A message from the Executive Director and the President of the Board of Directors

As we approach LSPC’s 45th Anniversary in 2023, and a look back lets us see how far we’ve come, and how we’ve done that great work to move forward our critical work. When Ellen Barry started LSPC in 1978 as a Network of Women in Prison, she said the work would be taking 10 years to make any real impact. And a few years later, LSPC has an over $3 million budget, owns our own building, employs 27 people—mostly formerly incarcerated and system-impacted—and it’s a powerhouse in California’s prison abolitionist movement.

45 years later, LSPC has had hundreds of interns, many of whom became lawyers and are doing amazing work at organizations such as the National Center for Constitutional Rights and the Equal Justice Initiative, or writing books that impact our national consciousness, like The New Jim Crow. And we hope that legal intern from UC Berkeley Law, our first legal intern, Pamela Price, was just elected as the first black District Attorney for Alameda County.

Since our founding, LSPC has had a strong commitment to train our future leaders. We are very excited about the next generation of organizers and civil rights attorneys. For example, our Elder Freeman Policy Fellowship is an apprentice style training program for formerly incarcerated, system-impacted, and formerly incarcerated people to learn grassroots organizing, legislative and administrative advocacy, and other strategies to run local and statewide advocacy campaigns. The Family Unity Project provides policy and regulatory changes to maintain and strengthen family relationships during and after incarceration. This includes protecting parent rights of incarcerated mothers and fathers, making visitation a right, reducing the financial burden incarceration has on families, and advocating for legal services for prisoners with children (LSPC) mission is to end mass incarceration, restore human and civil rights, create opportunities in housing, employment, and education, and to reunify families torn apart by the criminal justice system. We understand that mass incarceration is a uniquely American problem that impacts the human rights of American citizens, particularly those who come from communities of color.

At the heart of LSPC is our desire to lift up the voices of those most impacted by our injustice system. We practice a bottom-up or grassroots model by taking our lead from the family members and on the ground activists, the 32 All of Us or None chapters across the country; and from incarcerated people we respond to each year; from the family members and on the ground activists and organizations we work in coalition with.

We are very proud that over the course of the COVID pandemic that we’ve been able to maintain and support all our staff. It wasn’t too long ago—less than a decade—that Administrative Director Hamdiya Abdullah and Dorsey Nunn were taking serious pay cuts to keep as many staff as possible. Our current financial stability is a sign of the scope and quality of our legislative advocacy, litigation, and grassroots organizing work.

We now have a great mix of people who will allow us to accomplish more than we’ve been able to before: We have a team of 20 people who are committed to the work in a real, personal way. They are doing critical work on new state and local bills to end long-term solitary confinement, to responding to the hundreds of letters we receive each month requesting legal advice. We are informed by the more than 2000 letters from incarcerated people we respond to each year; from the 12 All of Us or None chapters across the country; and from the family members and on the ground activists and organizations we work in coalition with.

We aim to build awareness of structural racism in policing, the courts, and the prison system. Our goal is to advance racial and gender justice in all our work. Our approach is guided through community organizing, policy advocacy, and legal services. We advance our mission in these three programmatic areas. All of Us or None, The Family Unity Project, and legal advocacy. All of Us or None strengthens the leadership of current and formerly incarcerated people and their families in legislative advocacy and community organizing. Each year, LSPC hires three Elder Freeman Policy Fellows. The fellowship is an apprentice style training program for people who are formerly incarcerated to learn grassroots organizing, legislative and administrative advocacy, and other strategies to run local and statewide advocacy campaigns.

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We are very excited about the next generation of organizers and civil rights attorneys. For example, our Housing Advocate Taqwaa Bonner, after having served decades incarcerated in prison, has successfully helped pass Fair Chance housing ordinances in Berkeley and Oakland. California. Not only does this continue all of Us or None’s initial fall the box campaign started in 2003, but these campaigns provide a model for other counties, like Los Angeles, CA, and across the nation.

We look forward to continuing our campaigns into 2023, especially our work to expand visiting rights for family members and to remove the exception clause from Article 1, Section 6 of the California Constitution that legalizes involuntary servitude and perpetuates the practice of prison slavery. And we look forward to welcoming you to our 45th Anniversary Gala in 2023!
The goal of ALL OF US OR NONE (AOUON) is to build a National Movement of formerly incarcerated people and our families with expertise and political power to restore our human and civil rights.

