

# Circle for Justice Innovations' Leadership Circle Grantee Profiles 2019



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## **Circle for Justice Innovations Leadership Circle 2019**

The Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI) began in 2000 and was born out of a growing concern for prison expansion, mass incarceration, and the impact of racial disparities on oppressed and marginalized communities. The CJI Circle is an innovative participatory engagement of activists, donors, and donor-activists, most of whom have experienced incarceration. We share authority and a passion for supporting meaningful, transformative and systemic change of the criminal legal system. CJI's mission is to end mass criminalization, mass incarceration and state violence in the United States.

This year, CJI invested \$500,000 in 39 groups across the country. Our grantee partners are advancing de-carceration at every stage, from bail reform to parole policy, to demanding the closure and re-purposing of prison buildings and prison funding. They reflect a fierce commitment to police and prosecutor accountability, transforming our punitive immigration system, and maintaining the rights and visibilities of specifically vulnerable populations. In this pivotal election year, many of our grantees are fighting for the re-enfranchisement of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people.

We are proud that eight of this year's grantees, working on a variety of issues, maintain an inside/outside organizing model that relies on activists inside prisons who are members, staff, or board members of the organizations. It is a testament to our movement that this work has become more plentiful. As the network and leadership of formerly incarcerated people has grown, their guidance in reaching back to include those left behind has breathed new life into the movement. Through this work, we empower incarcerated activists and honor work that is done on the inside, which often goes unsupported by funders.

CJI believes that the leadership of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people counters the injustice of perpetual punishment. It allows for deeper analysis of the problems and solutions that will best serve impacted communities, and all communities. We are excited to support the vision of the Leadership Circle's 2019 Grantees as they drive our movement toward honest narratives and electoral, legislative, and policy changes grounded in the wisdom of lived experiences.

# Leadership Circle Grantee Profiles 2019

## Expanding & Enforcing Immigrant Rights

**All of Us or None Texas**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**San Antonio, TX**

[www.prisonerswithchildren.org/about-aouon](http://www.prisonerswithchildren.org/about-aouon)

All of Us or None is a grassroots civil and human rights organization fighting for the rights of formerly and currently incarcerated people and their families, working against the discrimination that people face every day because of arrest or conviction history. Their efforts in the coming year will consist of:

- Publishing at least two opinion pieces written by members of collaborating organizations and All of Us or None, focusing on criminal justice/immigration policies that affect people of color in Texas, and proposing workable solutions.
- Convening a larger network of Latino and Black advocates within struggling communities in San Antonio, with the goal of learning about and improving race relations within the movement to end mass incarceration. The gatherings will provide opportunities to discuss challenges with criminal justice and law enforcement systems locally and statewide to find common ground.
- Increasing the political participation of marginalized communities and amplifying the voices of historically oppressed communities.

**Justice for Families**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Sulphur, LA**

[www.justice4families.org](http://www.justice4families.org)

Justice for Families (J4F) prepares activists across the country to challenge the fundamentally flawed narrative of American justice and immigration systems and create a new factual narrative in their churches, neighborhoods, unions, city councils, county boards, and other decision-making junctures. Through the Family Leadership Institute and Network, J4F supports family leaders in 49 states to participate in peer-to-peer support, healing, coaching, intensive training and a shared learning environment that enables people to recognize, challenge and stop systemic problems in the justice system. These leaders then join campaigns or start their own groups that fight for system-wide reforms. CJI funding will support movement building in Alabama, helping local organizers to connect the struggle of prisoners working to improve conditions with outside family members who want to support those actions. It will also fund campaigns to hold the Alabama Department of Corrections accountable, connect the local movement to national efforts, and interrupt and end the school-to-prison pipeline across the state.

**Migrant Justice**  
**Awarded \$12,500**

**Burlington, VT**

[www.migrantjustice.net](http://www.migrantjustice.net)

Migrant Justice builds the voice, power, and capacity of the immigrant farmworker community to organize for economic justice and human rights. With CJI support, Migrant Justice will advance a number of campaigns, all supported by their underlying structure of base-building, popular education, and support to members in crisis:

- No Polimigra: municipal campaigns across Vermont to replicate the best-in-country policing policy adopted by the City of Winooski, foreclosing all communication between police and immigration agencies.
- #Not1More Deportation: campaigns denouncing arrests by ICE and Border Patrol and demanding the release of detained community members. Campaigns are coordinated with legal strategy and involve protests, communications work, and letter writing to ICE and the immigration judge.
- MJ v. ICE: advancing their federal First Amendment lawsuit against ICE and the Vermont DMV, along with organizing that highlights and denounces ICE's targeting of human rights defenders.

