Our All of Us or None newspaper is a multi-faceted venture linking those of us who have been locked up, those who are locked up, as well as our families and allies in this struggle. As we envision a monthly paper that speaks to our concerns and hears our cries, we want to ensure that the voices of our people inside are heard and the inside artists are recognized for their contributions to this movement. Your articles and poetry are important to us and your art is a valuable tool as we work together to dismantle the injustices in the Prison Industrial Complex. Please submit any articles, poetry and artwork to the following address: AOUON Editor, 4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608

All of Us or None is an organizing movement started by people who have been in prison in order to challenge the pervasive discrimination that formerly incarcerated people, people in prison, and our family members face. Our goal is to strengthen the voices of people most affected by mass incarceration and the growth of the prison industrial complex. Through our grassroots organizing, we are building a powerful political movement to win full restoration of our human and civil rights.
January 2022

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Submit your art and/or news articles for publication.
Nominate a formerly incarcerated person for the Coming Home section or submit your own story about reentry.
Nominations and submissions may be sent to:
AOUON Newspaper Editor
c/o Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
4400 Market Street
Oakland, CA 94608

Movement Maker

RE E A E M C A P A C I T Y
I C N T D E R O T S E R T P
L A A O I V M T T C E A E T
O M E A I A O O I V L V S N
R P N R E T U C E A N C C O
G A Y A U O U T A T I C G S
A I F C P T E T H T A P E I
N G E E I E A C I O E G L R
I N E P P L O L N T R R P P
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E O P I T P S P G I T N T I
U R M U M I X A M L G N I Y
T I M P A C T P U N E E E C
A N I Y R E O E N C A L S

Answer key on page 5

Chapter Connections

Go get it and come back wit it
By: Chi-Chi Cannon

In the spring of 2019, a native Bakersfield woman, Ucedrah Osby, opened the only All of Us or None (AOUON) chapter in Kern County. Kern County is located south of the central valley, with minorities making up 65.4 percent of the county’s population. It is one of the top ranked counties in agriculture and is home to 27 jails and prisons. There is one jail and prison per 32,546 people, and one jail and prison per 981 square miles. However, there are few resources for re-entering citizens.

During her childhood, Ms. Osby’s brother and father had both been imprisoned. When she grew of age, she also spent time in prison. Ms. Osby was no stranger to the tough Kern county criminal system. “Everyone says Kern county is special because it has different rules – once Kern County gets you, that’s it.” Despite their economic position or where they were located geographically, Ms. Osby’s father had hope and faith in her adventurous personality, nicknaming her his(?) Million Dollar Baby. Her father’s faith in her built up her self-esteem, giving her the confidence that she could achieve whatever she wanted. This stuck with Ms. Osby, motivating her to go out and get it by whatever means. In the quest to live up to the name, Ms. Osby wanted several income streams. After moving to Los Angeles to work with the Susan Burton project, where folks reentering society could find housing, legal services and more. While doing Justice on Trial, she met a group of black women who invited her to Oakland. Not knowing much about this group of women, adventurous and self-assured Osby hopped in her car and drove to Oakland. There they bonded over food and conversation. They joined another event for the formerly incarcerated and Ms. Osby recognized a familiar organization in attendance, All of Us or None. She had seen the organization before in Los Angeles, but this intimate setting allowed for natural dialogue with some of the organization’s young representatives. Here Ms. Osby learned that the organization was run by people who had all been incarcerated.

Ms. Osby then traveled to Los Angeles to work with the Susan Burton project, where folks reentering society could find housing, legal services and more. While doing Justice on Trial, she met a group of black women who invited her to Oakland. Not knowing much about this group of women, adventurous and self-assured Osby hopped in her car and drove to Oakland. There they bonded over food and conversation. They joined another event for the formerly incarcerated and Ms. Osby recognized a familiar organization in attendance, All of Us or None. She had seen the organization before in Los Angeles, but this intimate setting allowed for natural dialogue with some of the organization’s young representatives. Here Ms. Osby learned that the organization was run by people who had all been incarcerated.

Ms. Osby described how AOUON made her feel: “[All of Us or None is] a safe space for their citizens returning home from prison. And to stay out of the criminal system, the hustle was real! While Ms. Osby sat waiting at a job agency, she saw a flier on a vending machine looking to train candidates to become substance abuse counselors. She finished her 18 month program and became a certified counselor. She soon recognized that her clients had a variety of problems and yet again no resources. Ms. Osby then traveled to Los Angeles to work with the Susan Burton project, where folks reentering society could find housing, legal services and more. While doing Justice on Trial, she met a group of black women who invited her to Oakland. Not knowing much about this group of women, adventurous and self-assured Osby hopped in her car and drove to Oakland. There they bonded over food and conversation. They joined another event for the formerly incarcerated and Ms. Osby recognized a familiar organization in attendance, All of Us or None. She had seen the organization before in Los Angeles, but this intimate setting allowed for natural dialogue with some of the organization’s young representatives. Here Ms. Osby learned that the organization was run by people who had all been incarcerated.

