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LSPC Newsletter, July/August 2018

Welcome to the Freedom & Movement Center!



Message from the ED
By Dorsey Nunn

We're moving into our own building, and you're all invited to be there at the beginning!



LSPC Development Director Azadeh Zorhabi stands among the bare studs, envisioning our new home and all the amazing work that will happen here.

The Freedom and Movement Center, located in the Longfellow District a few blocks away from a former Black Panther headquarters, will create a space of our own to support and service our community—to organize, to train, to self-reflect, to heal, and to build. People will be able to come out of prison knowing they have a place they can call home, an organization that has their back and values their experience. At the same time, directly-impacted led organizations can tap into our experience and have a blueprint for buying a building for their own community.



This building is more than just walls, windows, and a roof: it's setting the foundation for a larger work—a common space for creating common dreams. 15 years ago, AOUON was able to organize because a few people had the means, support, and space to sit down, discuss, share, strategize, and move forward. In the past few years, LSPC has been able to provide Ronald "Elder" Freeman Policy Fellowships to support and train formerly incarcerated and convicted advocates and organizers. The Freedom and Movement Center will multiple that training tenfold by being a West Coast hub for bringing people

Dorsey Nunn meets our new neighbors in Superior Barbershop, a few blocks down Market Street from us in the Longfellow District of N. Oakland.

and organizations together from down the street and across the country to find fellowship, make connections, share strategies, and support the Movement to restore our rights and end incarceration.

We invite you to join us at our new home in Oakland on Saturday, September 1, for a community celebration of the new chapter in LSPC's 40 years of civil rights work.

Can't make it to the party? [Donate here to the Freedom & Movement Center Capital Campaign!](#)



See you at the Freedom & Movement Center!

AOUON Joins International Human Rights & Prison Reform Conference in Rwanda

LSPC / All of Us or None members Aaliyah Muhammad, Hamdiya Cooks-Abdullah, Noe Gudiño, and AOUON member Jerry Elster travelled to Rwanda on May 17-25 to participate in the Human Rights and Prison Reform Conference hosted by [CURE International](#). At the end of the conference the participants issued an official call on the United Nations to accelerate its Prison Reform program [see below].

Aaliyah Muhammad: "The trip to Rwanda was my first time visiting an African country. It was the experience of a lifetime! It is a beautiful country, and the people go out of their way to help



(Left to Right) Aaliyah Muhammad, Jerry Elster, Noe Gudiño, and Hamdiya Cooks-Abdullah in Kigali, Rwanda in May, 2018.

others. I don't know if they have always been so hospitable, or if this is part of their healing process from [the brutal fighting between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes](#). The hatred between the Tutsi and Hutu tribes stemmed from the ways they were treated under Belgian rule: the Belgians believed that the Tutsi ethnic group in Rwanda was racially superior to the Hutu ethnic group because the Tutsis had more "European" features.



Noe (bottom row, second from left) joins locals for a pickup game of soccer outside of Kigali.

During the conference we resided in the city of Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, where the Rwandan President, Juvénal Habyarimana, was killed when his plane was shot down out of the sky in April 1994. This sparked the beginning of the Rwandan Genocide in which 1 million people were killed in 100 days. We visited one of

Rwanda's Reconciliation Villages, where restorative justice is being practiced. In this village, people who were participants in the genocide are living side by side with family members who lost loved ones. We wonder if the US will ever use a system like this.

We took a 3-hour ride to visit Nyanza Prison, which holds 5,000 people. Many who participated in the Genocide are serving their time there. Under Belgian rule, the people experienced exploitation, and poverty, which ended in horrific violence. The country is still healing from this horrible experience, during which the international community turned its back on Rwanda and refused to step in until after a million people were dead. Overall, the people are healing—they are poor, but happy. The country is lush and rich in minerals. Maybe someday they will be able to benefit as much from their own country's natural resources as the colonizers have. I plan to go back."