Throughout the 2022 year AOUON was able to serve our community partnering with Planting Justice and the Black Sobrante Park Community Healing Council rolling out the first ever Policy/Political Education Course. We continued to serve our community by capturing their lived experiences to support policy efforts via surveys. Our partnership with InitiumCares/Rockefeller Foundation allowed us to provide gift cards to the community members who participated in the inquiry.

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AOUON boasts a diverse membership of nearly 2000 members located in every corner of the country. The organization’s national headquarters, based in Oakland, CA, holds monthly virtual meetings that typically attract an average of 30 attendees.

As part of its mission to support members nationwide, AOUON’s headquarters offers comprehensive training and technical assistance programs aimed at enhancing members’ political education, community organizing, digital organizing, and computer proficiency. The organization also provides invaluable strategies for creating successful campaigns, equipping members with the tools needed to enact meaningful change in their respective communities.

In addition, AOUON’s various chapters host their own regional meetings, setting custom agendas and spearheading campaigns such as the Rejects Slavery initiative. Furthermore, they have passed resolutions in their respective locals condemning the “exception clause” in the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution or their state governing documents, demonstrating the organization’s unwavering commitment to effecting change at every level of government.

The AOUON California Chapter includes various locations such as Oakland, Oakland (National Headquarters), Long Beach/Los Angeles, Orange County, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, and San Diego.

Apart from California, AOUON has chapters across the country, including Eastern NC, Maine, Charlotte NC, Huntsville KY, Hopkinsville KY, San Antonio TX, Greenville NC, Durham NC, Eastern Washington, Northern New Jersey, Central IL, Chicago IL, Cincinnati OH, St. Louis MO, Atlanta GA, South Jersey, Philadelphia PA, Washington DC, Greenville SC, Texas, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Las Vegas NV.

AOUON welcomed many national advocates to the Freedom & Movement Center, including Corinna Forsman (here for a UNITY door knocking campaign).
COMMUNITY GIVEBACK

The 23rd annual Community Giveback event, organized by All of Us or None and supported by volunteer time, was held on December 10th, 2022. Despite the stormy weather, over 200 children from 100 families were welcomed by staff and volunteers.

The Community Giveback is a heartwarming tradition that allows children to receive a bicycle or toy on behalf of their incarcerated loved one.

At the event, the children pick out their very own bicycle, a prized possession that will bring them joy and freedom. Amidst the festivities, they savor a delicious lunch and are captured in a cherished photo, a treasured memento of this special day. They also craft thank you cards, a sincere expression of gratitude that is sent, along with a photo, to their loved one inside.

In addition to these meaningful activities, there is an array of other delights to enjoy, including facepainting and a helmet fitting area, ensuring the children are not only entertained, but also safe as they embark on their new biking adventures.

This event not only helps maintain the bond between a child and their incarcerated loved one, but it also gives formerly incarcerated individuals the chance to give back to their community through volunteering.

Our goal is to remind these children that they have a supportive community who cares for them, and that their incarcerated loved one still remembers and cares for them too. Annually we have provided an average of 175 to 250 bikes to children.

THE COALITION FOR FAMILY UNITY

THE COALITION FOR FAMILY UNITY is a lead by AOUON's Family Unity Project, along with other core members, system-impacted people and allies to address the impact of mass criminalization on families. Our first goal is to expand the rights of family members to visit their incarcerated loved ones by establishing visiting as a right.

Family Unity Project organized the Coalition for Family Unity and directly impacted organizations across California creating a campaign to pass AB 990, which would establish family visitation as a right, free transportation to and from visits, free phone calls, and compassionate end of life visits. While the bill passed both house and senate, it was ultimately vetoed by the Governor in 2021. However, the campaign succeeded in raising these core issues as attacks on the very foundation of the system impacted families across California bringing the main tenets of AB 990 into the language of several other successful legislative measures. Family Unity Project was able to contribute to the language for SB 1139 that passed and gave end of life incarcerated people the right to have their next of kin at their bedside. With the passing of 100B all phone calls in State prison are now free!

The Coalition for Family Unity will continue to work to maintain and strengthen family relationships during and after incarceration by conducting online informal trainings/webinars, and creating new manuals/flyers. The hope for 2023 is to help families affected by incarceration advocate for themselves, their loved ones and the community. The Coalition for Family Unity will continue to work with AOUON’s legal team, coalition partners and families to restore the ever elusive “visiting as a right”!