## **DE-CARCERATION – BAIL, SENTENCEING, PAROLE & CLOSING JAILS**

**Chicago Community Bail Fund**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Chicago, IL**

[www.chicagobond.org](http://www.chicagobond.org)

Chicago Community Bond Fund (CCBF) operates a revolving community bail fund to immediately free people from pretrial detention and support them as their cases proceed. CCBF also works to abolish the use of money bail and pretrial incarceration in Illinois through public education, litigation, legislation, and other policy advocacy. CCBF will work to stop poverty-based incarceration in Illinois using educational outreach, relationship building workshops, media work, public rallies, and developing community leaders. Upcoming work will focus on influencing the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Pretrial Practices to recommend a statewide court rule eliminating pretrial jailing due to the inability to pay a money bond. CCBF believes this avenue is most likely to result in a lasting end to wealth-based pretrial incarceration in Illinois.

**Philadelphia Community Bail Fund**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Philadelphia, PA**

[www.phillybailout.com](http://www.phillybailout.com)

The Philadelphia Community Bail Fund (PCBF) organizes to demand that the District Attorney's Office, the First Judicial District, and the Pennsylvania State Legislature use their respective powers to end the use of money bail and pretrial detention in Philadelphia. They organize to urge these entities, as well as others such as City Council, Pretrial Services, and the Defenders Association of Philadelphia, to invest in supportive services and resources for people in their communities using an invest/divest framework. They also raise money to buy back the freedom of people whom the state is currently holding, and provide supportive services in the form of rent, utilities, food, and fee assistance. Specific goals for this period include:

- Expanding capacity by growing their Core Organizer team through the leadership development of those whose bail has been posted by PCBF.
- Improving engagement of directly impacted communities with the Follow the Heart campaign by doing outreach to local salons, barbershops, corner stores and other Black and Brown owned businesses.
- Increasing the number of transgender people PCBF bails out and are in leadership positions by building community with local transgender advocacy groups and organizations.

**People's Justice Project**  
**Awarded: \$15,000**

**Columbus, OH**

[www.facebook.com/OhioPJP](http://www.facebook.com/OhioPJP)

People's Justice Project (PJP) is a grassroots organization of working people and communities of color united across Columbus, Ohio. Through canvassing and community conversations, PJP leaders continuously push for police accountability, knock on doors and host community conversations to earn commitments to vote, and educate voters at community meetings about issues that are important to them. In 2020, PJP will continue their statewide coalition to retroactively make low level drug felony possessions become misdemeanors. They will address jail overcrowding by demanding recognition of the crisis through community public meetings and a direct action on the jail. They will simultaneously increase their emphasis on trauma recovery and restorative healing practices for communities directly affected by violence and trauma.

**Release Aging People in Prison****New York, NY****Awarded: \$20,000**[www.rappcampaign.com](http://www.rappcampaign.com)

The Release Aging People in Prison (RAPP) Campaign is a grassroots organizing project founded and led by formerly incarcerated people to mobilize community power to end mass incarceration and promote racial justice through the release of aging people in prison. RAPP was the first group to pose release as the solution. As they have achieved significant advances in parole release rates in the face of rising, aging incarcerated populations, they have weathered pushback from police organizations and conservative policy makers. CJJ support will help them expand their statewide organizing to counter those forces, continue to change the narrative that has fueled life imprisonment, and the use of policing and prisons to contain social justice struggles and community resistance.

**Orleans Parish Prison Reform Coalition****New Orleans, LA****Awarded \$15,000**[www.opprcnola.org](http://www.opprcnola.org)

OPPRC advocates for a safer and smaller jail in New Orleans. To date, their campaign has led to a consent decree to improve conditions of confinement and has reduced operable jail beds from 7,000 to 1,438. They now face current efforts to increase beds by continuing to use a Temporary Detention Center (TDC) and adding an additional jail building. OPPRC is organizing to ensure that the TDC bed-cap is enforced and, simultaneously, to permanently shut it down by exposing its unlawful operation and to reduce the jail population. They are using a litigation strategy to force the Sheriff to comply with local law for reopening a building, which includes community meetings in which they will mobilize New Orleanians. They will also work with the Alliance for Equity and Justice to end money bail in New Orleans while providing community support for those released from jail.

**Amistad Law Project****Philadelphia, PA****Awarded: \$15,000**[www.amistadlaw.org](http://www.amistadlaw.org)

Amistad Law Project (ALP) helps to build the leadership of families of incarcerated people and formerly incarcerated people by providing staff support to the Coalition to Abolish Death by Incarceration, a movement of lifers and lifers' family members working to end mandatory life without parole sentencing. They organize hundreds of family members of incarcerated people in nine counties across Pennsylvania, training them in public speaking, advocacy, and organizing in the fight to extend parole eligibility to people sentenced to life. ALP also engages in strategic litigation to uphold the human rights of incarcerated people. Through their litigation they have freed people from long term solitary confinement, protected the first amendment rights of incarcerated people, secured life-saving medical treatment, and also secured the rights of incarcerated people to confidential attorney-client communications.