Participants of the 2018 International CURE Conference on Human Rights & Prison Reform - May 25 - Kigali, Rwanda.

First CA Family Unity Conference Focuses on Family Visiting Rights

On June 19-20, formerly-incarcerated people and their loved ones came together at the Asian Heritage Center in Oakland for the first Family Unity Convening. This gathering, made up of about 40 people representing organizations from across California, allowed directly impacted people and advocates to discuss strategies for organizing against mass incarceration and for the interests of children, family, and larger community.



Members from organizations all over California meet in discussion groups to identify and strategize the issues and solutions to better family connection through prison visits.



(Left to Right) LSPC Summer Interns Abby, Corryn, Patricia, and Allie helped organize, facilitate, and document the Family Unity Conference—great hands-on training and experience!

Staff members of LSPC and All of Us or None organized this

conference and facilitated break-out groups where people were able to get into the details of policies they would like to see. The room filled with ideas culled from the shared experiences of families visiting their loved ones in prison, with much discussion about priorities for changing policy and legislation.



Thank you to all who participated in the first Family Unity Conference on June 19-20 in Oakland, CA. We look forward to continuing the work together in January!

The convening will be followed by another event in January. It will serve as a check-in on these organizing plans in order to continue the movement for families of incarcerated people. For more information about our Family Unity Project work, contact Aaliyah Muhammad at aaliyah@prisonerswithchildren.org or 415.625.7042.

Bay Area Youth Organizing Convening

All of Us or None Policy Fellow Noe Guidiño attended the Bay Area Youth Organizing Convening as a part of his efforts to build youth leadership into AOUON. The convening occurred on July 11th in Oakland, CA as a space to network youth organizers in the Bay Area.



The agenda for the day included workshops that taught a wide variety of skills to better equip youth to respond to the needs of their communities. Noe said, "It was tremendous to see youth organizers and their members incorporate self-care in leadership building to developing policy."

Organizations leading workshops at the convening included Californians for Justice, Family Violence Law Center, and National Center for Youth Law.



AOUON has recently organized a youth chapter in East Oakland, and will continue training youth organizers and advocates at our new Freedom & Movement Center. For more information about organizing formerly incarcerated and convicted youth, contact Noe at noe@prisonerswithchildren.org.

San Bernardino Clean Slate Clinic

LSPC staff and interns worked tirelessly into July to make sure that over a hundred people could get their records expunged through Clean Slate Clinics offered in San Bernardino. At the June 23 clinic, hard-working volunteers assisted one group of people get Livescan fingerprinted (for free!). Those people were referred to a later Clean Slate clinic organized by Starting Over Strong for follow-up work. Meanwhile, many other volunteers helped a different group of people finish filing out their court paperwork to get their charges dismissed and removed from their criminal records that employers may consider. This group had attended our earlier San Bernardino Rap Sheet Day. Well over 100 people came to the June 23 event to work on getting their records expunged.



LSPC Office Manager Tina Nunn (left) and AOUON Organizer Sandra Johnson, ready to help people at the Clean Slate clinic in San Bernardino, CA.

Other organizations involved in making the San Bernardino Clean Slate Clinic possible included: Drug Policy Alliance, Assembly Member Eloise Gomez Reyes' Office, Riverside County Public Defender's Office, Starting Over Strong, and the All of Us or None Riverside Chapter.

LSPC Staff Attorney Eva DeLair remarked, "This clinic was the best we've ever had! We had a dedicated crew of volunteers who stayed five hours after the clinic was set to end so that we could serve as many people as possible. We filed 142 separate petitions in multiple counties, on behalf of low income folks in San Bernardino. This made it the largest Clean Slate Clinic we've had so far. It was exhausting and spectacular."



Assemblymember Eloise Gomez Reyes (D-San Bernardino), who co-sponsored the clinic, addresses the participants.



Clients and volunteers go over the RAP sheet review and filing process. Over 100 people received help during the clinic.

