

2019

CCJRC ANNUAL REPORT



Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition
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Our Mission

The mission of the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition is to eliminate the overuse of the criminal justice system and advance community health and safety!

About Us

Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition (CCJRC) is a statewide 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1999 out of concern in the community about the unprecedented growth in the prison population and budget in Colorado. Since 1999, CCJRC has been a leader in the effort to end mass incarceration in Colorado. The staff, Board and volunteers have diverse, personal, and deep experience with the criminal justice system which allows for sophisticated analysis, strategic planning, and mobilization. CCJRC has a reputation for being highly knowledgeable, skilled, effective, collaborative, and solution oriented.

CCJRC has also developed authentic working relationships and credibility with people directly impacted by both crime and the criminal justice system, community organizations, faith communities, law enforcement, prosecutors, defense attorneys, corrections (both prison and jail), other criminal justice professionals, and legislators across the political spectrum. The combination of extensive experience and strong relationships is at the core of CCJRC's competency and effectiveness as a grassroots organization.

In addition to eliminating the overuse of the criminal justice system, one of CCJRC's foundational values is to be of help to people currently impacted by the criminal justice system. We have over 9,000 members statewide, including 1,000 members who are currently in prison. We respond to over 1,000 requests a year from people in the justice system or their loved ones looking for help navigating, problem solving, or trying to successfully reintegrate back into the community. Our reentry publication, *Getting on After Getting Out*, is extremely popular and we've heard from many people in prison and on parole that it is an invaluable resource.

CCJRC believes the last three decades of over-use of the criminal justice system have done significant damage to individuals, families, and communities. Repairing some of that harm, to the greatest extent possible, is also essential to us.

FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE



Overuse of the Criminal Justice System and Mass Incarceration in Colorado

Over 120,000 adults in Colorado are involved in the criminal justice system on any given day: 80,000 are on probation, 10,000 are on parole, and thousands more are on bond, in jail, or in a halfway house. Additionally, each year tens of thousands of people are released from prisons and jails across the state. Woven throughout the "get tough" on crime analysis is the chronic and structural racial and class bias that is particularly insidious within the unequal enforcement of laws, racial profiling, the war on drugs, and the criminalization of youth. People of color are vastly over-represented among the justice involved. While 509 people per 100,000 Anglos are incarcerated in Colorado, that rate increases to 1,280 per 100,000 for Latinos, 2,939 per 100,000 for American Indians, and 3,651 per 100,000 for African Americans.

Mass incarceration, rather than enhancing public safety, has had a destabilizing effect on the lives of individuals and communities, particularly people of color and residents of low-income communities. Prison expansion is fueling the diversion of state funds from education, human services, and other critical programs that are known to improve community stability, self-sufficiency, and the strength of families. Civil, constitutional, and human rights are increasingly eroded under the guise of fighting crime. People released from incarceration and others with a criminal record face so many barriers – such as finding gainful employment and affordable housing – that economic, social, and political marginalization are likely to be permanent for many.

CCJRC works diligently to help the general public pivot away from the narrative that mass incarceration, over-policing, and criminalization promotes public safety. It is our belief that improving public health and safety is an outcome when communities are better able to meet the needs of the people through opportunities for achievement and innovation, meaningful connection with one another, and effective community-based services to help people in times of struggle.

Reviewing Our Success & Implementing Our Vision

UNDER THE DOME-LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

2019 marked a big year for both state and local policy advocacy. During the 2019 legislative session, CCJRC helped develop and support HB19-1263 which was signed into law that reduced the penalty for simple possession of small amounts of drugs from a felony to a misdemeanor for the first three offenses. This was a



landmark bill will prevent a lot of people from going to prison and it was many years in the making. CCJRC also wrote and successfully supported SB19-143 which will greatly reduce the number of people reincarcerated for a technical parole violation and worked in coalition to pass HB19-1266 which restored voting rights to people on parole. Our other priority bill, SB19-08, was also signed into law that will greatly expand the use of Medicated Assisted Treatment (MAT) for people leaving jail and prison. SB19-08 also created our fourth Community Reinvestment Initiative and is funding a new Harm Reduction Grant program that will provide state funding to support collaborations between local law enforcement, health agencies, and community direct service providers to divert people who are using drugs from the criminal legal system using harm reduction strategies

and principles. It is expected that the first round of grants will be awarded by the summer/fall of 2020. The Harm Reduction bill also clarifies that a pharmacist may sell a nonprescription syringe to someone without violating Colorado's drug paraphernalia law.