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Desmond Meade

is a formerly incarcerated civil rights activist fighting to restore voting rights for formerly incarcerated citizens. He is the author of a book entitled, “Let My People Vote.” Time Magazine named him as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. Meade was recently awarded the MacArthur Fellowship (sometimes referred to as the MacArthur Genius Award), where more than 100 anonymous experts chosen for their combined variety of experience and expertise selected Desmond Meade to receive one of the most prestigious awards of our time. It is said that fellowships are NOT rewards, but instead are part achievements, but are intended to be an investment in the future, which in turn is an investment in our collective future! I sat down with Desmond Meade to interview him for the All Of Us Or None Newspaper.

Troy Williams: First tell us who you are? Give us a little bit about you and your journey?

Desmond Meade: I am the Executive Director of the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition. The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition is an organization in Florida that’s made up of people with previous felony convictions, as well as family members who have loved ones that have been caught up in the criminal injustice system in some way. When I joined, it wasn’t really an organization, but rather it was a project that was run out of the ACLU office. I officially incorporated the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition in 2011, with the founding board members all being members who have been formerly incarcerated. We have about 20,000 members now, with about 20 chapters throughout the state of Florida. And our work centers around felon enfranchisement.

Troy Williams: Why is it important to have formerly incarcerated people at the helm of this work?

Desmond Meade: It’s very important because what I learned early on was how other people don’t feel the pain that you feel. Like when I was working with a coalition of many big name organizations. … When we ran into a little rough patch, they went on to other things. And so your issue may not be a priority for them at the time. But it’s always gonna be a priority for you, because it’s affecting you right now. And so, if you are a person that wants to eliminate the pain of whatever you’re experiencing and the trauma you’re experiencing, then it’s in your best interest to be leading it.

Troy Williams: Absolutely. You’ve been at this for a while. Talk about your successes.

Desmond Meade: Well, let me start by saying we laid down the proper way to help elect the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition in 2011, with the founding board members all being members who have been formerly incarcerated. When I joined, it wasn’t really an organization, but rather it was a project that was run out of the ACLU office. I officially incorporated the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition in 2011, with the founding board members all being members who have been formerly incarcerated. We have about 20,000 members now, with about 20 chapters throughout the state of Florida. And our work centers around felon enfranchisement.

Troy Williams: Back when our load was starting to get into gear. I was introduced to Dorssey Nunn. I fell in love with the brother from day one. He’s my day one, you know. It’s funny because when I had to come to California, I used to always stop by the office and have some of the interactions that revealed that purchase my usual set of All Of Us Or None gear. So I used to come with a half-empty suitcase and make myself up at the end of the day. I’d drive all over with the hoodies, and hats, and the shirts and all that. But All Of Us Or None and Legal Services for Prisoners with Children stood as an example for me, for the entire country, on how people directly impacted could lead the work around issues that we could do it in a very professional way as well as a very impactful way.

Troy Williams: When I first met you in Florida, it hasn’t been long since I came home myself. The way you operated in Florida, to pull people together and pull people from all over the country to be involved in that movement was definitely a deep inspiration to me. It’s one thing to hear about somebody doing something. But it’s another thing to see the stamina of somebody when he does it. Then it becomes a living example for you. So yeah, I’m definitely inspired by you and your work.

Desmond Meade: Man, I appreciate that.

Troy Williams: Tell us your connection to All Of Us Or None?

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Troy Williams: Tell us about your MacArthur Fellowship.

Desmond Meade: Man, that caught me off guard. You could be Time Magazine’s 100 most influential people, and then to see how a lot of the brothers coming back. I was able to get out of my head and really put in that work to help liberate their brothers and sisters. People hit the ground and they were grinding. I fully appreciate my Cali brothers and sisters.

Troy Williams: Likewise, y’all made us feel like home with that good Southern hospitality.

Desmond Meade: You were at home.

Troy Williams: Yes sir. So what’s next for Desmond and the Florida Rights Restoration Committee?

Desmond Meade: We are steady grinding, brother. We’re expanding our rainy work as it relates to advocating so that people open up to have better jobs and housing, and even though you may have a criminal history, that you’re treated with dignity and respect. And, continue to build power among people who have been impacted by the criminal system.