**Equity and Transformation**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**Chicago, IL**

[www.eatchicago.org](http://www.eatchicago.org)

Equity and Transformation (EAT) focuses its work to end mass incarceration by achieving equity in the lives of Black Chicagoans who are engaged in the informal economy. EAT recently won a major victory when, in the spring of 2019, Illinois passed Senate Bill 7 to become the 11th State to legalize cannabis. Under the bill, 800,000 cannabis convictions will be expunged, 25% of the cannabis sales revenue will go to Black communities, 20% of the revenue will go toward supporting services, and a \$20 million low-interest loan program for minority-owned businesses will be enacted. CJI funding will support EAT's organizing to ensure SB 7 maintains its powerful equity components through the senate rules and regulations process, and through its implementation. Planned activities include hosting five community forums to educate the community on the process of expungement and how to enter the market as a formerly incarcerated person; continuing to educate elected officials on their commitment to expungement by holding press conferences and placing co-written op-eds and reports; hosting six political education sessions; and increasing their base and constituency by 15% across the board.

**Unheard Voices Outreach**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Nashville, TN**

[www.unheardvoicesoutreach.org](http://www.unheardvoicesoutreach.org)

Unheard Voices Outreach advocates for the successful re-entry of incarcerated citizens by garnering support for parole hearings, organizing for sentencing and parole reform, and participating in grassroots partnerships to abolish felonism. They work to reduce recidivism by providing re-entry resources and actively cultivating a supportive community for formerly incarcerated citizens. CJI funding will support implementation of the Smartphone Smarts program, which addresses the technology-related obstacles that so often hinder re-entry. The program includes a mobile application with user-friendly technology that will give citizens transitioning from prison instant access to resources that will aid their re-entry. This includes free smart phones, operation workshops, a formerly-incarcerated-friendly job board, and lists of partner organizations. Additionally, they will draft a parole reform bill that greatly reduces the denial powers of the Tennessee Board of Parole and will lobby for parole qualifications to be based upon transformative progress, family/community support, and overall suitability for release.



## LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Anti Police-Terror Project**  
**Awarded \$12,500**

**Oakland, CA**

[www.antipoliceterrorproject.org](http://www.antipoliceterrorproject.org)

The Anti Police-Terror Project is a Black-led, multi-racial, intergenerational coalition that seeks to build a replicable and sustainable model to eradicate police terror in communities of color. In order to grow the number of organizers able to take on and continue their important work, they build capacity within sister organizations and now have thriving groups in both Sacramento (Anti Police-Terror Project Sacramento) and Vallejo (Vallejo for Racial Justice). With CJI support, they will continue to be deeply involved in resourcing and supporting these groups while carrying out local campaigns in Oakland and San Francisco, including the campaign to decrease city spending on police and instead invest in parks, libraries, education, and mental health services. Project staff intentionally and consistently works against patriarchal culture and structures inside the organization as they move their agenda forward.

**Chispa Education Fund**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Santa Anna, CA**

[www.chispaoc.org/contact-us](http://www.chispaoc.org/contact-us)

Chispa Education Fund (CEF) educates and mobilizes young Latinxs to organize for police accountability and alternatives to policing and to incarceration in a county that has some of the deadliest police departments in the country. This includes the City of Santa Ana, the fourth densest city in the nation, with a Latinx population of 77.9%. In the face of these severe challenges, CEF incorporates original publications and social media content to expose the way police associations use independent election expenditures to win support from elected officials. They disrupt police culture by exposing misconduct and corruption and building a coalition to organize for a civilian review board that will hold police officers accountable. In this way, their organizing constitutes a model for countering the influence of police unions and elevating police union influence as an important issue. Upcoming goals include:

- Requesting and examining police misconduct records under new California law.
- Producing fact sheets and articles to educate residents on police misconduct cases.
- Establishing CEF as the digital organizing hub for young Latinxs in Orange County by the continued use of online petitions, online publications and social media content to educate and incite action.