During the summer, CCJRC also participated in the Prison Population Management Legislative Interim Committee that focused on two primary goals: strategies to safely reduce the prison population and reduce recidivism and evaluate state and private prison use and alternative programs. Part of the impetus behind the creation of this interim committee was the ongoing concern about how full the prisons have been and whether to reopen the south campus at Centennial Correctional Facility (aka Colorado State Penitentiary 2) which closed in 2012. CCJRC worked in coalition to successfully prevent the opening of this prison in the past which was the impetus behind the creation of this legislative interim task force which ultimately recommended three bills that will be introduced in the 2020 legislative session: (1) reforms specifically for young adults who are between the ages of 18-25 who are involved in the criminal justice system; (2) authorize the reopening of a state prison but requires a 1-1 reduction in the use of private prison beds, and changes to the felony escape law and other reforms, and (3) a "system mapping" study to examine how individuals proceed through the various stages of criminal proceedings, including various sentences and programs, identification of gaps in services, and communication/collaboration cross criminal justice agencies.

CCJRC also participated in the Opioid Legislative Interim Committee which met for the third year in a row. Five bills were approved that will be introduced during the 2020 legislative session on prevention, harm reduction, criminal justice, treatment, and recovery. CCJRC staff was involved in drafting parts of the harm reduction, criminal justice, and treatment bills.

In early August of 2019, the Denver City Council decided to end their relationship with private prison operators GEO and CoreCivic who operate six community corrections facilities in Denver. CCJRC immediately engaged in this local issue out of concern for the displacement of justice involved people in community corrections and inmates released from to community corrections. We participated on the City of Denver's stakeholder group to develop potential new program models and to help mitigate the impact of losing so many community corrections beds as GEO and CoreCivic facilities close.

Take Care Health Matters Campaign

Increasing Access to Health Care for Justice Involved People - During 2019, the Take Care Health Matters campaign focused on working more deeply with organizations that work directly with justice involved people as well as learning from and hearing directly from impacted people. In the Spring of 2019, CCJRC conducted a survey with all the Work and Gain Education and Employment Skills (WAGEES) reentry programs that are providing direct services to people released from prison to better understand how participants were or weren't able to access healthcare and behavioral healthcare services through Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program). Based on those outcomes, tailored outreach and trainings were conducted at each site throughout the summer and fall of 2019 to build the skill set of WAGEES staff to better help participants navigate the healthcare and behavioral healthcare system. In many instances, the site visits led to improved relationships within their community with local healthcare entities and/or the organizations that administer Health First Colorado (Medicaid) benefits across the state.

The goal of this work is to help improve access to care for justice involved people and this focus of the campaign is going to continue to be key going forward. In addition, focus groups with justice involved women were conducted to learn firsthand from their experiences having Health First Colorado of what was working, not working, where there were gaps in services, and what other supports they may need to be their best in the community. CCJRC staff also continued to participate in numerous stakeholder meetings in efforts to further strengthen the behavioral healthcare system, so that our state can truly pivot away from overusing the criminal justice system for people with addiction disorders and/or a mental illness.

