

Colorado Justice Report

Founded in 1999, CCJRC is a network of organizations, faith communities, and individuals working to eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system in Colorado.

1212 Mariposa St. #6, Denver, CO. 80204 | www.ccjrc.org | info@ccjrc.org | 303 825-0122

Hit the Ground Running

by Terri Hurst, CCJRC Policy Coordinator

Whether you are excited or upset by the 2016 election results, one thing is clear; it was certainly one of the most consequential elections in U.S. history at the federal level. There is much uncertainty as to what federal policy changes the Trump administration will pursue over the next 4 years. In addition, with Republican control of both the Senate and the House at the Congressional level, we anticipate changes in criminal justice, law enforcement, immigration and health care that will not align with our mission.

How and to what extent those changes will impact Colorado remains largely unclear. CCJRC is working with our partners across the country to be ready to mobilize to retain the gains we have made here in Colorado.

At the state level, the General Assembly pretty much remained the same. Even with a slew of newly elected legislators, Republicans maintained a one seat majority in the state Senate and the Democrats maintained the majority in the House; although widened that margin to a 6 seat majority. The next legislative session starts on January 11th and one major issue will be an approximate \$500 million state revenue shortfall for the next budget year, which begins July 2017 and runs through June 2018.

Continued on page 3

Time for a New Normal

by Juston Cooper, CCJRC Deputy Director and Alex Landau, CCJRC Outreach Coordinator

As African-American men we are deeply disheartened and saddened by America's continuous tolerance for racism as illustrated in this year's presidential debate and election. To hear the historical "Law and Order" and "Tough on Crime" rhetoric in 2016 triggers a pattern of trauma in our bodies at a cellular level. For decades, poor and low income communities, specifically those of color, have suffered a disproportionate burden of environmental, social and economic impacts on our quality of life as a result of "Get Tough" politics and policies. During this election process we experienced a sequence of disturbances fueled by an all too familiar story filled with triggering language, behaviors and archaic rhetoric. More troubling is the racial underpinnings that influence this narrative leading to over-criminalizing, policing and incarceration in our neighborhoods.

The degradation of our people is not new in this country. The historical link to current day examples are not a stretch but in fact part of the very foundation of our experiment with Democracy. People of color still experience systematic suppression in schools, voting, health, and justice.

Continued on page 2

Support Change that Works-Support CCJRC

What is your vision for the future of Colorado and America? While there is a lot of uncertainty and concern about the direction the country is moving, CCJRC is very clear about our vision, values, and commitment. With your help, for almost twenty-years, CCJRC has advocated and organized for ending mass incarceration in Colorado.

In the past few years, five prisons have closed including another private prison that was shuttered in July. CCJRC has been at the forefront of sentencing and parole reform and reshaping drug policy. We've been successful in reducing prison spending and reinvesting those savings. That work continues as well as the work to strengthen our voter education and turnout efforts to ensure that people with criminal records are aware of their right to vote. We will work to make decision-making by District Attorneys more transparent and holding DAs more accountable. Of course we will continue to advocate for ending the criminalization of low-income people with mental illness or addiction and help them get care – not a cage. **But none of this can happen without you.**

Using the enclosed envelope please make a generous tax-deductible donation today to CCJRC.

Normal: Continued from page 1

From the birth of slavery to post-slavery, practices such as the Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, the Southern Strategy, the war on drugs, mass incarceration and contentious abuses by law enforcement are steeped in racism. For us and many others in communities of color, the issue has continued to heat up until it is now a boiling pot of outrage and disgust not unlike what our ancestors experienced in 1865, our elders during the Civil Rights era, and what our children confront today.