Troy Williams: I appreciate you brother, and I’m looking forward to what comes next.

Chapter Connections

Continued from page 3

people to get involved with something they’ve been impacted by.” Ms. Osby told me that she recognized AOUON as a space where you could work and exist as you are. AOUON encourages you to talk to you, be you. After all, this was our story and our people.

Ms. Osby needed to open a chapter of her own in Kern County, asking me if I ever heard of the phrase, “Go it and get come back wit it.” She knew this would be no easy feat. She wanted not only to bring the resources back, but also to provide a safe space for previously incarcerated individuals. In March 2019 she opened the AOUON chapter in Kern County. Eleven of us gathered together, wrote down our lives, our stories, and shared our dreams and papers, at hotels, libraries, churches, and wherever they could meet. Four months later, the AOUON chapter in Kern County received funding. It was enough to get to their own location. A couple months before the pandemic, Ms. Osby located an office space which needed renovating. Everything was down to the studs. Then the pandemic hit and the novel virus was unsettling for all. Ms. Osby had no other choice but to push through. After having already put a deposit down on the office space, the

Renovations were in full effect, and they were inquiring what Ms. Osby needed the office to look like. She told them that all she needed was four walls, but it turned into this beautiful brand new building.

"The office is morphing into a hub," Ms. Osby told me. “It’s so deep. I never imagined this. We’re able to help the whole person, and that’s something we can’t do, we know where to refer our folks.”

When people come into the office, they often ask for her by calling her “the lady that drives the grey car.” She is confident and resilient. Ms. Osby is known to have the resources and, if she doesn’t, they know she will go out, get it and come back wit it.

RELAND FOR FORMERLY INCARCERATED FIREFIGHTERS

Contra Costa County (CA) successfully challenged and changed the law that resulted in allowing certain people with criminal convictions to petition the court to have their convictions expunged.

Incarcerated conservation camp firefighters are among the people who are seen as being burdened with the injustice of not being able to secure employment as a result of their criminal conviction histories.

If you know someone that would benefit from this law, LSPC will assist you in accessing your county of conviction(s) public defender(s) office(s) to support you in the process to get your conviction(s) expunged.

For more information please contact:

Oscar Flores
All Of Us Or None National Organizer
Work (415) 625-7048
oscar@prisonerswithchildren.org

4400 Market Street
Oakland CA, 94608
January 2022

2021 Homecoming Celebration

LSPC/AOUON hosted a Homecoming Event in December for our comrades released in 2021. We enjoyed the fellowship of people who have each experienced being released after living inside prison walls.

Here are a few quotes from our staff who helped make this event possible:

Tina — LSPC Office Manager

The following morning I woke up thinking about how much time each one shared that they were incarcerated. It was a sickening. The openness and smiles were my favorite part.

January 2022

Legal Advocacy

Continued from page 3

despite evidence to the contrary presented by prisoners, and that the case should therefore end.

Jules Lobel, lead counsel for the plaintiffs, stated, “The Ashker case began almost a decade ago, as people in prison organized to end the inhumane practice of warehousing human beings in solitary confinement for decades on end. While we have succeeded in forcing California to transfer thousands of men into less restrictive units, there is so much left to do, and California has shown itself unwilling to make those necessary changes without court oversight.”

CDCR is still using fabricated, exaggerated, or inaccurately disclosed confidential information to return men to solitary confinement, plaintiffs said. Informed men are pressured to provide information in exchange for favors and better treatment, and prison officials may use false information as reliable, taking no steps and enacting no safeguards to ascertain the facts. Further, men who refuse to answer an alleged safety concern even when an investigation does not conclude they have violated prison rules. At the same time, CDCR places on those who may be deemed a threat to impose a de facto bar on parole for men with alleged gang affiliation, providing parole boards with purported evidence of gang affiliation obtained through the unconstitutional process described above. Finally, CDCR places and retains certain men in a restricted unit in the general population without adequate procedural protections. All of this, the former staff advocates say, violates their right to due process.

They will ask Judge Wilken to both extend the monitoring period and also to order reforms to guard against violations of their rights, including:

• Audio-recording all confidential interviews when prisoners implicate other prisoners in rule violations;
• Implementing additional layers of review and opportunities for men in prison to appeal certain decisions that result in continued isolation.

“We are asking the court to address ongoing rights violations,” said Carmen Bremer of the Center for Constitutional Rights’ case page. “One of the top concerns for the prisoners we represent is the way the system population uses the use of unreliable information to further punish them — we need safeguards, and we need an independent monitor or event, until all the reforms are new and old, are carried out.”