Know Your District Attorney (DA) Campaign

This year, CCJRC focused on scaling our public education efforts to help inform the public on the upcoming 2020 District Attorney (DA) elections. We understood the importance of increasing voter knowledge of DA elections to encourage down ballot voting in a presidential election year. Over the summer, CCJRC administered a DA voter questionnaire by going door-to-door in Aurora and surveyed 300 voters to gain a better understanding of voter's knowledge of DA elections and their expectations of their next DA. Key findings from the survey include:

- Close to half (49%) of the respondents had very little to no knowledge of the role, power, and responsibility of an elected DA.
- An overwhelming majority (89%) of voters surveyed did not know who the current elected DA is in their community (18th Judicial District).
- When considering respondents overall "satisfaction" with how people are treated in prison, 63% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with how people are treated.
- More than half of survey respondents are dissatisfied with the treatment of juvenile/kids in the criminal justice system.
- 68% of respondents were dissatisfied with expanding the Arapahoe County Jail as a means for reducing crime.
- More than two-thirds (69%) are dissatisfied with how people of color are treated by the criminal legal system.
- 61% of voters are dissatisfied with Arapahoe County's current bail system.
- 55% of respondents were dissatisfied with Arapahoe County policing practices as compared to just 29% of respondents who were satisfied.

As the nation gets ready for a presidential election in 2020, our state will also be ramping up for state and local elections, including the election of District Attorneys (DAs) in each of the twenty-two Judicial Districts. In 2020, we plan to help impact the outcome of DA elections by increasing voter education and turnout of justice involved people and African Americans, providing DA voter guides to voters and hosting DA candidate forums.

Civic Engagement: The “Voting With Conviction” Campaign

Last year, CCJRC along with coalition partners helped pass SB18-150 which mandated all 52 Colorado county jails and county election divisions develop plans to allow eligible voters in jail to have meaningful access to vote. 2019 marked a year for CCJRC to build on that momentum through the passage of HB19-1266 which restored the right to vote for people on parole in Colorado. As of July 1, 2019, 10,000 people on parole were immediately eligible to register to vote and vote. This landmark legislation will engage historically marginalized people not only in our electoral process, but more importantly, in our democracy.

Currently, only people incarcerated for a felony are disenfranchised so the statutory changes in 2018 and 2019 move us a few steps closer to full enfranchisement for people involved in the criminal justice system.



To help with implementation of the new parolee voting law, CCJRC began registering people on parole to vote at parole offices, Second Chance Center, Aurora Ready-to-Work, and several halfway houses. We also developed and widely distributed new voter education information and held a series of community meetings to help educate the community on the new law.



During the 2019 election cycle, CCJRC organized with other partner organizations to oppose Arapahoe County Ballot Measure 1A. Issue 1A would have increased property taxes in Arapahoe County by \$46 million per year to pay for the construction, maintenance, and operation of a new jail, as well as other jail-related expenses, such as equipment, supplies, and programming. Led by CCJRC, The Coalition for Smarter Public Safety Spending, launched the "NO on 1A" campaign to defeat the measure and promote fair and effective ways to address jail overcrowding

without expansion that could also improve public safety. CCJRC commissioned a poll of Arapahoe voters and found that a majority was not supportive of Measure 1A and we were able to use the poll results to push public opinion to oppose the ballot measure. We also knocked on over 5,000 doors, contacted over 700 voters by phone, and texted over 70,000 voters to urge them to vote No. And it worked! On November 5th, voters pushed back and 67% voted down Measure 1A. CCJRC also provided support to a coalition in Pueblo County that also had a jail expansion ballot measure that was rejected by 65% of voters. Although CCJRC was not involved, voters in Jefferson County also rejected a jail expansion plan with 54% opposed.

Community Reinvestment-improving safety from the ground up

In 2014, CCJRC pioneered a new public safety approach that we call *Community Reinvestment* that provides state funding for community-led and community-based safety strategies. Often this funding is generated through savings in the prison budget due to sentencing and parole reforms. These savings are captured and then reinvested into public health and safety strategies developed and led by communities most impacted by crime and the criminal legal system. To date, CCJRC has successfully advocated at the state legislature for the creation of four Community Reinvestment Initiatives:

- Enacted in 2014, the WAGEES reentry grant program supported 18 community-based organizations providing direct services and case management to people leaving prison, in partnership with the Department of Corrections. The majority of staff at the WAGEES programs are formerly incarcerated and their leadership has transformed the field of reentry in Colorado.

