has received numerous honors, including an Echoing Green fellowship award. He was awarded a New Visions for Shared Safety grant from A4J for artists who seek to build a world without mass incarceration.



Contract With Black America, 2020, by Halim Flowers.



Kate Fowle

Curator, educator, advocate

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Kate Fowle (she/her) is a longtime curator and the former director of MoMA PS1 in New York, stepping down in July 2022. During her tenure at the museum, she strengthened community partnerships and led collaborations with artists and activists to develop projects that addressed a range of social justice issues, including mass incarceration and public safety. She also initiated the launch of Nicole R. Fleetwood's highly acclaimed exhibition, *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, making MoMA PS1 one of the first major institutions to showcase the work of currently and formerly incarcerated artists.

Over the past three decades, Fowle has been intentional in using her positions in the contemporary art world to redefine perceptions of who is an artist and what work is featured. She has developed cultural institutions and curatorial projects in China, Mexico, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. She also co-founded the master's program in curatorial practice at California College of the Arts in San Francisco.

Support from the Fund enabled Fowle to directly support the professional development of artists, many of them grantees of the Fund. Through this work, she also has sought to reach and support a broader group of artists through video-recorded classes on the fundamentals of professional development and how to move mentorship and training forward in the future.



Artists in MoMA PS1's *Marking Time* Exhibition.

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Allen Kwabena Frimpong

Cultural strategist, cooperative entrepreneur, resource mobilizer

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Allen Kwabena Frimpong (he/him) is a co-founder of ZEAL, a worker-owned creative agency and social impact collaborative for Black artists throughout the diaspora, where he practices as a conceptual artist using the name 'nii.a.k'.

Frimpong brings a unique multidisciplinary practice in community organizing, harm reduction, cultural strategy, transformative leadership coaching, and participatory planning. His primary aim through his skills set and talents is to support resource mobilization initiatives that strengthen social movement ecosystems to be relational and networked, center community healing, and redistribute wealth and resources through learning and innovation. Through his art and social practice, he transforms objects familiar to the Black diaspora into spiritual instruments of liberation.

Frimpong was also a senior fellow at Policylink and co-founder of Liberation Ventures, a resource mobilizing and field-building effort fueling the Black-led movement in the United States for racial repair. A key focus of his work is towards practicing abolition through creating a solidarity economy for all. He has supported the capacity building of philanthropic, governmental, and local community efforts over the last 15 years.



Team working at ZEAL, co-founded by Allen Frimpong



Henry Frank

Multidisciplinary artist

Novato, CA

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Henry Frank (he/him) is a descendant of the nations of the Yurok and Pomo Tribes and a multidisciplinary artist, block printer, creative writer, poet and photographer based in Novato, CA. Per Frank, “I grew up below the poverty line, joined a gang, received a 29-year-to-life sentence at age 19, and was released just short of my 40th birthday. My father served a life sentence, my mother did time, and my brother has been in and out of the carceral system since 1991. Introduced to the (in)justice system by my own choices, I was guided by a jury that was not of my peers and a biased courtroom.”

While incarcerated in San Quentin State Prison, Frank participated in Arts in Corrections, a program where he learned bookbinding, color theory, composition and more. He served as a clerk to the lead teaching artist, handling tasks such as accounting, scheduling, event production and conflict resolution. Frank has worked as an instructor for Arts in Corrections and serves as vice president of the Marin Museum of the American Indian.

Frank believes that art taught him to be both critical and humble, instilling meaning and inner peace. Art is only one of the benefits he has found from the program. Through his participation, he has developed friendships, a community, and compassion for others. Support from the Fund enabled Frank to continue to create a new series of Lego sculptures, paintings and prints that speak to the human experience and carceral system.



Henry Frank's *Mind Prison: The Gun Towers 1, 2, & 3*

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Gwendolyn Garth

Multimedia artist

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Gwendolyn Garth (she/her) is a 71-year-old native Clevelander, a multimedia artist and long-time community activist. She founded Kings & Queens Art, a grassroots collective embracing all creative disciplines with a focus on artists who are presently and/or formerly incarcerated. Garth is committed to building a vibrant arts environment in a neighborhood context. Her goal is to create safe and communal spaces for everyone, from beginners to professionals. In her work, Garth integrates her training as a creative arts therapy specialist along with a passion for celebrating African-American history and culture. A life-long learner, her own artistic practice has expanded to include new mediums, including writing.

Garth received support from the Fund to implement a project called *Overcoming Darkness and Defying Stereotypes*. This project uses an old school bus – artwork is displayed on the exterior while art and adult literacy classes and performing arts programs are hosted inside. The goal is for this “art palace on wheels” to present exhibitions and classes on the weekends in the spring, summer, and fall, traveling to accessible spaces such as libraries, parks and vacant lots throughout Cuyahoga County, OH. Garth aims to create a flexible community engagement platform to reach Clevelanders who seldom frequent local cultural institutions (especially returning citizens and at-risk youth) and engage them with collaboration, transparency and love.



Gwendolyn Garth's work outside Kings and Queens Collective.

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Maria Gaspar

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Maria Gaspar (she/her) is a Chicago-based artist who has worked extensively with incarcerated people to create works of art that reflect their stories. From 2012–2016, she led the 96 Acres Project, a series of community-engaged, site-responsive art projects that used theater, video, sound installation, and interdisciplinary processes to examine the impact of incarceration at the Cook County Jail in Chicago, the nation's largest single-site jail. Gaspar also leads an ongoing project, *Radioactive: Stories from Beyond the Wall*, a series of radio broadcasts and visual projections on Cook County Jail, to communicate the experiences of currently incarcerated people. She is a faculty member of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Gaspar was awarded the Frieze Impact Prize in 2021.

Support from A4J enabled Gaspar to create a TV miniseries called *Walls Turned Sideways are Bridges*, produced and recorded at Cook County Jail and staged inside a former cell tier that had been turned into a classroom. The main sources for the miniseries were two novels, *Pedro Paramo* by Juan Rulfo and *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison.



Maria Gaspar's *Radioactive: Stories from Beyond the Wall*



Dean Gillispie

Visual artist, filmmaker

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Dean Gillispie (he/him) spent 20 years in prison before he was freed by the Ohio Innocence Project, where he now serves on the board of directors. A self-taught artist, Gillispie spent his nights in prison making intricate miniature models of places and things he remembered from before his incarceration, using materials scavenged by fellow prisoners. His artworks included contraband materials such as sewing pins, small lights, beads and wire. Gillispie's work is featured in *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration* and has been shown at the Rutgers University campus and the public library in New Brunswick, NJ. He says making art in prison offered a "way to escape" and opportunities to connect with others inside who also became the audience for his work.

Gillispie and filmmaker Barry Rowan received support from the Fund to complete a feature-length documentary called *Spiz*, which covers Gillispie's wrongful imprisonment and transition to civilian life while emphasizing the power of carceral art as both a reclamation of individual identity and an indictment of the criminal legal system. Although the film focuses on Gillispie, it also includes interviews with fellow exonerees and those inside to communicate the brutality of mass incarceration and to foreground the perspectives of those who have experienced incarceration.



Dean Gillispie's *Spiz's Dinette*

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Faylita Hicks

Activist, Writer, and Artist

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Faylita Hicks (she/they) is a queer Afro-Latinx activist, writer, and interdisciplinary artist born in California and raised in Texas. They use their intersectional experiences to advocate for the rights of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and LGBTQIA+ people by interpreting policies' impacts on individuals using poetry, music, performance, and digital art.

Hicks is the author of *HoodWitch*, a finalist for the 2020 Lambda Literary Award for Bisexual Poetry, and a forthcoming poetry collection and debut memoir titled *A Map of My Want and A Body of Wild Light*, respectively. Their poetry, essays, and digital art have been published in or are forthcoming in the *American Poetry Review*, *Ecotone*, *the Kenyon Review*, *Longreads*, *Poetry*, *Slate*, *the Texas Observer*, and *The Yale Review*, among others. An account of their time in pretrial incarceration in Texas is featured in the ITVS Independent Lens 2019 documentary *45 Days in a Texas Jail* and the Brave New Films 2021 documentary narrated by Mahershala Ali, *Racially Charged: America's Misdemeanor Problem*.

Hicks is the former editor-in-chief of *Black Femme Collective* and *Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review* and a voting member of the Recording Academy/GRAMMYS and the Songwriters and Composers Committee for the Texas Chapter. They are also a recipient of fellowships and residencies from Black Mountain Institute, the Broadway Advocacy Coalition, Civil Rights Corps, Lambda Literary, Texas After Violence Project, Tin House, and Right of Return USA.



Video still from *45 Days in a Texas Jail*, featuring Faylita Hicks



Szu-Han Ho

Artist

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Szu-Han Ho (she/they) is an artist in performance, sound, text, image making, and installation who roots her artmaking in collaboration. The experience of growing up in Texas as an immigrant from Taiwan influences her art as she focuses on migration, borders, and alternative economies.

Ho received two grants from the Fund. The first supports the project *Solidarity Strategies Against Migrant Detention*, which focuses on coalition building with rural and Indigenous communities surrounding Cibola County Correctional Center in Milan, NM and solidarity for the migrants who are being detained inside through a curriculum of art and language workshops. This project helped lay the foundation for community members to build a solidarity economy and re-envision what is possible in terms of justice.

A second A4J grant helped Ho and OLÉ New Mexico develop *#FreeThemAll Billboards*, a project along the US/Mexico border in New Mexico that aimed to raise awareness of the outbreaks of COVID-19 and maltreatment that individuals face in detention centers, prisons, and jails. The billboards were created in partnership with New Mexico-based Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) artists, creating opportunities for them to get involved as advocates in the justice transformation movement.



Video still from Szu-Han Ho's *Migrant Songs*

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Ashley Hunt

Visual artist, writer

Los Angeles, CA

<http://correctionsproject.com/wordpress>

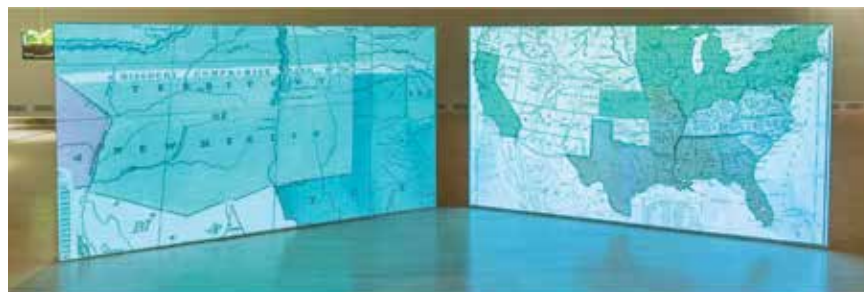
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Ashley Hunt (he/him) is a visual artist, filmmaker and writer based in Los Angeles, where he is on faculty at California Institute of the Arts. In works such as *Prison Maps*, *A World Map in Which We See*, and *Degrees of Visibility*, Hunt has collaborated with grassroots organizations to illuminate criminal justice issues. His partners have included Critical Resistance, California Coalition for Women Prisoners, Southerners on New Ground, and Friends and Family of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children. Hunt's art has been shown in venues ranging from community centers to prisons to museums, most notably at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the Hammer Museum and the Tate Modern. His writings include *Notes on the Emptying of a City*.

Hunt received support from A4J to complete and disseminate *Good Grief*, the third installment of his film cycle about mourning – and letting go of – the histories and parts of ourselves that have been invested in the carceral state. His work aligns with the Fund's New Visions for Shared Safety goals, as his films use the closing of an existing prison as a trigger to imagine a world beyond mass incarceration. The film cycle considers what layers of the past contribute to the present and what we can make out of the ruins of former prison structures. By considering carceral closures as both a realistic and practical strategy, coupled with re-purposing criminal justice resources toward new forms of care and transformative justice, Hunt's films provide a road map for community repair and dialogue building.



Ashley Hunt's *Double Time*

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Duron Jackson

Multidisciplinary artist

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Duron Jackson (he/him) is a cross-disciplinary artist who uses installation, photography, video archives, and objects to create new critical perspectives on dominant historical and contemporary narratives. His younger brother has been incarcerated on and off for his entire adult life, including a 25-year span at Rikers Island. The impact of his brother's incarceration on their entire family informs Jackson's body of work, including recent projects that address displacement, surveillance, and the justice systems, such as *Other America* and *Niggah U (University)*.

With the support of A4J, Jackson built upon his 2016 piece *Witness*, creating a multimedia installation that commemorated a generation of people who suffered through mass incarceration and the systems that support it. *Witness* includes multiple totems of sneakers suspended above a domino-tiled floor; it is inspired by the many urban myths attributed to sneakers tossed over lampposts and electrical wires throughout the country. Jackson collects and receives donations of sneakers from cities across the country, building collaborations with organizations that work directly with the incarcerated, formerly incarcerated, and their families.



Duron Jackson's *Witness*



Mitchell S. Jackson

Author, criminal justice reform advocate

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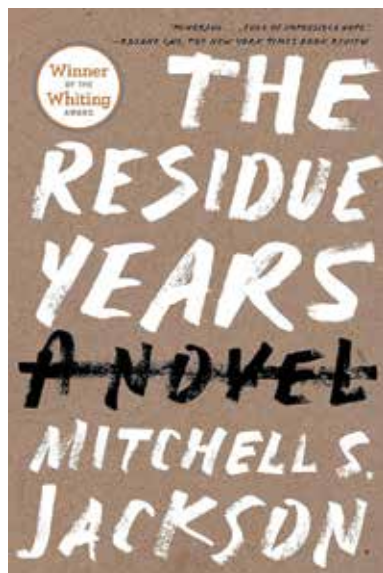
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Mitchell S. Jackson (he/him) is the winner of the 2021 Pulitzer Prize in feature writing and the 2021 National Magazine Award in feature writing. His debut novel, *The Residue Years*, received wide critical praise and won a Whiting Award and the Ernest J. Gaines Prize for Literary Excellence. *The Residue Years* was also a finalist for The Center for Fiction First Novel Prize, the PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Novel, and the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award. Jackson's honors include fellowships and awards from the Guggenheim Foundation, Creative Capital, the New York Public Library's Cullman Center, the Lannan Foundation, the Ford Foundation, PEN America, TED, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and The Center for Fiction. His memoir *Survival Math: Notes on an All-American Family* was published in 2019.

Jackson's writing has been featured on the radio program *This American Life*, on the cover of the *New York Times Book Review*; in magazines including *Time*, *Esquire*, *Marie Claire*, *The New Yorker*, *Harper's* and *Harper's Bazaar*; and in other media outlets including *The Paris Review*, the *Washington Post Magazine*, *The Guardian*, and elsewhere. Jackson is an advocate for criminal justice reform who has visited prisons and youth facilities in the United States and abroad. He is a recipient of the Fund's Bearing Witness Fellowship, which is intended to enable talented writers to complete projects that speak to the human cost of mass incarceration.



Cover of Mitchell Jackson's *The Residue Years*



Asia Johnson

Filmmaker, writer

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Asia Johnson (she/her) is a writer, storyteller, and filmmaker who has worked with several organizations in the criminal justice reform space, including The Bail Project, #cut50, Shakespeare in Prison, Prison Creative Arts Program, Hamtramck Free School, and the Michigan Prison Doula Initiative. She is a 2019 Right of Return USA Fellow, a 2019 Room Project Fellow, and a 2021 Brennan Center for Justice Fellow. Her chapbook, *An Exorcism*, was released in 2018 and her first film, *Out of Place*, was released and screened across the country in 2022.

Johnson is currently the manager of storytelling and local organizing at Zealous. When she isn't helping to uplift the stories of those impacted by the criminal legal system and making her dream of a world without cages come true, she is writing poetry.



Video still from Asia Johnson's *Out of Place*

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Michelle Daniel Jones

Author, artist

Indianapolis, IN and New York, NY

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Michelle Daniel Jones (she/her) is a doctoral student in the American Studies Program at New York University. Her dissertation focuses on creative liberation strategies of incarcerated people. As an organizer, collaborator, and subject matter expert, she creates opportunities to speak truth to power and serves in the development and operation of taskforces and initiatives to reduce harm and end mass incarceration. Jones is a senior research consultant at Second Chance Educational Alliance and an advisor at the Survivors Justice Project. She is board president of Constructing Our Future, a housing organization created by incarcerated women in Indiana, and serves on the boards of Worth Rises and the Correctional Association of New York as well as the advisory boards of Jamii Sisterhood, The Education Trust, A Touch of Light, the Urban Institute and ITHAKA's Higher Education in Prison Research project.

Jones has been awarded fellowships from the Columbia Center for Justice, the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University, Right of Return USA, Code for America and Mural Arts Philadelphia. With the Fund's support, she is collaborating on a history of Indiana's carceral institutions for women with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated colleagues. As an artist, Jones has found ways to funnel her research into theater, dance, and photography. Her co-authored play, *The Duchess of Stringtown*, was produced in 2017 in Indianapolis and New York and her artist installation about weaponized stigma, *Point of Triangulation*, ran in New York from 2019–2020, and with new participants from 2020–2021 in Philadelphia.



Michelle Daniel Jones' *Always Resilient* (created with Deborah Willis)



Dwayne Betts / Titus Kaphar / Redaction

Poet, memoirist / painter

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Reginald Dwayne Betts (he/him) is a poet and memoirist with a juris doctor (JD) degree from Yale Law School and a master of fine arts (MFA) degree from Warren Wilson College. He has published a memoir, *A Question of Freedom*, and several collections of poems, including *Shahid Reads His Own Palm* and *Bastards of the Reagan Era*. *Felon* was awarded the American Book Award and an NAACP Image Award. His work reflects on his personal experiences with the criminal legal system and larger questions related to systemic discrimination, violence, and youth incarceration. In 2021, Betts was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship. He is also the founder of Freedom Reads, an organization providing libraries in carceral settings across the country .

Titus Kaphar's (he/him) work interacts with the history of art, including by reconfiguring the work of classical and Renaissance painters to create new pieces that straddle fantasy and reality. One of his goals is to address racism through art. *Time* magazine commissioned a painting from him in response to the unrest in Ferguson, MO resulting from the shooting of Michael Brown. He also created the Jerome Project, a body of work that includes paintings, works on paper, and a short film connected to photos of his father, who was involved in the justice system. Kaphar's experiences of and engagement with the system are linked to people in his life who have been incarcerated. A MacArthur Fellowship awardee and Yale Art School graduate, he founded NXTHVN, an artist residency in New Haven.

With support from A4J, Betts and Kaphar created *Redaction*, a series of works incorporating civil rights complaints filed by Civil Rights Corps (CRC). *Redaction* addresses cash bail reform, a pivotal issue when it comes to the dehumanizing elements of the justice system. Kaphar and Betts drew inspiration and source material from CRC lawsuits filed on behalf of people who remain locked up because they cannot afford bail, despite not having been tried or convicted. Betts' poetry, which uses legal redactions artistically, is coupled with Kaphar's unique printmaking techniques to create a visually sobering portrait of mass incarceration.



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Dana Kaplan

Incarceration reform advocate

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Dana Kaplan (she/her) is a senior advisor to the Independent Commission on NYC Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform (also known as the Independent Rikers Commission), which aims to help the City close its jail complex on Rikers Island and reduce unnecessary incarceration, among other key objectives. She served in the New York City Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) in a key role coordinating the multi-agency effort and public approval process to close the complex and overseeing related efforts to reduce the jail population including diversion, reentry and alternatives to incarceration.

Prior to this role at MOCJ, she worked on issues of school climate and young adult justice and led a neighborhood-based crime prevention effort focused on public housing. Kaplan was the executive director of the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana, working on issues including closing youth prisons, ending life without parole for juveniles, and improving conditions of confinement in Louisiana.

Kaplan received support from the Fund to disseminate the lessons from New York City’s commitment to closing the Rikers complex. Specific purposes of this work include advancing decarceration as a central tenet of jail and prison conditions reform, promoting models for government responsiveness to community, and outlining a path to addressing conditions of confinement that acknowledges the inherent challenge to fundamentally improving carceral facilities that are embedded in a racially biased criminal legal system.



Long time justice advocate Dana Kaplan.

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Adnan Khan

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Adnan Khan (he/him) works in collaboration with survivors of crime, currently and formerly incarcerated people, district attorneys, and other stakeholders to build a case and encourage action towards restorative justice practices. In 2019, while incarcerated at San Quentin State Prison, he co-founded the organization Re:store Justice, which worked to convene diverse stakeholders in the criminal legal system and engage in meaningful dialogues about crime, violence, and healing for crime survivors as well as those who have inflicted harm.

The organization promoted restorative justice as a means of reforming mass incarceration and was committed to keeping people who are incarcerated connected to society. Through its signature FirstWatch media project, based in San Quentin, incarcerated people created and shared stories about being justice involved. Re:Store Justice also successfully led a legislative effort to amend California's felony murder rule, which automatically held co-defendants liable for first-degree murder if a death occurred during the commission of certain felonies, even if they did not intend for or directly cause the death.

Khan is an Art for Justice Fund Advocacy Fellow. Support from the Fund enabled Re:Store to extend its activities to respond to the humanitarian crisis of COVID-19 inside prisons, including by creating a mini-documentary aimed at raising awareness. Its COVID-19 response efforts included direct support through donations of personal protective equipment (PPE), personal hygiene supplies, and capacity for incarcerated people to community-led grassroots advocacy. In these efforts, Re:Store Justice partnered with organizations including Initiate Justice, Amend at the University of California, San Francisco, the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, White Coats for Black Lives and others.



Adnan Khan (left) at closing of *No Justice Without Love* exhibition.



Jesse Krimes

Artist, social justice advocate

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Jesse Krimes (he/him) is a formerly incarcerated visual artist. Since 2014, he has been deeply engaged in both contemporary art and social justice efforts, including co-founding the Right of Return USA Fellowship in partnership with The Soze Agency, and in 2023 launching the Center for Art and Advocacy with support from A4J and other donors. The new Center, which encompasses Right of Return USA, is dedicated to supporting formerly incarcerated artists at all career stages through fellowships, residencies, and more.

While serving a six-year prison sentence, Krimes produced numerous bodies of work exploring how contemporary media shapes or reinforces societal mechanisms of power and control. He has also produced various projects focused on racial and criminal justice issues through his work with Philadelphia Mural Art's Restorative Justice program, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation's Artist as Activist initiative, and Creative Capital. In addition to his independent practice, he successfully led a class-action lawsuit against JPMorgan Chase for the bank's predatory practice of charging exorbitant fees to people released from federal prison.

With support from A4J, Krimes created the *Voices* project, which used participatory public art and an accompanying engagement program as a catalyst for dialogue around the hidden injustices of the criminal legal system. Collaborative design workshops were held for community members directly impacted by the criminal justice system in Pennsylvania's Lancaster County. Through an Activating Art and Advocacy grant, Civil Rights Corps commissioned Krimes to create the *Mass Incarceration Quilt* – a touring exhibit that sought to reframe public narratives that perpetuate mass incarceration.



Some of Jesse Krimes' quilts from his exhibition, *Voices from the Heartland*.



Sara Kruzan

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Sara Kruzan (she/her) is an activist and survivor of child sex trafficking. In 1995, at the age of 17, she was convicted of the first-degree murder of her trafficker, who began to groom her for the sex industry at the age of 11. Kruzan was initially sentenced to life imprisonment without parole, but was later released on parole in 2013, after serving 19 years, and eventually pardoned in 2022.

During Kruzan's 2.5 day trial, her traumatic abuse was not admitted into evidence, and she was not allowed to speak of it. Kruzan was finally able to recount her story during an interview with Human Rights Watch 12 years into her sentence. That led to her receiving national attention from individuals and organizations focused on judicial reform, who advocated for a new trial.

Kruzan has dedicated her life to advocating for children who find themselves in a similar position to the one she was in – young, vulnerable, at the mercy of abusers, and subject to a lack of care, empathy and consideration. There are now policies known as 'Sara's Law' in multiple states that call for as much flexibility as possible in creating a trauma-informed and age-appropriate response to child victims who retaliate against their abusers.

While incarcerated, Kruzan began creating art and used it as part of her healing.



Sara Kruzan's *Crying Locker*



Deborah LaBelle/ Youth Justice Fund

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In 2017, Deborah LaBelle founded the Youth Justice Fund (YJF) to create opportunities for the growing number of young adults returning to the community after long periods of incarceration. YJF is building a human rights-based reintegration and responsibility model for these young people. The organization aims to provide alternative means of support that do not marginalize formerly incarcerated people, educate the community about the need to reform criminal justice policies that are punitive and excessive, and change the narrative about people who are returning home after incarceration.

With support from the Fund, YJF was supported through its early stages of development, but the grant was principally intended to support the leadership of LaBelle – a seasoned litigator and nationally recognized champion for children serving excessive prison sentences.

Illinois Humanities' *Envisioning Justice* exhibit on incarceration in Illinois is an example of where the voices and engagement of YJF and LaBelle are valued. As part of an exhibit, the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting hosted a half-day program to educate its journalists and other leaders from Chicago institutions. To design the project, the Pulitzer Center called on the expertise of YJF and fellow Art for Justice Fund partners Voice of the Experienced and Fair Sentencing of Youth. The convening also featured engagements with high school and post-secondary students, as well as another workshop at Illinois Youth Center.



Youth Justice Fund advocates and young people who were formerly incarcerated

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Mark Loughney

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Mark Loughney (he/him) is an artist from rural Pennsylvania who engages with portraiture through serialization. Prior to his incarceration, he used watercolors and acrylics to create bright paintings of his favorite musicians. During his 10 years inside, Loughney found portraiture to be a life raft – a way to share time and space with others inside. His series *Pyrrhic Defeat: A Visual Study of Mass Incarceration*, which comprises nearly 750 images, was included in the *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Incarceration* exhibition. Loughney's work provides each of his subjects with a level of dignity, personalization and respect that is often forgotten and ignored within the prison system.

Loughney received support from the Fund to undertake *People with Time*, a project to explore and discuss time as a commodity. The work focuses on revealing temporal arrangements between people and the way that time is used as a commodity to punish, reward, express love, control others, empower or incapacitate. This project enables Loughney to engage with the public in a meaningful way and propels him toward his goal of becoming a self-sustaining artist. He is connected to the network of other formerly incarcerated artists from Pennsylvania who are supported by the Fund and has been active in strengthening his reentry community.



Mark Loughney's *Pyrrhic Defeat: A Visual Study of Mass Incarceration*



Valeria Luiselli

Author

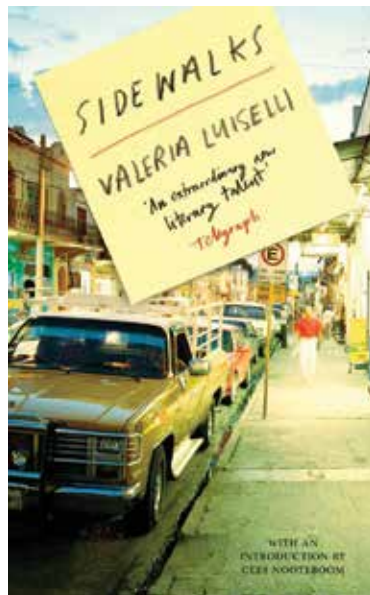
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Valeria Luiselli (she/her) was born in Mexico City and grew up in South Korea, South Africa and India. An acclaimed writer of both fiction and nonfiction, her work has been translated into more than 30 languages. She is the author of *Sidewalks*, *Faces in the Crowd*, *The Story of My Teeth*, *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions*, and *Lost Children Archive*. She has been a recipient of the Vilcek Prize and Guggenheim and MacArthur fellowships.

Tell Me How It Ends, about the perils faced by children who travel alone from Central America to the United States in search of refuge, received the American Book Award. *Lost Children Archive*, also about migration and state violence against migrants, won the Dublin Prize, the Folio Prize, and the Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction. Luiselli is a recipient of Art for Justice Fund's Bearing Witness Fellowship, which is intended to enable talented writers to complete projects that speak to the human cost of mass incarceration



Cover of Valeria Luiselli's *Tell Me How It Ends*



Marcus Manganni

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Marcus Manganni's (he/him) art is centered around his experiences with prison and mental health systems and his advocacy for changing these systems. He began his journey as an artist during his time in solitary confinement, when a sliver of natural light entered his cell. He sought to capture it – creating compositions out of toothpaste, toilet paper and the reflective insides of potato chip bags. By placing these structures around his cell, Manganni scattered the natural light, allowing him to explore his physical and social isolation.

Through the use of reflection and refraction, Manganni continues to investigate isolation within physical and societal structures of hierarchy. His large-scale public installations are abstracted segments of institutional architecture, using the sun-mapping process he developed while incarcerated. Manganni is a Right of Return USA Fellow and was a featured artist in the 2019 Young Collectors Contemporary at Crosstown Arts in Memphis, TN. In 2022, he had his first solo exhibition at Brackett Creek Exhibitions in New York City and unveiled a new sculpture at The Foundry in NYC's Long Island City neighborhood.

Support from the Fund helped Manganni expand his practice by making traditional studio works for gallery spaces. He believes that this additional platform, which enables him to exhibit in both exterior spaces and traditional galleries, contributes to his ability to uplift and empower other system-impacted people. Among the series he intends to create is one that confronts the intentional torture imposed by institutional lighting.



Manganni uses multiple mediums to refract and reflect light



Ian Manuel

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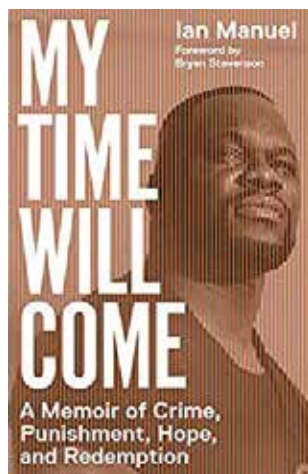
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Ian Manuel (he/him) is a Brooklyn-based author, activist, poet and performer. At age 13, he was directed by older juveniles to commit a robbery in his hometown of Tampa, FL. During the botched attempt, a woman suffered a non-fatal gunshot wound. Manuel surrendered to the police and was charged – as an adult – with armed robbery and attempted murder. His attorney instructed him to plead guilty and said he would receive a 15-year sentence. Manuel accepted responsibility for his actions, but was sentenced to life imprisonment without possibility of parole.