**Justice Committee**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

[www.justicecommittee.org](http://www.justicecommittee.org)

**Jackson Heights, NY**

The Justice Committee (JC) is a grassroots organization dedicated to building a movement against police violence and systemic racism in New York City, and empowering low-income Latinx communities and other communities of color to address these issues. Recognizing that true power can only be exercised by unified communities, they prioritize developing the leadership of both young people and elders, striving to make their organizing a multi-generational effort. CJI funding will support organizing the leadership of families who have lost loved ones to the police, providing healing programming, and working towards repeal 50-A, dubbed “the police secrecy law.” Repeal of the law would increase the transparency of police misconduct and allow communities timely access to important misconduct and discipline records across the state. Funding will also help engage impacted New Yorkers through the Safety Storytelling Project and launch the research phase of the Safety Planning Project to engage community members in safety planning as a means to decrease reliance on police.

## **ORGANIZING COMMUNITIES FOR VISIBILITY & RIGHTS**

**Black and Pink**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

[www.blackandpink.org](http://www.blackandpink.org)

**Omaha, NE**

Black and Pink is the nation’s only network of LGBTQ+ and HIV-centered organizations collaborating to transform the criminal justice system. They create and implement an original curriculum, made by and for formerly incarcerated people, providing empowerment-based policy and advocacy tools for organizing, as well as self-care strategies for activists. Their primary goal is to unite the LGBTQ+/HIV criminal justice movement with the broader movement and achieve liberation for all criminalized people through coordinated action, advocacy, and shared learning. After the 2016 election, and the subsequent passage of unfavorable criminal justice policies, they focused on advancing state-level reforms by establishing partnerships with state and local organizations and networks. Other key priorities are to develop resources to engage state-based LGBTQ+ and HIV focused organizations not currently involved in criminal justice transformation work, and train formerly incarcerated leaders in effective ways to educate members of Congress about criminal justice issues and their impact on the LGBTQ+ and PLWH (people living with HIV/AIDS) community.

**RestoreHer US. America**  
**Awarded \$10,000**  
[www.restoreher.us](http://www.restoreher.us)

**Fayetteville, GA**

The mission of RestoreHER is to enhance the lives of directly impacted women of color and work in partnership with those women to end the mass incarceration of women of color and all pregnant women in the South. RestoreHER strengthens the larger movement by providing public education about directly impacted women's lives, writing legislation that improves conditions of incarceration, and promoting advocacy by and for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and people of color. This grant period, RestoreHER will collaborate with the Georgia Dept. of Corrections and other stakeholders to implement and amend HB345, which mandates data collection, breast pumps, and women's health education for incarcerated pregnant women. They will also begin research to initiate a new campaign to make people who have been convicted a "protected class," and create an infrastructure for the Doula Program in partnership with the Georgia State University "Crim Center."

**Families for Justice as Healing**  
**Awarded \$10,000**  
[www.justiceashealing.org](http://www.justiceashealing.org)

**Roxbury, MA**

Families for Justice as Healing nourishes, sustains, and celebrates a Black-women led abolitionist movement "with room for all of sisters and families." They hold movement building spaces where people can fight for their own freedom while building skills and power to fight for the freedom of others. The group makes creative use of participatory research and participatory defense as core organizing tools. In the coming year, CJI support will help them advance the following key projects:

- Hold weekly Participatory Defense meetings to support, strategize, and be in solidarity with people and families fighting criminal legal battles. This work challenges the power and influence of prosecutors and judges and has a transformative effective on the culture of the courts.
- Train defense attorneys, prosecutors, and judges about the availability and benefits of community-based alternatives to incarceration for mothers.
- Support formerly incarcerated women and the daughters of incarcerated parents to lead the Listening Tour, a participatory research effort that collects and lifts up the voices of women from the most incarcerated neighborhoods in Massachusetts.
- Fight for the Massachusetts Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act to address dire conditions of confinement.
- Continue to work on the Clemency Campaign to release almost 30 women in Massachusetts state prison who are elderly, sick, and survivors of violence.

**Ostara Initiative**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Minneapolis, MN**

[www.ostarainitiative.org](http://www.ostarainitiative.org)

Ostara Initiative is a thought leader dedicated to ending incarceration of pregnant and postpartum birthing people in the United States. They build power and shift ideologies, while working inside facilities to provide support so that incarcerated women are not giving birth alone. CJI funding will support their work to improve conditions of confinement and collectively create community-based alternatives to incarceration that emphasize healing over punishment, and end parent-infant separation. Key goals for 2020 include:

- Collaborating with the Minnesota Department of Corrections to conceptualize and build a community-based alternative to incarceration for pregnant and postpartum people.
- Collaborating with key community partners to support passage of a Primary Caregiver Bill that will create alternatives to incarceration for primary caregivers to dramatically reduce family separation with a strong emphasis on pregnant people at the county and state level.
- Working with the Indiana Department of Corrections and local leaders and Birthworkers of Color to develop and pilot a prison doula project at the Indian Women's Prison.