Whether it's implicit bias from arrest to sentencing, or the arbitrary notion that black, brown and indigenous people commit more crimes and are criminals, there is a consistent disproportionate racial impact that is often ignored, refuted or completely dismissed. The non-recognition has devastating consequences; such as a lack of access to livable wages because employers view people of color as criminals or incompetent or both. A lack of quality education because black and brown kids are considered delinquent and often suspended, expelled and trajected into the juvenile justice system at exponential rates in comparison to their white counterparts. As a result, this becomes a barrier to accessing higher education. This marginalization contributes to the neglect and blight of our communities. For those of us who have this experience it is physically and psychologically crippling to our families and community and there is often a lack of compassion for the complexity of this oppression by those who are not directly impacted.

We are at a critical point where real solutions are needed. Taxpayers are underwriting the cost of so-called public safety which is the veneer for this oppressive construct. This approach has done little to prevent crime, address racial discrimination, reduce disparities, and more importantly reconcile and repair the harm that has been done to people of color. When you have been a victim of poverty, violence, trauma, and police brutality like my colleague Alex and I both have, we can no longer tolerate 20th century solutions offered by those who have created this problem.

We need real solutions because our lives and quality of life is at stake. We must act now and speak truth to power by working to eliminate the cognitive dissonance that promotes superiority in any race, gender, or ethnicity. We need to work to eliminate all forms of overt discrimination when it takes place. The ongoing dissonance promotes hate mongering which is illustrated by acts of violence and discrimination against people. Secondly, we must reprioritize spending of taxpayer dollars by local, state and federal government into developing infrastructure in communities devastated by the overuse of the criminal justice system.

This work requires real investment of public dollars directly into communities of color and those funds need to be managed by those communities. Millions of dollars are needed for investment into small business, housing, education and more importantly services to truly help re-stabilize and restore our communities. If there is not an unyielding commitment to support reconciliation and investment that matters, there will be ongoing backlash from our community. We must continue to stand up and speak out against this perpetual cycle of oppression that has us on a path of becoming morally and financially bankrupt.



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT 2016

by Pamela Clifton, CCJRC Communications Coordinator

As 2016 comes to a close, this election year generated a whirlwind of uncertainty for the future. Throughout the country, however, the focus on District Attorneys elections has moved under the magnifying glass in local politics. CCJRC played a key role in Colorado through our non-partisan C3 campaign called "Know Your DA," focused on educating the public on the role, power and responsibility of District Attorneys because local elections matter.

Each of Colorado's 22 judicial districts elect their own DA to serve a 4 year term.. The majority of DAs races only had one candidate running. CCJRC targeted three specific DA races that were contested including the 1st Judicial District – Jefferson & Gilpin Counties; 2nd Judicial District-City and County of Denver; & the 17th Judicial District-Adams & Broomfield counties.

We successfully developed and distributed DA candidate voter guides and held candidate forums in all three Judicial District to help inform voters on the candidates perspectives on critical criminal justice and social justice issues. In addition, we increased our civic engagement efforts by distributing public education materials regarding voter rights and eligibility for people with criminal backgrounds. In the 2nd Judicial District – Denver, we launched our pilot "Jail Based Voting" project in conjunction with the Denver Elections Division and the Denver Sheriff's Department, to both educate and help eligible people confined in jail register to vote. We produced a video which is being shown in the Denver City Jail and helped register hundreds of voters in the Denver Detention Center and Denver County Jail.

Now that the election is over with the winners being - Pete Weir in Jefferson/Gilpin, Beth McCann in Denver and Dave Young in Adams/Broomfield, CCJRC plans to continue our efforts with both our Know Your DA and our Civic Engagement campaigns. We will focus on helping communities hold elected DA's accountable and strengthen the community's capacity for increased voter registration and voter turn-out efforts.

Work and Gain Employment and Education Skills Program (WAGEES)

The following is a list of the community nonprofit organizations that are available to help people on parole in Colorado. Services are free and people can contact the programs directly or people can be referred to any of these programs by his/her parole officer or DOC community reentry specialist.