During Manuel's 26-year imprisonment in Florida, he spent 18 years in solitary confinement. While isolated, Manuel taught himself to write poetry and believes this was the thing that kept him sane. In 2016, the Equal Justice Initiative was able to vacate his juvenile life without parole sentence and free him. Five years later, Manuel released *My Time Will Come: A Memoir of Crime, Punishment, Hope and Redemption*, which documents his struggles from a childhood in Tampa's most violent housing projects, to his time in prison, to freedom.

With support from the Fund, Manuel intends to write and perform a one-man poetry show and album that addresses mass incarceration, juvenile life without parole, and solitary confinement.



Cover of Ian Manuel's *My Time Will Come*



Guadalupe Maravilla

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Guadalupe Maravilla (he/him) is a visual artist, healer and choreographer. At the age of eight, in the 1990s, he fled civil war in El Salvador and was one of the undocumented children to arrive at and cross the United States/Mexico border. In 2016, he became a U.S. citizen and adopted the name Guadalupe Maravilla in solidarity with his undocumented father, who uses Maravilla as his last name.

Combining personal mythology and collaborative performative acts, Maravilla's work traces the history of his own and others' displacement. He seeks to transform collective narratives of trauma into celebrations of perseverance and humanity by culling the entangled fictional and autobiographical genealogies of border crossing accounts.

Across all media, Maravilla explores how the systemic abuse of immigrants physically manifests in the body, reflecting on his own battle with cancer, which began in his gut. His large-scale sculptures, entitled *Disease Throwers*, function as headdresses, instruments and shrines. They incorporate materials collected from sites across Central America, anatomical models, and sonic instruments such as conch shells and gongs. Described by Maravilla as "healing machines," these *Disease Throwers* ultimately serve as symbols of renewal, generating therapeutic, vibrational sound.

Maravilla has directed his A4J grant to The Good Shepherd Church in the Bay Ridge neighborhood of Brooklyn, NY. Beginning in 2022, the church became a sanctuary for asylum seekers bused from Texas. This occurred as hundreds of people in detention centers or caught at the border were bused to New York City, Chicago and Washington, DC. Maravilla has organized volunteers, raised money (including donating his own COVID-related stimulus checks) and provided self-funded holistic healing work. He cites the growing evidence of the connection between migration and post-traumatic stress disorder, an aspect of immigration that he believes is largely overlooked.



Guadalupe Maravilla's *Planta Abuelx*



Talilo Marfil

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Talilo Marfil (he/him) is a Portland-based artist seeking to positively impact the world through music. He immigrated to the United States from the Philippines when he was two. As a youth, living in poverty and struggling with housing insecurity, he experienced survival challenges and became incarcerated as a result. Upon release at 21, Marfil was guided by spiritual values to reconnect with his culture.

Growing up, Marfil related to the struggles expressed in the hip-hop genre and began rapping at age 16. Since 2014, he has been working with marginalized youth in Portland as a mentor/guide, helping them use music to express themselves. This approach includes serving as a hip-hop instructor in schools and juvenile detention centers, inspiring hope in young people through their ability to create music together.

Marfil's direct work with youth also takes place through Ascending Flow, a nonprofit supporting young people aging out of foster care where he is a program manager. He leads a new national program called the Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship, creating career pathways for justice system-impacted youth by offering 2-4 year paid on-the-job training and peer support. This program is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and a family foundation. Marfil intends to use his A4J grant to complete works in progress, to create new music videos, and to perform and tour.



Still from *Kontrast*, a music documentary series featuring Talilo Marfil.



C.T. Mexica

Author, speaker

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C.T. Mexica (he/him) is a writer and formerly incarcerated man who spent the ages of 12–21 behind bars. He has been a 2019–2020 PEN America Writing for Justice Fellow, under the mentorship of Piper Kerman, and the recipient of a postdoctoral fellowship in justice and social inquiry at Arizona State University. In 2015 the University of Washington Graduate School awarded him The Graduate School Medal, given to recognize scholar-citizens, for integrating his academic expertise and social awareness in a way that demonstrates active civic engagement and a capacity to promote political, cultural and social change.

Mexica holds a dual doctorate in comparative literature and theory and criticism from the University of Washington. His work has appeared in *McSweeney's* and *The Southwest Review*. He has completed a memoir soon to be published, titled *18 With A Bullet*. Mexica is a recipient of A4J's Bearing Witness Fellowship, which is intended to enable talented writers to complete projects that speak to the human cost of mass incarceration.

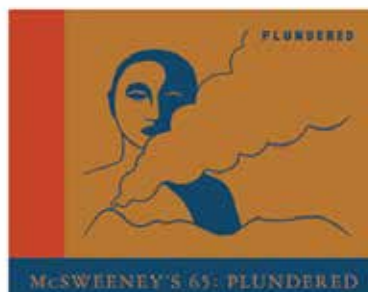
McSweeney's 65 | Ain't Them Bodies Saints

WEB EXCLUSIVES January 6, 2022

The following story by C. T. Mexica appears in *McSweeney's 65: Plundered*, guest-edited by Valeria Luiselli with Heather Cleary. In fifteen bracing stories, the collection spans the American continent, from a bone-strewn Peruvian desert to inland South Texas to the streets of Mexico City, and considers the violence that shaped it. With contributors from Brazil, Cuba, Bolivia, Mexico, Argentina, Ecuador, the United States, and elsewhere, *Plundered* is a sweeping portrait of a hemisphere on fire.

A child is a lonely thing to put in prison

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George Anthony Morton

Artist, filmmaker

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George Anthony Morton (he/him) was born in Kansas City, MO. He is a painter who spent 10 years in a federal prison that he often describes as his “monastery”. Morton dedicated much of his time while incarcerated to studying and making art. After his release, he trained at the Florence Academy of Art.

Morton is committed to defying society’s inequities and challenging the white-dominant art world. He is an accomplished artist with a signature style, and his work is sought after by international galleries and prized by collectors. He is the founder of Atelier South, an Atlanta art workshop/studio modeled upon six centuries of classical tradition. He has traveled throughout Egypt studying the origins of the Renaissance principles of art and design.

Morton is the subject and co-creator of *Master of Light*, a much heralded documentary that had its world premiere at the 2022 SXSW Film & TV Festival. Made in collaboration with director Rosa Ruth Boesten, the film follows Morton as he seeks to repair his relationship with his mother and understand his past during multiple trips to Kansas City to paint family members. Morton is a recipient of the Fund’s New Visions for Shared Safety grant, which is intended to allow grantees to continue creating art that envisions a world without mass incarceration.



Video still from George Anthony Morton’s *Master of Light*

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Christopher Myers and Kaneza Schaal

Visual and theater artists

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Kaneza Schaal (she/her) and Chris Myers (he/him) are acclaimed New York City-based visual and theater artists whose past collaborations include *GO FORTH*, which premiered to great acclaim as part of PS122's 2015 Coil Festival. Schaal's creations represent an extraordinary history of work at many major venues, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Award-winning illustrator Christopher Myers is the son of acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers. In 1998, Schaal and Myers collaborated on *Harlem*, which was named a Caldecott Honor Book as well as a Coretta Scott King Honor Book.

Schaal and Myers are recipients of Art for Justice Fund's Bearing Witness Fellowship, which is intended to enable talented writers and artists to complete projects that speak to the human cost of mass incarceration.



Still from *GO FORTH*, by Kaneza Schaal and Chris Myers.

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Vivian Nixon

Reverend, writer

Washington, D.C.

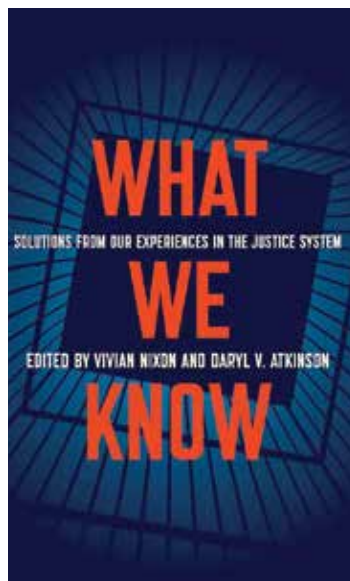
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Vivian Nixon (she/her) joined the Square One Project as a writer-in-residence after 20 years at College & Community Fellowship (CCF), a nonprofit that helps women with criminal convictions graduate from college and pursue their dreams. In both professional outlets, she has contributed to narrative change and educational work that elevates racial reckoning in conversations about the U.S. justice system. She also serves as an advisor for the Bard Prison Initiative, building support to expand access to no-cost college degrees.

Nixon earned an undergraduate degree after she was released from prison. Later, she earned a master of fine arts (MFA) degree from Columbia University School of the Arts and was ordained an elder minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. She is the founding board chair of JustLeadershipUSA and received an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Bard College.

Nixon's essays, poems, and commentary can be found in various periodicals and anthologies. She co-edited *What We Know: Solutions from Inside the Justice System*. Nixon is working on a book that chronicles her career in justice reform with support from A4J, PEN America and Square One.



Cover of *What We Know*, co-edited by Vivian Nixon



Ndume Olatushani

Painter

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Ndume Olatushani (he/him) is a painter based in Denver, CO. He was born and raised in St. Louis, MO and was the seventh of 11 children. Although his early years were spent in the notorious Pruitt-Igoe housing projects, his home life was supportive and nurturing. Still, Olatushani ended up getting involved in petty criminal activity. His early exposure to the criminal legal system led to him being falsely accused of a crime. He was charged with a robbery and murder in Memphis, even though he had never been to Tennessee. At a trial that lasted just three days, he was convicted and sentenced to death. The all-white jury dismissed the testimony of multiple alibi witnesses who swore that Olatushani was at home in St. Louis, at the time of the crime. He spent 28 years in prison, 20 on death row, for a crime he did not commit.

Two years into his imprisonment, Olatushani got terrible news while sitting in the 4 x 9-foot cell: his mother and one of his nieces had been killed in a car accident. In the wake of that tragedy, he turned to art – he was completely self-taught – to climb out of the depths of his despair. Art allowed him to find harmony, freedom, and peace despite being physically locked up. Olatushani’s paintings from the time of his imprisonment depict Black people who are unbound, bright, and colorful. His bold use of color was a form of resistance, a rebellion against the sensory deprivation of the colorless prison environment where he was held.

He was released from prison on June 1, 2012, after his lawyers showed that the prosecution had withheld a mountain of evidence demonstrating his innocence. Since his release, he has continued to create art, while also working with advocacy groups to end capital punishment and mass incarceration. Support from A4J enabled Olatushani to work on a series of paintings on the lynching of Black people. This project emphasizes the connection between historic lynchings and the modern death penalty, while stressing the importance of abolishing capital punishment.



From Ndume Olatushani's series depicting lynchings



Juan Ortiz

Artist, activist, community organizer

El Paso, TX

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Juan Ortiz (he/him) is an artist, activist and community organizer who focuses on raising awareness and consciousness around issues of immigrant rights and mass incarceration as they affect both sides of the border. He creates art through what he calls “actions” and “interventions”, which are not lobbying, campaigns, objects or performances. Ortiz’s voice is deeply informed by both lived experience and careful study. In and out of juvenile detention centers by age 14, and after spending years fighting false charges only to be found innocent, he seeks to highlight how his experience of mass incarceration is individual, but also collective, generational and structural.

Ortiz received a master’s degree in art and public policy from New York University and a master of fine arts (MFA) degree from Maryland Institute College of Art. His doctoral dissertation from the University of Arizona is titled ‘Mass Incarceration in a Border Context: The Borderless Carceral State’. Ortiz is a member of the Tornillo: The Occupation Coalition, a convergence of artists and activists from around the country who came together to occupy the children’s detention camp that opened in Tornillo, TX (a suburb of El Paso). Support from the Fund enabled the coalition to use that physical site at El Paso’s port of entry to convene families of victims of state violence.



Juan Ortiz's *Corpus Cicatrix*

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Michelle Angela Ortiz

Visual artist, community arts educator, filmmaker

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Michelle Angela Ortiz (she/her) is a visual artist, community arts educator, and filmmaker who works to counter narratives that criminalize immigrants and devalue the contributions of communities of color. Over a period of more than 20 years, Ortiz has designed and created over 50 large-scale public artworks with communities nationally and globally. For example, such large-scale art installations have covered the streets outside the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) building in Philadelphia and the steps of the Pennsylvania State Capitol building in Harrisburg.

In 2013, she launched the *Familias Separadas* project to amplify the stories of families affected by detention and deportation. As part of that project, Ortiz created the *Las Madres de Berks* documentary, which shares the testimonials of four mothers who were detained for two years with their children at the Berks County Residential Center in Pennsylvania, the country's oldest prison for immigrant families seeking asylum. With support from the Fund, Ortiz developed phase three of the *Familias Separadas* project. This included expanding her work to communities in North Carolina, Colorado, and New Hampshire –all in close proximity to detention centers that are often not included in the national conversation on family separation and detention.



Michelle Angela Ortiz's *Familias Separadas* project



Jared Owens

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Jared Owens (he/him) is a multidisciplinary artist raised in Rockland County, NY. His practice calls attention to the 2.5 million people enmeshed in the American carceral system. During more than 18 years of incarceration, Jared taught himself to work in painting, sculpture, and installation, using materials and references culled from the prison environment. While inside, Owens taught classes in ceramics, painting, and drawing. He continues to mentor and teach system-impacted young people.

Owens' work have been part of a wide range of exhibitions and other outlets, including *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration* at MoMA PS1 in New York City (2021); *Rendering Justice* at the African American Museum of Art in Philadelphia (2021); *The O.G. Experience* in partnership with HBO and The Soze Agency in New York City (2019); *Made in America: Unfree Labor in the Age of Mass Incarceration* at Hampshire College (2017); and *Black Bone* (an exhibition of Affrilachian poets and visual artists) at Morlan Gallery in Lexington, KY (2017). His solo exhibition opened at Malin Gallery in 2022, titled *111...and Other Stories*.

Owens is a fellow of Right of Return USA and Silver Arts Projects. In 2019, he received a Restorative Justice grant from Mural Arts Philadelphia to create murals with teenagers under court supervision. Three years earlier, he won a grant from the Eastern State Penitentiary to produce a large-scale installation. Owens has presented public talks and panels about the intersection of art and activism as a means of disrupting the prison-industrial complex. He is a recipient of A4J's New Visions for Shared Safety grant, which is intended to allow grantees to continue creating art that envisions a world without mass incarceration.



Jared Owens' *Hog feed 102*



Liza Jesse Peterson

Playwright, actor, poet

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Liza Jesse Peterson (she/her) is a playwright, actor, and poet. She instructs formerly incarcerated people during the reentry process through Friends of Island Academy and DREAMS Youthbuild. Over the past 20 years, she has served as a court advocate, teaching artist, group facilitator, and reentry specialist for people incarcerated at Rikers Island. Her experiences have inspired her to create a memoir titled *All Day: A Year of Love and Survival Teaching Incarcerated Kids at Rikers Island*, and to contribute to Bill Moyers' documentary *Rikers: An American Jail*.

Support from A4J helped launch and sustain the national tour of Peterson's one-woman show, produced by the National Black Theatre, *The Peculiar Patriot*. The play's title references a 19th century Southern euphemism for slavery as "our peculiar institution", while "patriot" seeks to examine the definition of love of country. The play's protagonist proclaims herself a "peculiar patriot" as she makes regular visits to penitentiaries to boost the morale of her incarcerated friends and family. She is a reflection of the millions of people who travel to penitentiaries, subjecting themselves to long rides and security checks to maintain contact with loved ones.

The Fund also partnered with Peterson through two different Art and Advocacy grants. First, together with Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation, she created a short film titled *Black Love Manifesto* in which an original musical score and compelling videography accompanied her poetry. Second, Peterson and the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting collaborated on a special online presentation that incorporated clips from her performance of *The Peculiar Patriot*.



The Peculiar Patriot, National Black Theatre, 2017, by Liza Jesse Peterson.



Marlon Peterson

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Marlon Peterson (he/him) is a writer, speaker and criminal justice advocate. He is the author of *Bird Uncaged: An Abolitionist's Freedom Song* and co-author, with Colin Kaepernick, of *Abolition for the People*. His writing has been featured in *Ebony*, The Marshall Project, and *The Nation*, among many other outlets. In 2017, he originated (and has continued to host) the *Decarcerated* podcast, which surpassed 10,000 downloads during its first season. While incarcerated for a decade, he began youth development work, co-creating How Our Lives Link Altogether (H.O.L.L.A.) and later Youth Organizing to Save Our Streets, an initiative of the Center for Court Innovation.

Peterson is the executive director of College and Community Fellowship. He is also the owner of a social impact endeavor, The Precedential Group Social Enterprises, and its nonprofit arm, Be Precedential, Inc., through which he provides consulting services to criminal justice reform organizations. He sits on the boards of directors and advisory boards of several arts and advocacy groups. Peterson has been a Soros Justice Fellow, an Aspen Institute Civil Society Fellow, an Atlantic Fellow for Racial Equality, and an *Ebony* Magazine Power 100 honoree. He is a recipient of A4J's New Visions for Shared Safety grant, which is intended to allow grantees to continue creating art that envisions a world without mass incarceration.



Marlon Peterson speaking



Samora Pinderhughes

Composer, pianist

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Samora Abayomi Pinderhughes (he/him) is a composer and pianist known for large multidisciplinary projects and for his use of music to examine sociopolitical issues. He graduated from The Juilliard School with a bachelor of music degree in jazz studies in 2013. While at Juilliard, he began work on his highly acclaimed performance piece, *The Transformations Suite*, which brought together jazz and classical musicians, spoken word artists, actors, and dancers to produce a musical representation of the current state of social inequality and injustice. He has written music for artists including Kenny Barron and Common, and is the composer for the documentary *Whose Streets?* about the Ferguson, MO protests following the killing of Michael Brown. He is a member of Blackout for Human Rights and was musical director for its 2016 #MLKNow and #JusticeForFlint events.

With support from the Fund, Pinderhughes created *I'M STILL HERE: Reflections on Trauma and Healing* (a.k.a. The Healing Project), an installation piece and album that combines musical compositions with audio interviews delving into issues of violence and incarceration/detention in communities of color. The project was driven by his quest to understand how incarceration and detention traumatizes people and communities, and the processes, strategies, and practices that people use to cope and heal.



Samora Pinderhughes' *I'M STILL HERE*

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Aron Pines

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Aron Pines (he/him) is a returning citizen dedicated to championing the rights of those impacted by mass incarceration. Since his release from prison in 2015, Pines has completed a bachelor's degree in English and creative writing from Rutgers University, received a PEN America Writing for Justice Fellowship, and was a fourth-year Right of Return USA Fellow. Employed in the public health sector, he continues to work on his memoir, *The Miseducation of Icarus*, which captures his journey as a pro se litigant in the American judicial system. (Pro se litigants represent themselves in federal court.)

Support from the Fund is helping Pines to finalize and publish his book documenting his life-altering experiences in the criminal legal system. He wants to share his story in hopes that others in similar circumstances may see that they do not need to rely solely on court-appointed counsel. He intends his memoir to provide insight into what a democratized judicial system could look like, including the possibilities that are unleashed when society empowers groups from non-traditional legal backgrounds to use their voices in the justice process.

Seventeen was the perfect age to destroy myself - so that's what I did.

But what was left for me now? A prison cell where I had spent the last three years and the distinct probability of spending the rest of my life. The thought was wicked - enough to destroy the minds of stronger men, let alone a kid of twenty; yet there I was, caged in a dungeon buried in a plot of earth beneath the courthouse. The use of the word buried is deliberate: the dungeon is more like a coffin and the courthouse is filled with spectators to the burial. I was standing at the front gate, my forehead pressed lightly against the chipped, steel bars that divided the cage from the attorney area. A miserable stench strangled the air like the thickest smoke; it smelt like breeding german shepherds. To my left, positioned just behind me were a couple of older men playing cards along the bench. To my right was another inmate, heavy-set, brown with dreadlocks, who made wild contortions with his hands as he spoke with another inmate placed in a holding tank on the opposite side of the attorney area before us. The other man, dressed in a yellow jumpsuit, observed with a deepened attention, nodded his head, and then responded with his own flurry of hand motions. They were skywriting - the underground dialect of prisoners. In the attorney area, just behind a desk, a sheriff stood doing naner-work. He broke his concentration for a moment, turned his head to the left to face the heavy-set man and then to the right towards the man in the yellow suit. His face then turned bright red in a flash of anger. "Cut that shit out over there!" he snapped as he stepped from behind the desk and towards the bullpen. His brown eyes then slowly panned to his right, falling directly upon me. "You too, step away from the gate. Y'all know the rules." He allowed his gaze to hold for a few extra seconds, relishing his petty authority. Satisfied with himself, he walked back over to his post and then buried his head back into the file of paperwork before him.

Excerpt from Aron Pines' *The Miseducation of Icarus*



Beverly Price

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Born and raised in Washington, DC, Beverly Price (she/her) is a fine arts photographer with a documentary aesthetic. She first used a camera in 2016 to bear witness to her neighborhood's gentrification from a grassroots perspective. A recent Right of Return USA Fellow, her art explores social realism, self-representation, and identity within the Black/brown community.

Price sees her work as “reflecting a spiritual sequence that balances intuition and logic.” Her approach encourages the active engagement of her photo subjects – especially those from younger generations, whose voices are often not heard or silenced. Two recent projects, *When the Children Speak* and *Royal Blue*, focused on preserving the innocence of Black youths, particularly boys. Such work is deeply personal because Price was incarcerated as a young teen and had firsthand experience in an environment that made her feel much older than she was.



Beverly Price's *We the Children*

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Victor Quiñonez

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Victor ‘Marka27’ Quiñonez (he/him) works at the intersection of contemporary art, graffiti, fashion, and design. He describes himself as a son of Mexican immigrants, father, husband, artist, designer, survivor of the streets, and activist. Born in Juarez, Mexico, Quiñonez grew up in East Dallas, Texas. He witnessed his father being deported and incarcerated when he was a young child—an event which had a significant impact on his life.

With paintings, murals, drawings, and mixed-media pieces, Quiñonez’s robust palette blends elements of street and pop culture with Mexican and Indigenous aesthetics. He creates large-scale works that invoke identity and self-empowerment. Quiñonez seeks to honor the bold resiliency of people of color and Indigenous peoples in the face of centuries of structural racism.



Victor Quiñonez's *Luna Bliss*



Rowan Renee

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Rowan Renee (they/them) is a genderqueer artist whose process often encompasses images and documents from government or family archives. Through labor-intensive processes, including lithography, loom weaving, and kiln-fused glass, Renee alters source materials to challenge biases and reveal erasures in the “official record.” Their research-led practice addresses intergenerational trauma, gender-based violence, and the impacts of the criminal legal system through image, text, and installation. “Through working with my hands, I found a way to process the trauma held in my body and to express the unspeakable,” they stated.

Renee has created solo exhibitions for Smack Mellon, FiveMyles, Aperture Foundation, and Pioneer Works. In 2023, *The Perimeter Path*, their largest installation to date, opened at the historic chapel in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, where they were artist-in-residence. Renee’s solo projects are influenced by community-based workshops with people affected by trauma. Partners have included Recess Art, the Reentry Theater of Harlem, and The Stories We Tell. In 2020, they developed *Between the Lines*, a series of art workshops by correspondence with LGBTQ+ individuals incarcerated in Florida, supported by a grant from We, Women. Renee’s installation *No Spirit For Me* (2019) was included in the critically acclaimed exhibition *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, curated by Nicole Fleetwood at MoMA PS1. With A4J support, Renee is creating a new body of work focused on transformative justice and reconciliation.



No spirit for me 2020, mixed media.



Laurie Jo Reynolds

Artist, community organizer

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Laurie Jo Reynolds (she/her) is an artist and organizer whose work challenges the demonization, warehousing, and social exclusion of people in the criminal legal system. She has produced bill analyses, communications trainings, symposiums, performances, listening campaigns, and photography projects. She was the organizer of Tamms Year Ten, the grassroots legislative campaign in Illinois to close the notorious state supermax Tamms Correctional Facility, which then-Governor Pat Quinn shuttered in 2013.

A4J support helped Reynolds to build the Chicago 400 Alliance, which she currently coordinates. It is a multi-disciplinary organizing campaign to challenge all public conviction registries and housing banishment laws. It was developed in collaboration with hundreds of community members, including people with past convictions who have been forced into homelessness due to Illinois housing laws. Through both art and data collection, the Alliance has demonstrated how registry laws mandate adversarial police contact and have expanded the policing, surveillance, and incarceration of poor Chicagoans.

Reynolds has received fellowships and grants from Open Society Foundations, Creative Capital, Opportunity Agenda, and United States Artists, as well as Creative Time's Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change. She serves on the boards of the Prison Policy Initiative and Narrative Arts and is an associate professor of art at the University of Illinois Chicago.



Members of the Chicago 400 Alliance, which Laurie Jo Reynolds coordinates

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Gilberto Rivera Reyes

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Gilberto Rivera Reyes (he/him) was born in Puerto Rico and raised in Brooklyn, where as a teen, he was a graffiti artist. Sentenced to 20 years at the age of 23, Rivera began to explore a range of artistic mediums and collaborate with fellow artists inside. He lost his hand in a construction site accident a few months after his release from prison in 2013, but has adapted his art practice to continue making dynamic multi-media work.

Rivera has continued to integrate new approaches in his practice over the years. His work has been featured in Artforum, *The Arts Fuse*, *The Nation*, *Hyperallergic*, and *The New York Times*. He was a Right of Return USA Fellow and participated in *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Incarceration* and *The Collective: Chosen Family* exhibitions at MoMA PS1 and Martos Gallery, respectively.

Rivera is a recipient of A4J's New Visions for Shared Safety grant, which is intended to allow grantees to continue creating art that envisions a world without mass incarceration.



Gilberto Rivera's *An Institutional Nightmare*



Sherrill Roland

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Sherrill Roland (he/him) is a multidisciplinary artist whose *The Jumpsuit Project* is intended to raise awareness around issues related to mass incarceration. The project grew out of his personal history. He spent 10 months in state prison on a wrongful conviction, just as he began the last year of his graduate school art degree program in 2013. Based on new evidence, Roland was exonerated of all charges in 2015.

He toured *The Jumpsuit Project* nationally as a performance piece and through speaking engagements at institutions including Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), the Studio Museum in Harlem, Princeton University, and the University of Michigan Law School. Roland earned a bachelor of fine arts (BFA) degree in design and a master of fine arts (MFA) degree in studio art from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Roland is represented by the Tanya Bonakdar Gallery where he has exhibited his work in NYC and Los Angeles. He was also featured in For Freedoms' 2022 billboard campaign Another Justice: By Any Means Necessary, with an original piece installed on a billboard in Charlotte, NC as part of a project that proposes new paths forward to justice.



Sherrill Roland's *The Jumpsuit Project*

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Paul Rucker

Visual artist, composer, musician

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Paul Rucker (he/him) is a visual artist, composer and musician who often combines media, live performance, original compositions and visual art. His work is the product of a rich interactive process in which he investigates community impacts, human rights issues, historical research and basic human emotions surrounding a particular subject matter. Much of Rucker's current work focuses on the prison-industrial complex and the relationship between incarceration and slavery. He has performed and exhibited across the country, including in schools and prisons, and has collaborated with educational institutions to highlight and address mass incarceration.

Rucker is a Guggenheim Fellow, a TED Senior Fellow, a Rauschenburg Fellow, and an iCubed Arts Research Fellow at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Currently, he is the curator for creative collaboration at VCU School of the Arts. With his A4J grant, he created a project on the prison economy that included a large-scale installation on the façade of The Art Students League of New York (ASL), an accompanying microsite, a series of educational and public programs in partnership with ASL, a cello composition and artist talks.

Additionally, Rucker received support from the Fund for his effort to create a permanent, multidisciplinary cultural center in Richmond, VA dedicated to preserving and promoting omitted histories. The center is envisioned to include exhibitions and public programming; a community coffee shop with a training program for formerly incarcerated individuals and those in recovery; an artifact lending library; an onsite print studio and recording studio where participants can print and frame their own artwork and produce podcasts; a banned book library; and a facility to produce and sell Harmony Food Sauce, a line of handcrafted sauces, produced and distributed by formerly incarcerated people. The center also intends to establish a monthly residency for visiting artists, researchers, and scholars.



Paul Rucker's *Banking while Black*



Aaron “El” Sawyer (Media in Neighborhoods)

Filmmaker, social justice advocate

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El Sawyer (he/him) is a filmmaker and social justice advocate whose personal experience with poverty and incarceration informs his international consulting and public speaking practice on the challenges of reentry, recidivism, and neglected communities. He was trained in film production while in a maximum security prison, and upon his release, began to create media programs for youth. Sawyer later co-founded Media in Neighborhoods (MING) to use the power of media to change the culture of crime. MING creates video documentaries, offers audio and photo services, and leads professional mentorship and technical training for communities, including returning citizens.

MING received support from the Fund for its SHOOTERS program providing professional digital media skills for formerly incarcerated individuals. The Fund’s grant enabled MING to engage a cohort of eight returning citizens in the production of short social media-friendly films that reflect their personal journeys through the justice system. This 12-month paid digital media training program culminated in screenings, immersive exhibitions, and public events.



El Sawyer working with a student at MING



Iquail Shaheed, PhD

Choreographer, director, professor, activist, scholar

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Iquail Shaheed (he/him) is a Philadelphia-based artist and activist whose work successfully integrates social justice into high-caliber performance and community-building. As the founder and executive artistic director of DANCE IQUAIL!, he creates new works and programs that center Blackness, justice, and joy. Shaheed has worked with internationally acclaimed companies such as Compagnie Thor, Seán Curran Company, the Fred Benjamin Dance Company, and EVIDENCE, A Dance Company. He has also appeared in various Broadway productions, including *The Lion King*, *Hot Feet*, and *Super Fly*, in addition to various films and TV shows.