**Indigenous American Institute of Legacy, the I. Am. Legacy Project Rapid City, SD**  
**Awarded \$20,000**

[www.indigenouamericalegacy.org](http://www.indigenouamericalegacy.org)

Native Americans comprise only 10% of the population of South Dakota yet make up 80% of those incarcerated. As a grassroots system-impacted group of community members, I. Am. Legacy advocates for, protects, and cultivates youth who are the change makers for the next seven generations. Their goal is to impact the industry standards through which Native youth are systematically removed from their communities and placed in the criminal justice system via school administrative and liaison officers, foster care, out of home placements, and the state department of social services. Founded in 2019, this powerful young organization will host eight large scale community engagement events in the coming year, providing participants with a greater understanding of how youth are processed through social safeguards to the juvenile justice system and juvenile incarceration. They will hold a minimum of five weekly in-house community support programs and will work with teams in local towns and on the reservation to collect information, advise, and advocate for community developed solutions for justice transformation.

**Indian Peoples Action**  
**Awarded \$20,000**

**Butte, MT**

[www.indianpeoplesaction.org](http://www.indianpeoplesaction.org)

Indian Peoples Action (IPA) challenges the pipeline that results in the massive over-incarceration of Native people in the Montana corrections system. They expose the ways in which Native children do not receive the full protections of the Indian Child Welfare Act, but rather are drawn into the system and ultimately juvenile incarceration. Their goal in 2020 is to test strategies for dismantling the system that over-incarcerate Native Americans. To do so, they will gather data and collect stories of police encounters, people's experiences of incarceration, police neglect, and assault of the homeless. By year's end, they will publish a comprehensive report to be shared with county officials, the state legislature, and the media. CJI funding will additionally support expansion into a second urban area, Great Falls.

**Trans United**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Washington, DC**

[www.transunitedfund.org](http://www.transunitedfund.org)

Trans United is a trans-led, majority trans women of color, national organization. They partner with visionary transgender leaders and groups to build the collective capacity of the trans community and improve the lives of transgender people, families, and allies, many who have been directly impacted by the criminal system and police violence. They prioritize decriminalizing sex work because so many transgender people are targeted and taken into the carceral system for engaging in methods of survival. Strategies for work in the coming year include collaborating with partners in the Sex Worker Advocacy Coalition in DC to decriminalize sex work in the District. They will also partner with other trans-led groups to serve trans folks of color in and around Atlanta, Georgia, including weekly jail support/visitation, re-entry programs, support and social groups, and access to critical resources for transgender people on the inside as well as those surviving on the outside.

**FIERCE**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Bronx, NY**

[www.fiercenyc.org](http://www.fiercenyc.org)

By developing a politically conscious LGBTQ youth leadership collective to end homelessness, FIERCE addresses systemic racism and oppression through their drop-in center and brave space, education, community organizing, advocacy, healing and social justice work. They remain one of the few organizations nationally whose mission is to organize and build the personal and collective power of LGBTQ youth of color to actively direct their own social change agendas. This grant period, FIERCE is expanding its infrastructure and capacity through opening new drop-in centers in Manhattan and Brooklyn as they continue to recruit, organize and develop the leadership of over 1000 new members in the next five years through a participatory citywide network of public school students - LGBTQ youth of color who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

## RESTORATION OF RIGHTS & VOTING

**Community Success Initiative**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Raleigh, NC**

[www.communitysuccess.org](http://www.communitysuccess.org)

Community Success Initiative (CSI) was one of the first organizations to begin the conversation about effective and supportive re-entry more than 15 years ago, engaging community members over fellowship and food. Their continued focus is to organize impacted community members to fight for measures that help end the disproportionate incarceration of African American males and the variety of collateral consequences that are attached to their sentences. CSI's primary project for the year ahead includes working for clean slate reforms that expand access to criminal record expungement; a fair chance policy for public employment and occupational licensing that facilitates fair consideration of an applicant's criminal history; investment in education in jails and prisons as well as community based re-entry services; elimination of unaffordable criminal court costs; and common sense limitations on driver's license suspensions for failure to pay traffic court costs. In this critical election year, they will also organize for voting rights and voter empowerment.