LSPC Office Manager Tina Nunn, who volunteered to leave her desk in San Francisco to travel to work at the Southern California clinic, said, "I thought the event went great. It was important because people are getting an opportunity to get jobs. Most people were there because they wanted things off their records to be able to get jobs to support themselves and their families."

For more information about Clean Slate clinics, please contact Aaliyah Muhammad at: aaliyah@prisonerswithchildren.org.

Farewell Eva!



Former LSPC Staff Attorney Eva DeLair

LSPC bids farewell to Staff Attorney Eva DeLair after many years of wonderful work. Eva began at LSPC first as an intern and then as a legal fellow, before being hired as a full-time staff attorney in early 2016. Eva focused much of her work on California regulations—especially implementation of Ban the Box / Fair Chance Employment policies. She supervised the responses to the hundreds of prisoner letters LSPC receives every month, both with our Interns and with volunteers at the Letter Writing Nights that she initiated. Eva also organized and led the Clean Slate Clinics we offered all over California, developing

relationships with other organizations and creating a process that allowed helping hundreds of people to reduce or expunge their conviction histories.

Senior Staff Attorney Carol Strickman: "Eva ratcheted up every area of LSPC work that she took on. From clean slate, to CLE trainings, to regulatory advocacy, to intern trainings, to prisoner resources, she made us shine. She was also an asset on the litigation and monitoring team for the *Ashker v. Governor* class action lawsuit."



Eva (standing) assists a volunteer while clients wait to have RAP sheets reviewed at a clean slate clinic in Fresno, CA.

We will miss Eva's razor-sharp mind and wit, as well as updates on her rabbit raising adventures. We thank Eva for all her amazing work and wish her much success in the next chapter of her life.

August Legislation Push!

End Driver's Licenses Suspensions for "Failure to Appear"!

Last year, with your support, [we made California the first state in the nation to end the use of license suspensions as punishment for people who missed a payment in traffic court](#). As you know, traffic tickets in California come with a hefty price tag and, for many, can be an insurmountable financial burden. Suspending indigent driver's licenses based on their inability *to pay* just leads to unemployment and traps vulnerable families in poverty.



Now we need your help to stop courts from using someone's failure *to appear* in traffic court as a loophole that undermines the rights of low-income traffic defendants! As amended, SB 185 would clarify that if someone missed a court

date and had their license suspended as a result, the person's later request for an evaluation of their ability to pay their traffic fine will be considered a "court appearance" for the purpose of lifting the suspension. Currently, many counties require a person who misses a court date to pay the entire fine, regardless of ability to pay, before getting their license back. Poor people should not be forced

to pay of potentially thousands of dollars in tickets just because they missed a court appearance.

SB 185 will be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee as early as this week!

Please send your support letter ASAP this week!

[See template here.](#)

You can also show your support on social media by sharing the graphic above and *tagging*:

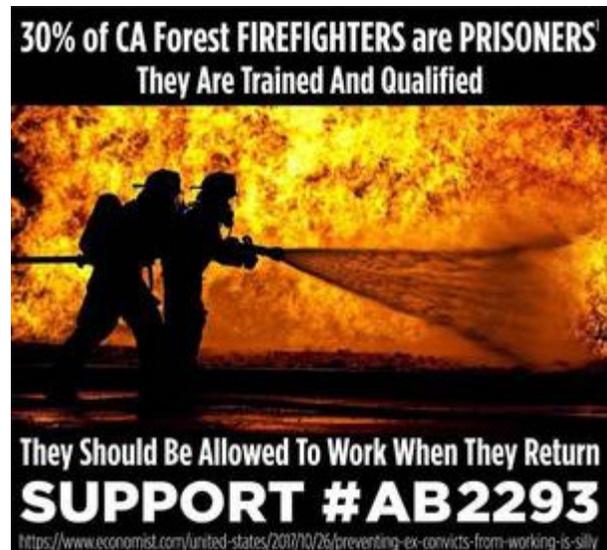
Assembly Appropriations Chair Gonzalez-Fletcher

([@lorena.gonzalez.942](#) on Facebook and @LorenaAD80 on Twitter)

Speaker Rendon (@SpeakerAnthonyRendon on Facebook and @Rendon63rd on Twitter).