As an educator, Shaheed has served on faculty at The Ailey School and the NAISDA Dance College in Australia, as an associate professor of dance at Goucher College in Baltimore, and as a master teacher at numerous other institutions in Africa, Australia, Europe, North America, and the Caribbean. Dr. Shaheed received his training as a scholarship student at the Philadelphia Dance Company and Alvin Ailey American Dance Center. He received a bachelor of fine arts (BFA) degree in ballet performance from the University of the Arts, a master of fine arts (MFA) degree in choreography from the State University of New York at Purchase, and a PhD from Texas Woman's University.

A4J support enabled Dr. Shaheed to expand his choreographic work *Public Enemy*, which centers on the oral histories of formerly incarcerated Black men and seeks to present the humanity of Black men and the diversity of their humanity.



Iquail Shaheed dancing.



Xaviera Simmons

Artist, arts educator

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Xaviera Simmons' (she/hers) sweeping practice includes photography, painting, video, sound, sculpture, text and installation. Her work engages the formal histories of art through the construction of landscape, language, and the complex histories of the US and its continuing empire building internally and on a global scale.

Simmons received her bachelor of fine arts (BFA) degree from Bard College after spending two years on a pilgrimage retracing the transatlantic slave trade with Buddhist monks. She completed the Whitney Museum of American Arts' Independent Study Program in Studio Art and simultaneously finished a two-year actor-training conservatory with Maggie Flanigan Studio.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Crisis Makes a Book Club* at the Queens Museum (2023); *Nectar* at KADIST Paris (2022); and *The structure the labor the foundation the escape the pause* at the Sarasota Art Museum (2022). Recent group exhibitions include *The Momentary* at Crystal Bridges Museum of Modern Art and *Desert X*, which has been presented at museums and exhibition spaces across the US and abroad. Simmons' work has been featured in publications, including *ARTnews*, *Artforum*, *New York, Paper*, *The New York Times* and others. Simmons' works are in major museums and private collections across the United States, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, among others. She has held teaching positions at Harvard University, Yale University, Columbia University and the Art Institute of Chicago.



Multimedia display *Skin Hunger*, part of Arizona State University Art Museum's *Undoing Time: Art and Histories of Incarceration*, by Xaviera Simmons



Bayeté Ross Smith

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Bayeté Ross Smith (he/him) is a photographer, multimedia artist, filmmaker, and educator who is involved in a number of community art projects and interventions that challenge power structures inherent in images and media. His works are often realized through partnerships with cities and civic and legal institutions. Notably, he developed *Hyphen-Nation* in collaboration with *The New York Times* and Public Broadcasting Service's *POV* series.

The Fund support helped Smith to create *Art Matters*, a multi-year series of installations, workshops, games and lectures that uncover and examine implicit biases related to mass incarceration, migration policy and immigrant detention. Ross was the first Artist in Residence at Columbia University's Law School. Through storytelling, *Art Matters* brought a wide range of criminal legal system actors – including law students, law firms, district attorney offices, and current and future policymakers – into experiences that challenge common narratives around mass incarceration. *Art Matters* also engaged the public through digital and in-person events.



From Bayeté Ross Smith's *Art Matters*



Clint Smith

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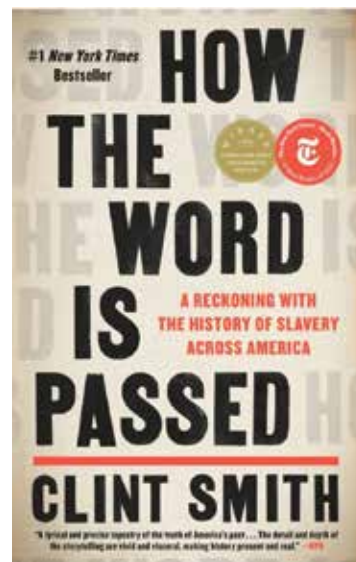
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Clint Smith is a staff writer at The Atlantic. He is the author of the narrative nonfiction book *How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*, which was a #1 *New York Times* bestseller; winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Nonfiction, the Hillman Prize for Book Journalism; the Stowe Prize; and was selected by *The New York Times* as one of the 10 best books of 2021. He is also the author of the poetry collection *Counting Descent*, which won the 2017 Literary Award for Best Poetry Book from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association and was a finalist for an NAACP Image Award. His poetry collection *Above Ground* was also a *New York Times* best seller.

Smith is a recipient of the Fund's Bearing Witness Fellowship, which is intended to enable talented writers to complete projects that speak to the human cost of mass incarceration.



Cover of Clint Smith's *How the Word is Passed*



Jonathan “Jon Boogz” Smith

Dancer, choreographer, video artist/director

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Jon Boogz (he/him) is a movement artist whose work encompasses dance traditions of urban Black communities, including jooking, popping & locking, and krump. As a dancer, choreographer and director, Boogz seeks to push the evolution of what dance can be. He sees dance as a way to tell stories, bring awareness to social issues and discharge trauma. Boogz wrote, choreographed, directed and performed in *Color of Reality*, a short video with artist Alexa Meade and dancer Lil' Buck that explores police violence in communities of color. It won Concept Video of the Year from the *World of Dance* television series and Best Experimental Film at the Toronto International Short Film Festival, among other awards. His video, *Am I a Man?* plays on a loop at Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum in Montgomery, AL.

Boogz received support from the Fund to create *Street Vanguard*, a TV pilot highlighting how street dance is an act of resilience – a response to poverty, marginalization and mass incarceration – that enables communities to claim ownership of their own narratives and to thrive. By documenting and exploring street dance in locations including Memphis, Oakland and Brooklyn, Boogz also aims to show that beautiful gems of art come from unjustly treated communities.



Jon Boogz and Lil' Buck in their award winning film *Color of Reality*.

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jackie sumell

Multidisciplinary artist, abolitionist

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jackie sumell (she/her) is a multidisciplinary artist and prison abolitionist working at the intersection of art, abolition and education for over 20 years. Her collaboration with Herman Wallace, who was wrongfully imprisoned in Louisiana and sent to solitary confinement for 41 years, was the subject of the Emmy-winning documentary *Herman's House*. Her public artwork, *The Solitary Gardens*, uses the tools of permaculture and transformative justice to facilitate exchanges between people in solitary confinement and volunteer proxies on the 'outside'. It asks all involved to imagine a landscape without prisons. *Solitary Gardens* was featured in MoMA PS1's courtyard as part of a larger plant-powered initiative called *Growing Abolition*.

With support from the Fund, sumell took the Prisoner's Apothecary on tour across the US. The Apothecary is a mobile healing unit, designed by prisoners, that aims to help everyone rethink the country's reliance on punishment and control. It operates with *Solitary Gardens* to offer free plant medicine and healing justice workshops to communities affected by mass incarceration.

sumell also collaborated with fellow A4J grantees Maria Gaspar, Titus Kapfar and Shaun Leonardo, and a nonprofit coalition of more 80 artists known as In Plain Sight, to create imaginative public artworks to make visible the country's indistinguishable response to immigration and crime: incarceration. More recently, sumell received support from the Fund to open a brick-and-mortar home for the Abolitionist's Apothecary in New Orleans. The space, the John Thompson Legacy Center (JTLC), honors John Thompson, who spent 18 years wrongly incarcerated, including 14 years on death row at the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola, before he was exonerated of all charges in 2003.



jackie sumell with young people at the Prisoner's Apothecary



Kamisha Thomas

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Kamisha Thomas (she/her) is a Columbus, OH native, a second-generation carceral system survivor, and an interdisciplinary artist dedicated to ending mass incarceration. After being released after serving seven and a half years in prison, she and Aimee Wissman established the Returning Artists Guild (RAG), a group of directly impacted artist-abolitionists. Via RAG, they are providing a wide range of support services to other formerly incarcerated artists across Ohio.

Thomas is an a Right of Return USA Fellow. She screened her first short film at the 41st Cleveland International Film Festival. Thomas believes that unapologetic artistic expression is the tool that will destroy the master's house: the system that disproportionately exploits and kills Black and brown bodies.



Still from *Silence is Consent*, 2022, by Kamisha Thomas.

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Hank Willis Thomas

Conceptual artist

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Hank Willis Thomas (he/him) is a conceptual artist who works with themes related to perspective identity, commodity, media, and popular culture. His monograph *Pitch Blackness* was published in *Aperture* in 2008. Notable works include *Strange Fruit* (2011, Corcoran Gallery of Art); *Hank Willis Thomas: I Am A Man* (2016, New City Arts Initiative); and *All Power to All People* (2017, Thomas Paine Plaza in Philadelphia). He is a recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship and is a member of the New York City Public Design Commission.

A grant from A4J supported Thomas and partner Dr. Baz Dreisinger to create *The Writing on the Wall*, an installation made from diagrams, essays, letters, notes, poems, and stories from incarcerated people around the world. Thomas and Dreisinger partnered with MASS Design Group to turn the pop-up concept into a traveling exhibit and a collapsible booth. They have shown the work in public spaces across the US and overseas, including on The High Line in NYC through a partnership with Friends of The High Line.

During the exhibitions, formerly incarcerated leaders are paid to serve as hosts to engage viewers on different subjects. Each debut of *The Writing on the Wall* is intended to be an event and part of an ongoing campaign, coordinated in collaboration with organizations – including JustLeadershipUSA and #cut50 – and led by formerly incarcerated community leaders.



The Writing on the Wall, co-created by Hank Willis Thomas



Heather Ann Thompson

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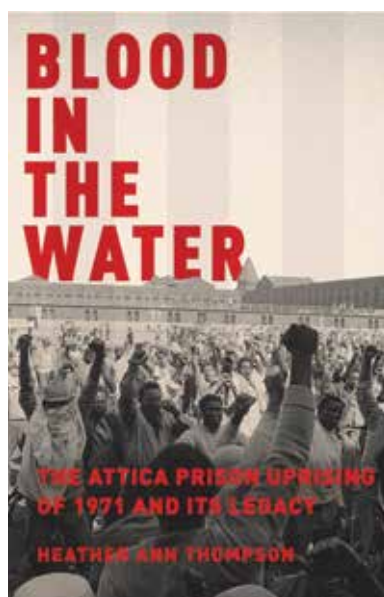
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Dr. Heather Ann Thompson (she/hers) is a historian at the University of Michigan and is the Pulitzer Prize- and Bancroft Prize-winning author of *Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and its Legacy*. Previously, she served on a National Academy of Sciences blue ribbon panel sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and the MacArthur Foundation that studied the causes and consequences of mass incarceration in the United States.

As a recipient of the Bearing Witness Fellowship, Thompson received support from A4J to conduct initial research for a book about the 1978 police assault on the MOVE community in Philadelphia. She chose the Prison Creative Arts Project (PCAP) at the University of Michigan as a co-grantee partner for her fellowship, which led to the Documenting Criminalization and Confinement project. That research initiative focused on creating a record of the impacts and consequences of the post-1970 turn to mass incarceration from the perspectives of those who endured it most directly.

More recently, PCAP received support from the Fund to hire formerly incarcerated people to conduct research, record oral histories and create artistic pieces that coalesce the many stories of those with lived experiences who participated in the Documenting Criminalization and Confinement project. The final project will be delivered to policymakers as part of the larger effort to further criminal legal system reform.



Cover of Heather Ann Thompson's *Blood in the Water*



Natasha Trethewey

Poet

Chicago, IL

[instagram.com/natasha_trethewey_official](https://www.instagram.com/natasha_trethewey_official)

twitter.com/ntrethewey

[facebook.com/natasha.trethewey.3](https://www.facebook.com/natasha.trethewey.3)

natasha.trethewey@northwestern.edu

Natasha Trethewey (she/her) the daughter of a mixed-race marriage whose parents divorced when she was six. When she was a teenager, Trethewey's mother was murdered by her ex-husband. Trethewey's third book of poems, *Native Guard*, which won the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in poetry, contains elegies to her mother and a sonnet sequence in the voice of a Black soldier fighting in the Civil War. Her more recent work includes a book of creative nonfiction, *Beyond Katrina: A Meditation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast*, and the poetry collection *Thrall*.

Trethewey is a recipient of A4J's Bearing Witness Fellowship, which is intended to enable talented writers to complete projects that speak to the human cost of mass incarceration.

Theories Of Time And Space

You can get there from here, though
there's no going home.

Everywhere you go will be somewhere
you've never been. Try this:

head south on Mississippi 49, one-
by-one mile markers ticking off
another minute of your life. Follow this
to its natural conclusion - dead end
at the coast, the pier at Gulfport where

riggings of shrimp boats are loose stitches
in a sky threatening rain. Cross over
the man-made beach, 26 miles of sand
dumped on a mangrove swamp - buried
terrain of the past. Bring only
what you must carry - tome of memory
its random blank pages. On the dock
where you board the boat for Ship Island,
someone will take your picture:
the photograph - who you were -
will be waiting when you return

Natasha Trethewey

Natasha Trethewey's *Theories of Time and Space* from
Native Guard

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Shontina Vernon

Writer, filmmaker, theater artist, musician

Atlanta, GA and New York, NY

shontinavernon.com

[instagram.com/shontinavmuses](https://www.instagram.com/shontinavmuses)

[facebook.com/shontinavmuses](https://www.facebook.com/shontinavmuses)

shontina@visionaryjusticestorylab.org

Shontina Vernon (she/her) is an award-winning filmmaker, theater artist, musician, and educator whose work explores memory, intergenerational trauma and queerness. Having entered the Texas juvenile justice system at just 10 years old, she bears witness to the impact of incarceration on identity and one's sense of belonging, especially in the lives of women and girls of color. Some of her recent works include the short film *Grrrl Justice*, the installation *Bodies in Extremities*, and *Forging Ahead*, a coming-of-age story using a hybrid form of film and theatre performance. She serves as founding lead producer for the Visionary Justice StoryLab, a collective of visual storytellers whose work highlights the impact of the criminal legal system and systemic oppression in communities of color.

With support from the Fund, Vernon developed a limited episodic series, *Consider the Rainbow*, centering Black and brown queer women and trans folks who have been impacted by the criminal legal system. The series employs an intersectional lens, using gender and sexuality as a framework to understand rising rates of incarceration in these communities.



Video still from Shontina Vernon's *Grrrl Justice*

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Louise Waakaa'igan

Poet

Wisconsin

lwaakaaigan@gmail.com

Louise Waakaa'igan (she/her) is an Anishinaabekwe poet enrolled at Odaawaa Zaaga'iganiing (Lac Courte Orielles Reservation) in northern Wisconsin. A former participant in the Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop, she released her debut poetry collection, *This is Where*, in the spring of 2020. That was just months after she finished serving a 16-year prison sentence at Shakopee Correctional Institute in Minnesota. Waakaa'igan writes in the preface, "It has only been, in part, through my incarceration that I have been able to sit with the experiences of my life and put them to words, not just for my writing, but for my understanding and healing."

Waakaa'igan received support from the Fund to finish her second collection of poetry, publish it, and travel on a book tour meeting Indigenous women incarcerated across Indian Country. At prisons and jails, she aims to host six 4-6 week writing workshops. Through a variety of prompts, her goal is to offer women a safe space and the opportunity to remember who they are. From this project, she hopes to gather an anthology of these women's poetry, curated by them, that documents their resilience.

I'm from Six Mile.
49n up the driveway, sitting on green
boxes watching cars.
Sometimes their doors didn't match. . .

I'm from women with the same last name
and a father
none of us knew. . .

I'm from a single-parent household.
Michael Jackson cassette tapes,
Purple Rain posters and latch-key kids.
Title V programs, commods on pantry shelves,
cucumbers from Grandpa Jake's garden
and a mean ol' dog name Turkey.

From Louise Waakaa'igan's *This is Where*

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Credit: Clare Gatto

Lauren Williams

Designer, researcher, educator

Detroit, MI

williamslaurenm.com

williams.lauren.m@gmail.com

Lauren Williams (she/her) is a Detroit-based designer, researcher, and educator who works with visual and interactive media to understand, critique, and reimagine the ways social and economic systems distribute and exercise power. Of late, her creative and research practice focuses on examining the violence visited on Black people at the hands of the American state and speculative worldbuilding that enables us to imagine and inhabit liberated, decarceral futures as a means for advancing abolitionist organizing.

Williams was a 2022 Jacob Lawrence Legacy Resident and the inaugural Detroit Justice Center artist-in-residence in 2020. Her writing and artwork have appeared in *SHIFTER Magazine*, *The Black Experience in Design: Identity, Expression and Reflection*, *Futures*, *becoming undisciplined*, and the *Design and Culture* journal. She is a recipient of the Fund's New Visions for Shared Safety grant, which is intended to allow grantees to continue to create work that envisions a world without mass incarceration.



Lauren Williams' *Making Room for Abolition*

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Dorsey Nunn of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children. Photo is courtesy of LSPC

Organizations



Tyra Patterson of Ohio Justice and Policy Center spent 23 years incarcerated for crimes she did not commit. Photo by Erin Baiano.

**ART FOR
JUSTICE
FUND**

A



Donna Hylton, founder,
A Little Piece of Light

A Little Piece of Light

Services and support centered on ending criminalization of women and girls

New York, NY

alittlepieceoflight.org

facebook.com/alittlepieceoflight

instagram.com/alittlepieceoflight

Donna Hylton (dhylton@alittlepieceoflight.org)

A Little Piece of Light (ALPOL) provides important services for women formerly involved with the justice system and their families, including domestic violence resources and grief and mental health support. The organization was founded by Donna Hylton, an activist and author who advocates for the rights and well-being of women and girls who have been impacted by intersectional trauma. She is an outspoken proponent of the need to incorporate harm reduction approaches into policies for addressing societal and justice issues in order to achieve a more humane framework.

ALPOL received support from Art for Justice Fund to further strengthen its infrastructure and operations and deepen its engagement with community partners in advancing criminal legal reform. These efforts include expanding the Justice 4 Women Task Force, which was originally formed to organize a collaborative response to COVID-19 inside prisons and jails. This type of collective action builds on successful initiatives to promote re-entry, including prioritizing women's voices in the ongoing effort to close the Rikers Island jail complex in New York City.

Through an earlier partnership with the Fund, A Little Piece of Light also opened an office in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood of Brooklyn to serve as a community resource center for people affected by mass incarceration. Community members can receive help at that facility for a wide range of social service needs, including transitional housing and health care.



Donna Hylton speaking at a rally to provide trauma-informed care to women in the carceral system.

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A New Way of Life Reentry Project

Linking promise with opportunity for women

Los Angeles, CA

anewwayoflife.org

[instagram.com/anewwayoflifela](https://www.instagram.com/anewwayoflifela)

twitter.com/ANewWayofLife1

[facebook.com/ANewWayofLifeReentryProject](https://www.facebook.com/ANewWayofLifeReentryProject)

[linkedin.com/company/a-new-way-of-life-reentry-project](https://www.linkedin.com/company/a-new-way-of-life-reentry-project)

Susan Burton (susan@anewwayoflife.org)

A New Way of Life Reentry Project (ANWOL) is a nationally acclaimed, Black-led re-entry program for women. It is dedicated to helping women, families, and communities heal from the experience of mass incarceration while simultaneously creating opportunities for leadership, activism, and advocacy. In doing so, it recognizes and honors the value of the expertise and lived experiences of women directly impacted by incarceration.

A New Way of Life offers community-based services and resources that spur leadership development and collective action. These include providing safe re-entry housing for women returning to the community and operating a family reunification program and legal clinic to promote and protect the civic and employment rights of formerly incarcerated women. ANWOL has expanded the reach of the kind of services it provides by creating the SAFE Housing Network, which currently consists of 24 organizations in 20 U.S. cities, including Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and New York City, that offer similar support and resources.

With support from A4J, ANWOL was able to continue to provide women with housing and other supports for successful re-entry, build the capacity and power of a network of formerly incarcerated women, and increase the number of SAFE Housing sites across the country. Support from the Fund also has helped ANWOL raise the profile of its founder, Susan Burton, as a public speaker and nationally recognized criminal justice reformer, an effort that has galvanized new thinking in the field, attracted cornerstone partners and expanded the project's work. The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) evaluated the organization's methods and the capacity to replicate the SAFE Housing Network model and framework nationally.



Susan Burton (I), founder of A New Way of Life

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Alliance for Safety and Justice's Aswad Thomas

Alliance for Safety and Justice

Building a movement to replace mass incarceration with shared safety

Oakland, CA

allianceforsafetyandjustice.org

facebook.com/safeandjustusa

instagram.com/safeandjustusa

twitter.com/SafeandJustUSA

Jay Jordan (jay@safeandjust.org)

Aswad Thomas (aswad@safeandjust.org)

Jessica Reid (jreidd@safeandjust.org)

Alliance for Safety and Justice (ASJ) is a multi-state advocacy organization that aims to replace ineffective criminal legal system policies with those that keep people safe. It represents diverse crime survivors as well as people living with old records as key public safety stakeholders. ASJ brings its members together with state leaders and coalition partners to promote and achieve reforms that stop cycles of crime, reduce costly incarceration, and make communities safer. The organization supports a range of ‘shared safety’ reforms, including crime prevention, community health, rehabilitation, economic mobility, and trauma recovery.

With support from the Fund, ASJ expanded its operations and is now active in eight states. Its more than 200,000 members in two main program categories (Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice, and TimeDone) are driving a bold multi-state advocacy agenda focused on reducing incarceration and supervision while expanding support for crime survivors, removing barriers for people with records and expanding investments in public safety solutions.

Additionally, the Fund aided ASJ in the creation of a leadership development program, the Safe and Just Campaign Academy, which trains local leaders, especially impacted leaders of color, in justice reform advocacy. Finally, A4J support helped ASJ expand its communications capacity to advance new narratives on safety and justice and build broad-based support for reform via public opinion polls, paid and digital media messages, national press events and more.



A

Allied Media Projects

Hub, home, and incubator for visionary people and collectives

Detroit, MI

alliedmedia.org

facebook.com/alliedmediaprojects

instagram.com/alliedmediaprojects

twitter.com/allied_media

youtube.com/channel/UCMnlx5WyLmbetzP5x4BillQ

info@alliedmedia.org

Allied Media Projects (AMP) is a hub, home, and incubator for visionary people and collectives in Detroit. In addition to AMP, the LOVE Building, located in Detroit's Core City neighborhood, is also home to the Detroit Justice Center, Detroit Disability Power, the Detroit Narrative Agency, the Detroit Community Technology Project, and Paradise Natural Foods.

With all these organizations under one roof, the LOVE Building provides a hub for collaborative social justice organizing and serves as a resource for the surrounding neighborhood. Although the individual missions vary, all organizations are rooted in the collective vision of cultivating liberation, joy, and justice for all Detroiters.

With Art for Justice Fund support, AMP helped create and expand the space and scope of the LOVE Building, including by seeking to make it as diverse as possible. The building provides a community space that is deeply accessible and environmentally responsible. It nurtures and amplifies the art, organizing, and cultural work of Black, brown, Indigenous, queer, trans, and disabled Detroiters. And it provides legal services, healthy and affordable food, media arts programming, and a community Internet hotspot to the surrounding neighborhood.



Allied Media Projects (AMP) is a hub, home, and incubator for visionary people and collectives

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American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) National and Local Chapters

Dismantling discriminatory systems through public education and legal action

aclu.org

facebook.com/aclu

instagram.com/aclu_nationwide

twitter.com/aclu

Karen Goldman (Karen.goldman@aclu.org)

Brandon Buskey (bbuskey@aclu.org)

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is committed to getting as many people out of pretrial detention as possible and, in the process, ending wealth-based pretrial incarceration. It used its partnership with A4J to focus on bail reform via litigation, public education, and organizing in Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan.

Louisiana's ACLU launched the Justice Lab: Putting Racist Policing on Trial initiative to combat racially discriminatory policing practices and thereby reduce pretrial incarceration. With support from nearly 50 law firms and 19 legal clinics, the ACLU of Louisiana has collected 400 complaints of police misconduct, filed more than 40 cases across the state, and documented countless stories from survivors of police violence.

Pennsylvania's ACLU is litigating class-action lawsuits challenging unconstitutional bail practices in Lancaster County as well as Montgomery County's practice of jailing people for parole and probation violations for weeks, months, and in some cases years, without even a hearing. It also released a research report on bail, *Broken Rules: How Pennsylvania Courts Use Cash Bail to Incarcerate People Before Trial*.

Ohio's ACLU launched a fiscal impact analysis of bail reform. This report, which took two years of relationship building and data analysis, revealed that Ohio could save between \$199 million and \$264 million each year by implementing commonsense bail reform.

Michigan's ACLU successfully settled a federal lawsuit to overhaul Detroit's bail system, a victory it is leveraging to add momentum to its yearslong push for legislative bail reform. Meanwhile, Michigan criminal courts began implementing recommendations the affiliate made as part of a task force Gov. Gretchen Whitmer convened in 2020.



The American Civil Liberties uses litigation, public education and organizing to advance bail reform.

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Aperture Foundation

Connecting the photo community with inspiring work and sharp ideas

New York, NY

aperture.org

facebook.com/aperturefoundation

instagram.com/aperturefnd

twitter.com/aperturefnd

Founded in NYC in 1953, the Aperture Foundation produces, publishes, and presents photography projects that stimulate dialogue on the role of images in contemporary culture. Through these projects and the publication of *Aperture* magazine, the organization aims to bring new voices and points of view into the art world.

With A4J support, the Aperture Foundation aimed to reframe the conversation around incarceration in the United States with a photography exhibition at the Cleveland Public Library, titled *Prison Nation*, at a critical moment for Ohio audiences. The exhibition underscored the humanity of incarcerated people in Ohio in the lead up to a statewide referendum on Issue #1 (Drug and Criminal Justice Policies Initiative), which would have reformed sentencing for many criminal offenses and boosted rehabilitation support (The amendment ultimately was defeated by voters in November 2018).



Layla "Roach" Roberts (Inquisitor), Deborah Luster. One of the Photographs from the exhibition at the Cleveland Public Library, 2018



Aperture Foundation's *Prison Nation* exhibition

A

Apollo Theater

Multidisciplinary commissioner and presenter of performing arts

New York, NY

apollotheater.org

twitter.com/apollotheater

[instagram.com/apollotheater](https://www.instagram.com/apollotheater)

[facebook.com/ApolloTheater](https://www.facebook.com/ApolloTheater)

Kamala Forbes (kamala.forbes@apollotheater.org)

Sarah Rodriguez (Sarahb.rodriguez@apollotheater.org)

Since its founding nearly a century ago, the Apollo Theater has served as a center of innovation and a creative catalyst for Harlem, NYC, and the world. It envisions a new American canon centered on contributions to the performing arts by artists of the African diaspora, and contributes to this vision by playing a vital role in cultivating emerging artists and launching legends.

A grant in 2020 from A4J supported planning for a musical collaboration between the Apollo Theater and the American Composers Orchestra for a contemporary production of Joel Thompson's *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed*, a choral and orchestral piece about police killings of unarmed black men across the United States. The grant also served as a stabilizing force for the project after the COVID-19 pandemic forced the Apollo to close to the public in March 2020.

A4J also supported the eventual production at the Apollo, in May 2022, of *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* as part of a full performance called *The Gathering: A Collective Sonic Ring Shout*. Also featured were Abby Courtney Bryan's *Sanctum* and Carlos Simon's *Amen!* plus new works by three composers: Toshi Reagon, Nona Hendryx, and Jason Michael Webb.

The planning and production of *Seven Last Words of the Unarmed* was part of an effort to use art as a tool for community healing and reflection in the wake of the murders of George Floyd and Breanna Taylor and the reenergized Black Lives Matter movement. Recognizing the importance of this work to the African-American communities of Harlem and NYC, the Apollo recruited singers from across communities and various Black churches. The production was performed twice on Apollo's mainstage stage and once for local New York City schoolchildren.



The Apollo Theater in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City

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Arizona State University Art Museum

Launched exhibition exploring transformative ideas about criminal justice

Tempe, AZ

asuartmuseum.asu.edu
facebook.com/asuartmuseum
instagram.com/asuartmuseum
twitter.com/asuartmuseum

Miki Garcia (Miki.garcia@asu.edu)
Lizabeth Dion (Lizabeth.dion@asu.edu)

The Arizona State University (ASU) Art Museum was founded in 1950. It has a mission to pursue the highest level of research and experimentation in exhibitions, programs, collections, and publications. The museum has more than 12,000 pieces in its collection across three locations in the Phoenix metro area.

ASU Art Museum received support from A4J grant to research, plan and mount *Undoing Time: A Visual History of Incarceration*. The exhibition considers the foundational roots of confinement from philosophical, sociological, theological and art historical perspectives to better understand the fact that today's mass incarceration crisis is centuries in the making. It traces history's images that contribute to the entrenched cultural beliefs associated with today's carceral system.

The six-month exhibition featured contemporary artists Ashley Hunt, Cannupa Hanska Luger, Mario Ybarra, and Vincent Valdez, among others, who presented works intended to explore transformative ideas about criminal justice. In the exhibition, art and history were used to interpret how the penal legacies of the past persist today. To accompany the exhibition, the museum produced a fully illustrated catalogue featuring interviews with artists and essays by the curators, poets and cultural historians and a free digital microsite with accompanying essays and an exhibition guide.



Undoing Time: A Visual History of Incarceration at ASU Art Museum

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ArtChangeUs

*Supporting Currently Incarcerated Artists
Reframing the national arts conversation*

Philadelphia, PA & New York, NY

artsinachangingamerica.org

facebook.com/ArtsinaChangingAmerica

twitter.com/ArtChangeUS

youtube.com/channel/UCpNfZo2_687Bmb1Z-_IPqzA

Roberta Uno (roberta@artchangeus.com)

Art in a Changing America (ArtChangeUS) is a not-for-profit initiative that has created a vast network of artists, idea producers, and organizations as part of an effort to bring unheard leadership voices to the forefront of social discourse, arts production, and community change. It aims to reframe the national arts conversation to understand and respond to cultural change, catalyze innovative artistic work, create opportunities for artists to learn new perspectives and collaborate, and disseminate cultural equity best practices.

ArtChangeUS received a grant from the Fund to support the practice and exhibition capacity of incarcerated artists, thereby ensuring their voices can be part of the narrative about ending mass incarceration.



Support from ArtChangeUS is provided to artists who are currently incarcerated.