**The National Re-entry Network for Returning Citizens**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**Washington, DC**

[www.thenationalreentrynetwork.org](http://www.thenationalreentrynetwork.org)

The National Re-entry Network is a national network comprised of individuals returning from incarceration who support each other's reintegration and connect one another to jobs, housing, training, mental health resources, substance abuse treatment and recovery programs. They use a client-centered approach to identify basic needs and create a continuum of care that addresses barriers to re-entry, promotes restorative practices, and reduces recidivism. Their advocacy for the successful passage of the Second Look Act has already led to the release of 11 people. Primary goals for this grant period include developing a coalition for ending supervised release, which will work with the Washington Lawyers Committee and the ACLU to file a lawsuit on the grounds that it is unconstitutional. In this stage of advocacy, they will be recruiting and training individuals under supervised release to prepare their cases for review and dismissal in court. Supervised release is used extensively in the District and is the reason that violations of supervised release are the largest driver of incarceration there.

**The Ordinary People Society  
Awarded \$20,000**

**Dothan, AL**

[www.theordinarypeoplesociety.org](http://www.theordinarypeoplesociety.org)

TOPS is an innovative faith-based community program founded and led by formerly incarcerated people. Last year, TOPs observed its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrating its achievements with coalition partners: state legislation to Ban the Box; an Alabama mandate that all city and county jails must inform and allow currently incarcerated people to vote by absentee ballot; and the successful end of a twenty-five year one-party rule in the Alabama state legislature. In the year to come, TOPS will educate, equip, and organize pastors and other community leaders to advocate for transformation of the criminal legal system and educate the public about the impact and unintended consequences of prison expansion, a key issue in Alabama. In this pivotal election year, they will take their work to the national level, organizing across the country with other pastors and leaders through their winning strategies for building voting power among those directly impacted, inside and outside of prisons.

**Nation Outside: The Voice of Formerly Incarcerated People  
Awarded \$10,000**

**Ann Arbor, MI**

[www.nationoutside.org](http://www.nationoutside.org)

Nation Outside mobilizes and supports formerly incarcerated people and their families to advocate for political and social changes that will reduce incarceration, as well as educate the community about the contributions and potential of formerly incarcerated people in order to enhance their capacity to thrive. Nation Outside is also actively involved in collaborative campaigns for Michigan bail reform and Clean Slate expungement legislation. CJI funding will support its organizational focus on:

- Voting rights education and mobilization among formerly incarcerated people and their families across Michigan.
- Maintaining seats at policy tables to represent the interests of formerly incarcerated people.
- Educating formerly incarcerated people to avail themselves of the few existing opportunities for housing and employment.
- Advocating to eliminate structural barriers to housing and employment.

**New Hour for Women and Children  
Awarded \$10,000**

**Brentwood, NY**

[www.newhourli.org](http://www.newhourli.org)

New Hour's mission is to provide pre- and post-release services to promote successful community re-entry and family reunification for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their children on Long Island. CJI funding will support the EMERGE Training Program. EMERGE currently runs for 10 weekly sessions. By adding two additional sessions focused on education and employment rights and existing Ban the Box efforts around the country, New Hour will better educate their members and provide them with a deeper understanding of systemic barriers and how to dismantle them.

Primary goals for 2020 are:

- Increasing EMERGE members' knowledge base about systemic barriers to re-entry and the criminal justice landscape.
- Increasing EMERGE members' exposure and opportunities to speak directly with elected officials and build a diverse base of supporters.
- Strengthening their collaboration with other organizations to push for reforms in New York State, including parole reform for elderly people, reproductive justice for incarcerated women, and ending solitary confinement.

## **INSIDE OUTSIDE ORGANIZING**

**California Coalition for Women Prisoners  
Awarded \$10,000**

**Oakland, CA**

[www.womenprisoners.org](http://www.womenprisoners.org)

California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP) is a social justice organization, with members inside and outside prison, that challenges the institutional violence imposed on women, transgender people, and communities of color by the prison industrial complex (PIC). Naming the dismantling of the PIC as an essential part of the struggle for racial and gender justice, CCWP has consistently worked to expose the links between state violence and intimate partner violence, shining a light on the unjust punishment that incarcerated survivors of domestic and sexual violence experience. CJI funding will support building upon the current momentum of commutations of LWOPs (those sentenced to life without parole) by co-hosting a DROP LWOP strategy session in September 2019 in Los Angeles (with over 30 organizations and formerly incarcerated LWOPs, family members, and representatives from national organizations). They will also work in coalition to convene a public hearing about the #MeToo Behind Bars lawsuit and the excessive force against transgender nonconforming people in women's prisons. They will expand support for trans women transferred from men's to women's prisons, and advance the legislative bill they are co-sponsoring, calling for reparations for victims of non-consensual sterilization in women's prisons between 2006-2010.