Ashker v Governor of California amended a lawsuit filed by then-Pelican Bay prisoners Todd Ashker and Danny Tavares, who represented themselves. The class action suit charges that prolonged solitary confinement violates the Eighth Amendment’s prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment, and that the absence of meaningful review for placement violates the prisoners’ rights to due process. It is part of a larger movement sparked by hunger strikes by thousands of prisoners protesting conditions in Security Housing Units in California prisons.

The named plaintiffs in Ashker include several leaders and participants from the hunger strikes.

Co-counsel with the Center for Constitutional Rights are Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, California Prison Focus, Siegel & Tye, Wel Gotschal & Manges LLP, Bremer Law Group, Ellenberg & Hull, The Law Office of Charles Carbone, and the Law Office of Matthew Straugar.

For more information, visit the Center for Constitutional Rights’ case page: ccjrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/ours-cases/ ashker-v-brown

The Center for Constitutional Rights works with communities under threat to fight for justice and freedom through litigation, advocacy, and strategic communications. Since 1966, the Center for Constitutional Rights has taken on systems of power, including structural racism, gender oppression, economic inequality, and governmental overreach. Learn more at ccjrjustice.org

Follow the Center for Constitutional Rights on social media: Center for Constitutional Rights on Facebook, @ccJRcr on Twitter, and ccjrjustice on Instagram.

/// RESULTS OF THE HEARING ///

Kellie Walters — LSPC Staff Attorney.

On Tuesday, October 28, 2021, attorneys for the Ashker plaintiffs went up against attorneys for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) in front of Judge Claudia Wilken to request that she extend the monitoring period and institute other reforms.

The litigants discussed, among other things, whether CDCR is making adequate inquires into whether an ongoing against the RCGP prisoner continues. (The RCGP was created to provide a form of protective housing.) Plaintiffs attorneys suggested that, when there is no evidence of a threat against RCGP prisoners, rather than return the prisoners to general population, CDCR is telling the prisoners that they are being retained in the RCGP due to their lack of positive programming.

Attorneys Jules Lobel and Carmen Bremer both rebuked arguments that CDCR was continuing its ongoing constitutional violations within the prison walls through its use of confidential informants. CDCR uses this unverified information to make determinations concerning the lives of these prisoners, including whether they violated prison rules or have any gang affiliation. Furthermore, CDCR does not provide any mechanism for a neutral third party to evaluate the authenticity or reliability of said information. In opposition to these future representations, counsel further sought an independent monitor, in addition to the extension.

Concerning the confidential information, the court addressed the need to review unredacted transcripts and memoranda. The court ordered CDCR to deliver them to the court within a week. They will, however, be filed under seal and not accessible to the general public.

After hearing arguments for over two hours, Judge Wilken took the matter under submission and will issue a written opinion.

Your Brother(s)

By: Mr. Ronald Reyes A.K.A. Double R

Imprisoned Comrade

You will recognize your Brother by the way they act and move throughout the World; there will be a strange force about them. There will be unspoken answers in them. This will be obvious not only to you, but to many. The Confidence they have in themselves and in their people will be evident in their quiet certainty.

The way they relate to Black Women will be clean, complimentary, responsible and with honesty. The way they relate to children will be strong and soft, full of positive direction. The way they relate to Man will be that of questioning the position of this world, the will be one of planning for movement and change, and will be one of working for the people and one of gaining and maintaining trust within our race.

This at first may seem strange and unusual, but this will not be the case of long. They will train others and the Discipline they display will become a way of life for many. We know that this is difficult, but this is the Life they have chosen, for themselves, for other, for Life.

They will be the Benefactors

They will be the Creators

They will be the First to give up the Power

They will be one to share a Black Value System

They will be the Workers

They will be the Scholars

They will be the Providers & Protectors

They will be the Doctors, Lawyers, Farmers, Fathers & World Leaders, and are destined for Development and Growth.

You will recognize these brothers

And

They will never betray you.
Because you hunger, who shall feed you?
Because you are wounded, who shall call?
Because you are alone, who shall say it?

Who, oh wretched one, shall dare it?
You, on whom the blows are falling,
Contribute to the All of Us or None
If you would like to send feedback or
Beaten man, who shall avenge you?
Comrade, only these can see you
Those in deepest darkness lying.

You who hunger, who shall feed you?
If it’s bread you would be carving,
Come to us, we too are starving.

One alone his lot can’t better.
Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

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Either gun or fetter.
Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Weakness gives us strength to lend you.

Hear your wounded brothers calling.

Taught the time by need and sorrow,
Counts the blows that arm his spirit.

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