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Arts for Healing and Justice Network

Building resiliency and wellness among justice-impacted youth

Los Angeles, CA

ahjnetwork.org

[instagram.com/ahjnetwork](https://www.instagram.com/ahjnetwork)

twitter.com/AHJNetwork

Elida Ledesma (elida@ahjnetwork.org)

The Arts for Healing and Justice Network (AHJN), formerly known as the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network, utilizes arts to build resiliency and wellness in justice-impacted youth and seeks to transform the juvenile justice system. Young people themselves lead the efforts to design effective policy and drive reform around youth diversion from incarceration.

AHJN received an A4J grant to continue to replicate its model. It trained nonprofits in New Mexico to create arts-based network models in the state's juvenile justice system and has since worked to do the same with partners in cities in California, Ohio, New York and Louisiana.

The organization is building on its practice of arts as an integral tool for systems change around youth incarceration. For example, AHJN has collaborated with the Los Angeles Department of Public Health to implement its peer learning exchange training through the department's Trauma Prevention Initiative. It has also partnered with the city's Department of Arts and Culture, Office of Child Protection, and Department of Mental Health to co-design *Creative Wellbeing*, an approach to integrating healing-informed arts practices with mental health tools.

AHJN's youth leaders have also worked closely with Los Angeles County in making the Youth Justice Reimagined plan a reality and have been instrumental in the creation of the new Department of Youth Development. Other partnerships with the county include working with the Probation Department to continue providing coordinated, exceptional arts programming via its network of community-based organizations to all detention centers in county.



Art created by young people in the Arts for Healing and Justice Network

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Asian American Writers' Workshop

Creative writing by Asian Americans at the intersection of migration, race, and social justice

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aaww.org

facebook.com/AsianAmericanWritersWorkshop

instagram.com/aaww_nyc

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Jafreen Uddin (juddin@aaww.org)

F

With a focus on both literary arts and racial justice, Asian American Writers' Workshop (AAWW) is devoted to the development, publication, and dissemination of creative writing by Asian Americans at the intersection of migration, race, and social justice. AAWW publishes online magazines, manages grants fellowships to emerging writers of color, and curates and presents community programs with Asian American writers.

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A4J invested in AAWW's prison intervention initiative, which fostered, published, and promoted writing that highlights the human cost of mass incarceration and the essential humanity of incarcerated people, with particular emphasis on immigrant populations. The initiative also coordinated public events, writing clinics and cross-movement coalitions to advance the cultural shift against mass incarceration while also examining the specific role that Asian Americans play in efforts to abolish prisons across the United States and the world.

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Also, the Fund supported AAWW's partnership with Black Women Radicals and the Asian American Feminist Collective to create Black and Asian Feminist Solidarities, an editorial collaboration through AAWW's *The Margins* digital magazine that explores how Black and Asian feminist histories and practices can offer tools and strategies for liberation. The publication includes creative works, first-person essays, and interrogations on language and solidarity. These pieces examined contemporary conversations about Black/Asian American feminist solidarity in the time of COVID-19.

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A reading organized by the Asian American Writers' Workshop

Bard Prison Initiative

Providing college education opportunities to incarcerated students

New York, NY

bpi.bard.edu

facebook.com/BPIbard

instagram.com/bard_prison_initiative

twitter.com/BPI

Max Kenner (kenner@bard.edu)

Founded in 2001, Bard Prison Initiative (BPI) was one of the first programs in the country to offer college education to incarcerated students following the ban on federal funding for higher education in prison. From its beginnings as a pilot program with 15 students, the program has grown immensely and currently offers college courses in six New York State facilities, enrolls more than 300 incarcerated students annually, and has conferred more than 450 degrees. In addition to its educational programming, Bard established the Consortium for the Liberal Arts in Prison, offering support and technical assistance to colleges and universities that operate college-in-prison programs across the country.

With its first grant from A4J, BPI worked with Spitfire Strategies to develop a communications strategy around the release of *College Behind Bars*, a feature-length documentary film directed by Lynn Novick and executive produced by Ken Burns. BPI and Spitfire identified press opportunities to make visible the human toll of mass incarceration, promoted the film and support screenings, and developed a plan to engage audiences and motivate viewers to advocate for carceral reforms.

With continued support from Art for Justice, BPI was able to build on the attention gained from *College Behind Bars*. It generated press and strategic social media campaigns to promote the mission and vision of the organization, shared stories of BPI to build public empathy for the obstacles faced by people returning home, and worked to expand policy and practice impacts related to access to education for those incarcerated.



Bard Bard Prison Initiative offers college courses in several New York State facilities.

Borealis Philanthropy / Spark Justice Fund

Supporting grassroots efforts to end cash bail and reform pretrial justice, among other key priorities

Minneapolis, MN

borealisphilanthropy.org

facebook.com/BorealisPhil

linkedin.com/company/borealis-philanthropy

twitter.com/BorealisPhil

[Jose Santacruz \(jsantacruz@borealisphilanthropy.org\)](mailto:jsantacruz@borealisphilanthropy.org)

Spark Justice Fund supports community-based organizations to interrupt mass incarceration. Borealis Philanthropy is a philanthropic intermediary that helps donors find and fund grantees that are doing the most effective, constituency-led work. Its key operating principle is that community leaders who are closest to the problems are also closest to the solutions. Founded in 2015, Borealis supports 10 donor collaborative funds at the intersections of criminal justice, Black-led movements, LGBTQIA+ communities, disability justice, immigrant rights and more.

With support from A4J, Borealis Philanthropy was able to start the Spark Justice Fund (SJF), a donor collaborative that supports grassroots efforts throughout the country to end cash bail, transform pretrial justice, and build power in communities most impacted by incarceration. SJF provides grantees with predominantly general operating, multi-year grants, as well as organizational development and capacity-building services. Art for Justice supported SJF's distribution of close to \$4.5 million to 28 small and medium-sized organizations (for example, Action St. Louis, Free Hearts, Law for Black Lives, and the Michigan Liberation Education Fund). Such groups are important to the grassroots' ecosystem which larger foundations can't always fund.



Spark Justice Fund supports community-based organizations to interrupt mass incarceration.

Brooklyn Museum

Using art to drive community conversations for a more empathetic world

New York, NY

brooklynmuseum.org

facebook.com/brooklynmuseum

instagram.com/brooklynmuseum

twitter.com/brooklynmuseum

Catherine Morris (Catherine.Morris@brooklynmuseum.org)

The Brooklyn Museum, one the largest cultural centers in NYC's most populous borough, has instilled and celebrates a public agenda that calls for increased community representation and inclusion. The museum values art as playing a central role in society, framing ideas around social and policy change. It therefore promotes art as a catalyst to engage communities in conversations that create a more connected, civic, and empathetic world.

Support from A4J allowed the Brooklyn Museum to demonstrate its commitment to promoting criminal justice reform by opening its spaces to communities that are directly affected by the inequities of the carceral system, including by inviting them to participate and collaborate in the creation of an exhibit and related programming focused on policy and advocacy efforts to help end mass incarceration. The resulting exhibition used art to amplify underrepresented voices and educate a wider audience about the harmful, pervasive effects of the nation's penal system.



Atrium and gallery space at the Brooklyn Museum

California Lawyers for the Arts

Serving the creative arts community

San Francisco, CA

calawyersforthearts.org

facebook.com/calawyersforthearts

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Founded in 1974, California Lawyers for the Arts (CLA) provides education, representation, and dispute resolution while articulating a role for the arts in community development. Its vision is for artists and arts organizations to serve as agents of democratic involvement, innovation, and positive social change. It believes an empowered arts sector is essential to healthy communities.

Through an Art for Justice Fund Art and Advocacy grant, CLA supported artist-activist Stone Singh in creating a 15-foot-high steel sculpture, *In God We Trust*, which was installed on the campus of California State University, Sacramento in 2023. The Fund's support also helped CLA to launch its re-entry program, *Designing Creative Futures*, in San Diego and Los Angeles in 2022 and to leverage state funding in order to expand the project statewide.

A4J also supported CLA's agenda of reducing mass incarceration through hosting one-day forums that took place in 2018 in states with high prison populations; a national conference on Arts in Corrections held at Santa Clara University in 2019; and start-up funding for the Justice Arts Coalition. A separate grant helped CLA collaborate with the national Free at Last Coalition to produce a series of public service announcements (PSAs) calling for the US Constitution to be amended to eliminate the 'exception clause' of the 13th Amendment.

The Fund has also supported CLA and grantee partner Voice of the Experienced (VOTE) to collaborate with the Louisiana State Arts Council, the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge and the Arts, Racial Justice, Culture and Healing (ARCH) collaborative in New Orleans to hold 10- to 12-week art classes in at least three parish (county) jails and/or transitional facilities.



Stone Singh's *In God We Trust*



Californians for Safety and Justice

Advancing effective justice strategies to increase public safety for all Californians

Oakland, CA

safeandjust.org/

facebook.com/safeandjust

twitter.com/safeandjust

youtube.com/user/SafeAndJust

Tinisch Hollins (tinischhollins@safeandjust.org)

Jessica Reid (jreid@safeandjust.org)

Californians for Safety and Justice (CSJ) is the flagship state-based advocacy organization sponsored by Alliance for Safety and Justice (ASJ). Similar to ASJ, it represents diverse crime survivors as well as formerly incarcerated people as key public safety stakeholders. Through advocacy, grassroots organizing and strategic communications, CSJ aims to move California's justice system away from mass incarceration and towards approaches that stop crime and increase community safety, well-being and access to economic opportunity.

With its A4J grant, Californians for Safety and Justice corralled the energy of Crime Survivors for Safety and Justice (CSSJ) around a statewide victim's agenda to break through the barriers that survivors of crime face in getting help recovering from trauma and expanded the influence of the 'TimeDone' program to remove barriers for people with old records. As a result, the organization drove a successful statewide advocacy strategy around the passage and signing in 2022 of SB 731. This bill, which mandates the automatic clearing of most felony convictions four years after the case ends, was the first of its kind and the most expansive expungement bill ever passed in the United States.

Additionally, A4J's support helped CSJ to participate extensively in more than three dozen other reforms that were successful, including to reduce incarceration and supervision; expand stabilizing support and access to trauma recovery for crime victims; and expand investments into public safety solutions such as trauma recovery, violence prevention, re-entry and mental health treatment and support.



Bail reform is a key goal of Californians for Safety and Justice

The Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth

Advocating to ban life without parole and other extreme sentences for children

Washington, DC

cfsy.org

[instagram.com/thecfsy](https://www.instagram.com/thecfsy)

[linkedin.com/company/campaign-for-the-fair-sentencing-of-youth](https://www.linkedin.com/company/campaign-for-the-fair-sentencing-of-youth)

twitter.com/TheCFSY

[youtube.com/user/thecfsy1](https://www.youtube.com/user/thecfsy1)

Xavier McElrath-Bey (xavier@cfsy.org)

Angel Alejandro (aalejandro@cfsy.org)

Founded in 2009, the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth (CFSY) works to reform the youth justice system by banning life without parole and other extreme sentences for children. CFSY approaches reform through movement-building, public education, advocacy, and litigation, with the experience and expertise of those directly impacted by the justice system galvanizing its work.

With support from A4J, CFSY supported members of its Incarcerated Children's Advocacy Network (ICAN) and other directly impacted people to take even greater leadership roles across the movement. Additionally, through its new Community Prosperity Initiative, CFSY deepened cross-collaboration among organizations serving directly impacted people to ensure that once released, those incarcerated as children are able to thrive and live meaningful lives. CFSY also worked with national partners to further establish movement-wide narratives to combat dehumanizing and racist rhetoric and policies to advance legislation ending extreme sentences.

With its latest grant from the Fund, CFSY developed a multi-year strategy (both nationally and state-based) to abolish life-in-prison sentences for children and increased its lobbying efforts, public narrative campaigns, and strategic prosecutor engagement.



CFSY community members at the U.S. Supreme Court in 2019.

Center for Employment Opportunities

Providing employment support to returning citizens

New York, NY

ceoworks.org

facebook.com/ceoworks

instagram.com/ceoworks

linkedin.com/company/center-for-employment-opportunities

twitter.com/ceoworks

info@ceoworks.org

The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) provides immediate and comprehensive employment services exclusively to people released from incarceration. The organization is based on a belief in the transformational power of work, and therefore helps to ensure that anyone with a criminal record who wants to work has the preparation and support to find a job and remain in the labor force. CEO believes that everyone, regardless of their past, deserves the chance to shape a stronger future for themselves, their family, and their communities.

CEO's employment program model offers participants a pathway to economic stability through job readiness training, transitional employment with daily pay, assistance in removing barriers to employment, individualized job coaching and development services, connection to fair chance employers, and retention support after job placement. Currently operating in more than 30 communities across 12 states, CEO is a national leader in providing re-entry employment services and setting previously incarcerated participants on a path toward economic stability.

A4J supported CEO's Returning Citizens Stimulus (RCS), a first-of-its-kind cash assistance program for justice-impacted individuals during the COVID-19 crisis. CEO launched the project just a month into the pandemic to meet constituent's emergency needs. Over the next two years, it distributed \$24+ million to more than 10,000 people, the largest-ever conditional cash transfer to formerly incarcerated individuals. RCS aimed to promote public health and safety, fairness, and opportunities that benefit returning citizens, their families, and the larger community.



Participants on the job with one of the Center for Employment Opportunities' transitional work crews in Los Angeles.

Center for Justice Innovation

Using arts to help build a fairer and more humane justice system

New York, NY

innovatingjustice.org

facebook.com/CenterForCourtInnovation

instagram.com/courtinnovation

twitter.com/innovjustice

youtube.com/user/Courtinnovation

Amy Ellenbogen (ellenbogena@courtinnovation.org)

The Center for Justice Innovation develops and runs programs to strengthen neighborhoods by improving safety and economic opportunity. The Center for Justice Innovation (CJI) envisions a justice system that is fair, effective, and humane. Since 1993, it has worked with both governments and communities to develop and run programs that have reduced incarceration, increased equity, and strengthened neighborhoods by improving safety and economic opportunity. CJI's first initiative was the Midtown Community Court, that effectively reduced the number of people sent to jail by instead requiring them to carry out restitution projects (e.g., painting over graffiti, cleaning local parks) and social services (e.g., drug treatment, counseling, job training). CJI employs a team of researchers who to determine what is and is not working in the justice system and provides training to justice reformers both inside and outside of government.

Through an A4J Activating Art and Advocacy grant, CJI joined with Performing Statistics and Recess Art to provide artistic expertise for their respective alternatives to incarceration programs. The collaboration included creating artwork with participants that reflects their interactions with law enforcement and connects to officers who are patrolling their neighborhoods. CJI focused on Project Reset, a pre-arraignment diversion program that offers people charged with low-level misdemeanors the opportunity to resolve their criminal cases by participating in community-based programming. Project Reset culminated with an exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum created by project participants.

CJI also leads the Imagine Justice Project, which pairs local courts with community arts organizations to introduce to the legal system, city officials, and law enforcement new solutions for accountability and responding to harm. This project seeks to build the capacity for new and existing artists and young people to advocate for community justice. The ultimate vision of this project is to shift funding from NYC Departments of Corrections and Police toward investments that allow for healing and support communities to thrive.



The Center for Justice Innovation develops and runs programs to strengthen neighborhoods by improving safety and economic opportunity.

Chicago Torture Justice Memorials

Honoring and seeking justice for the survivors of Chicago police torture

Chicago, IL

chicagotorture.org

facebook.com/chicagotorture

twitter.com/chicagotorture

justicememorials@gmail.com

Chicago Torture Justice Memorials (CTJM) is a cultural collective that aims to honor and to seek justice for the survivors of Chicago police torture, their family members, and the communities affected by the torture. Founded in 2011, it has fused art, activism, and radical popular education with a tenacious commitment to antiracist politics.

CTJM spearheaded the grassroots campaign, Reparations Now!, that led to unprecedented legislation passed unanimously by the Chicago City Council in May 2015 to provide redress to approximately 120 victims of racially motivated torture by former Police Commander Jon Burge and his subordinates. Today, CTJM's mission is to fulfill the final piece of the reparations legislation: a permanent public memorial honoring the Burge torture survivors and their resilience. The memorial is intended to show how public art can bear witness to ugly truths of the past and how people can come together collectively to seek positive change and repair systematic harm.

CTJM received support from Art for Justice to oversee the construction of the public memorial design, titled *Breath, Form, and Freedom*, by artist Patricia Nguyen and architectural designer John Lee. The memorial will be a 1,600-square-foot structure featuring names of all known survivors, a space for survivors yet to be named, historical timelines and archives, oral histories, manifestos from a creative writing project with survivors, and a community area.



Rendition of the planned public memorial, titled *Breath, Form, and Freedom*

Civil Rights Corps

Civil rights advocacy

Washington, DC

civilrightscorps.org/about

facebook.com/civilrightscorps.org

instagram.com/civrightscorps

twitter.com/CivRightsCorps

Alec Karakatsanis (alec@civilrightscorps.org)

Quinita Ennis (quinita@civilrightscorps.org)

Civil Rights Corps (CRC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to challenging systemic injustice in the U.S. legal system. It takes on civil rights cases around the country on behalf of impoverished and marginalized people, working with people accused and convicted of crimes, their families and communities, currently or formerly incarcerated people, activists and organizers, and judges and government officials to create a legal system that promotes equality and human freedom. A4J supported Civil Rights Corps in its efforts to end practices and trends such as the money bail system, the criminalization of poverty, misleading media coverage about public safety, and abusive prosecutor and policing practices.

CRC received support for its Artist in Residency fellowships, which embed leading artists who have experienced incarceration into the organization's work, creating beautiful and powerful collaborations and an organizational culture deeply connected to the value of art in changing how advocates think about their work.

CRC has been a partner in three different A4J Activating Art and Advocacy grants. It commissioned artist Jesse Krimes to create *Mass Incarceration Quilt*, a touring art exhibit that aims to reframe public narratives and tell the stories of people whose lives have been affected by the criminal legal system. CRC worked with attorney and poet Reginald Dwayne Betts and artist Titus Kaphar to tour the *Redaction* exhibition from MoMA PS1 across the country. With the Texas Jail Project and Zealous, CRC created *Bearing Witness: A COVID-19 Capsule*, a digital archive of letters, art, handwritten lawsuits, audio and video interviews. The capsule increases community awareness of jail conditions and serves as an advocacy toolkit for directly impacted people and their supporters by documenting the conditions within Texas county jails.



Left: Quilt by Jesse Krimes. Right: Civil Rights Corp takes on civil rights cases on behalf of impoverished and marginalized people.

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Cleveland Public Library's Dr. Shenise Johnson-Thomas

Cleveland Public Library

Providing education, connectivity and creativity to Clevelanders

Cleveland, OH

cpl.org/
[instagram.com/clevelandpubliclibrary/](https://www.instagram.com/clevelandpubliclibrary/)
twitter.com/cleveland_pl
[youtube.com/channel/UCn61KJzQ8f0F7TIWYFSpHkA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCn61KJzQ8f0F7TIWYFSpHkA)

Shenise.johnson@cpl.org (foundation@cpl.org)

Cleveland Public Library (CPL) is the library system for the city of Cleveland. Its main library facility and 27 branches serve every neighborhood of the city, helping residents to read, learn, create, and connect. CPL's role is to encourage thoughtful and informed civic dialogue and engagement and contribute to the community's ongoing learning and understanding. One approach the library system takes toward the fulfillment of this role is to develop programs and build collections that are diverse, inclusive, and culturally relevant.

Cleveland Public Library received support from A4J for a project guided by Dr. Shenise Johnson-Thomas to develop a series of public art installations addressing mass incarceration in Ohio. The project is being created specifically for local context, with an added goal of achieving national impact. It is inspired by other monumental public art installations such as Kehinde Wiley's *Rumors of War* in Richmond, VA; the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, AL, founded by the Equal Justice Initiative; Kara Walker's *A Subtlety* at the Domino Sugar Factory in Brooklyn, NY; and Ai Weiwei's *Refugee Project*, which has been presented in Berlin, Germany and Qatar.



Sculptures in the Eastman Reading Garden at the main branch of the Cleveland Public Library



Bryan Lee Jr., design principal of Colloqate Design

Colloqate Design

Designing spaces of racial, social, and cultural equity

New Orleans, LA

colloqate.org

facebook.com/colloqate

instagram.com/colloqate

twitter.com/colloqate

Colloqate Design is a multidisciplinary nonprofit design practice with a mission to intentionally organize, advocate for, and design spaces of racial, social, and cultural justice throughout the built environment. It focuses on expanding community access to, and building power through, the design of social, civic, and cultural spaces. Through programming, planning and design projects, Colloqate seeks to dismantle the privilege and power structures within the design profession to maintain systems of injustice.

Support from the Fund has enabled Colloqate to advance existing projects and launch a campaign to promote redesign and reuse of carceral spaces into places of community and healing. One approach is to create and collect renderings, images, essays, and public installations to illustrate the potential for anti-carceral spaces.

Colloqate collaborates with advocacy and arts organizations pursuing aligned goals and activities. These include transforming carceral spaces and advocating for real world alternatives; advocating for divestment from policing and reallocation of law enforcement resources to community-led safety initiatives; creating public awareness campaigns and educational resources that highlight the importance of criminal legal system alternatives; and fostering collaboration between artists, designers, policymakers, and community members to envision and create a more just and equitable society. Through the development of a design toolkit, the campaign is encouraging designers, artists, and architects to adopt anti-carceral principles in their work.



Envisioning new uses for carceral spaces

Color of Change

Progressive civil rights advocacy

Oakland, CA

colorofchange.org

facebook.com/colorofchange

instagram.com/colorofchange

twitter.com/ColorOfChange

youtube.com/user/colorofchange

Erika Maye (Erika.maye@colorofchange.org)

Founded in 2005, Color of Change (COC) is one of the nation's largest online racial justice organizations. It develops strategies to help Black people and their allies concentrate and channel their participation into strategic action towards a more humane and less hostile country for Black people and others. As a national force driven by over one million members, COC enables citizen participation in its advocacy initiatives focused on criminal justice, voter participation, media portrayal, news accuracy, and community organizing. With support from the Fund, COC continued its national campaign focused on abolishing money bail and reducing pretrial detention. It also supports local organizations to implement criminal justice reforms.

Additionally, Color of Change partnered with Worth Rises and people directly impacted by the carceral system through an A4J Activating Art and Advocacy grant aimed at dismantling the prison industrial complex. The project included the development and launch of a digital action hub aimed at increasing information available on the injustice of the carceral system, including the money that perpetuates the prison industry's continued existence.



Color of Change's grassroots-based advocacy initiatives focus on issues related to criminal and racial justice.

Columbia University Justice Lab / Vincent Schiraldi

(National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform)

Acting for community-centered justice

New York, NY

justicelab.columbia.edu

facebook.com/CUjusticelab

twitter.com/cujusticelab

Vincent Schiraldi (vinny.schiraldi@maryland.gov)

Lisa McAllister (ldm2152@columbia.edu)

The Columbia University Justice Lab works for community-centered justice in which incarceration is no longer used as a solution to problems that are rooted in extreme poverty and racial inequality. Founded in 2017, the Justice Lab combines research expertise, policy innovation, and collaboration with justice-involved people. Youth justice is its focal area, including specific efforts aimed at closing youth prisons and ending the exclusion of older youth from the rehabilitative aspects of the youth justice system. Such steps are essential to an overarching goal of shifting away from applying adult responses to system-involved youth.

Vincent Schiraldi, (then co-director of the Justice Lab, now Secretary of Maryland's Department of Juvenile Services) was the founding director of the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice and the Justice Policy Institute. He served as commissioner of two New York City agencies, the Departments of Probation and Correction. Support from A4J enabled The Justice Lab to leverage art to guide, inform and propel juvenile justice reform. Through a community-based approach of building and strengthening partnerships with community art partners, the Lab created the context for transformative youth justice reform.

Additionally, the Justice Lab has been involved in two of the Fund's Activating Art and Advocacy grants. It joined with Performing Statistics, cinematographer and storyteller Wren Rene and the Amplifier Foundation to curate an educational video series outlining the case for ending youth incarceration. The Justice Lab's Emerging Adult Justice Project deepened its partnership with Echoes of Incarceration to produce a new youth-reported short film for its 'Emerging Adult Journalists Explore Emerging Adult Justice' series.



Columbia University Justice Lab's Vincent Schiraldi (left) talking with a young person.



Common Justice's founder and executive director, Danielle Sered

Common Justice / Danielle Sered

Developing and advancing alternatives to incarceration

New York, NY

commonjustice.org
facebook.com/WeAreCommonJustice
instagram.com/common_justice
twitter.com/Common_Justice

Danielle Sered (dsered@commonjustice.org)

Hyunhee Shin (hshin@commonjustice.org)

Common Justice develops and advances solutions to violence that transform the lives of those harmed and fosters racial equity without relying on incarceration. In New York City, the organization operates the first alternative-to-incarceration and victim-service program in the US that focuses on violent felonies in the adult courts. Locally and nationally, Common Justice seeks to transform the justice system through partnerships, advocacy, and elevating the experience and power of those most impacted. Rigorous and hopeful, the organization builds practical strategies to hold people accountable for harm, break cycles of violence, and secure safety, healing, and justice for survivors and their communities.

The Fund has supported the mission of Common Justice and initiatives by its founder and executive director, Danielle Sered. With the success of its Ever After social media storytelling campaign and Sered's book *Until We Reckon*, Common Justice leveraged its widespread recognition to help shift broader narratives about violence and strengthen local organizing work that addresses these issues head on. Common Justice is committed to telling the truth about violence – about the people who survive it, the people who cause it, and the strategies that will work to end it.

Common Justice knows that no one can tell these stories better than the people whose lives are at stake. It will continue working to create broad new platforms to elevate their voices and leadership from the block to the Capitol and sharing what it has learned about addressing violence without prison.



Supporters rally at City Hall in NYC.

Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans

Committed to artists, multidisciplinary work, and advancing the value and power of the art of our time

New Orleans, LA

cacno.org

facebook.com/ContemporaryArtsCenterNewOrleans

instagram.com/cacnola

twitter.com/cacno

George Scheer (gscheer@cacno.org)

Erin Lee Antonak (eantonak@cacno.org)

Led by Executive Director George Scheer, the Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans (CAC) is a touchstone for visual and performing arts education in New Orleans and the Gulf South. The connection between artists and communities is at the forefront of its programming. Louisiana is a leader in the development of private prisons and has one of the highest rates of incarceration per capita in the US. Thus, CAC's community is inherently impacted by the carceral system.

The center's Inter[Sector] is a multidisciplinary curatorial program considering decarceration, health, and environment issues. Artists address incarceration as their subject matter and community-building as their method. A subset of this program, Inter[Sector] Decarceration, promotes the work of artists and seeks to shine light on the injustices of the country's criminal legal system and engage families and communities dealing with the effects of mass incarceration.

With support from A4J, CAC brought the exhibition *Undoing Time: Art and the Histories of Incarceration to New Orleans*, where it ran for three months beginning in April 2023. *Undoing Time* is co-curated by three people associated with the Arizona State University Art Museum (Miki Garcia, Heather Sealy Lineberry, and Matthew Villar) and was developed with support from the Fund. CAC worked with the curators of *Undoing Time* to expand the show to include Louisiana artists who added regional voices and perspectives on issues and histories of incarceration.



Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans is in the historic downtown.

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Crenshaw Dairy Mart

Artist collective and art gallery

Inglewood, CA

crenshawdairymart.com

[instagram.com/crenshawdairymart](https://www.instagram.com/crenshawdairymart)

twitter.com/russellcraig17

Ashley Blakeney (ashley@crenshawdairymart.com)

South of Manchester Avenue and just off Crenshaw Boulevard in Inglewood, CA is a former grocery store known as the Crenshaw Dairy Mart Art Center. It is home to an artist collective and art gallery dedicated to shifting the trauma-induced conditions of poverty and economic injustice, bridging cultural work and advocacy, and investigating ancestries through the lens of Inglewood and its community. What these Black and transnational people seek is an imagination of new collective memory through programming, events, and art installations that cultivate and nurture communal arts and education – and which by doing so, repatriate resources into Inglewood and help to combat displacement and gentrification driven by a new sports stadium nearby.

The Crenshaw Dairy Mart emerges from an investment in abolition, modes of accessibility in art practice, and weaving community solidarity through new memories. It is an abolitionist, pro-Black, pro-trans, pro-brown, pro-Asian, pro-queer, anti-racist organization with zero tolerance for hate of any and all kind.

An A4J New Visions for Shared Safety grant has helped the organization make progress in its work to make visible how a world without mass incarceration might look, feel, and take shape.



Crenshaw Dairy Mart staff at the collective's exhibition site.

CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance

Data-Driven Approach to the Challenges and Opportunities Confronting Government Services

New York, NY

islg.cuny.edu

Raegan Daly (Raegan.Daly@islg.cuny.edu)

The Institute for State and Local Governance (ISLG) was created in 2013 with the purpose of applying a data-driven approach to the challenges and opportunities confronting government services. It is a research and technical assistance institution housed within the City University of New York (CUNY). The Institute provides research, policy, strategy, and performance management support to government partners and other stakeholders that help to drive reform, both in New York City and across the country. Many of its projects focus on the criminal justice system.

With support from Art for Justice, ISLG curbed abuses on Rikers Island, including providing training for New York City correctional officers to address issues of violence, mismanagement, and inefficiency. It also supported development and implementation of a plan to change operations and practices in preparation for a move into new jail facilities.





Deanna Van Buren, founder of
Designing Justice + Designing Spaces

Designing Justice + Designing Spaces

*Working to end mass incarceration through
architecture and real estate development*

Oakland, CA

designingjustice.org

facebook.com/designingjustice

instagram.com/designingjustice

linkedin.com/company/designing-justice-designing-spaces

twitter.com/designstorestore

Deanna Van Burren (dvanburen@designingjustice.org)

Garrett Jacobs ([gjacob@designingjustice.org](mailto:gjacobs@designingjustice.org))

Designing Justice + Designing Spaces (DJDS) is an architecture and real estate development nonprofit working to end mass incarceration by building infrastructure that addresses its root causes: poverty, racism, unequal access to resources and the criminal legal system itself.