- ☐ **Bridge House** 4747 Table Mesa Dr. Boulder, CO 80305 Tim Arnold (303) 575-4964 tim@boulderbridgehouse.org Intake Hours 8am-5pm Monday-Thursday. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. No current offense for sex assault or arson.
- ☐ **Inside/Out- Sister Mary Alice Murphy Center of Hope** 242 Conifer St. Ft. Collins CO 80524 Ellen Toomey (303) 907-7598 ellen.t@crpio.org Intake Hours 8am-5pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Thursdays by appointment. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. All Offenses.
- ☐ **Inside/Out** 14221 E. 4th Ave Bldg. #2 Ste. 330 Aurora CO 80011 Debbie Winans (720) 207-5041 crp.insideout@gmail.com Intake Hours 10am-8pm Tuesday-Thursday, 10am-5pm on Fridays. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. All Offenses.
- ☐ **Christlife Ministries** 1211 N. Main St. Pueblo CO 81003 Linda Perkins (719) 647-9235 lperkins@mychristlife.org Intake Hours 8am-5pm Monday-Thursday. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. All Offenses.
- ☐ **Positive Impact** 2210 E. LaSalle St Colorado Springs CO 80909 Rosemary Lytle (719) 634-7813 wageescs@gmail.com Intake Hours 9:00am-3:00pm Monday-Friday. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. All Offenses.
- ☐ **Second Chance Center** 9722 E. 16th Ave Aurora CO 80011 Sean Taylor (303) 909-0813 secondchancecentercolorado@gmail.com Intake Hours 8am-5pm Monday-Thursday. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. All Offenses.
- ☐ **Servicios de la Raza** 3131 W. 14th Ave. Denver CO 80204 Josef Lopez (303) 953-5904 josefl@serviciosdelaraza.org Intake Hours 8am-5pm Monday-Thursday. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. All Offenses.
- ☐ **The Rock Foundation** 1542 7th Ave. Greeley, CO 80631 Cheryl Cook (303) 252-7453 therockfoundation@comcast.net Intake Hours 8:30am-4:30pm Monday-Thursday. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. All Offenses.
- ☐ **Junction Community Church- Inside/Out** 2867 Orchard Ave. Grand Junction, CO 81501 (970) 773-3186 wagees.gj@crpio.org Intake Hours 9:00am-5:00pm Tuesday-Friday. Plan 1 ½ hours for intake. S.O.s To Be Scheduled by Phone Off-Site.

What Kinds of Services Do they Provide?

Each of the community partners listed above provide services designed to assist people returning from prison to successfully connect with their communities and families. People who choose to enroll and actively participate in the WAGEES program are eligible to receive services such as; Employment Preparation and Placement, Work Clothing and Tool Assistance (pay for clothing/boots/shoes required by employer or clothing for interviews, also for small tools required by employers) Mentoring, Identification Acquisition (i.e. fees for Driver's License, Birth Certificate, etc.), Vocational Training Cost Assistance, Transportation Assistance (bus passes or tickets to help attend work and WAGEES activities), Gang Disengagement, Medical Benefits Acquisition (medical and mental health), Housing Assistance (shelter fees, limited housing or hotel rent), Family Reunification/Parenting, Education Assistance (fee for classes and books) and more.

Hit the Ground Continued from page 1

The current budget cycle we are in is also facing a shortfall, though we are waiting until the next budget revenue forecast, which will occur on December 20th, to learn what/if any cuts will need to be made for this current year.

Even with a tight budget, as a result of marijuana legalization, the state is bringing in revenue through the Marijuana Treatment Cash Fund (MTCF). During the 2017 legislative session, the MTCF may allow for some new housing options for people being released from DOC who would have otherwise been released homeless. The MTCF may also be used to help house people who are veterans or who have a severe mental illness. Within the DOC budget request, DOC would like the ability to establish a 20-bed Mother-Baby Unit to be located at La Vista in addition to having funds to treat approximately 70 people within DOC who have chronic Hepatitis C.