**Fair Chance Project**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**Los Angeles, CA**

[www.fairchanceproject.org](http://www.fairchanceproject.org)

Fair Chance Project (FCP) empowers prisoners, “liberated lifers,” and their loved ones to secure just sentencing laws and fair parole practices. CJI funding will help to hire new staff to enhance the FUEL, Families United to End LWOP, program, to stop the practice of sentencing people to life without parole. FCP now has 32 FUEL organizers inside 18 prisons and over 180 members statewide. FUEL organizers are participating in policy work throughout the state of California and are being called on to address national conferences. Funding will also support the Youth Life Changer's Mentoring Program, which began in 2018 by people who went to prison 30-35 years prior as gang members. The program recruits young people with past relationships to gang life to go through a three-month series of peer-led workshops. From these workshops, the organization develops participants to aid in directing future youth work.

**University Beyond Bars**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Seattle, WA**

[www.universitybeyondbars.org](http://www.universitybeyondbars.org)

University Beyond Bars is a stakeholder-driven organization established by prisoners in 2003 to empower incarcerated people to fulfill their potential through communities of higher learning that transcend prison walls. They believe in the power of all forms of education to break cycles of incarceration, confront racism and classism, and promote personal achievement and social reintegration. With CJI support, they will grow their work in three key ways by:

- Expanding their Organizational Development course, which provides peer-to-peer training on grant writing, fundraising, and developing promotional material. They will also make the course available to the incarcerated leadership of other community advocacy organizations.
- Facilitating a series of workshops on subjects including organizational structures, community building, consensus decision-making, and ethical conflict resolution.
- Creating and compiling written curriculum and training materials and making them available to the social justice, cultural, and community organizations operating within the prison.

**We Are Better Together  
Awarded \$10,000**

**Boston, MA**

[www.wab2g.org](http://www.wab2g.org)

We Are Better Together (WABT) educates and supports families on both sides of gun violence to break the cycle of trauma and to promote transformative healing and social change. Founded and led by women who have lost loved ones to homicide and incarceration, many of whom are also previously incarcerated, WABT builds the leadership of families affected by homicide and incarceration, creating culturally-appropriate healing spaces, and building collaborative partnerships to challenge narratives that dehumanize, stigmatize and ultimately drive more harm. With CJI's support, they will pilot a new element of their programming to strengthen the capacity of mothers affected by homicide and incarceration to more effectively navigate and advocate within the criminal legal system for themselves and their loved ones.

**Youth Art and Self-empowerment Project  
Awarded \$15,000**

**Philadelphia, PA**

[www.yasproject.com](http://www.yasproject.com)

The Youth Art & Self-empowerment Project (YASP) empowers young people who are or have been incarcerated in adult jails and prisons, using a combination of artistic expression, political education, and community organizing. YASP provides space for incarcerated young people to express themselves creatively, building platforms to share their voices, and helping them to develop as leaders and organizers both within and beyond the prison walls. YASP also builds youth leadership in the movement to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline in Pennsylvania. With the support of CJI, YASP will train new youth movement leaders; lift up the stories of young people impacted by pretrial detention in adult jails; advocate for local and state policy change to end the detention of youth as adults; and advance models of restorative and transformative justice that create real community healing and safety.

**TRANScending Barriers**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**Atlanta, GA**

[www.transcendingbarriersatl.org](http://www.transcendingbarriersatl.org)

TRANScending Barriers empowers the transgender and gender non-conforming community in Georgia to dismantle systems of harm and punishment in favor of systems that increase health, stability, and self-determination. Focusing on political education, they advance a clear analysis of what policing is, its depth, and how communities can organize to reject its reaches and erode its power. In all of its advocacy work, TRANScending Barriers collaborates with inside members across Georgia's prisons and jails in order to build stronger inside/outside organizing, uplift analysis, strategy, and advocacy, and bolster currently and formerly incarcerated family perspectives. Primary campaigns for the coming year include promoting pre-arrest diversion, and re-entry support. Collectively, their programs are designed to end the criminal justice system's abuse of the trans community.

**Parole Illinois**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**Chicago, IL**

[www.paroleillinois.org](http://www.paroleillinois.org)

Parole Illinois brings together incarcerated activists and activists in the free world to end death-by-incarceration in Illinois and to mobilize for a fair and inclusive parole system. In their first year of operation, they mobilized over 300 inside and 1000 outside members, gathering to address prison injustices and hold Springfield's first public rally for parole. Working in communities that have deep biases against the formerly incarcerated, PI addresses and helps break down those biases. To support Parole Illinois constituencies' involvement in a broad array of policy matters that affect their lives, they collaborate with local and statewide organizations across issues, including Chicago Votes. CJI funding will support the development of regional chapters that will carry the parole reform message to churches, community groups, and representatives in Southern Illinois; produce and distribute educational materials; and fund travel from Chicago to outlying areas to meet with regional members.