The organization employs a trauma-informed approach to developing restorative spaces that center the expertise, wellness and healing of systems-impacted individuals. The Women's Mobile Refuge Trailer is one example. The trailer addresses some of the challenges women often face when returning home from prison by providing a mobile space of refuge for them – a respite from disparaging environments, a safe drop-in space as they integrate back into their communities, and a site for other nonprofit programs to provide services to these highly vulnerable women and girls.

An unrestricted grant from the Fund has enabled Designing Justice + Designing Spaces to take on more projects, serve more organizations, hire additional staff and elevate the people who are directly impacted by mass incarceration as expert voices in infrastructure development. DJDS hires and collaborates with formerly incarcerated people in almost all of its projects.



Detroit Justice Center

Community lawyering to remedy the impacts of mass incarceration

Detroit, MI

detroitjustice.org

facebook.com/DetroitJusticeCenter

instagram.com/detroitjusticecenter

linkedin.com/company/detroit-justice-center

twitter.com/justcitydetroit

Regina Sharma (rsharma@detroitjustice.org)

Detroit Justice Center (DJC) is a nonprofit law firm working alongside communities to create economic opportunities, transform the justice system, and promote equitable and just cities. Founded by Amanda Alexander, it is rooted in the belief that discussions of just and equitable cities must address the systemic disenfranchisement of incarcerated people and their loved ones. In efforts aimed at remedying impacts of mass incarceration, DJC is committed to community lawyering that builds up Detroit's poorest residents through direct services and novel approaches to land use, housing, and employment.

DJC and Detroit-based audio story maker Zak Rosen used an Art for Justice Activating Art and Advocacy grant to launch a podcast that explores what it takes to build truly just cities. Through elevating the work of people creating a better world right now, the podcast explored how efforts like movement lawyering, restorative justice, racial justice and art are all central to building the world we need and dismantling punitive systems of justice.



Detroit Justice Center supports skills trainings as part of an effort to promote employment within the community.

Die Jim Crow Records

Dismantling stereotypes around race and prison in America through music

New York, NY

diejimcrow.com

facebook.com/diejimcrow

instagram.com/diejimcrow

open.spotify.com/user/5mrldb8x37twmsg358h2j96da

twitter.com/diejimcrow

youtube.com/channel/UCUB3-3aGitBPWeM5sFOZKlg?view_as=subscriber

BL Shirelle (b.shirelle@diejimcrow.com)

Fury Young (f.young@diejimcrow.com)

Die Jim Crow Records is the first nonprofit record label for formerly and currently incarcerated musicians in the United States. It began as a project in 2013, when founder artist/activist Fury Young started production of a double album about racial injustice in the U.S. prison system, featuring the music of formerly and currently incarcerated Black musicians. After recording 25 music groups in three prisons, creating dozens of unreleased recordings that would not fit on one album, the Die Jim Crow Board of Directors expanded the purpose of the organization from concept album to record label. The label launched in 2020, and its first two full-length albums were released to critical acclaim with features in the Los Angeles Times, BBC, Pitchfork, Grammys, and The Washington Post.

Art for Justice support is enabling Die Jim Crow to increase investment in programs and communication, and expand fundraising efforts. This gives the organization greater ability and flexibility to expand its reach, especially within communities impacted by incarceration, by partnering with more prisons, recording more artists, and promoting its artists' work through increased record sales, live performances and professional opportunities.



Die Jim Crow Records' co-executive directors, Fury Young (left) and BL Shirelle (right)

Dignity and Power Now

Helping Los Angeles County heal from the trauma of violence and incarceration

Los Angeles, CA

dignityandpowernow.org

facebook.com/dignityandpowernow

instagram.com/dignityandpowernow

twitter.com/powerdignity

Mark-Anthony Clayton-Johnson (Mark-anthony@dignitypowernow.org)

Dignity and Power Now (DPN) helps Los Angeles County communities heal from the trauma of violence and incarceration. Grounded in the principles of abolition, healing justice, and transformative justice, DPN offers multiple programs centered around activism, health and wellness, and leadership building. They include a coalition to end violence by the sheriff's department, a coalition to stop jail construction, an arts and wellness collective, a rapid response team of healers, a leadership institute for youth of high school age affected by incarceration, a leadership institute for people coming home from prison, a re-entry program inside Soledad State Prison, and an influential media department.

Support from Art for Justice helped DPN's *Jailbeds* exhibit come to fruition. The project strategically placed 100 exact replicas of prison beds outside of the home of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors as a direct action against the plan to build two new jails in the county.

With continued support from the A4J, Dignity and Power Now focused on the needs of its staff and community members during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, DPN advanced the implementation of Measure R, which voters approved to hold law enforcement accountable for abusing people in their custody; contributed to the Los Angeles County Alternative to Incarceration Working Group; and supported an artist contest at the Crenshaw Dairy Mart.



Dignity and Power Now's *Jailbeds* exhibit

Dream.Org

Focusing on economic, environmental, and criminal justice issues

Oakland, CA

dream.org

facebook.com/thedreamcorps

instagram.com/dream.corps

linkedin.com/company/the-dream-corps

twitter.com/thedreamcorps

youtube.com/c/DreamCorpsTV

Katherine Young (katherine@dreamcorps.us)

Dream.org #cut50 national project is dedicated to giving formerly incarcerated people opportunities to rebuild their lives. Dream.Org focuses on economic, environmental, and criminal justice issues by connecting innovators in the field to partners, digital tools, and national media platforms. Dream.Org works on four projects, one of which is #cut50 – a national project dedicated to reducing the number of incarcerated people in the nation, showing the humanity of people emmeshed in the justice system, and providing formerly incarcerated people with opportunities to rebuild their lives.

With Art for Justice support, Dream.Org advanced its planning efforts to expand music programming to incarcerated women in California’s prisons and jails and distribute a music album by incarcerated young artists to promote public awareness of the crisis of mass incarceration. Its general operating grant from the Fund has continued to support #cut50’s projects, with a focus on efforts to finish a mixtape produced by people incarcerated in San Quentin State Prison, launch a music recording and production program at the Central California Women’s Facility in Chowchilla, and plan and host a concert at the Chowchilla prison.



Dream.org #cut50 national project is dedicated to giving formerly incarcerated people opportunities to rebuild their lives.

Drug Policy Action

Supporting progressive drug policy stances

New York, NY

drugpolicy.org/

facebook.com/drugpolicy

instagram.com/drugpolicyalliance

twitter.com/DrugPolicyOrg

youtube.com/user/DrugPolicyAlliance

Kassandra Frederique (kfrederique@drugpolicy.org)

Drug Policy Action Drug Policy Action (DPA) is a nonprofit advocacy group that supports marijuana legalization and less harsh punishments for drug possession, use, and sale, as well as supporting candidates and legislation that advances similar drug policy stances. DPA is the leading organization in the U.S. working to end the drug war. Together, they seek to end the drug war and build a better future shaped by love, not war.

Art for Justice supported Drug Policy Action in its planning and advocacy for the groundbreaking 2020 Oregon ballot initiative approved by voters, which decriminalized possession of all drugs for personal use. The initiative also called for significantly expanded access to services and treatment – viable alternatives to criminalization that are supportive rather than coercive – that would be funded primarily from excess marijuana tax revenue and criminal legal system savings.



Advocates calling for an end to the US drug war.

Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site

An old prison for new ideas

Philadelphia, PA

easternstate.org

facebook.com/easternstatepen

instagram.com/easternstate

tiktok.com/@easternstatepen

Sean Kelley (sk@easternstate.org)

Nicole Frankhouser (nf@easternstate.org)

Eastern State Penitentiary was once the most famous and expensive prison in the world and served as a model for more than 300 prisons worldwide. Its skylit cells held nearly 85,000 people over its long history. After sitting abandoned for two decades, Eastern State reopened in 1994 as a museum and historic site. Now, ESPHS welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors each year through its massive front gate to learn more about the penitentiary's complex history and the impact of modern-day mass incarceration in the United States.

ESPHS is well-known for its ambitious artist installation program, having commissioned more than 100 site-specific works since 1995. Projects are selected through an annual application process that seeks memorable, thought-provoking additions to the historic site's programming combined with true excellence in artistic practice. Installations are also chosen for their ability to make connections between the complex history of the penitentiary and today's justice system and corrections policies, and the lives of people living or working behind prison walls.

With support from the Fund, ESPHS has expanded its efforts to center the voices of people involved with the justice system, thereby fostering empathy and dialogue about today's prison system among visitors. Since 2016, ESPHS has been a proud fair chance employer (meaning that it refrains from asking job candidates about their criminal or conviction histories). The site was awarded the Excellence in Exhibitions award by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the nation's highest award in exhibition development and design, for its exhibit *Prisons Today: Questions in the Age of Mass Incarceration*.



A tour at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site

Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

Working for justice, opportunity, and peace in urban America

Oakland, CA

ellabakercenter.org

facebook.com/ellabakercenter

instagram.com/ellabakercenter

twitter.com/ellabakercenter

Marlene Sanchez (marlene@ellabakercenter.org)

For the past 25 years, the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights (EBC) has worked to shift resources away from prisons and punishment and toward opportunities that make Black, brown, and low-income communities safe, healthy, and strong. Based in Oakland, EBC’s state-level policy efforts and local organizing seek to drive concrete shifts, including resentencing reform, community-driven municipal budgets, ending youth incarceration, and addressing racial discrimination in California’s criminal legal system.

EBC’s annual Night Out for Safety and Liberation (NOSL) was founded in 2013 as an alternative to the police-centric National Night Out. NOSL challenges police-driven narratives of public safety and advances a vision of safety rooted in health, education, living-wage jobs, and other opportunities communities need to thrive. NOSL is now an event held in a growing number of places nationwide, with

EBC is helping community groups across the United States organize local versions. When providing tools – such as art, discussion guides, and organizing and social media toolkits – EBC invites communities to define what safety means to them. Through block parties, direct actions, mutual aid, and other NOSL-related events and activities, these communities uplift their vision and bring members together in care and celebration.



Participants at annual Night Out for Safety and Liberation (NOSL), organized by the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

Equal Justice Initiative

Protecting basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society

Montgomery, AL

eji.org

facebook.com/equaljusticeinitiative

instagram.com/eji_org

twitter.com/eji_org

youtube.com/user/ejiorg

Bryan Stevenson (bstevenson@eji.org)

Jacqueline Jones-Peace (jjonespeace@eji.org)

Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) aims to end mass incarceration and excessive punishment in the US, challenge racial and economic injustice, and protect basic human rights for the most vulnerable people. EJI's attorneys and staff represent marginalized people serving excessive sentences in the South; litigate to end the use of life without parole for minors; and educate the public about the link between slavery and mass incarceration through art.

In 2018, EJI opened the Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, AL. These sites are part of the organization's national effort to create new spaces, markers, and memorials that address the legacy of slavery, lynching, and racial segregation. The Legacy Museum traces America's history of racial injustice from enslavement to mass incarceration, weaving together a meticulously researched narrative through various forms of art, media and technology to provide a unique and immersive experience for visitors. In 2021, with support from A4J, the museum expanded to over four times its original size.

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice is the nation's first memorial dedicated to the legacy of enslaved Black people, including people terrorized by lynching and humiliated by racial segregation and Jim Crow. Set on a six-acre site, the memorial uses sculpture, art, and design to contextualize racial terror in both the past and present. The memorial structure at the center of the site is constructed of over 800 steel monuments, one for each county in the US where a racial terror lynching took place. The names of the lynching victims are engraved on the columns.



Visitors to EJI's Legacy Museum can listen to individuals who have been victims of injustice in the criminal legal system. All are clients that EJI has represented and whose release it was able to secure.

Essie Justice Group

Harnessing the collective power of women with incarcerated loved ones

Oakland, CA

essiejusticegroup.org

facebook.com/EssieJusticeGroup

instagram.com/essie4justice

twitter.com/essie4justice

Gina Clayton-Johnson (gina@essiejusticegroup.org)

Emma Ayers (emma@essiejusticegroup.org)

Founded in 2014, Essie Justice Group (EJG) works to harness and leverage the collective power of women with incarcerated loved ones to end mass incarceration's harm to women and their communities, including by reducing the number of people in jails and prisons. Essie focuses on three issue areas – reducing pretrial detention, promoting community-based re-entry, and ending mass incarceration's harm to women – and uses community organizing to incite policy change.

With support from Art for Justice, Essie Justice Group was able to recruit hundreds of directly impacted women leaders from across California to participate in its Healing to Advocacy training, which included trauma-informed care for women with incarcerated loved ones, with an emphasis on healing and raising political consciousness. Also, support from the Fund enabled EJG to help influence the implementation of SB 10 – legislation abolishing money bail in California that passed in 2018 – including by opposing strong lobbying by the bail industry, maintaining pressure on legislators to uphold reforms, and holding implementers accountable. As part of this effort, EJG used data analysis to identify several key states to establish relationships with local organizations to learn about their bail reform progress and milestones and trained women in other parts of the country who want to start new Essie Justice Group regional chapters.



A gathering of women with incarcerated loved ones convened by Essie Justice Group

Fair and Just Prosecution

Committed to increasing fairness of the criminal legal system

San Francisco, CA

fairandjustprosecution.org

facebook.com/fairandjustprosecution

linkedin.com/company/fjp

twitter.com/fjp_org

[Miriam Krinsky \(mkrinsky@fairandjustprosecution.org\)](mailto:Miriam.Krinsky@fairandjustprosecution.org)

Founded in 2017, Fair and Just Prosecution (FJP) supports a growing network of elected prosecutors (also called district attorneys, or DAs) who are committed to reducing incarceration and increasing the fairness of the criminal legal system. The rise of mandatory minimum sentences shifted power from judges to DAs, whose decisions on how to charge cases can effectively determine how long someone stays in prison. In recent years, a new manner of elected prosecutor has emerged that is using the power of the prosecutor's office to change business as usual in the criminal legal system.

Fair and Just Prosecution received two A4J Activating Art and Advocacy grants that led to the publication in October 2022 of *Change from Within: Reimagining the 21st-Century Prosecutor*. The grants allowed FJP to conduct interviews with a range of visionary locally elected prosecutors working to shrink the legal system and build safer, healthier, and fairer communities. The grants also provided FJP, The New Press, and Mural Arts Philadelphia the opportunity to hire justice-involved artists to create a collection of 13 original works of art. Each profile in the book is accompanied by a piece of artwork inspired by the prosecutor's vision of justice and created by an artist who was once incarcerated. These powerful images bring the DAs' stories to life and put those most impacted by mass incarceration at the heart of a national dialogue about a new vision for the country's legal system.



In 2019, FJP brought together a group of reform-minded prosecutors in Selma, AL to confront the systemic racism inherent in the American criminal legal system.



Desmond Meade, executive director of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

Working to end disenfranchisement and discrimination against convicted people

Orlando, FL

- floridarrc.com
- facebook.com/FLRIGHTSRESTORE
- instagram.com/flightsrestore
- twitter.com/FLRightsRestore
- youtube.com/channel/UCVr3EpA4YMHvKoovzFEEfQ

Desmond Meade (desmond@floridarrc.org)

Colleen Calvin (colleen@floridarrc.org)

The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition (FRRRC) is a grassroots, membership organization run by returning citizens (formerly incarcerated persons) who are dedicated to ending the disenfranchisement and discrimination against people with convictions, and creating a more comprehensive and humane system to support those coming home that will enhance successful re-entry, reduce recidivism, and increase public safety.

In 2018, Art for Justice supported FRRRC's ultimately successful campaign to restore voting rights to 1.5 million Floridians impacted by felony disenfranchisement. FRRRC used a later grant from the Fund to further equip these Floridians to vote in the 2020 elections. Its get-out-the-vote efforts included efforts to protect and implement the new law, non-partisan voter registration of returning citizens, and trainings. FRRRC has developed sophisticated analytical software to identify constituents willing to support its street-based organizing efforts.



Demanding the right to vote for formerly incarcerated Floridians.

For Freedoms

Artists collectively encouraging inclusive civic engagement

New York, NY

forfreedoms.org

[instagram.com/forfreedoms](https://www.instagram.com/forfreedoms)

twitter.com/forfreedoms

Claudia Peña (claudia@forfreedoms.org)

Founded in 2016 by a coalition of artists, academics and organizers, For Freedoms is an artist collective that centers art and creativity as a catalyst for transformative connection and collective liberation. For Freedoms has grown to become the largest community for creative civic engagement in the US. It comprises thousands of artists and organizations working together to invite radical imagination and lay the groundwork for new national conversations. For Freedoms maintains that if creativity is a core societal value, and if artists are at every table, then new ideas are more likely to take hold. With that, the coalition aims to build new systems that no longer rely on extractive or corrupt foundations but instead center love, care, and community.

Support from Art for Justice helped For Freedoms to host The Congress, a series of artist-led programs and workshops that built upon Los Angeles's historic role as the birthplace and driver of artistic-led cultural movements. The Congress included four public town hall programs curated by [Sankofa.org](https://www.sankofa.org) and a public day of programming at the Hammer Museum. Artists led For Freedoms 'delegates' from all 50 states, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico in building an artists' platform for publication and civic engagement in their communities leading up to the 2020 presidential election. Through such engagement, the community collectively developed the Creative Plan of Action to promote participation in democracy.

Another A4J grant enabled For Freedoms to create a series of billboards as part of the *Another Justice: By Any Medium Necessary* billboard campaign. Artists were invited to speak to the prompt: "What does JUSTICE mean to you?" These billboards went up in 36 cities across the country in May 2022, creating space for diverse perspectives and magnifying creativity in imagining and executing new solutions.



Billboard from For Freedoms' *Another Justice: By Any Medium Necessary* campaign



Force Detroit's director,
Alia Harvey-Quinn

Force Detroit

Empowering those people most vulnerable to the legal system, criminalization, violence, and poverty

Detroit, MI

forcedetroit.org

facebook.com/forcedet

instagram.com/force_detroit

Alia Harvey Quinn (aharveyquinn@faithinaction.org)

Force Detroit – with ‘Force’ standing for ‘faithfully organizing resources for community empowerment’– is a fiscally sponsored program of Faith in Action. It leverages media and culturally relevant strategies to activate individuals least likely to be engaged in civic infrastructures. In partnership with residents and peacemakers, the organization helps marginalized populations recognize the power of their vote, advocate for their communities, and advance dialogue with public officials and stakeholders about issues that adversely affect Detroiters. Force Detroit is a culmination of the work of interfaith, grassroots, and public sector leaders dedicated to having hard conversations about complex community issues, pushing boundaries, and generating creative justice-oriented solutions. It is headed by Alia Harvey Quinn, a directly impacted woman of color who comes from a family of activists and organizers.

Force Detroit received support from A4J to create a mural in Detroit’s Cody Rouge neighborhood. Given this community’s high violence rate, the organization is establishing a community violence intervention (CVI) site in collaboration with residents, nonprofit stakeholders, peacemakers, and youth. The artwork memorializes 55 young black men whose lives were lost to gun violence, underscoring the need for transformation of consciousness and policies. Art is an appropriate and familiar way to memorialize loved ones and community members’ stories, and is an essential element of Force Detroit’s neighborhood-specific CVI work. By engaging artists, residents, youth, and violence interrupters as co-creators, the organization uses the mural design and production processes to capture the voices of those most impacted by violence, injustice, and poverty.





David Ayala, executive director of the Formerly Incarcerated & Convicted People and Families Movement

Formerly Incarcerated & Convicted People and Families Movement

Strengthening and intensifying efforts to dismantle the mass incarceration system

Los Angeles, CA

ficipfm.org

David Ayala (david@ficipfm.org)

The Formerly Incarcerated & Convicted People and Families Movement (FICPFM) is a network of over 50 civil and human rights organizations led by people with conviction histories and their families. A4J supported its efforts to restore voting rights for people who were incarcerated and to eliminate cash bail, as well as plan for its 2020 national conference. The Fund supported FICPFM in its efforts to dismantle the mass incarceration system by promoting the leadership of those with lived experience in several different ways. Key goals included efforts to shore up the growing number of Quest for Democracy (Q4D) grantees. These groups are participants in FICPFM's capacity-building project across some 20 states that build civic engagement and community organizing for returning citizens across the country. FICPFM awards grants for general operating expenses to allow these groups to strategically sustain their movement building.

With its most recent Art for Justice Fund grant, FICPFM was able to design and deploy a COVID-19 rapid response across its network, including mutual aid, medical treatment, legal interventions and sustained pressure to hold public officials accountable. Also, FICPFM received support from the Fund to partner with Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice (CURYJ) to create a film showing the journey of the families of two young Latinx men murdered by the police as a tool to demand justice. CURYJ has identified a gap in understanding of the ways in which police violence impacts Latinx communities. This project aims to create a new consciousness and to join Latinx and Black communities together in the fight against police violence.



Forward Justice

Advancing racial, social and economic justice by ending mass incarceration

Durham, NC

forwardjustice.org

facebook.com/forwardjusticeorg

instagram.com/forwardjustice

twitter.com/forward_justice

youtube.com/channel/UCS7PPIqZv3sb0XaWhm1XsuQ

Daryl Atkinson (daryl@forwardjustice.org)

Forward Justice is a law, policy, and strategy center, based in and primarily working in the South, dedicated to advancing racial, social, and economic justice by partnering with human rights organizations at the forefront of movements organizing for criminal and racial justice. The current leadership of the movement's steering committee includes 12 formerly incarcerated leaders from 8 nonprofit organizations.

Support from Art for Justice helped Forward Justice to strengthen and sustain the Formerly Incarcerated Convicted People & Families Movement, a network of formerly incarcerated leaders working to end mass incarceration and expand opportunities for people with convictions through advocacy and an integrated model of policy reform, organizing, and social services. A subsequent grant from the Fund was used to cultivate the field of smaller grassroots organizations, increase national voter engagement of formerly incarcerated people, and launch a campaign to change the language around people impacted by the justice system.



Rallying in support of Forward Justice's advocacy priorities



Kenneth Zimmerman, chief executive officer of Fountain House

Fountain House

Creating community, innovations, and structural changes for those impacted by severe mental illness

New York, NY

fountainhouse.org

facebook.com/fountainhouseamerica

instagram.com/fountainhouse

linkedin.com/company/fountain-house

twitter.com/fountainhouse

Kenneth Zimmerman (kzimmerman@fountainhouse.org)

Based in New York City for 75+ years, Fountain House is a national mental health nonprofit fighting to improve health, increase opportunity, and end social and economic isolation for people living with serious mental illness. Fountain House uses a pioneering collaborative model in which staff and members (constituents) work to overcome social isolation and build the community and resilience needed to thrive and take steps in reclaiming their agency and dignity – with access to clinical support, housing, and care management. Fountain House has also made a long-term investment in research and knowledge-building, tracking and measuring the efficacy of its programs, and scaling this work through policy and advocacy to serve the more than 14 million Americans impacted by serious mental illness.

Over the past few years, Fountain House has expanded its national footprint in the areas of advocacy and policy change. Support from A4J is intended to help Fountain House with this increased advocacy and policy work through a multi-channel, national mental illness advocacy and policy campaign. This campaign aims to increase sustainable funding to advocate for new payment models and establish a national strategy to expand access to high-quality services.

Through this campaign, Fountain House is partnering with clubhouses around the country, leveraging their regional relationships and targeting opportunities at the state level that have immediate impact, while additionally propelling its longer-term federal efforts. Members of the Fountain House community and its affiliate partners are creating a reform roadmap and participate in its member Advocacy Academy, where participants develop skills to tell their stories, lobby important stakeholders and organize community efforts.



Fountain House members

Freedom Reads

Confronting what prison does to the spirit through books

Washington, D.C.

freedomreads.org

[instagram.com/freedombeginswithabook](https://www.instagram.com/freedombeginswithabook)

twitter.com/million_book

[linkedin.com/company/the-million-book-project](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-million-book-project)

[youtube.com/channel/UCrvihLvp3Wdvtcj22IEqPQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrvihLvp3Wdvtcj22IEqPQ)

Reginald Dwayne Betts (dwayne@freedomreads.org)

Tyler Sperrazza (tyler@freedomreads.org)

Founded by poet, lawyer and non-profit leader Reginald Dwayne Betts, Freedom Reads is a first-of-its-kind organization that empowers people through literature to confront what prison does to the spirit. A central resource it provides is Freedom Libraries, curated book collections that Freedom Reads has put in prisons and housing units, allowing people in prison to have access to books that spark human curiosity and thereby help them to imagine new possibilities for their lives. The beautiful book shelves are hand-crafted by formerly incarcerated artisans.

The project aims to engage readers who are currently incarcerated with highly relevant, multi-pronged programming centering on books that examine carceral systems, justice, and universal themes of race, sexuality, family and love. Extraordinary support from Mellon Foundation helped Betts to launch Freedom Reads. Additional resources from National Book Foundation, A4J and other funders have helped them to quickly expand the number of prison libraries and programming they provide.



Founder Dwayne Betts in front of a Freedom Library.

Friends of The High Line

Connecting people to challenging subjects through commissioned projects

New York, NY

thehighline.org

facebook.com/highlinenyc

instagram.com/highlinenyc

twitter.com/highlinenyc

Melanie Kress (Mealnie.kress@thehighline.org)

Tara Morris (Tara.moriss@thehighline.org)

Friends of The High Line Friends of The High Line (FOTHL) oversees public art and programming for The High Line, an elevated public park converted from a disused rail track in NYC. The public art program is a vehicle for connecting the public to challenging subject matter through commissioned projects. This can include site-specific commissions and exhibitions, videos, and performance-based pieces and reach a large audience of local, national, and international visitors, 365 days a year, at no charge. Because of the public nature of The High Line, the people who experience the art are not limited to traditional museum-goers or criminal justice advocates.

A grant from Art for Justice supported a multi-faceted program serving as a companion to Sable Elyse Smith's sculpture *C.R.E.A.M.* The piece is an altered replica of the iconic Hollywood sign that instead reads 'IRONWOODLAND' – simultaneously referencing Ironwood State Prison, where Smith's father was incarcerated, and the Hollywood sign, which originally read 'Hollywoodland'. The title of the piece is drawn from a Wu-Tang Clan song that narrates the realities of navigating NY streets as a Black man, including experiences with incarceration.

Also with A4J support, FOTHL partnered with Dr. Baz Dreisinger, artist Hank Willis Thomas and the MASS Design Group to install *The Writing on the Wall* exhibit on The High Line. This collaborative installation includes essays, poems, letters, stories, diagrams and notes written by individuals in prison around the world, including the United States, Australia, Brazil, Norway and Uganda. After the exhibit closed, Friends of The High Line worked with Openbox, a design firm partner, to move the exhibit to other public spaces.



Presentation of *The Writing on the Wall* supported by Friends of The High Line



Maria Hinojosa, founder,
Futuro Media Group

Futuro Media Group

Journalism to educate and enlighten

futuromediagroup.org

[instagram.com/futuromedia](https://www.instagram.com/futuromedia)

twitter.com/futuromedia

[facebook.com/TheFuturoMediaGroup](https://www.facebook.com/TheFuturoMediaGroup)

Stacy Parker LeMelle (stacy@futuromediagroup.org)

The Futuro Media Group (FMG) is an independent nonprofit organization producing multimedia journalism that explores and gives a critical voice to the diversity of the American experience. Based in Harlem and founded in 2010 by award-winning journalist Maria Hinojosa, Futuro is committed to telling stories from a point of view often overlooked by mainstream media.

FMG produces the Peabody Award-winning *Latino USA*, the only national Latino news and cultural weekly radio program on National Public Radio (NPR); *America By The Numbers*, a documentary series on Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) that highlights human stories behind America's dramatic demographic changes; *In The Thick*, a political podcast from the perspective of journalists of color; *Humanizing America*, a digital-shorts online series distributed by NBCNews.com that presents intimate profiles of diverse Americans; and *Latino Rebels*, a pioneering digital news outlet founded by Julio Ricardo Varela. Support from A4J allowed FMG to use a new episodic podcast format of *Latino USA* to examine the impact of the 2012 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Miller v. Alabama* that prohibited life without parole sentences for juveniles.

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Goodnation

Platform for impact giving

New York, NY

[instagram.com/givewithgoodnation](https://www.instagram.com/givewithgoodnation)

[linkedin.com/company/goodnation](https://www.linkedin.com/company/goodnation)

twitter.com/give_goodnation

Rob Hansen (hello@goodnation.io)

Goodnation is a nonprofit founded to change how donors find and fund powerful work. It focuses on connecting donors seeking to have a meaningful impact with the highest-performing nonprofits in the areas that matter most to them.

With the assistance of Goodnation, A4J was able to provide funding for the Women's Community Justice Association. The Women's Community Justice Association (WCJA) is a non-profit dedicated to improving the lives of women and gender-expansive New Yorkers affected by mass incarceration. Founded in 2018, WCJA is led by justice-impacted women and focuses on change through policy advocacy, community organizing and service. WCJA leads the #BEYONDrosies campaign and the Justice 4 Women Task Force.



Goodnation helps connect donors to nonprofits undertaking impactful work.



Goodnation fiscal sponsoree Women's Community Justice Association.

Groundswell Action Fund

Funding organizing led by women of color

San Francisco, CA

groundswellactionfund.org

facebook.com/groundswellaxn

instagram.com/groundswellaxn

Groundswell Action Fund is one of the largest funders of women of color-led organizing in the United States and of the reproductive justice movement. Established in 2017, it centers electoral organizing efforts led by women and trans people of color by providing unrestricted general support grants. Such grants allow organizations to build their infrastructure and avoid the harm caused by boom-and-bust electoral funding that only shows up to elect certain candidates during key election years. For the past two decades, Groundswell has moved more than \$100 million in grants and capacity-building support to nearly 300 organizations across 49 states and territories. They have also increased the giving of dozens of national and local foundations and helped bring thousands of new individual investors to support intersectional organizing and reproductive justice.

Art for Justice support for Groundswell Action Fund came in the form of matching a \$1 million grant directly from Agnes Gund, the benefactor behind A4J. This support helps Groundswell continue to empower and fund women and trans organizers, specifically around reproductive justice.