The Coalition for Family Unity’s Core Members are: A New Way of Life, California Families Against Solitary Confinement, California’s Impacted Families Project, Community Works, Communities United for Restorative Youth, Justice, Drop (DWOP), East Bay Family Defenders, Felony Murder Elimination Project, Families Limited to End DWOP, Incarceration, Prison From TheInside-Out Inc., Starting Over, Over, Young Women’s Freedom Center, Alliance for Boys and Men of Color, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, Humanities United, Mary Mac Homes, and Pillars of the Community San Diego.
In 2022, we focused on key issues affecting our community, like family visiting, sentiments reform, housing rights, and self-advocacy. Our advocacy was comprehensive. We attended hearings and wrote letters, submitted public education, and we helped pass bills in partnership with others.

AOUON’s 10th annual Quest for Democracy in Sacramento attracted 1,300 participants. With partner organizations and legislators in attendance, attendees received legislative training in English and Spanish. We advocated for our four legislative initiatives.

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INTERNS & VOLUNTEERS

POLICY FELLOWS

Our interns and volunteers are an integral part of our community and our organization. As such, we encourage and depend on the contributions of our interns and volunteers.

At our center, we can effectively advocate for policy change by empowering formerly incarcerated individuals, family members, and allies. With their support, we can amplify the voices of incarcerated individuals, humanize and aid incarcerated individuals, and support the work we do.

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS

We recognize that our organization would not be able to achieve our goals without the support of interns and volunteers. As such, we encourage and depend on the contributions of our interns and volunteers by providing an exciting space where we can organize and train formerly incarcerated individuals, family members, and allies.

BACKGROUND IN 40 SECONDS

The Freedom Movement Center is more than just a hub. It represents a powerful platform against the gentrification of Oakland, and it’s an incredibly meaningful place for formerly incarcerated individuals, family members, and allies. With their support, we can amplify the voices of incarcerated individuals, humanize and aid incarcerated individuals, and support the work we do.

POLICY FELLOWS

As an organization committed to uplifting and advocating for marginalized communities, LSPC values the contributions of our interns and volunteers. Through EFPF, we were fortunate to host a talented group of undergraduate and law school interns who assisted with our community underwriting and law school interns fortunate to host a talented group of undergraduate and law school interns who assisted with our community. They engage in a variety of projects, ranging from research and and data gathering to constitutional amendments, legislation, at state, and nationwide coalition building, civic and community engagement.

Our interns and volunteers have contributed to all of our programs and followed hundreds of currently incarcerated individuals with legal information.

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WORKPLACE MATCHING OR MONTHLY GIFTS

We’re also very excited to announce our Matching Gift Program and make your contribution recurring each month.

LEGACYTE GIVING

A purpose and defining way to support our work in the future is by recognizing your support. We do this by offering a Matching Gift Program, which allows you to share your philanthropy, your values, and your relationships with us.

HOST AN EVENT, HAPPY HOUR, DINNER, BRIEFING

Share LSPC’s work with your community and encourage them to support our work.

TAKE ACTION!

Your support means you’re moving strength.

MAKE A GIFT TODAY

Please visit www.prisonerswithchildren.org or email a check to LSPC, 408 Market Street, Oakland, CA 94607. Consider your tax-deductible donation and make your contribution recurring each month.

This is our way of ensuring that our organization is more than just a hub. It represents a powerful platform against the gentrification of Oakland, and it’s an incredibly meaningful place for formerly incarcerated individuals, family members, and allies. With their support, we can amplify the voices of incarcerated individuals, humanize and aid incarcerated individuals, and support the work we do.

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The conference’s success was due to the efforts of the planning team, AOUON’s logistical personnel, panelists, presenters, and the community. AOUON conducted community outreach, emphasizing the importance of voting rights, and received a warm response from the attendees. The panels, leaving attendees energized and ready to continue their work.

The FICPFM team provided a diverse program of speakers, workshops, and panels. AOUON chapters from various States united at the conference, creating a collective experience. AOUON’s Family Chapter Gathering stood out as an occasion for action plan organization and knowledge-sharing. The workshops were well-prepared and informative, with highly-regarded distinguished speakers, including Distinguished speakers, including Dorsey Nunn, Susan Burton, Hamdiya Cooks-Abdullah, and Stephanie Jeffcoat, took part in the panels, leaving attendees energized and ready to continue their work.

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