**La Resistencia**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**Seattle, WA**

[www.laresistencianw.org](http://www.laresistencianw.org)

La Resistencia (formerly NWDC Resistance) is a grassroots undocumented- and detainee-led movement that works to end the detention of immigrants and stop deportations. La Resistencia supports and follows the leadership of those detained at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington, demanding better treatment and conditions, and a stop to all deportations. They reject the paradigm that classifies immigrants as either “hardworking” or “criminal,” “worthy” or “unworthy,” and organize to dismantle an immigration system that profits from the separation of families and exploitation of undocumented communities. CJI funding will support quarterly actions and monthly solidarity days related to the detention center that feature speakers who are directly affected by detention. Funding will also support their ongoing organizing to build connection between activists and organizers inside and outside the detention center, as well as to connect the struggles and demands of detained people to the broader movement to end detention, deportation, and the criminalization of immigrants in the U.S.

## **YOUTH ORGANIZING**

**Youth Rise Texas**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**Austin, TX**

[www.youthrisetx.org](http://www.youthrisetx.org)

Youth Rise Texas uplifts teens whose lives have been impacted by individual, family, and collective criminalization so that they may heal, take action, and cultivate compassionate communities. Their work centers restorative practices, consciousness-raising education, and strategic actions to transform individuals who are prepared and poised to change the world around them. Youth Rise Texas delivers a healing-centered, consciousness-raising organizing curriculum to directly impacted teens in Austin, facilitated by trained youth organizers. They are spearheading a youth-led Participatory Action Research initiative to learn from their members and communities their vision of justice and how parental removal and criminalization impacts their lives in order to inform their policy platform. CJI funding will ensure the continuation and expansion of these critical programs, overhead costs, living wage salaries for youth organizers, and training that will serve them as they transition to the adult world.

**Rockaway Youth Task Force**  
**Awarded \$10,000**

**Far Rockaway, NY**

[www.rytf.org](http://www.rytf.org)

The Rockaway Youth Task Force (RYTF) is a grassroots member-led organization principally comprised of young women of color within the Rockaway Peninsula. RYTF develops politically conscious youth leaders who are invested in building power in themselves and their communities through member-led campaigns, leadership development, movement building, and cultural expression. CJI funding will support RYTF's campaigns to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline by removing all police from schools, reducing school suspensions, and increasing school quality and restorative justice measures to achieve safe and supportive schools. Their work also addresses eliminating suspensions for Kindergarten-3rd grade students and stopping inappropriate interactions between school safety.

## **CROSS-COMMUNITY & CROSS-ISSUE**

**Southsiders Organized for Unity & Liberation**  
**Awarded \$15,000**

**Chicago, IL**

[www.soulinchicago.org](http://www.soulinchicago.org)

Southsiders Organized for Unity & Liberation (SOUL) works with low-income people of color in the Chicago Southland to remove the stigma of prior incarceration and win economic opportunities communities need to thrive. Their analysis breaks down the abolitionist narrative of ending the Prison Industrial Complex by emphasizing the importance of concurrently ending systemic poverty by providing living wages, robust education systems, access to adequate and affordable physical and mental health services, access to decent and affordable housing, and creating fair tax systems. CJI funding will support their campaign to engage stakeholders, including Cook County State's Attorney and Board President, in their Justice Reinvestment Program, which would reallocate millions of dollars in unused funds to re-open mental and physical health clinics. They will also continue their Water for All campaign, an initiative to create a free residential water program for low-income residents, and their Fair Election Campaign which will offer "democracy dollars," to finance local political campaigns of all residents, including those currently in Cook County Prison.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE – Cross-Community Organizing**

**Campaign to Fight Toxic Prisons  
Awarded \$15,000**

**Gainesville, FL**

[www.fighttoxicprisons.org](http://www.fighttoxicprisons.org)

The Prison Industrial Complex puts currently incarcerated people at exceptional risk of dangerous environmental conditions while impacting surrounding communities and ecosystems due to prison construction and operation. To address this, the Campaign Against Toxic Prisons conducts grassroots advocacy and direct action at the intersection of incarceration and the environment. Goals for 2020 include:

- Building solidarity and coordinated action among the environmental, environmental justice, and prison reform movements to drastically reduce prison populations.
- Calling for mandatory evacuation protocols for correctional facilities in hurricane zones.
- Launching a campaign to highlight the exposure of incarcerated people to deadly toxins such as H-pylori in Texas and requiring the placement of air conditioning units in all Texas prisons.
- Demanding removal of the corrupt prison administration and ending torture and unwarranted solitary confinement in Alabama prisons.
- Launch a campaign against new private prison construction in Alabama.

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[www.cjifund.org/support-us](http://www.cjifund.org/support-us)