Groundswell Action Fund gives grants to organizing efforts led by women of color

Harmony Project

Building a more inclusive society through creative arts

Columbus, OH

harmonyproject.com

facebook.com/HarmonyProjectColumbus

instagram.com/harmonycolumbus

linkedin.com/company/harmony-project-columbus

David Brown (david@harmonyproject.com)

Shelly Lewis (shelly@harmonyproject.com)

The Harmony Project was formed in 2009 with the mission of building a more inclusive society by breaking down social barriers, bridging community divides, and empowering the voices of people through arts, education, and volunteerism. An initial chorus of 100 people who agreed to sing and serve their community has grown to more than 1,000 people singing weekly, tens of thousands who attend concerts and performances, and programs serving differently abled adults, men and women who have experienced homelessness, students from across the economic spectrum, incarcerated women and men, veterans and returned citizens.

With support from Art for Justice, the Harmony Project was able to expand its work, including new programming for young people, and hire more staff to manage hundreds of volunteers and multiple arts programs across Ohio. This ongoing growth and expansion have included supporting local artists to create and lead programs within and outside of prison walls to engage the community in the re-entry process in creative and non-judgmental ways. This helps make the transition from prison to community feel easier and more supportive for those coming home.



Young people in a Harmony Project performance

Haymarket Books

Contributing to struggles for social and economic justice through books and ideas

Chicago, IL

haymarketbooks.org

facebook.com/haymarketbooks

instagram.com/haymarketbooks

twitter.com/haymarketbooks

youtube.com/channel/UCXu5dcswjbA0zpXLIBn5NmQ

Anthony Arrnove (anrove@haymarketbooks.org)

Jyothi Natarajan (jyothi@haymarketbooks.org)

Haymarket Books is a radical, independent, nonprofit book publisher with a mission to publish books that contribute to struggles for social and economic justice. The organization strives to make its books a vibrant and integral part of social movements and the education and development of a critical, engaged readership. Since its founding in 2001, Haymarket Books has published more than 900 titles. Its authors include Noam Chomsky, Angela Y. Davis, Mariame Kaba, Naomi Klein, Winona LaDuke, and Rebecca Solnit among other leading writers.

In an effort to support those inside who are dealing with the immense violence of the prison system, Haymarket Books makes its books available for free to people who are incarcerated through its *Books Not Bars* program. Haymarket has donated more than 10,000 books since the program launched in 2020. A4J helped enable Haymarket to build a fellowship program for poets, fiction and nonfiction writers whose lives have been impacted by the criminal legal system. The fellowship, awarded to 40 exceptional writers, provides unrestricted funding to system-impacted writers, granting them material resources to help support their writing practice while offering opportunities for mentorship and professional development.



Display of offerings from Haymarket Books



Marlon Chamberlain, manager,
Heartland Alliance's Fully Free
Campaign

Heartland Alliance

Advancing human rights and championing human dignity

Chicago, IL

heartlandalliance.org
facebook.com/heartlandalliance
instagram.com/heartlandalliance
twitter.com/heartlandhelps
youtube.com/user/heartlandalliance

Marlon Chamberlain (mchamberlain@heartlandalliance.org)

The Heartland Alliance seeks to provide comprehensive services to justice system impacted people and advocates for systems change to advance social, economic, and racial justice to those who have been denied it. The organization leads the Fully Free Campaign, which works to dismantle the laws and regulations that govern permanent punishments. These punishments are the barriers that deny or restrict rights and opportunities for people with a record, essentially creating a 'prison after the prison'.

In Illinois, 3.3 million adults in 2020 had been arrested or convicted of a crime since 1979, which is widely thought to be the beginning of mass incarceration. Currently, there are nearly 1,200 permanent punishment laws and regulations in Illinois that restrict people with records, often indefinitely. As a result, many cannot exercise their basic human and civil rights to participate in society as a free person, including access to housing, education, employment, and opportunity. Families and communities of color continue to be burdened the most by permanent punishments. The criminal legal system targets and oppresses Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color – especially those experiencing poverty – at every step.

With support from A4J, the Fully Free Campaign is bringing together diverse people from across Illinois to push for bold policy change in areas including eliminating permanent punishments and providing hope and opportunity to people with records. As it pursues a multi-year advocacy strategy, the campaign is centering the expertise of people who have been directly impacted by the criminal legal system and supporting their leadership.



Fully Free campaign members advocating for the elimination of barriers to re-entry

Hugh L. Carey Battery Park City Authority

Planning, creating, coordinating and sustaining a balanced community

New York, NY

bpca.ny.gov/home

facebook.com/batteryparkcityparks

instagram.com/bpcparks

twitter.com/bpca_ny

youtube.com/channel/UCChns9KDJB0Ykrq5owkHIPyA/videos

Abby Ehrlich (Abigail.ehrlich@bpca.ny.gov)

Eric Munson (Eric.munson@bpca.ny.gov)

Established in 1968, the Battery Park City (BPC) Authority is a New York State public benefit corporation charged with overseeing development in a large area of land on the Lower West Side of Manhattan, where deteriorating piers once stood in the Hudson River. The organization's mission is to plan, create, coordinate, and sustain a balanced community of commercial, residential, retail, and park space within its designated 92-acre site. Battery Park City has achieved worldwide acclaim as a model for community renewal.

The BPC Authority received support from A4J to commission and present an installation by Pittsburgh, PA artist James 'Yaya' Hough. Titled *Justice Reflected*, it is a three-panel, vividly colored glass mosaic series that weaves a journey through American and world history. Hough's complex composition invites viewers in with images that evoke curiosity, reflection, and empathy. *Justice Reflected* bears witness to the injustices of the incarceration system and offers inspiration and hope through ancient and contemporary symbols and messages. The BPC Authority actively engages with the greater public community with free musical programs, readings and workshops related to *Justice Reflected* as well as guided talks led by the artist and students of art and justice.



Artist James 'Yaya' Hough with *Justice Reflected*, commissioned and presented by the Battery Park City Authority

Illinois Humanities Council

Programming, Events, and Grantmaking

Chicago, IL

facebook.com/ILhumanities

instagram.com/ILHumanities

twitter.com/ILHumanities

youtube.com/ILHumanitiesCouncil

Gabrielle Lyon (gabrielle.lyon@ilhumanities.org)

Jane Beachy (Jane.beachy@ilhumanities.org)

Illinois Humanities (IH) works to build dialogue across all sectors of society to examine issues important to democracy in the areas of public policy, media and journalism, business, and art. Using the humanities as a tool to stimulate discussion, IH creates experiences across Illinois through programming, events, and grantmaking to engage a diverse public on ideas that matter.

With support from Art for Justice and In partnership with Illinois Humanities’ “Envisioning Justice” exhibit on incarceration in Illinois, the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting hosted a half-day program to educate Pulitzer Center journalists and other leaders from Chicago institutions. To design the project, the Pulitzer Center called on the expertise of fellow Art for Justice partners Voice of the Experienced, Fair Sentencing of Youth and Youth Justice Fund. Illinois Humanities used the next grant for the next phase of its Envisioning Justice exhibition. The exhibition included establishing a fellowship or residency at Illinois Humanities to employ a person of color who has deep knowledge or experience with the mass incarceration system to support building more community partnerships across the state; supporting artist-led community organizing efforts that put formerly incarcerated and incarcerated people at the forefront; curating a listening tour and site visits that will help determine the next location for another interactive exhibition program; and developing a communication plan to disseminate Envisioning Justice’s curriculum across the state.

With their latest grant Illinois Humanities produced a dynamic digital program to uplift voices of folks across the country who are invested in ending mass incarceration. Co-curated and hosted by Baz Dreisinger, C.T. Mexica, Mahogany L. Browne and Tyra Patterson, the session illuminated how ongoing justice reform work can and must respond to a new era. Amid a global pandemic and the devastation of police violence, criminal legal reforms and abolitionist movements have gained incredible momentum. Regardless of election outcomes, those whose lives and careers are dedicated to the pursuit of justice will face new obstacles and opportunities.



Impact Justice

Advancing new ideas and solutions for justice reform

Oakland, CA

impactjustice.org

[linkedin.com/company/impact-justice](https://www.linkedin.com/company/impact-justice)

twitter.com/ImpactJustice

Alex Busansky (abusansky@impactjustice.org)

The nonprofit research center Impact Justice dares to dream of a humane and restorative system of justice in America. While its approach is anchored in research, policy, and advocacy, the organization also prioritizes innovation to forge a new path to a justice system that is fair to all. Its Restorative Justice Project (RJP) focuses on making improvements on what is already considered a progressive reform: diversion programs. Based on longstanding evidence that referrals to typical programs often replicate the same racial disparities known to plague the criminal legal system overall, Impact Justice's model of restorative justice diversion is explicitly designed to ensure that offenses and neighborhoods driving the highest number of referrals for youth of color are prioritized. Additionally, its model bridges the gap in diversion services widely available across the country by specifically targeting high-level misdemeanor and felony offenses where there is an identifiable person(s) harmed.

Since 2011, Impact Justice has also provided training and technical assistance to sites across the country through a National Restorative Justice Diversion cohort, which includes community-based organizations and leaders from the criminal and juvenile legal systems who are working to introduce pre-charge restorative justice diversion programs to meet survivors' needs that are not reliant on youth criminalization.



Participants in diversion program supported by Impact Justice's Restorative Justice Project

Innocence Project

Litigation and advocacy on behalf of the wrongfully convicted and incarcerated

New York, NY

innocenceproject.org
facebook.com/innocenceproject
instagram.com/innocenceproject
tiktok.com/@innocence
twitter.com/innocence
youtube.com/user/innocenceproject

Christina Swarms (christinaswarms@innocenceproject.org)

The Innocence Project is a national litigation and public policy organization dedicated to exonerating people who have been wrongfully convicted and reforming the criminal legal system to prevent future injustice. Founded as a legal clinic at Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University by civil rights lawyers Peter Neufeld and Barry Scheck in 1992, the Innocence Project was the first legal organization to systematically apply DNA testing to criminal justice – not as a means to convict, but as a tool to reveal innocence in cases of wrongful conviction. The organization has provided legal support in 200+ exonerations because of factors including DNA testing, new scientific evidence, conviction reinvestigations, and more.

The Innocence Project received support from Art for Justice to partner with the renowned national storytelling and archiving program, StoryCorps, on a project to preserve the experiences of people who have been wrongfully convicted and incarcerated, by recording their stories in their own words. These first-person narratives were shared and amplified locally and nationwide through StoryCorps programming and will be archived in the Library of Congress.



By 2023, the Innocence Project had provided direct representation or critical assistance in more than 200 exonerations.

Justice Arts Coalition

Uniting artists in and around the criminal legal system

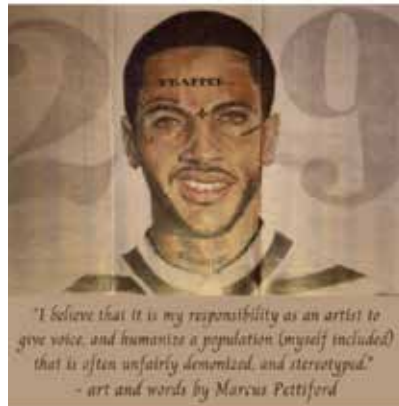
thejusticeartscoalition.org

[instagram.com/justiceartsorg](https://www.instagram.com/justiceartsorg)

Wendy Jason (wendy@thejusticeartscoalition.org)

Justice Arts Coalition is a national network that unites teaching artists, arts advocates, and currently and formerly incarcerated artists in harnessing the transformative power of the arts to reimagine justice. It seeks to increase teaching-artists' collective ability and capacity to implement arts programs, including those centering restorative and transformative justice practices, in and around prisons.

Justice Arts Coalition received support from A4J to help it expand, adapt, and improve programs and services. The network's goals as it continues to build and strengthen its resources include fostering an ongoing community of artists and advocates working to end mass incarceration; ensuring that the voices of formerly incarcerated and currently incarcerated artists take priority in conversations around criminal legal reform; and shifting the narrative around incarceration by creating opportunities for the broader public to encounter the work of currently and formerly incarcerated artists.



Artwork created in programs supported by Justice Arts Coalition

JustLeadershipUSA

Ending mass incarceration through empowerment of those most impacted

New York, NY

jlusa.org

facebook.com/JustLeadersUSA

instagram.com/justleadershipusa

linkedin.com/company/justleadershipusa

twitter.com/JustLeadersUSA

youtube.com/channel/UCIScnE6LbHKOfZfyILthZw

deanna@jlusa.org

JustLeadershipUSA (JLUSA) was founded in 2014 on the principle that the people closest to the solution are often the people furthest from resources and power. The organization equips individuals most affected by incarceration to drive policy reform as a key approach in its dedicated effort to cut in half the number of people incarcerated in the United States by 2030. Through targeted advocacy, strengthening the leadership of formerly incarcerated persons and membership support, JLUSA believes a decarcerated America is both possible and necessary.

Support from Art for Justice helped JustLeadershipUSA to sustain its core leadership programs, expand its reach impact into new regions in the United States, and add new visionary programs, bringing JLUSA closer to its decarceration goal of #halfby2030.



JustLeadershipUSA mobilizes people affected by incarceration to secure policy reform.

Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice

Enhancing collaboration to advance health, equity, and justice for everyone

New York, NY

katalcenter.org

facebook.com/katalcenter

instagram.com/katalcenter

twitter.com/katalcenter

Gabriel Sayegh (gabriel@katalcenter.org)

Lorenzo Jones (lorenzo@katalcenter.org)

The Katal Center for Health, Equity, and Justice, formed in 2016, is a strategy hub and collaborative partner in movements aimed at ensuring health, equity, and justice for everyone. Katal approaches its work through community organizing, advocacy, and leadership development to create change. Its primary organizational goal is to end mass incarceration through an approach of advancing evidence-based solutions that promote health and safety while eliminating racial disparities and securing equitable and fair outcomes.

Support from Art for Justice helped Katal to build statewide coalitions in New York in support of bail reform and gaining access to speedy trials, both of which are central to the organization's mission to reform the criminal legal system overall. Katal played a key leadership role by organizing campaign activities and strategies, training new advocates who have been directly impacted or incarcerated, and engaging lobbyists to work with legislators.



The Katal Center supports pretrial reform to ensure speedier trials for all.



Topeka K. Sam, founder of Ladies of Hope Ministries

Ladies of Hope Ministries

Ending the incarceration of women and girls

New York, NY

thelohm.org/

facebook.com/thelohm

instagram.com/thelohm

twitter.com/TheLOHM

youtube.com/channel/UCFJpfB0rFhKo-NivmAXB2hg?view_as=subscriber

The Ladies of Hope Ministries (LOHM) was founded in 2017 with the ultimate goal of ending the incarceration of women and girls. The organization supports five key initiatives: the Reentry Readiness Program, Hope House, Faces of Women Imprisoned, the Angel Food Delivery Project, and the Parole and Probation Accountability Project. Those programs are at the core of LOHM's efforts to advance its goal of helping disenfranchised and marginalized women and girls transition back into society through access to high-quality resources such as education, entrepreneurship, spiritual empowerment, advocacy and housing.

Since becoming a grantee partner in 2018, support from the Fund also was instrumental to the organization's successful efforts to formalize its infrastructure and grow Faces of Women Imprisoned into a thriving entrepreneurial network of professionally trained public speakers. It also has opened multiple Hope Houses, with regional hubs in New York/New Jersey, New Orleans, Baltimore, Atlanta and Chicago.

In November 2020, the United Nations appointed LOHM founder Topeka K. Sam as the Goodwill Ambassador for Social Justice (Incarceration Reform) at the Global Festival of Creative Economy. Later that year, Sam was granted a full presidential pardon in recognition of her work as an advocate for criminal justice reform and dedication to helping other women in need turn from a path of despair toward a path of empowerment.





ChristinaMaria Xochitlzihuatl,
a co-leader of Las Imaginistas

Las Imaginistas

Liberating the public imagination

Brownsville, TX

lasimaginistas.com

[instagram.com/lasimaginistas](https://www.instagram.com/lasimaginistas)

christinamaria@lasimaginistas.org

Las Imaginistas is an artist collective in Brownsville, TX in the Rio Grande Valley on the United States/Mexico border, that was founded by three women in 2017. Brownsville is 95% Latino/a and among the poorest cities in the United States. The collective's work focuses on community empowerment through artistic expression and policy activism. Activist-artists ChristinaMaria Xochitlzihuatl, Ruben Garza, and Michelle Serrano currently serve as its co-leaders and primary decision-makers.

The Fund's support is enabling Las Imaginistas to combine recent community organizing efforts with Xochitlzihuatl's work with justice system impacted people to create an artwork that imagines liberated solutions for community accountability and restorative justice. Conducting interviews with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals along Texas' Gulf of Mexico coast is a key initial step of the project. By the project's end, the collective aims to generate a series of recommendations for local legislators and policy makers, as well as a series of key ideas and tools that can be used by communities to take restorative justice into their own hands.



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Jin Hee Lee, director of strategic initiatives at the Legal Defense Fund

Legal Defense Fund / Prosecutor Reform Project

Civil and Human Rights Law Organization

Washington, DC

naacpldf.org/

[instagram.com/naacp_ldf/](https://www.instagram.com/naacp_ldf/)

twitter.com/NAACP_LDF

[linkedin.com/company/naacp-legal-defense-and-educational-fund-inc-](https://www.linkedin.com/company/naacp-legal-defense-and-educational-fund-inc-)

[Jin Hee Lee \(jlee@naacpldf.org\)](mailto:jlee@naacpldf.org)

The Legal Defense Fund (LDF) is the country's first and foremost civil and human rights law firm. Founded in 1940 under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, who subsequently became the first African-American U.S. Supreme Court Justice, LDF was launched at a time when the nation's aspirations for equality and due process of law were stifled by widespread state-sponsored racial inequality. From that era to the present, LDF's mission has always been transformative: to achieve racial justice, equality, and an inclusive society.

The Legal Defense Fund has focused on working to ensure that the nation's criminal justice laws are administered fairly and without regard to race. Its criminal justice practice uses litigation, advocacy, and public education to eliminate racial bias in the criminal legal system. LDF received support from Art for Justice to allow its incarcerated clients to pursue artistic endeavors both inside and outside of prison, including by using art to educate and engage stakeholders and the general public about the risks of violence and incarceration among Black youth.

Art for Justice Fund's supported LDF's Prosecutor Reform Project. The project educated African American communities on the importance of prosecutor elections to reform the criminal legal system. LDF focused their efforts on Southern states that were holding prosecutor elections in 2018 in four high-incarceration states: Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Texas. With its grant, LDF was able to partner with key community stakeholders in each state to train partner members to implement voter education programs on important role of prosecutors for police accountability and mass incarceration. Additionally, LDF created toolkits to help the public evaluate a prosecutor's commitment to addressing racial discrimination and mass incarceration.

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Legal Services for Prisoners with Children

Organizing and advocating for communities affected by the criminal legal system

Oakland, CA

prisonerswithchildren.org
facebook.com/LegalServicesPrisonersChildren
instagram.com/allofusornone/
twitter.com/LSPC_
youtube.com/channel/UCzoZXqrF8xLzXkvl62uxt6Q

Dorsey Nunn (dorsey@prisonerswithchildren.org)

Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC) organizes communities affected by the criminal legal system and advocates to release incarcerated people, restore human and civil rights, and reunify families and communities. It is a national leader in exposing how the expansion of the prison system damages low-income communities and communities of color, and how women and their children have been adversely affected by mass incarceration.

LSPC used funding from its A4J grant to promote its All of Us or None campaign, an agenda at the state and local levels to lessen the impact of the criminal legal system on families. This included promoting child custody and visitation rights for incarcerated mothers, expanding the number of All of Us or None chapters and continuing to develop the internal capacities of each chapter, supporting the restoration of voting rights, and working with the Oakland Housing Authority in California to secure property for re-entry housing for individuals being released from jail or prison.



Legal Services for Prisoners and Children seeks to reunify families and communities.



Kristin Sakoda, Director, LA County Department of Arts and Culture

Los Angeles County Arts Commission

Advancing arts, culture, and creativity throughout Los Angeles County

Los Angeles, CA

- lacountyarts.org
- facebook.com/LACountyArts
- instagram.com/lacountyarts
- twitter.com/lacountyarts
- youtube.com/user/lacountyarts

Kristin Sakoda (ksakdoa@arts.lacounty.gov)

The Los Angeles County Arts Commission (LACAC) fosters excellence, diversity, vitality, understanding, and accessibility of the arts in Los Angeles County and provides leadership in cultural services. In addition to coordinating the Arts Education Collective, a public-private partnership dedicated to making the arts a core component of public education for the county's 1.5 million students, the Arts Commission funds nearly 400 nonprofit arts organizations, manages the county's civic art policy, and funds the largest arts internship program in the country.

An initial grant from Art for Justice helped the LACAC to launch the Arts and Youth Development Project, which aims to support, heal, and develop youth and families in the criminal legal system and those at risk of involvement by engaging them through art. The project utilizes a collaborative, arts-based approach to youth development to foster personal growth.

The Fund also supported the Arts Commission's partnership with Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network (AIYN) and Performing Statistics to host a five-day mini-residency in Los Angeles of *No Kids in Prison*, a Performing Statistics' touring exhibition in Los Angeles. The exhibition featured art created by youth in Virginia detention centers and was intended to start and sustain conversations among activists, policymakers, youth and the general public about juvenile justice systems and the need for reform.



The Los Angeles County Arts Commission funds nonprofit arts organization and exhibitions.

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MASS Design Group

Designing built environments that promote justice and human dignity

Boston, MA

massdesigngroup.org

facebook.com/massdesigngroup

instagram.com/massdesigngroup

linkedin.com/company/mass-design-group

twitter.com/MASSDesignLab

vimeo.com/massdesigngroup

Jeffery Mansfield (jmansfield@mass-group.org)

Michael Murphy (mmurphy@mass-group.org)

MASS Design Group is a team of over 200 architects, landscape architects, engineers, builders, furniture designers, makers, writers, filmmakers, and researchers representing 20 countries across the globe that was founded on the understanding that architecture's influence reaches beyond individual buildings. A guiding principle of MASS (Model of Architecture Serving Society) Design is that architecture has a vital role to play in supporting communities to confront history, shape new narratives, collectively heal, and project new possibilities for the future.

One area of work the group is committed to is exploring the built environment's role in accelerating decarceration and promoting re-entry. Its Restorative Justice Design Lab aims to boost both the demand for improved spaces and the supply of architects who can implement those strategies.

Support from Art for Justice Fund has helped MASS Design Group to increase advocacy and training in hopes of transforming the way the nation views criminal justice. Through case studies, historical analysis and partner insight, it hopes to inspire a national narrative that values and calls for restorative justice infrastructure.



MASS Design Group is committed to exploring the built environment's role in accelerating decarceration and promoting re-entry.

Mayor's Office (City of Detroit)

Removing barriers to employment for those with criminal records

Detroit, MI

In 2016, on behalf of Detroit's Mayor's Office, the city's Law Department launched Project Clean Slate to eliminate barriers to employment for Detroiters eligible for expungement of their legal record (sealing a criminal conviction in the eyes of the law). Project Clean Slate works with partner organizations to provide free legal representation and connections to employment support for Detroit residents with criminal records. Through quarterly open 'expungement conferences', participants undergo an initial screening by volunteer attorneys to determine eligibility, connect with the city's workforce development team, and receive individual assistance with their expungement applications.

Art for Justice supported a public/private collaboration with the Detroit Mayor's Office to expand expungement of criminal records for thousands of people in Detroit and across the state of Michigan to reduce barriers to successful reentry such as the ability to become gainfully employed.



Project Clean Slate was launched by the City of Detroit's Law Department in 2016.

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Michigan Collaborative to End Mass Incarceration

Reforming carceral-based criminal justice solutions in Michigan

Lansing, MImichigan

collaborative.org

facebook.com/MICHCEMI

instagram.com/micollaborative

twitter.com/mi_cemi

Kary Perry (gjacobs@mlpp.org)

Chuck Warpehoski (chuckw@mi-cemi.org)

The Michigan Collaborative to End Mass Incarceration is a coalition launched in 2015 to promote and advocate for reform-minded non-carceral-based criminal justice solutions in Michigan. Currently, more than 50 organizations and 250 individuals make up the collaborative's membership. Its general members include organizers and policy advocates, direct service organizations with a mission to serve incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, faith-based groups, and prison-based membership organizations.

Over two years, the coalition used its Art for Justice grant in three priority areas of work: prosecutorial reform advocacy through public education about the role of prosecutors and their impact on mass incarceration; pretrial reform advocacy focused on the elimination of money bail; and support for incarcerated parents, especially pregnant women and mothers, along with advocacy for increased visitation opportunities for children with incarcerated parents.



More than 50 organizations and 250 individuals make up the membership of the Michigan Collaborative to End Mass Incarceration.

MoMA PS1

Positioning art and artists at the intersection of important social, cultural, and political issues

New York, NY

momaps1.org

twitter.com/museummodernart

Elena Ketelsen Gonzalez (Elena_ketelsen@moma.org)

MoMA PS1 champions art and artists at the intersection of social, cultural, and political issues of their time. Providing audiences with the agency to ask questions, access to knowledge, and a forum for public debate, PS1 has offered insight into artists' diverse worldviews for more than 40 years. PS1 received support from A4J to present the debut of *Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration*, an exhibition of works by currently and formerly incarcerated artists curated by Nicole Fleetwood. *Marking Time* was PS1's first exhibition when it reopened in September 2020 after the COVID-19 pandemic, and it welcomed 32,000 visitors. It gave the public a window into the visual culture of incarceration and was praised by art critics and arts media.

PS1 leveraged its institutional resources and platforms to amplify and support formerly incarcerated artists. Artist residencies, mutual aid initiatives, training workshops, and teaching-artist initiatives have now been integrated into PS1's long-term programming. The Fund's support for PS1's Residency at Large initiative allows the museum to provide tailored support to an emerging, justice-involved artist regardless of their geographic location. The year-long program supports one artist at the beginning of their career, offering workshops on the core aspects of developing a sustainable career as an artist. The residency features networking and mentorship opportunities with professionals and peers in the commercial art market.



Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration launched at MOMA PS1

Motus Theater

Creating original theater to facilitate dialogue on critical issues of our time

Boulder, CO

motustheater.org

[instagram.com/motustheater](https://www.instagram.com/motustheater)

twitter.com/MotusTheater

[youtube.com/channel/UCI7vXjJF4bOeJofenRaPVBg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI7vXjJF4bOeJofenRaPVBg)

Rita Valente-Quinn (rita@motustheater.org)

Kristen Wilson (kristen@motustheater.org)

Motus Theater works at the nexus between narrative and policy change, using original theater to promote discussion and consideration of important social, political and cultural issues. It creates two types of original theater: multimedia performances, exploring U.S. history through the lens of race and class, and professional autobiographical monologue and music performances, with leaders on the frontlines of addressing violence in the US.

Motus Theater received support from A4J for *JustUs*, one of the theater's two touring monologue projects. In it, leaders who have experienced incarceration share personal stories exposing the devastating impact of the criminal legal system to inspire action toward true justice. These stories are read aloud on stage by decision-makers in criminal legal policies who have been asked to center the experience of a justice-impacted person. Readers include district attorneys, law enforcement, leaders for correctional departments, judges, state and federal legislators, as well as business and education leaders.

JustUs leverages the power of these personal monologues to encourage community conversations about the inhumanity of the prison system, the failure of the punitive approach to incarceration, and the systemic racism and class inequity that is at the root of most crime. In so doing, *JustUs* helps audiences make informed decisions about true public safety for all when they exercise their civic responsibility of voting and community engagement. In partnership with Fair & Just Prosecution (FJP), and with the support of the Fund, Motus Theater is presenting a national tour of *JustUs* monologues with local district attorneys' offices.



Motus Theater creates original theater including multimedia performances and autobiographical monologue.

Mount Tamalpais College at San Quentin State Prison

Transforming the lives of incarcerated people through higher education

San Quentin, CA

mttamcollege.org

facebook.com/Mt.Tam.College

twitter.com/MtTamCollege

Jody Lewen (jlewen@prisonuniversityproject.org)

Mount Tamalpais College (MTC) is an independent college located inside San Quentin State Prison in California. It provides an associate of arts degree in liberal arts, intensive college preparatory courses in math and writing, and individualized support services and advising to more than 300 people incarcerated at the large facility each year.

MTC charges no fees or tuition and provides all textbooks and school supplies free of charge. Any student who has received a high school diploma or a general educational diploma (GED) is welcome to enroll; no one is excluded from enrollment based on age, length of sentence, commitment offense, or time left to serve. The college has no competitive admissions process. In addition to its academic programs, MTC supports an array of activities and events related to media production, arts and culture, and other forms of civic engagement.

Support from Art for Justice helped MTC provide COVID-19 relief aid to incarcerated people and correctional staff across California during the pandemic. Care packages offered to all of the more than 100,000 people incarcerated in California state prisons included some basic food items, writing materials, envelopes/stamps, art supplies, soap, and toothpaste along with an information packet related to COVID, re-entry support, and legal information. The initiative also provided food trucks for staff at all 32 California state prisons.



Graduates of Mount Tamalpais College at San Quentin State Prison in California

Mural Arts Philadelphia

Public art program

Philadelphia, PA

muralarts.org

[instagram.com/muralarts](https://www.instagram.com/muralarts)

twitter.com/muralarts

[facebook.com/MuralArtsPhiladelphia](https://www.facebook.com/MuralArtsPhiladelphia)

[youtube.com/user/phillymuralarts](https://www.youtube.com/user/phillymuralarts)

Jane Golden (Jane.golden@muralarts.org)

Carolyn Nagy (Carolyn.nagy@muralarts.org)

Mural Arts Philadelphia (MAP) is an innovative public art program rooted in the traditions of mural-making that engages the community and employs therapeutic practices to transform individual lives. Each year, the organization interacts with up to 25,000 people through projects at mural sites around the city of Philadelphia.