- Enacted in 2017, the Transforming Safety grant program is a crime prevention initiative piloted in North Aurora and Southeast Colorado Springs to fund community-based direct services and small business lending to prevent crime and reduce recidivism. In 2019, 46 organizations in northern Aurora and southeast Colorado Springs received grants consistent with the priorities identified by the local planning teams. (See transformingsafety.org/) Last year, over 3,250 unique individuals received services for a total of 23,111 service hours.
- Enacted in 2018, the Community Crime Victim Services grant program is the first in Colorado to specifically focus on providing direct support services to underserved survivors, namely men, people of color, and young adults. In 2019, the first grants were awarded. The grantees include a domestic violence program in Colorado Springs that specifically focuses on serving military families, a Culturally Based Care Initiative that integrates culturally relevant healing practices into victim services, a collaboration of 20+ therapists of color to counsel survivors individually, and the Denver Indian Health Center. Another grant went to Denver Health to research effective interventions to reduce repeat victimization and to host a convening on men and victimization in the Spring 2020.
- Enacted in 2019, the Harm Reduction Grant Program was created to strengthen collaboration between law enforcement, public health agencies, and community direct-service providers to divert active drug users from the criminal legal system using harm reduction strategies and principles. The first grants will be awarded in 2020. CCJRC has been asked to serve on the implementation team at the Colorado Department of Health & Environment.

Although CCJRC helped create these grant programs, the implementation is led by the Latino Coalition for Community Leadership that provides grant management for several of the initiatives and provides ongoing capacity building and technical assistance to grantees of these initiatives to ensure they have the support to be successful.

Crime Survivors for Health, Safety and Justice

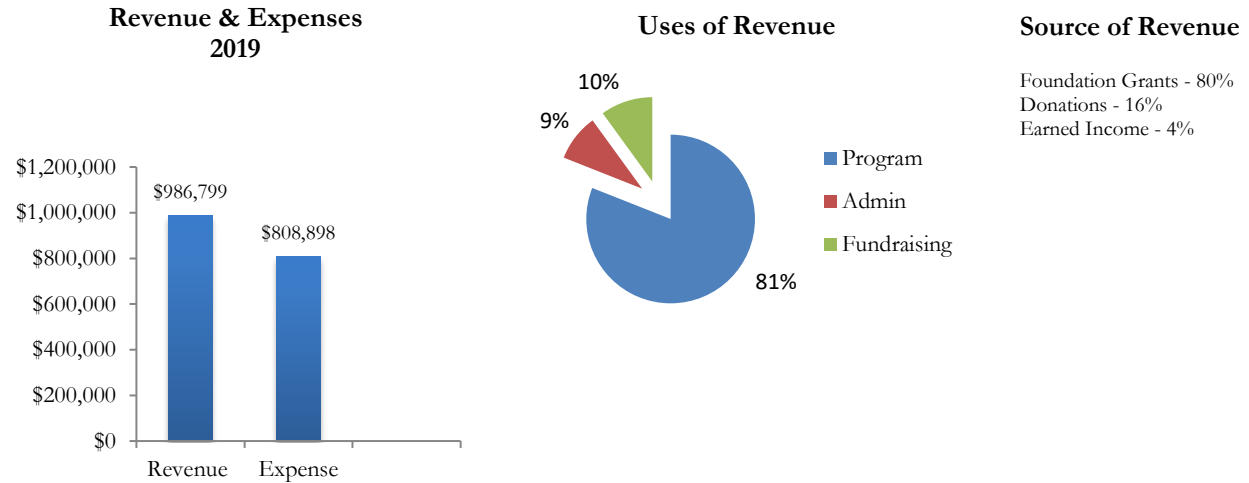
Much of CCJRC's crime survivor campaign agenda has focused on enacting and supporting the Community Crime Victims Services grant program referenced above. CCJRC will also be part of the planning team that will be organizing the convening on men and victimization in the Spring of 2020. Moving forward, CCJRC will be launching a new research project on all state victim services funding from an equity lens.