We are also certain there will be legislation introduced next session focused on behavioral health. Several task forces have been working over the summer on policy recommendations that

would reduce the amount of people with severe mental illness from getting involved in the criminal justice system. Additionally, during the 2016 legislative session, SB 202 was passed which expanded funding for residential drug and alcohol treatment. SB 202 required a substance use disorder (SUD) "needs assessment" to be done to identify gaps in SUD treatment services throughout the state of Colorado. This "community action plan" is due on March 1, 2017 and will provide a roadmap for the state on what SUD services are needed throughout our state. An annual \$6 million has been allocated for at least each of the next three years to expand access to treatment.

CCJRC's legislative agenda will include additional reforms to parole and parole board decision-making and seeks to reinvest savings from the DOC budget into the community to improve economic and educational opportunities and services that can help strengthen families and neighborhoods. We expect to have our weekly legislative updates during the session, so you will be able to keep up with all of these happenings and more starting in January.

**COLORADO
CRIMINAL
JUSTICE
REFORM
COALITION**

1212 Mariposa St., Suite 6 Denver, CO 80204

Non-Profit Org
US Postage
PAID
Denver, CO
Permit No. 808



We wish our members a happy holiday season. We understand that this time of year can be very difficult for people separated from their loved ones. We keep you all in our thoughts and prayers.

Our sincerest thanks to those who sponsored the 2016 Voices for Justice event. Also to those freedom fighters who support us on a monthly basis all year long as well as all of our very generous donors. Your support is deeply appreciated

CCJRC 2016 Voices for Justice Sponsors

Supporting Sponsors

Precision Policy Group

JFM Consulting, LLC

jbk law
JOHNSON, BRENNAN & KLEIN

voices
Contributing Sponsors
Jan and Dave Mackenzie
Howard and Bianca Lerman
Greg and Karen Gulley
Kathleen Lord
Christie Donner
Pastor King Harris

McAllister Law Office P.C.
CUTTING EDGE COUNSEL FOR THE MARILAKIA INDUSTRY

Centennial
BANK AND TRUST

Advocate Sponsors
Inside/Out
a community reentry place

303.420.PLAN
Denver Relief
CONSULTING

LATINO
COALITION
FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP
Strengthening • Leading • Transforming

Freedom Fighter Sponsors
Greer Law Firm, PC
Tiftickjian Law Firm, LLC
ACLU of Colorado

EQUITAS
FOUNDATION
Fairness in the justice system

COLORADO
COMMUNITY
HEALTH
ALLIANCE

Mental Health Center of Denver
Behavioral Healthcare, Inc.
Creative Treatment Options
Tony Bubba and Leigh Schilz
Kathleen McGuire, LLC
Killmer, Lane and Newman
Foothills Behavioral Health Partners
Signal Behavioral Health

GSCONE STRATEGIC CONSULTING

Mile High
Behavioral
Healthcare

Rupert-Tate Sponsors
Mental Health Partners
Elizabeth and Evan Anderman
Dorothy Rupert

beacon
health options

Justice Sponsors
Bill and Lorraine Cecil
Justice Strategies
Harm Reduction Action Center
Projection Digital
Jim Laurie
EndPoint Direct
Katal Center for Health, Equity & Justice
Roberta Burrington
Doug Wilson
Longmont Community Justice Partners
Brian Corniers
Stephen Risher
Jamie Cowan Law Office
Dr. Jean Scandlyn
Drug Policy Alliance of Colorado
It Takes A Village
Mardy Wilson
Ann Roan and Jim Jerns
Colorado Behavioral Healthcare Council
Henry Frazier
Hoffmiller, LLC
Meyer Law Office, PC
DW Haraburda, LLC

MANDY M. RIGG

YES! Count me in! I want to support CCJRC and help eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system in Colorado. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution!

Your support makes all the difference!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL: _____

- Individual \$35
- Household \$50
- Sustainer \$100 or more
- Freedom Fighter \$__ charge me monthly/quarterly
- Low Income/senior \$15
- Prisoner \$3 (cash or stamps)

Credit Card # _____ Exp date _____

Please return to:
CCJRC 1212 Mariposa St. #6 Denver, CO. 80204



CCJRC is a proud member of
Community Shares of Colorado!