One of its core programs focuses on restorative justice, with MAP seeking to create opportunities and improve quality of life for those in and returning from prison to reduce recidivism and increase chances of successful re-entry. MAP received support from A4J in 2017 to launch the Reimagining Reentry Fellowship which selects artists impacted by the justice system to examine the problems posed by mass incarceration on both a personal and a systemic level, illuminating the human cost and potential solutions. An exhibition grew out of this fellowship initiative which explored how artists maintain a sense of identity, regain or maintain their agency, and grapple with the coercive forces within and outside of prison.

A4J support also enabled Mural Arts to establish an artist-in-residence program at the Philadelphia district attorney's office. The inaugural artist was James 'Yaya' Hough, in 2020, followed by Russell Craig in 2022.



Reimagining Reentry Fellowship Murals created with the support of Mural Arts Philadelphia are located throughout the city.

National Book Foundation

Reaching readers everywhere

New York, NY

nationalbook.org

facebook.com/NationalBookFdn

instagram.com/nationalbookfoundation

twitter.com/nationalbook

Natalie Green (ngreen@nationalbook.org)

The mission of the National Book Foundation, presenter of the National Book Awards, is to celebrate the best literature published in the US, expand its audience, and ensure that books have a prominent place in the country's culture. The foundation approaches this work from four programmatic angles: Awards & Honors recognizes exceptional authors, advocates, literature, and literary programs; Education & Access initiatives foster a lifelong passion for books in young and adult readers; Public Programs bring acclaimed authors to communities nationwide; and Service to the Literary Field provides support to the national literary ecosystem.

Art for Justice supported the launch of the Literature for Justice program, a nationwide, book-based campaign that ran from 2018–2021. Each year was guided by an annual committee – a cohort of well-known authors who are also experts, leaders, and advocates within the justice space. The committee curated reading lists to investigate, illuminate, and guide readers through the complex issue of mass incarceration, with the hope that these texts would deepen readers' understanding of the carceral system. In addition to publicizing and promoting the reading lists, the National Book Foundation presented several large-scale public events in person and online.

The foundation later partnered with Freedom Reads, established by grantee partner, Dwayne Betts, to further the initiative's work and distribute thousands of books to readers currently incarcerated in prisons, jails, and detention centers nationally. This collaboration on book distributions has highlighted exceptional, timeless and timely books, from Edward P. Jones' *Lost in the City* and Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place* to Martín Espada's *Floater* and Don Mee Choi's *DMZ Colony*.



Left: Monthly Book Circle packaging and distribution in partnership with Freedom Reads, featuring National Book Award Winner *The Yellow House* by Sarah M. Boom. Photo credit: Freedom Reads.

Right: Literature for Justice program launch with committee members and selected authors at the Los Angeles Public Library. Photo credit: Nicholas Gingold.

National Employment Law Project

Ensuring all workers can attain economic opportunity, security, and prosperity

New York, NY

nelp.org

facebook.com/NationalEmploymentLawProject

instagram.com/nationalemploymentlawproject

linkedin.com/company/national-employment-law-project

twitter.com/NelpNews

Kemi Role (krole@nelp.org)

The National Employment Law Project (NELP) aims to ensure that all workers, and all who aspire to work, can attain economic opportunity, security, and prosperity through their labor. Achieving this mission demands an inclusive economy – one that has successfully realized NELP’s three core priorities of reducing economic inequality, ending structural racism, and building worker power. NELP is a leading research and advocacy voice focusing on issues of special significance to low-wage and unemployed workers. It champions several major economic and workplace rights issues, including increasing the minimum wage, strengthening the safety net for jobless workers, modernizing the system of workplace protections, and promoting access to employment for people with arrest and convictions records.

A grant from the Fund supported NELP to create employment opportunities for people with criminal records in states like Ohio and Illinois. Its efforts focused on organizing and legal and policy reform to create pathways to employment and improve the rewards of work for people in low-wage jobs, particularly women and people of color. NELP also developed and piloted innovative re-entry and narrative strategies in partnership with others in the field.

Through an A4J Art and Advocacy grant, NELP deepened its partnership with Black diasporic artists and cultural strategists using art as a vehicle for challenging mass incarceration and building shared learning for justice reform. This included working with the Afro Urban Society to enable six Black artists in the San Francisco Bay area to create work that explores their personal experiences and artistic practice as a catalyst for social change.



National Employment Law Project organized organized efforts to secure fair chance employment.

National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform

Working to transform the juvenile and criminal justice systems

Oakland, CA

nicjr.org/

twitter.com/NICJR01

linkedin.com/company/nicjr/

Diana Dahl (diana@nicjr.org)

The National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) works to reduce incarceration and community violence, improve the outcomes of system-involved youth and adults, and increase the capacity and expertise of organizations that serve these individuals. NICJR provides technical assistance, research, organizational development, and advocacy in the fields of juvenile and criminal justice, youth development, and violence prevention. It works with an array of organizations, including government agencies, nonprofits and foundations.

NICJR received support from the Fund to play a key role in the growing national movement to replace youth incarceration with effective, community-based approaches to youth rehabilitation. The organization intends to support 10 selected jurisdictions in the development and implementation of actionable plans to close youth correctional facilities, strengthen community-based approaches to youth rehabilitation through reinvestment of cost savings from closures, convert these facilities into community assets, and assess and respond to the economic impacts of facility closures on surrounding communities. Throughout all stages of this initiative, NICJR prioritizes ensuring that all planning processes are inclusive of the impacted communities and informed by robust needs analyses.



NICJR seeks to close youth carceral facilities and create supportive services for young people.

New Virginia Majority Education Fund

Supporting the rights and needs of working-class communities of color in Virginia

Alexandria, VA

nvm-educationfund.org

facebook.com/nvmef

instagram.com/newvamajority

twitter.com/newvamajority

Jon Liss (jliss@newvirginiamajority.org)

Tran Nguyen (tnguyen@newvirginiamajority.org)

Founded in 2010, the New Virginia Majority Education Fund (NVMEF) is an advocacy organization engaged with working-class communities of color in Virginia’s urban areas. It seeks to advance progress toward its goal of a Virginia that is democratic, just, and sustainable through community organizing, large-scale voter education and mobilization, leadership development, and strategic communication. NVMEF focuses on four issues: environmental protection, immigration, smart growth/transportation, and voting rights.

Support from Art for Justice enabled the organization to launch Court Watch of Central Virginia, a program that gathers data on the disturbingly high number of people of color without legal representation during bail hearings. With the Fund’s continued partnership, the New Virginia Majority Education Fund also pivoted its Right to Vote campaign to engage voters digitally. These partnerships have greatly helped the organization to create a movement that is transforming Virginia by organizing communities of color, women, working people, LGBTQIA+ people, and youth.



The New Virginia Majority Education Fund seeks to help build a Virginia that is democratic, just, and sustainable.

New York Women’s Foundation

Improving the social standing of women in NYC

New York, NY

nywf.org

facebook.com/NewYorkWomensFoundation

instagram.com/nywomensfdn

linkedin.com/company/the-new-york-women%27s-foundation

twitter.com/NYWomensFdn?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

youtube.com/user/NYWomensFoundation

Ana Oliveira (aoliveira@nywf.org)

Guisela Marroquin (gmarroquin@nywf.org)

The New York Women’s Foundation (NYWF) was founded in 1987 to improve the social standing of women in NYC. The largest women’s grantmaking foundation in the United States, by 2021 it had invested over \$100 million to build a vibrant network of more than 500 women-led organizations across the City’s five boroughs. Through an A4J Activating Art and Advocacy grant, NYWF continued its partnerships with STEPS to End Family Violence and artist Troy Lambert to expand engagement with system-impacted women in community conversations to envision a “healing New York City”. Lambert portrayed their vision in a series of posters that NYWF and STEPS presented to the Mayor’s Office for Criminal Justice and other key stakeholders. These posters and the ideas they represented provided a framework for creating a more just New York City.

A previous A4J grant supported NYWF’s Justice Fund, a seven-year initiative launched in the fall of 2018. Through the Justice Fund, the Foundation brings its expertise in identifying and investing in successful community-based solutions to address issues surrounding the campaign to close the Rikers Island jail complex. The Justice Fund also works to dismantle mass incarceration and its effects on women and girls by supporting organizations that promote justice, safety, and well-being in affected communities.



The New York Women’s Foundation’s Justice Fund is active in the campaign to close the Rikers Island jail.

Ohio Justice and Policy Center

Advocating for fair, intelligent, and redemptive criminal legal systems

Cincinnati, OH

ohiojpc.org

[instagram.com/ohiojpc](https://www.instagram.com/ohiojpc)

[linkedin.com/company/ohio-justice-&-policy-center/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ohio-justice-&-policy-center/)

Tyra Patterson (tpatterson@ohiojpc.org)

The Ohio Justice and Policy Center (OJPC) seeks to create fair, intelligent and redemptive criminal legal systems through advocacy and community education. Support from A4J has helped OJPC, a nonprofit law firm, to further its advocacy to reduce barriers and increase opportunities for Ohioans with criminal records. The organization aims to end the most harmful aspects of polices that are systematically dehumanizing and over-criminalizing Ohioans. As part of this work, OJPC expanded its Second Chance project, through which it operates clinics aimed at giving people relief from their criminal records so they can advance professionally, qualify for better housing, and engage in their communities. A key priority has been the reform of occupational licensing laws that block those who have been incarcerated from these type of jobs.

The Center has been influential in numerous policy wins related to reducing the size of Ohio’s prison system. As a result of its efforts alongside other advocates – including A4J grantee partners Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth, Represent Justice and the Alliance for Safety and Justice – Ohio became the 23rd state to abolish juvenile life without parole sentences. Also, OJPC successfully advocated for a new law that enables people with underlying substance abuse issues to access treatment in lieu of conviction and uses the ‘non-conviction/not guilty’ record-sealing mechanism that avoids more than 130 conviction-related sanctions for people with drug convictions.



Clinics operated by the Ohio Justice and Policy Center help clients get relief from their criminal records.

Ohio Transformation Fund

Addressing the impact of mass incarceration and criminalization in Ohio

Cleveland, OH

www.ohtransformationfund.org

Elissa Schneider (elissa@ohiotransformationfund.org)

The Ohio Transformation Fund (OTF) is a donor collaborative fund created in 2015 by national and local funders to address the impact of mass incarceration and criminalization in Ohio, with particular focus on safely reducing the number of people in prisons and jails. OTF regrants funds to organizations working in the field of criminal justice in Ohio to address capacity gaps and conducts fundraising to increase such support. Its staff convenes funders and grantees to help them learn from each other and work together to achieve policy reforms and systems change.

OTF used an A4J grant to enhance its creative messaging and strategies to advance criminal justice reform, build capacity and infrastructure for state grassroots activism, and deepen its relationships with arts partners. Previous support from the Fund helped OTF to center voices of people directly impacted by the justice system, including providing support to 15 people to publicly testify before legislators during hearings on drug sentencing reform efforts, publishing a brief with the Policy Matters Ohio research institute to guide legislators, and hosting several Night Out for Safety and Liberation events alongside the Ohio Organizing Collaborative. OTF also received support from the Fund, in partnership with JustLeadershipUSA, to develop a robust model emergency-management plan that puts the protection of incarcerated people first, which was of life-saving importance during the pandemic.



The Ohio Transformation Fund collaborated on an emergency-management plan for the protection of incarcerated people.

Ohioans to Stop Executions

Educating the general public and lawmakers about the importance of repealing the death penalty system

New York, NY

otseactionfund.org

The Ohioans to Stop Executions Action Fund (OTSE Action Fund) is the 501(c)4 arm of Ohioans to Stop Executions, a coalition of individuals and organizations that pushes for progressive policies that holistically address the harms of violent crime on victims and people who commit them, as well as community safety. The organization uses data-driven approaches to educate the public and lawmakers about the need to ban the death penalty in Ohio.

The OTSE Action Fund received support from A4J to work towards the coalition's goals by recruiting sponsors to move bills banning capital punishment through both chambers of the Ohio state legislature. This work has included collaborating with faith-based entities to educate constituents about the existence of the movement, partnering with community-based organizations to host educational civic engagement events in targeted districts throughout the state, and publishing reports that amplify public opinion polls showing that a majority of people – both Democrats and Republicans – want to ban the death penalty in Ohio.



Ohioans to Stop Executions seeks to educate the public and lawmakers across the state.

Operation Restoration

Helping current and formerly incarcerated women transition home

New Orleans, LA

or-nola.org

facebook.com/OperationRestoration.OR

instagram.com/operationrestorationtheor

twitter.com/TheOR_NOLA

Syrita Steib (syrita@or-nola.org)

Operation Restoration (OR) is an organization in New Orleans that is committed to providing currently and formerly incarcerated women with the resources necessary to sustainably transition home. Created and run by formerly incarcerated women, the organization provides women and girls opportunities to advance their education and access employment training. It strengthens its academic and employment programs with services that help manage post-traumatic stress, including by providing women and girls with a safe space for rehabilitation and healing.

Operation Restoration received funding from A4J to infuse activism with New Orleans arts and culture by expanding its *(Per)Sister: Incarcerated Women of Louisiana* exhibit, a project that centers women impacted by incarceration and immigrant detention. The Fund also supported OR's partnership with the Louisiana Center for Children's Rights (LCCR) for an exhibition titled *Rollercoaster* that focuses on children incarcerated in Louisiana and beyond. The second of a three-exhibition series based at the Newcomb Art Museum of Tulane University, *Rollercoaster* highlights the root causes of juvenile incarceration, the societal and economic impact of family separation, and the physical and developmental toll incarceration has on children.

Additionally, The Fund supported OR's affiliated 501(c)4, Opportunity 2 Restore, to build lobbying and advocacy efforts that benefit formerly and currently incarcerated women in Louisiana and across the US. This specific grant enabled staff to continue to advocate in Washington, DC to lift the ban on incarcerated individuals receiving federal Pell grants – an effort that succeeded with the passage of a new law in 2023.



Among other efforts, Operation Restoration supports academic and employment programs at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women (LCIW).

Opportunity Institute

Advancing social mobility and equity through education and social policies

Berkeley, CA

theopportunityinstitute.org
[instagram.com/opportunityinstitute](https://www.instagram.com/opportunityinstitute)
twitter.com/opportunityorg

Stacey Holderbach (stacey@collegecampaign.org)

The Opportunity Institute (OI) advances social mobility and equity through education and social policies that make true opportunity possible. With support from AFJ, OI was able to complete a four-year pilot of its Renewing Communities (RC) criminal justice initiative. Launched in 2016, RC focuses on partnering with community colleges to offer in-person, full credit college courses in California state prisons; partnering with community colleges to have a public presence of formerly incarcerated students and student leaders on campus; and hosting Project Rebound programs, a student initiative that originated at San Francisco State University 50 years earlier that RC helps to replicate on eight campuses.

RC aims to “bridge corrections to college” in California by providing people with criminal records with the opportunities, resources and supports they need to earn a college degree while in prison or after release. The program’s focus and approach are based on research confirming that higher education plays a key role in breaking the cycle of poverty, reducing recidivism by 40% or more, and rebuilding lives damaged by mass incarceration. Additionally, RC addresses employment barriers for formerly incarcerated college graduates. Support from A4J allowed RC to use legal processes such as expungement to help graduates build successful careers.



The Opportunity Institute partners with community colleges to offer courses in California state prisons.

PEN America

Championing the freedom to write and recognizing the transformative power in creative expression

New York, NY

pen.org

facebook.com/PENAmerica

instagram.com/penamerica

twitter.com/PENAmerica

youtube.com/penamericancenter

Robert Pollock (rpollock@pen.org)

PEN America is a nationwide community of more than 7,500 members – novelists, journalists, editors, poets, essayists, playwrights and other writing professionals – working together to carry out the organization’s mission of championing the freedom to write and recognizing the transformative power in creative expression.

PEN America’s longstanding Prison Writing Program supports and amplifies the writing of incarcerated authors by providing free resources, writing mentorships, a rigorous annual awards program, and opportunities to find new audiences. Thousands of individuals have been reached, and the number is continually growing.

PEN America received support from the Fund to establish the Writing for Justice Fellowship to connect incarcerated writers and those with lived experience of the criminal legal system with esteemed artists, authors and activists to serve as mentors. Fellows from its two initial cohorts included Art for Justice Fund grantees Dwayne Betts, Mitchell Jackson, Vivian Nixon and C.T. Mexica. PEN adapted the fellowship model in 2022 to focus on immersive creative projects for its fellows.



PEN America protects freedom of expression via its multiple projects.

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People's Paper Co-op

Amplifying the voices of women in re-entry

Philadelphia, PA

<http://peoplespaperco-op.weebly.com>

<http://facebook.com/peoplespaperco>

Courtney Bowles (courtbowles@gmail.com)

The People's Paper Co-op is a women-led, women-focused, women-powered art and advocacy project at the Village of Arts and Humanities in North Philadelphia, PA. The Co-op considers women in re-entry as the leading criminal justice experts US society needs to hear from and uses art to amplify their stories, dreams, and visions for a more just and free world.

Since 2018, the People's Paper Co-op has collaborated with the Philadelphia Community Bail Fund on its annual Mama's Day Bail Out campaign. Each year, the organization helps to organize exhibitions, parades, press conferences, and events to raise awareness and funds for the campaign, while sharing the stories, dreams, and demands of formerly incarcerated women with thousands of Philadelphians



Artwork by members of The People's Paper Co-op, a public art forum

Performing Statistics

Using art to imagine a world without incarceration

Richmond, VA

performingstatistics.org

facebook.com/performingstatistics

instagram.com/performingstatistics

nokidsinprison.org

Mark Strandquist (mark@performingstatistics.org)

Kate DeCiccio (kate@performingstatistics.org)

Performing Statistics (PS) is a national cultural organizing project that uses art to model, imagine and advocate for a world without prisons where young people are fully supported to be free. Among its impacts in Virginia, where it started and is based, it has helped advocates close a youth prison, change laws and policies on school suspensions and expulsions, and advance Virginia's investment in community-based alternatives to incarceration.

Support from A4J enabled Performing Statistics to support the design, fabrication and launch of the *No Kids in Prison* national exhibition tour, which was an immersive exhibition filled with first-person creative projects, new media and innovative technology that was co-created with young people impacted by the juvenile justice system. The exhibition used mixed-reality storytelling experiences to highlight the past and present (amplifying the stories, struggles and dreams of incarcerated youth), while also creating a speculative space for teens across the country to imagine a world without youth incarceration.

More recently, PS received support from the Fund, in partnership with the Columbia Justice Lab, cinematographer and storyteller Wren Rene and the Amplifier Foundation, to curate an educational video series outlining the case for ending youth incarceration and the steps that can be taken to achieve that goal. This video series provides a 'one-stop shop' for people to access clearly articulated positions and recommendations for ending youth incarceration as well as emotionally visceral experiences told by system-impacted youth.



Performing Statistics advocates for a world where young people are fully supported to be free.

Pioneer Works

Research and experimentation in contemporary culture

New York, NY

pioneerworks.org

facebook.com/PioneerWorksFoundation

instagram.com/pioneerworks

twitter.com/pioneerworks_

youtube.com/channel/UCvz10aafWdDEvO_4ehcr0jQ

Maxine Petry (maxine@pioneerworks.org)

Founded in 2012 by artist Dustin Yellin, Pioneer Works (PW) is a nonprofit cultural center that has become a new model for cultural organizations and a cornerstone of the contemporary art community in Brooklyn, NY. It seeks to enable artists to bear witness to the injustices of the criminal legal system, elevate the voices of people enmeshed in that system, and imagine alternatives to mass incarceration through exhibitions, public programs, workshops and classes.

Pioneer Works received support from A4J to develop two public artworks – *The Forever Museum Archive Circa 6000BCE* by Onyedika Chuke and *Kalief Browder: The Box* by Coby Kennedy. The installations focused on the historical origins and contemporary realities of the country’s criminal legal system and the carceral and legislative policies that disproportionately impact Black and brown communities. Shaped by Chuke’s research and experience as an artist-in-residence at Rikers Island, the project invited the audience into meditations and discussions on the origins and continuing traumas of mass incarceration. The series engaged with local nonprofits that work with youth who have been directly affected by the carceral system.

Pioneer Works also partnered with the For Freedoms artist collective to reimagine the quartet of freedoms – of speech, of worship, from want, and from fear – that President Franklin D. Roosevelt first spelled out during a 1941 wartime speech. Taking this as a point of inspiration, PW and For Freedoms posed a new quartet of public ideals that respond to the needs of our contemporary era: awakening, listening, healing and justice. These topics framed discussions during a series of town hall talks, during which a group of artists, scholars, legal experts and activists cross-pollinated their visions for a more equitable justice system.



Pioneer Works supports artists to bear witness to the injustices of the criminal legal system.

Pretrial Justice Institute

Advancing safe, fair, and effective juvenile and adult pretrial practices and policies

Baltimore, MD

pretrial.org

facebook.com/pretrial

instagram.com/pretrialjustice

twitter.com/Pretrial

youtube.com/c/PretrialJusticeInstituteWashington

Meghan Guevara (meghan@pretrial.org)

Jessica Bizik (jess@pretrial.org)

The Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI) informs, inspires, and mobilizes local pretrial changemakers working to end mass incarceration. Its framework for change is Local Antiracist Pretrial Justice, which addresses the spectrum of pretrial decision points, starting with a person's contact with law enforcement (or being able to avoid contact) through the disposition of their case. This framework aims to guide and support community members and public officials work together to implement decarceral solutions rooted in equity, safety and well-being for all.

With A4J's support, PJI expanded its national strategy focused on reframing pretrial justice reform through an equity lens. In its on-the-ground work in Ohio, the organization supported advocacy efforts to improve state pretrial policy emphasizing racial justice, data collection, pretrial liberty and community investment. Its team also worked locally with the Greene County Coalition for Compassionate Justice to successfully defeat a levy to build a larger jail while opening the door for expanding community-based wellness options.

The Fund's support also helped enable PJI to curate *Artful Souls + Liberated Voices*. This virtual exhibition featuring work by 16 Ohio artists, filmmakers, writers and musicians explores the intersection of pretrial justice and racial justice, and the power of 'artivism' in changing narratives around bail reform.



The Pretrial Justice Initiative explores the power of 'artivism' in changing narratives around bail reform.

Prison Policy Initiative

Challenging mass incarceration and over-criminalization through research, advocacy, and organizing

Northampton, MA

prisonpolicy.org

facebook.com/PrisonPolicyInitiative

instagram.com/prisonpolicy

twitter.com/PrisonPolicy

Peter Wagner (pwagner@prisonpolicy.org)

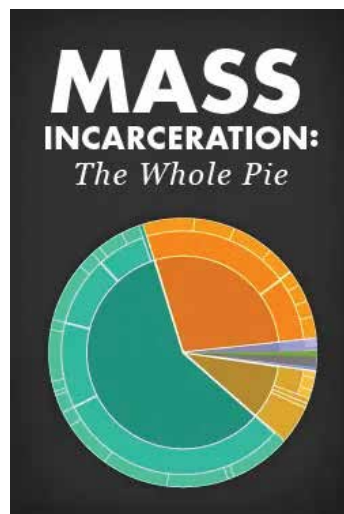
Wendy Sawyer (wsawyer@prisonpolicy.org)

The Prison Policy Initiative (PPI) produces cutting-edge research to expose the broader harms of mass incarceration and over-criminalization. Through its research publications, data visualizations, and advocacy, they fill data and messaging gaps to bring in new supporters for criminal legal system change and abolition, and to help movement leaders reach their goals.

PPI's research advances campaigns on issues affecting incarcerated people and their families, such as reducing the cost of jail and prison phone calls, eliminating medical co-pays, and protecting in-person visits and postal mail. It also calls attention to overlooked issues in the criminal legal system, including women's incarceration and re-entry needs, systemic barriers to voting and jury service, local jail expansion, and the impacts of incarceration on individual and public health.

In the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, PPI was at the forefront of tracking state correctional system responses – and lack thereof – to the health crisis within facilities. In an effort to help mitigate the devastating impacts, it pressured states to take meaningful actions, such as large-scale releases, widespread vaccination and vaccine education, and improving transparency for concerned families and the public.

Support from the Fund enabled PPI to publish dozens of major reports and nearly 100 research briefings, all designed to change the public conversation around mass incarceration and to provide timely, reliable resources for advocates, policymakers, and the press.



Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting

Supporting quality journalism and education to raise awareness on underreported issues

Washington, DC

pulitzercenter.org

facebook.com/Pulitzercenter

instagram.com/pulitzercenter

twitter.com/pulitzercenter

youtube.com/pulitzercenter

Jon Sawyer (jsawyer@pulitzercenter.org)

Natalie Applewhite (napplewhite@pulitzercenter.org)

The Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting (PCCR) is an award-winning nonprofit journalism organization dedicated to supporting in-depth engagement with underreported global affairs. PCCR's actions center on sponsoring quality international journalism across all media platforms and directing a unique program of outreach and education to schools and universities.

Support from A4J enabled PCCR to support the World of Difference initiative, a journalistic effort to examine issues related to mass incarceration over a three-year period. In partnership with Illinois Humanities' *Envisioning Justice* exhibit on incarceration in Illinois, PCCR hosted a half-day program to educate its journalists and other leaders from Chicago institutions. To design the project, the Pulitzer Center called on the expertise of fellow grantee partners Voice of the Experienced, Campaign for the Fair Sentencing of Youth, and the Youth Justice Fund.

PCCR also received support from the Fund to commission live (virtual) performances of Sarah Shourd's award-winning play *The BOX*, featuring actors who were formerly incarcerated. The intimate and raw performance of life and resistance in solitary confinement in U.S. prisons reached a global audience. Shourd, a survivor of solitary confinement, developed *The BOX* in collaboration with other survivors. PCCR also commissioned a special online presentation by actress and playwright Liza Jessie Peterson of clips from her performance in the one-woman show, *The Peculiar Patriot*, an indictment of the systemic inequality within the carceral system.



The Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting supports performing arts projects as part of its effort to promote in-depth engagement with issues related to mass incarceration.

Recess Art

Building a more just and equitable creative community

Brooklyn, NY

recessart.org/
facebook.com/recessart
instagram.com/recessart/
twitter.com/RecessArt
vimeo.com/recess

Shaun Leonardo (shaun@recessart.org)

Since 2009, Recess Art has partnered with artists to build a more just and equitable creative community. By welcoming radical thinkers to imagine and reshape networks of community resilience and safety, Recess defines and advances the possibilities of contemporary art.

Recess is driven by the belief that artists are uniquely situated to address social injustice due to the creative toolkit they possess and their ability to offer nuanced perspectives to challenge dominant narratives when examining systemic inequities.

From its inception, many of Recess' artists have addressed mass incarceration in their work. In recognition of that priority issue, in 2017, Recess initiated its Assembly program for artists to directly support system-impacted youth in Brooklyn. In the context of Assembly, art, performance, and storytelling disrupt the deeply problematic and false narrative of the 'criminal' that governs the system and cycles of oppression. Assembly is a pathway to long-term, meaningful creative involvement and employment skills.



Top: Alexander Bell, *A Teenager with a Promise*, 2019

Bottom: Recess Art's Assembly program supports system-impacted youth in Brooklyn.

Rehabilitation Through the Arts

Creating an opportunity for incarcerated people to build life skills through the arts

Purchase, NY

rta-arts.org

facebook.com/RTAARTS

instagram.com/rta_arts

linkedin.com/company/rehabilitation-through-the-arts-rta

twitter.com/RTA_ARTS

Ricki Gold (ricki.gold@rta-arts.org)

Charles Moore (Charles.moore@rta-arts.org)

Rehabilitation Through the Arts (RTA) works in maximum- and medium-security prisons to develop a supportive culture in which incarcerated people can explore their identity, build critical life skills, and express themselves through the arts. An RTA participant put it this way, “Arts programs in prisons are an important tool for supporting the advocacy of incarcerated people, providing a way to work out trauma, express rage and joy, and describe the conditions of imprisonment.”

RTA offers workshops in a range of artistic disciplines including theater, music, dance, writing, and visual art, and produces in-prison theatrical, musical and dance performances for prison populations, outside guests and families of participants. A4J’s grant funded a theatrical project based on participants’ harrowing stories of prison life during the COVID-19 pandemic. RTA also received support to co-produce the animated short film *Doing Time – A Woman’s View*.

Another RTA initiative, *Reimagining Myself: A Reentry Toolkit*, helps currently incarcerated people prepare for the social and emotional aspects of re-entry using a package of professionally produced narrative films, ‘lived experience’ videos (interviews with formerly incarcerated people), a participant workbook with original art contributed by RTA alumni, a facilitator guide, a 20-session arts-based curriculum, and a facilitator training program. The initiative was originally launched in New York State prisons.



Rehabilitation Through the Arts organizes workshops in prisons using a wide range of artistic disciplines.

Restore Justice Illinois

Mitigating human and fiscal impacts of extreme sentencing laws

Chicago, IL

restorejusticeillinois.org

facebook.com/restorejusticeillinois

[nstagram.com/restorejusticefdn](https://instagram.com/restorejusticefdn)

twitter.com/rj_illinois

Jobi Cates (jcates@restorejustice.org)

Restore Justice Illinois (RJI) is a 501(c)4 civic organization founded to mitigate the human and fiscal impact of the extreme sentencing laws of the 1980s and 1990s, particularly where they have impacted children. RJI believes in the possibility of rehabilitation, redemption, and reunification with the community for all incarcerated people.

RJI used support from Art for Justice for its ongoing effort to advance an end to extreme sentencing for youth, in partnership with the Campaign for Fair Sentencing for Youth. Not only is RJI steeped in the fight to end juvenile life without parole, but its policy and legislative work spans other critical issues in the state, including ending other extreme sentences and promoting voting rights for incarcerated individuals.



Restore Justice Illinois advocates for an end to extreme sentencing for youth.

Returning Artists Guild

Abolitionist Arts Guild of Directly Impacted Artists

Columbus, OH

thereturningartistsguild.org

Aimee Wissman and Kamisha Thomas (thereturningartistsguild@gmail.com)

The Returning Artists Guild (RAG) is a prison abolitionist arts guild of currently and formerly incarcerated artists in Ohio and across the United States. It was co-founded by artists Aimee Wissman and Kamisha Thomas, who wanted to continue the therapeutic, creative community that they found 'inside'. RAG consists of visual artists, filmmakers, musicians, singers, rappers, comedians, dancers, poets, spoken word performers and others.