Increase Access to Occupational Licenses!

Two of our #FairChanceLicensing bills, AB 2138 & AB 2293, are moving forward in the CA Legislature and will next be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee in early August. AB 2293 in particular stops the blanket ban on EMT licenses for people with felony convictions. Since an EMT license is required to be hired as a firefighter, people in prison who are trained and working as firefighters are currently banned from getting a firefighter job upon release. This bill would give them a chance.



Call Senator Anthony Portantino, Chair of the California Senate Appropriations Committee
CALL (916) 651-4025

Sample Script:

Hello Senator Portantino.

My name is _____, and I live in _____ County. I am calling in support of Fair Chance Licensing bills AB 2138 and AB 2293.

1 in 3 Californians have had prior justice system involvement. Many are educated and trained for professionally licensed fields that block them out simply because of an old, dismissed, or irrelevant record. I believe all people should be able to access living wage

careers that allow them to support their families and give back to society.

Please tally my support for AB 2138 and AB 2293.
Thank you.

Make Your Voice Heard!
Support AB 2138 and AB 2293!



LSPC CALENDAR

AOUON Bay Area Chapter Meeting

When: Thursday, August 16 — 6:30-8:00 P.M.

Where: 436 14th St. (5th Floor), Oakland, CA 94612

All people and family members directly impacted by the criminal justice system are invited to join All of Us or None at our monthly meeting the 3rd Thursday of each month in Oakland, CA. We discuss local and state legislation, plan community events, and strategize how to advocate for our community in our own voices. For more information contact AOUON Organizer Dauras Cyprian: dauras@prisonerswithchildren.org or 415.625.7051



Grand Opening: The Freedom & Movement Center!

When: September 1 — 10:30-6:00 P.M.

Where: 4400 Market St. (at 44th St.), Oakland, CA 94608

We've bought our OWN building and it's time to celebrate together! For the grand opening of the Freedom & Movement Center on Saturday, September 1, we're throwing a block party and you're

invited! Join us on 44th St. in front of our NEW (and hopefully fully renovated) building to celebrate the next chapter of LSPC / All of Us or None! For more information contact Dauras Cyprian at dauras@prisonerswithchildren.org or 415.625.7051.

JOIN US! For the grand opening of
The Freedom & Movement Center

12noon - 5pm
September 1, 2018
4400 Market St.
Oakland, CA

INFO: Dauras Cyprian - 415.625.7051
dauras@prisonerswithchildren.org

Community BBQ! Bike Givaway! Raffel! Fun & Games!

LSPC
Legal Services
for Prisoners
with Children

www.prisonerswithchildren.org

LSPC 40th / AOUON 15th Anniversary Gala

When: October 3 — 6:00-9:00 P.M.

Where: Scottish Rite Center - 1547 Lakeside Dr., Oakland, CA 94612

Join us for an evening with *The New Jim Crow* author Michelle Alexander and other special guests as we celebrate together both LSPC's 40 years of working to restore our human and civil rights and All of Us or None's 15 years of organizing and training formerly incarcerated and convicted leaders and policy advocates!

A reception with food and drinks begins at 6, followed by a discussion with Michelle and other special guests at 7:15. We hope to see you there! For more information contact Azadeh Zorhabi at azadeh@prisonerswithchildren.org or 415.625.7050.



Save the date

NEW LOCATION & NEW DATE

LEGAL SERVICES FOR PRISONERS WITH CHILDREN *40th Anniversary Gala*
ALL OF US OR NONE *15th Anniversary Celebration*

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 2018

SCOTTISH RITE CENTER
1st Floor, Grand Ballroom
1547 Lakeside Drive, Oakland, CA 94612

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