CCJRC Volunteer Program

What another great year for CCJRC's volunteer program! Over forty new volunteers join our 2019 efforts supporting multiple campaigns. Volunteers supported our "Know Your DA" and "Voting with Conviction" campaigns by contributing hundreds of hours as part of our door-to-door canvassing, material distribution, phone banking, and texting programs. Their work had a significant impact on helping inform voters on the role, responsibility, and power of elected District Attorneys. Volunteers went door-to-door this summer in Aurora asking voters for their perspective on priorities for the next elected District Attorney for Judicial District (JD) 18, which includes the city of Aurora. Volunteers were also critical in helping our efforts to defeat Arapahoe County Ballot measure 1A – which would have raised taxes, spending nearly half a billion dollars on a new jail. Volunteers helped knock on 5,313 doors, contacted 721 voters through phone banking, and texted 70,000 Arapahoe County voters to vote "NO" on Ballot Measure 1A.

Financial Overview

Through careful planning and stewardship of our funds, CCJRC is in a healthy financial position. CCJRC has developed multiple fundraising strategies to diversify our funding sources, including foundation grants, earned income, individual donations, our annual fundraising event, and membership in Community Shares of Colorado. CCJRC also has an automated monthly giving program called *Freedom Fighters*.



Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition Statement of Financial Position As of December 31,

ASSETS	2019	2018
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,350,823	\$ 1,172,745
Inventory	-	-
Total Current Assets	1,350,823	1,172,745
Non Current Assets		
Total Non Current Assets	-	-
Property and Equipment		
Hardware and Equipment	4,760	4,760
Furniture and Fixtures	550	550
Software	330	330
	5,640	5,640
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(5,640)	(5,640)
Total Property and Equipment	-	-
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1,350,823	\$ 1,172,745
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities		
Fiscal Agent	\$ -	\$ -
Accounts Payable	139	142
Total Current Liabilities	139	142
Net Assets - Unrestricted	1,321,417	987,603
Net Assets - Temporarily Restricted	29,087	205,000
Net Assets - Permanently Restricted	-	-
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	1,350,494	1,172,603
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 1,350,823	\$ 1,172,745

Voices for Justice – Annual Fundraising Event

On Wednesday, September 25, 2019 we celebrated our eleventh annual night of fun and fundraising with an award ceremony, open bar, delicious food, and a magnificent silent auction at the Mile High Station in Denver, Colorado. CCJRC was founded in 1999 when Senator Dorothy Rupert and Representative Penfield Tate introduced legislation calling for a three-year halt on prison expansion and the creation of a task force on sentencing reform. Our annual award, The Rupert Tate Game Changer Award, honors our two co-founders and their prescience in challenging the criminal justice status quo in Colorado. It was our great honor to extend the 2019 Game Changer award to Maureen Cain.



Maureen Cain is currently the Director of Legislative Policy and Organizational Communication at the Colorado State Public Defender's Office. She represents the State Public Defender on all legislative and policy matters before the General Assembly and all other governmental bodies or agencies. Maureen is a graduate of University of Denver School of Law and is the proud mother of Madeline, Sarah, and Joseph. Prior to her current position, Maureen worked at the Colorado Criminal Defense Bar and has been a part of the Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice for the last decade where she has worked on sentencing reform, bail

and drug policy reform. She also headed the Colorado Relief Project, a project designed to provide pro bono assistance to folks on record sealing and other collateral relief and maintained a private practice. Maureen currently serves on the Board of Directors for the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL). She also serves on the Colorado Attorney Disciplinary Board as an appointee by the Colorado Supreme Court and is the defense attorney representative on the Colorado Human Trafficking Council. Over the past few decades, Maureen has received numerous awards for her work. At the same time, she has very generously lent her legal and legislative expertise, wisdom, and partnership to CCJRC. We love and honor her for her decades of leadership and advocacy on behalf of justice and humanity.

We were honored to award the Game Changer Award to Maureen Cain



CCJRC Board Members

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 Lisa Raville, Vice President
 Kathleen Lord, Esq. Treasurer
 LeAnne Wheeler, Secretary
 Kwame Holmes
 Hans Meyer, Esq.
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 Juston Cooper, Deputy Director
 Christie Donner, Executive Director
 Terri Hurst, Policy Coordinator
 Alex Landau, Outreach Coordinator
 Jasmine Ross, Civic Engagement Assistant