The organization is dedicated to ending mass incarceration through community-centered art and healing practices. As part of its efforts toward that goal, RAG has created temporary spaces across Ohio for pop-up exhibitions; organized events such as workshops for skills sharing; supported access to community-centered art and healing practices; facilitated opportunities for mentorship; and provided a range of other resilience-driven support services for artists in re-entry and those who are still inside. It also partners with artists and organizations that want to provide resources to its community.

Through member performances, artworks, and storytelling, the exhibitions and events curated by RAG have given public audiences an understanding of mass incarceration and its impact on families and communities. Events serve as gathering places for the organization's members and other impacted people to build community, collaborate, and focus on imagining a future of shared safety.

RAG received support from A4J to help expand its reach, services, and impact. The funding is enabling the organization to purchase, lease, and develop physical space for studios, galleries, workshops, equipment storage, and offices for its members and staff. The Fund's support also is being used to provide rent and studio space stipends to artists in Columbus, OH to build an artist residency.



Members of Returning Artists Guild sharing their work

School for Poetic Computation/ American Artist

Teaching a diverse community of artists and critical thinkers

New York, NY

sfpc.study

[instagram.com/sfpc_nyc](https://www.instagram.com/sfpc_nyc)

twitter.com/sfpc

[American Artist \(Americanartist@gmail.com\)](mailto:Americanartist@gmail.com)

The School for Poetic Computation (SFPC) at Westbeth Artists Housing in New York City is an artist-founded and led school, residency and research community that explores the intersection of code, design, hardware, and theory. Founded in 2013, its mission is to support a diverse community of artists and critical thinkers to shape creative, humane, and poetic forms of computation. In its efforts to make the school more accessible to marginalized people, including formerly incarcerated students, SFPC offers a growing range of free public programs and classes focusing on environmental justice, disability and accessibility, and racial bias in algorithms.

The classes are free of charge, with priority given to students who are Black, Indigenous or other people of color; LGBTQIA+ people; people with disabilities; people from non-traditional educational backgrounds; and currently or formerly criminalized or incarcerated people. Enrollment is limited to 18 to ensure a welcoming and supportive classroom. SFPC staff and teachers worked collaboratively with each other and students.



Left: Student work from Reading, Writing, & Compiling
Right: American Artist lecturing about poetic computation



Playwright Lynn Nottage

Second Stage Theater / Lynn Nottage

Highlighting American living playwrights and illuminating the lives of marginalized people

New York, NY

2st.com/
facebook.com/2STNYC
instagram.com/2stnyc
youtube.com/channel/UCBHjlpjkr-8zqFoCJgeE6mg

lynnnottage.com/
facebook.com/Lynnida1
instagram.com/lynnnottage/
twitter.com/Lynnbrooklyn

Catherine Sumner (csumner@2st.com)

Second Stage Theater in NYC was founded in 1979 to produce ‘second stagings’ of contemporary American plays that deserved to reach a wider audience. It is the only theater on Broadway dedicated exclusively to living American playwrights. Lynn Nottage is an American playwright illuminating the lives of marginalized people. She is the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for Drama twice (*Ruined* in 2009 and *Sweat* in 2017).

With a grant from A4J, Nottage collaborated with Second Stage Theater to produce *Clyde’s*, a story about formerly incarcerated workers struggling to get their lives back. The play, which included a mix of humor and emotional resonance, shifts the narrative surrounding the current legal system while elevating the voices of people impacted. *Clyde’s* had a two-month run on Broadway beginning in November 2021 and was among the most-produced plays the following season, continuing to spread its important message and engage audiences with productions throughout the US and abroad.

The Fund’s grant also supported community engagement among viewers both inside and outside of incarceration. Representatives from several advocacy organizations providing re-entry services led talkbacks after live performances, and a streamed performance of the play was presented for people incarcerated at Rikers Island, with a talkback conversation with Nottage and members of the cast and crew. Materials were produced and shared with audience members about how to become fair chance employers.



Uzo Aduba starred alongside other cast members in Second Stage Company’s production of *Clyde’s*.

Silver Art Projects

Supporting artists with studio space and career development support

New York, NY

silverart.org

[instagram.com/silverartprojects](https://www.instagram.com/silverartprojects)

[Gregory Thornbury \(gthornbury@silverart.org\)](mailto:gthornbury@silverart.org)

Silver Art Projects supports artists with critically needed studio space in NYC to nurture and build thriving practices while also contributing to the creative ecosystem in Lower Manhattan. It was founded in 2019 to shift an element of the art world that often perpetuates a culture of inequity—who has the physical support to create work. In addition to large and beautiful studio space, Silver Art Projects aims to enhance artists' careers by providing professional development opportunities and connections with museum curators, art leaders, galleries, collectors, thought and business leaders, peer-to-peer artist mentors, and others.

With support from the Fund, Silver Art Projects reviewed applications for its third round of year-long residencies, offering free studio space in the World Trade Center starting in June 2022, along with stipends and mentorship for artists. Several residency positions were allocated for previously incarcerated artists. A new class of residents is under consideration for the year ahead.



Jared Owens working in his Silver Art Projects studio.



Agnes Gund attends a studio visit with Silver Art Project's artist residents.

Stand Up for Ohio

Building movements for social justice

Youngstown, OH

standupforohio.org

facebook.com/StandUpForOhio

twitter.com/StandUpOH

Prentiss Haney (prentiss@ohorganizing.org)

Founded in 2007, Stand Up for Ohio is a 501(c)4 that builds movements for social justice in Ohio. It has led large-scale electoral campaigns in six cities across the state. One area of its expertise is voter engagement, training hundreds of volunteer leaders to motivate communities to take action and help to create legislative change.

Stand Up for Ohio received support from the Fund to advance its efforts to reform Ohio's criminal legal system, including statewide canvassing and messaging efforts during the final phase of the referendum on Issue #1 (Drug and Criminal Justice Policies Initiative), which would have progressively reformed sentencing for many criminal offenses and boosted support for rehabilitative programming. (The amendment ultimately was defeated by voters in November 2018.) During the campaign, the organization's goal was to expand organizing activities into target geographies to reach more people of color, low-income people, and young people impacted by the justice system. A deeper base of constituents has been galvanized for ongoing action.



Stand Up for Ohio emphasizes voter engagement.

Storycatchers Theatre

Helping youth in the juvenile justice system tell their stories

Chicago, IL

storycatcherstheatre.org

facebook.com/StorycatchersTheatre

instagram.com/storycatchers_theatre

youtube.com/channel/UCVfg2gdliXjpRKvI2VYEPgw

Rachel Hauben Combs (rcombs@storycatcherstheatre.org)

Storycatchers Theatre prepares young people to make thoughtful life choices through the process of writing, producing and performing original musical theater inspired by personal stories. The organization has been engaged in juvenile justice work since 1990 and post-release employment since 2014. It now runs programs that engage with youth at four stages of court involvement: probation, detention, incarceration and post-release.

These programs have an impact on both the participants and the community, as Storycatchers' musicals are performed at schools, juvenile justice facilities, police facilities and community centers. These performances express how communities have been shaped by structural racism and generational poverty, and offer youth public recognition of their experiences. Performances are often followed by youth-led post-show discussions.

Storycatchers was supported by A4J to expand Changing Voices, a post-release performing arts employment program that enables formerly incarcerated youth aged 17–24 to create and tour original musical theater.



Participants in Storycatchers Theatre productions



Lauren Halsey, founder of
Summaeverythang

Summaeverythang/Lauren Halsey

Building resilience through equitable community development

Los Angeles, CA

summaeverythang.org

www.laurenhalsey.com

Lauren Halsey (laurenmane@gmail.com)

Lauren Halsey uses architecture and illustration to stimulate community engagement for social change. She produces stand-alone artworks and site-specific projects in South Central Los Angeles, where her family has lived for generations. Combining found, fabricated and handmade objects, Halsey's work conveys a sense of cultural celebration linked to the urgent need for civic action. She was awarded the Seattle Art Museum's 2021 Gwendolyn Knight / Jacob Lawrence Prize. Other solo shows have been presented at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Foundation Louis Vuitton, Paris; and The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

Summaeverythang Community Center (SCC), which Halsey founded, received support from A4J to grow and expand its reach. SCC provides programs that catalyze the resourceful, resilient, and boundless communities of Black and brown folks to transcend the intentional barriers placed in front of them. Halsey launched SCC to disrupt the lived experience in her neighborhood – that access to resources, creativity, and learning depends on zip code and not instead on ambition, interest or passion.

SCC has become a locus for community action to combat systemic disinvestment through equitable community development. In one example of SCC's approach, it organized a rapid response to the COVID-19 crisis that included distribution of more than 32,000 CSA (community supported agriculture) boxes of free and fresh food.



Lauren Halsey uses architecture and installation art to demonstrate the realities of urban neighborhoods.

The Actors' Gang Prison Project

Creating original programming to share hope

Culver City, CA

theactorsgang.com/prison-project

facebook.com/TheActorsGangPrisonProject

vimeo.com/actorsgangprisonproject

Kathryn Carner (kathryn@theactorsgang.com)

Since 2006, The Actors' Gang Prison Project has provided theater arts programming in prisons and re-entry facilities. Its mission is to establish a supportive community, offer participants tools for recognizing and managing their emotions, and create systemic change by centering the voices of those who have been impacted by the criminal legal system.

Through a highly physical and stylized form of theater practice, the Prison Project invites vulnerability, breaks down barriers, recognizes humanity, and supports human connections. Its partnership of participants, alumni, teaching artists, and staff provides the practice of ensemble theater to incarcerated adults and youth as well as people in re-entry programs in an effort to develop the emotional skills necessary to thrive in any environment and community. As a result, the program seeks to shift prison culture and the societal conversation about mass incarceration.

The Actors' Gang received two grants from Arts for Justice. The first supported a new arts-based wellness program for correctional officers to help heal work-related trauma and a re-entry project using the arts as a safe off-ramp for people exiting the prison system. The second grant allowed the organization to continue to develop re-entry programs, expand teacher training, and strengthen and forge new partnerships.



A workshop by The Actors' Gang Prison Project at a California prison in 2019. Photo by Peter Merts for the California Arts Council.

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The Center for Art and Advocacy

Investing in formerly incarcerated artists

New York, NY

centerforartandadvocacy.org
[instagram.com/centerforartandadvocacy](https://www.instagram.com/centerforartandadvocacy)

Jesse Krimes (jkrimes@thecenter.art)

The Center for Art and Advocacy (CAA), co-founded by A4J grantees Jesse Krimes and Russell Craig, is an organization led by directly impacted artists who are creating an artist-led movement to challenge the narratives, institutions and policies that sustain mass incarceration and racial inequity in the United States. It is the only organization in the country that is investing in deepening directly impacted artists' critical analysis to change cultural narratives.

Established in 2022, CAA builds on the successful Right of Return USA Fellowship program (ROR); its design is a direct response to the challenges and lessons learned by ROR. Even as ROR flourished, many of its fellows still struggled to sustain their practice and develop tools for building and maintaining an online/social media presence, applying for grants and approaching galleries, storing and archiving work, and managing finances. Additionally, ROR struggled with balancing an overwhelming demand for a limited number of fellowships, which often resulted in painful rejections for its artistic community of justice system impacted people.

The Center for Art and Advocacy received support from A4J to help it build upon the ROR Fellowship to provide financial and community support to a much larger number of artists annually and to establish partnerships with hundreds of advocates. Three programmatic approaches are being used to achieve these goals: annual artist fellowships; a training and mentorship program for formerly incarcerated artists at different stages of their careers; and a national residency for artists and advocates at which reflection, relationships, discovery, creativity, and strategy can flourish. These are mutually reinforcing initiatives and provide entry points and support for formerly incarcerated artists at each stage of their career.



Jesse Krimes, Agnes Gund and Russell Craig at the launch event for Center for Art and Advocacy



Gina Lyles (Executive Director) and
Trey Hartt (Managing Director)

The Hive

Holistically supporting young people as they transition into adulthood

Richmond, VA

thehivemovement.org

facebook.com/thehivemovement804

instagram.com/thehivemovement

twitter.com/thehivemovement

Trey Hartt (trey@thehivemovement.org)

The Hive is a youth-centered, Black-led and multi-racial community that seeks to create a world where all young people feel like they belong and have the resources they need to become independent, healthy, and thriving adults. It is centered around the belief that tangible investments in the diverse needs of young people can help reverse the intergenerational trauma caused by systemic racism and address the community's most pressing issues. The model it has established challenges conventional pathways through the juvenile justice and child welfare systems by engaging in what it calls legacy work, the idea that helping emerging adults build their skills and healing practices enables them to be drivers of generational transformation.

The Hive was born from A4J grantee partner, Performing Statistics, based on principles of participatory action research and cultural organizing. Its creation began with the question "How can we build a world without youth prisons?" that was directly asked of and responded to by hundreds of young people who have been impacted by the juvenile justice system and thousands of community members and advocates.

The new movement received support from the Fund to develop a campus in Richmond, VA that brings together holistic investments across six core needs defined by young people as key to navigating the justice system: housing, education, entrepreneurship, health and wellness, arts and culture, and restorative practices.



Hive Youth Advisory Board member Tia talks with young people in her community about the kinds of investments they wish to see. Photo by Mark Strandquist, 2021.

The New Press

Publishing innovative works and underrepresented viewpoints

New York, NY

thenewpress.com

facebook.com/newpressbooks

instagram.com/thenewpress

linkedin.com/company/the-new-press

twitter.com/thenewpress

www.youtube.com/channel/UCvoL4Y7jJHTP5Op9-JiSmGw

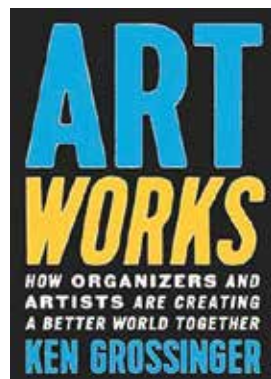
Diane Wachtell (dwachtell@thenewpress.com)

Blanche Norman (bnorman@thenewpress.com)

The New Press is a nonprofit publishing house operated in the public interest that was established in 1990 as an alternative to large, commercial publishers. It is committed to publishing innovative works of educational, cultural, and community value that commercial publishers may deem insufficiently profitable, and it aims to provide access to underrepresented viewpoints to leverage social change.

The New Press was involved with two A4J Activating Art and Advocacy grants, both related to a collaboration with Fair and Just Prosecution to develop and publish *Change from Within: Reimagining the 21st-Century Prosecutor*. The book highlights, in a series of profiles, the unique perspectives and experiences of 13 visionary locally elected prosecutors who work to reimagine the prosecutor's role, shrink the legal system, and build safer, healthier communities.

The grants also provided The New Press, Fair and Justice Prosecution, and a third partner, Mural Arts Philadelphia, the opportunity to hire justice-involved artists to create a collection of 13 original works of art published in *Change from Within*. Each profile in the book is accompanied by a piece of artwork inspired by the prosecutor's vision of justice and created by an artist who was once incarcerated. The New Press also received support to advance the publication of a series of books on mass incarceration that address four key strategies: keeping people out of jail and prison; shortening sentences; promoting re-entry; and changing the narrative through art.



The New Press was established as an alternative to large, commercial publishers.

Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural

Transforming the community through arts, culture, and literacy

Los Angeles, CA

tiachucha.org

facebook.com/TiaChuchasCentroCultural

instagram.com/tiachuchas

twitter.com/TiaChucha

Based in the neighborhood of Sylmar in the northeast San Fernando Valley part of Los Angeles, Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural works to transform the community through arts, culture and literacy. The organization's publishing wing, Tia Chucha Press, is one of the country's leading small cross-cultural presses focused on socially engaged poetry and literature.

Through an Activating Art and Advocacy grant, Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural in collaboration with the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network and Somos LA Arte led 15 Youth Justice Fellows through the process of creating life-sized wood cutouts of themselves. On one side, each young person captured the harmful narratives that society projects onto them, and on the other side, how they see themselves -- showing the gaps between stereotype and reality. The pieces were displayed for the LA County Board of Supervisors to see when they voted on a recommendation to move all youth out of the probation system and into another existing county system.

Separately, A4J support helped enable Tia Chucha to develop and move forward several different projects, including publishing via the organization's Trauma to Transformation program, an anthology of poems by 30 writers titled *Make a Poem Cry: Creative Writing from California's Lancaster Prison*. The Fund's support also was instrumental to the release of the organization's documentary film, *From Trauma to Transformation*, which follows participants' creative writing and performances in re-entry centers, transitional housing programs, community colleges, and community centers throughout Los Angeles.



Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural organized a poetry anthology by incarcerated writers in California

University of Arizona Poetry Center

Supporting poetry writing, readings and collections

Tucson, AZ

poetry.arizona.edu

[Diana Delgado \(dianadelgado@arizona.edu\)](mailto:dianadelgado@arizona.edu)

[Tyler Meier \(tmeier@arizona.edu\)](mailto:tmeier@arizona.edu)

The University of Arizona Poetry Center is one of the country's leading academic poetry institutions. Founded in 1960, it hosts programs including a reading and lecture series featuring nationally known contemporary poets, outreach programs for writers of all ages, and a library with one of the country's most extensive collections of contemporary English-language poetry. The Center administers a prison writing program that includes workshops in local, state and federal prisons, a weekly writing workshop for formerly incarcerated writers, and a journal featuring works from them called *Walking Rain Review*.

Support from Art for Justice Fund helped enable the Poetry Center to commission and publish new work from dozens of poets across the country focused on racial justice, the experience of incarceration and the need for systemic reform. The institution also expanded Free Time, a workshop that pairs community members, who serve as mentors, with incarcerated writers through written correspondence.

The Poetry Center also received A4J support to create an anthology of notable new work. Scheduled for publication in 2024, the title is *Like a Hammer Across the Page*. It features poems by the project's poet ambassadors, who use artistic expression to create new empathetic, radical and solution-centered thinking about carceral justice. They include: Hanif Abdurraqib, Reginald Dwayne Betts, Natalie Diaz, Tongo Eisen-Martin, Nikky Finney, Randall Horton, Frank Johnson, Ada Limón, John Murillo, Angel Nafis, Patrick Rosal, Raquel Salas Rivera, Nicole Sealey, Evie Shockley, Patricia Smith, and Vanessa Angélica Villareal.



The Helen S. Schaefer Building houses the University of Arizona Poetry Center.

Vera Institute of Justice

Working to create systemic change toward a more humane justice system

New York, NY

vera.org

facebook.com/verainstitute

instagram.com/verainstitute

twitter.com/verainstitute

youtube.com/channel/UCdUfqPJeOB_bHFdx1lhR0jQ

Nicholas Turner (nickturner@vera.org)

Insha Rahman (insharahman@vera.org)

Founded in 1961, the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) is a national leader in justice reform that seeks to advance systemic change toward a more humane criminal legal system. Vera focuses on injustices within the system by partnering with the institutions where most justice policy is lived and practiced: police departments, courts, the immigration system, jails and prisons.

With support from A4J, Vera played a significant role in the successful collaborative effort to restore federal Pell grants to people in prison. This victory, which enables incarcerated individuals nationwide greater opportunities to enroll in higher education courses, is the result of decades of consistent engagement and advocacy by grantee partners.

Vera also received support from the Fund to partner with Opportunity 2 Restore (O2R) to extend its letter-writing campaign, place a series of op-eds and launch a social media campaign to further its advocacy for higher education in prison. O2R provides the policy opportunities and training for currently and formerly incarcerated leaders to be at the forefront of the movement to increase educational access for people in prison. A4J supported Vera's efforts to continue partnering with grassroots and 'grasstops' leaders to shape and deliver legislative and policy victories related to bail reform, shift funding from jails and policing to community-based services, and ensure accountability for the government and criminal justice institutions.



Vera Institute for Justice plays a major role in supporting incarcerated individuals' access to higher education.

Voice of the Experienced

Mobilizing directly impacted leaders to transform Louisiana's criminal legal system

New Orleans, LA

voiceoftheexperienced.org
facebook.com/VOTENola
instagram.com/voiceoftheexperienced
twitter.com/FIPVOTENOLA

Norris Henderson (norris@voiceoftheexperienced.org)

Bruce Reilly (bruce@voiceoftheexperienced.org)

Lydia Hopewell (lydia@voiceoftheexperienced.org)

Voice of the Experienced (VOTE) is a grassroots organization founded and run by formerly incarcerated people and their families, friends, and allies. Established in 2004, it is an extension of the Angola Special Civics Project, a political group focused on improving criminal justice policies and prison conditions that began inside the Louisiana State Penitentiary (aka Angola) in the 1980s.

VOTE is dedicated to restoring full human and civil rights to the people most impacted by the criminal (in)justice system in Louisiana. Through civic education and participation, the organization seeks to mobilize a strong group of leaders to re-imagine and transform that system locally and statewide.

Support from A4J helped enable VOTE to advocate for and testify in support of numerous reforms in legislative policy related to formerly incarcerated people, including voter eligibility and access, housing discrimination, and quality medical care. In an example of a success, the passage in 2021 of Act 127 (state legislature) simplified the voter registration process for people on probation, ensuring that roughly 60,000 people on probation per year were no longer temporarily disenfranchised. VOTE also received support from the Fund to expand its programs into re-entry services and litigation. This included renovations to a house to serve as a women's transitional residence and the hiring of the organization's first staff attorney.



Voice of the Experienced emphasizes civic education and participation of justice system impacted people.

We Got Us Now

Built and led by children and young adults with incarcerated parents

New York, NY

[instagram.com/we_gotusnow](https://www.instagram.com/we_gotusnow)

twitter.com/We_GotUsNow

[youtube.com/channel/UCzuz83MhCMS_yW2-mb0H-Ig](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzuz83MhCMS_yW2-mb0H-Ig)

Ebony Underwood (ebonyu@wegotusnow.org)

We Got Us Now (WGUN), founded in 2017, is the first national nonprofit organization built by, led by, and focused on children and young adults with incarcerated parents. Ebony Underwood, the daughter of a formerly incarcerated parent, launched it to identify, mobilize and empower others with similar personal experiences through action and advocacy.

We Got Us Now seeks to keep families connected as they navigate the realities of being physically separated, including encouraging bold and relevant dialogue about mass incarceration. Its areas of work and emphasis include creative advocacy campaigns, digital narratives, safe and inclusive spaces, and a signature leadership program that promotes healing and aims to reduce the stigma from having parents who are incarcerated. The organization uses partnerships with media, entertainment, and the arts to raise the voices of children of incarcerated people and build community among them.

WGUN's mission to transform the justice system and its impact on children with parents behind bars took on new importance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The organization was highly active in efforts to protect parents behind bars and secure the release of those most vulnerable to the virus in prisons. WGUN received support from A4J to bolster its efforts to educate, train, and develop young people around the nation to lead and inform state-based advocacy efforts that work to end mass incarceration.



We Got Us Now seeks to amplify the voices of children with incarcerated parents

Women's Community Justice Association

Improving the lives of women affected by mass incarceration

New York, NY

womenscja.org

facebook.com/WomensCJA

instagram.com/womenscja

twitter.com/WomensCJA

Sharon White-Harrigan (sharon@wcja.org)

Michelle Feldman (michelle@wcja.org)

The Women's Community Justice Association (WCJA) is a nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives of women and gender-expansive New Yorkers affected by mass incarceration. Founded in 2018, it is led by justice-impacted women and focuses on change through policy advocacy, community organizing and service.

A4J supported WCJA's #BEYONDrosies campaign, which is focused on two goals: decarcerate as many people as possible from the Rose M. Singer Center (Rosie's) at NYC's Rikers Island jail, and close Rosie's before the 2027 deadline in the City's overall Rikers plan. The support enabled WCJA to increase its advocacy around securing a commitment from city and state officials to relocate a women's facility as a stand-alone site in New York City, and creating a preliminary decarceration plan that will drive down Rosie's population.



Closing the Rikers Island jail complex is a top priority of the Women's Community Justice Association.

Worth Rises

Working to dismantle the prison industrial complex and return resources to communities

New York, NY

worthrises.org

facebook.com/worthrises

instagram.com/worthrises

twitter.com/worthrises

Bianca Tylek (bytylek@worthrises.org)

Worth Rises is a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to dismantling the prison industry and ending the exploitation of those it touches. It works to expose the commercialization of the criminal legal system and advocate to return the economic resources extracted from affected communities. Through such work, the organization strives to pave a road toward a safe and just world free of police and prisons.

A4J supported Worth Rises' leadership to deepen partnerships that focused on exposing the venture capitalism driving the expansion of the prison industry. One result was the organization's groundbreaking report, *The Prison Industry: How It Started, How It Works, How It Harms*, published in December 2020, which delved into the history, business and impact of the prison industry, underscored by firsthand accounts of people with lived experience.

Worth Rises leveraged the report to launch a semester-long intensive course about the prison industry. The organization is prioritizing engagement and collaboration with people directly impacted by the prison system, offering paid learning opportunities to help develop skills that support their leadership to dismantle the industry and reinvest its resources in their communities. Worth Rises continues its education and awareness about the prison industry via that curriculum. This approach is based on the recognition that increased education drives divestment from the industry and provides tools and resources that highlight accessible, attractive alternatives for individuals and corporations to consider.



Worth Rises has been leading efforts to expose the rights abusing drive for profits within the private prison industry.

WriteGirl

Building writing skills among girls through mentoring and workshops

Los Angeles, CA

writegirl.org

facebook.com/WriteGirlOrganization

instagram.com/writegirla

twitter.com/WriteGirlLA

youtube.com/user/WriteGirlChannel/featured

Keren Taylor (keren@writegirl.org)

WriteGirl is an organization that spotlights the power of a girl and her pen by matching girls with women writers who mentor them in creative writing. Through one-on-one sessions and monthly creative writing workshops, girls are given techniques, insights and topics for quality writing in all genres from professional women writers. Workshops and mentoring sessions explore poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, songwriting, journalism, screenwriting, playwriting, persuasive writing, journal writing, editing and more.

WriteGirl received support from A4J for the pilot of new programming and curriculum that included specific job skills training, college entrance guidance, and support for youth in their transition back to their home communities. Since then, the organization has sustained, enhanced, and expanded its capacity to deliver mentoring and pathways to college and/or employment for the young women it serves.



WriteGirl workshops highlight the “power of a girl and her pen”.

Yes 4 Minneapolis

Campaign for policing alternative

Minneapolis, MN

Sam Cooper (sam@yes4minneapolis.org)

The Yes 4 Minneapolis campaign was a Black-led, coalition-model campaign that sought to replace the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD) with a new department of public safety by amending the Minneapolis City Charter. The measure that was presented to voters aimed to replace traditional policing with a comprehensive public health approach designed to address homelessness, addiction, lack of access to mental health services, and poverty more generally.

Led by grassroots community activists and allies, the campaign, which was supported by A4J, represented a first-in-kind effort to transform policing through a direct public ballot. The proposed charter amendment initiative ultimately was defeated by Minneapolis voters in November 2021, but campaign supporters believe that the national attention the effort attracted helped raise awareness that could lead to more positive results in the future, both in Minnesota and around the country.



Rally in 2021 in support of the Yes 4 Minneapolis campaign

Youth First Initiative / Youth First State Advocacy Fund

Leading state campaigns to transform the juvenile justice system

Washington, DC

nokidsinprison.org/

facebook.com/NoKidsInPrison/

newventurefund.org/

The Youth First Initiative is a national advocacy organization dedicated to ending youth incarceration and increasing community-based investment in the success of young people. To advance progress toward those goals, it designs strategies and leads campaigns under the heading ‘No Kids in Prison’ in support of closing youth prisons and redirecting resources to community-based alternatives to incarceration. In partnership with state-based organizers, Youth First creates a model for reducing incarceration that builds on past successes, overcomes opposition, and can be replicated across the country.

The organization used the Fund’s support for its efforts to accelerate reforms to dismantle the youth prison model via closing youth prisons, reducing the incarceration of youth, and redirecting resources to community-based alternatives to incarceration. Youth First continues to build on its high-impact campaigns, including those to successfully close or prevent new youth prisons from being built in Connecticut, New Jersey and Virginia.

The Youth First State Advocacy Fund (YSAF) is a pooled donor fund that works in parallel with the Youth First Initiative to provide financial resources to state-based advocates running campaigns to transform the juvenile justice system. YSAF has provided grantmaking support to state-based coalitions leading campaigns to dismantle youth prisons, a continuation of previous work undertaken by Youth First Initiative that was supported by A4J. Results through 2023 include the successful closing of youth prisons in New Jersey and Connecticut and deterring state efforts in Virginia to create a new facility. Similar campaigns have now been initiated in multiple other states.



Youth First Initiative's No Kids in Prison campaign is the centerpiece of its work.

Zealous

Galvanizing public defenders to advocate for criminal justice reform outside of the courtroom

Venice, CA

zealo.us/

Scott Hechinger (scott@zealo.us)

Zealous is a nonprofit organization that activates, trains, and supports public defenders, in partnership with local organizations and the people and communities they serve, to harness the power of media, technology, storytelling, and the arts. Its ultimate goal is transformative and enduring policy change to end mass criminalization.

Arts are integral to Zealous' work and process, with artists considered partners from the very beginning. With support from the Fund, Zealous worked with artists and other partners throughout the United States to develop a new, replicable practice of breaking down and rebuilding the way organizations and individuals advocate and collaborate around ending mass incarceration.



Zealous' ultimate goal is policy change to end mass criminalization.



Agnes and Catherine Gund speaking at the Hammer Museum's celebration of Frieze Prize winners Mary Baxer, Maria Gaspar and Dread Scott. Photo by Sara Golanka.

Board & Staff



A4J team members Helena Huang, Terrence Bogans, Amy Holmes, Sue Simon and LeAnne Alexander at the Museum of Modern Art. photo credit: Erin Baiano

**ART FOR
JUSTICE
FUND**

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Founder and Chair



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Darren Walker
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Desmond Meade of Florida Rights Restoration Coalition advocating against the disenfranchisement of formerly incarcerated people. Photo courtesy of FRRC.

