

Our All of Us or None newspaper serves to link those of us who have been locked up, those who are locked up, as well as our families and allies in this struggle.



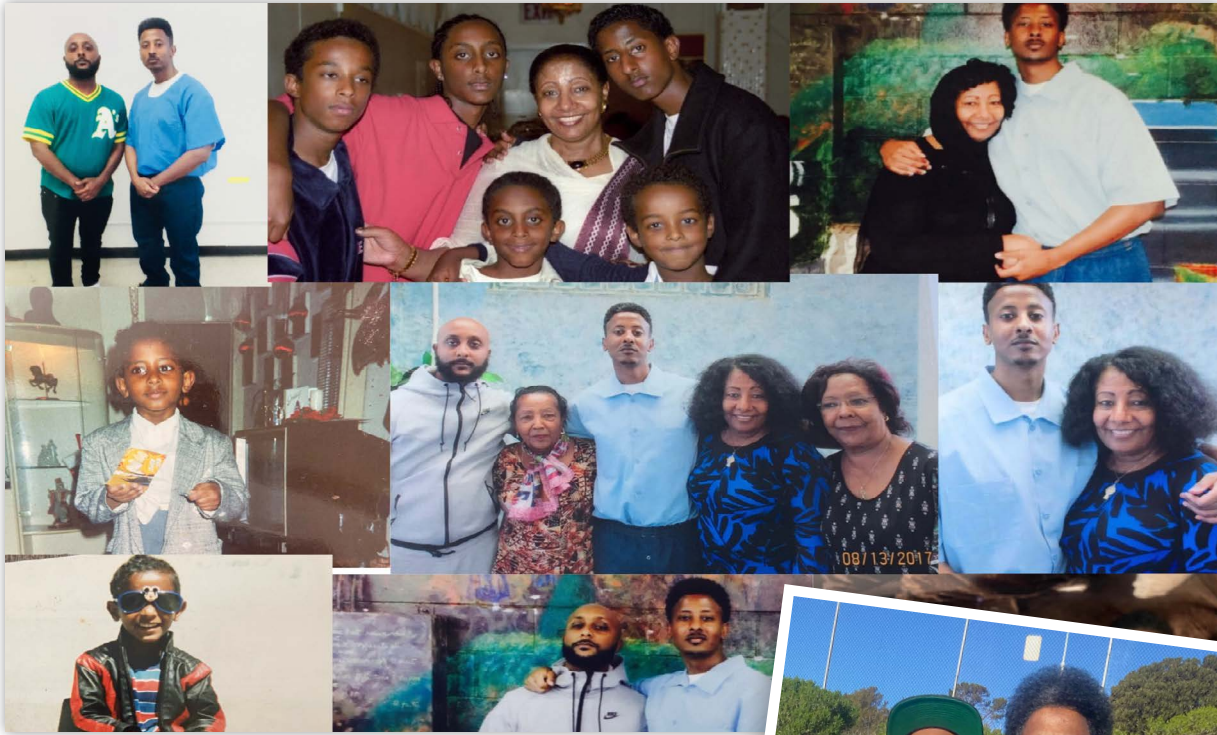
# ALL OF US OR NONE NEWSPAPER

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 stories matter!

## Journey to Freedom

by TaSin Sabir, AOUON Newspaper Editor and LSPC Communications Manager



Collage of Daniel Alem and family used as the cover page for his social biography. Photo on the right: Abel (in blue) and Daniel (in black), taken on the day of his release.

**A**fter serving 12 years in prison, Daniel Alem returned home February 22, 2023. But he likely would still be locked up if not for the dedication and tireless efforts of his cousin Abel Kebreab and the Oakland Participatory Defense Hub's Resentencing Project.



"I'm on top of the world. Yesterday I didn't have a ride to the doctor's office so I just got on the BART and you know I was in the rain but I had the biggest smile on my face. Just walking in the rain and the wind pushing 100 miles an hour, it was just one incredible feeling because I had the opportunity to do what a lot of guys aren't able to do right now. It was an appreciation that I've never felt before."

- Daniel Alem

Participatory Defense transforms the "in just" system by empowering incarcerated people and their families to positively impact the outcome of court cases. Nationwide, participatory defense programs have helped to shave thousands of years off of people's prison sentences. Based on a community organizing model, this approach creates opportunities for families and friends to take an active role in their loved one's defense, demanding that their voices be heard in the court process.

Often one of the steps in resentencing cases like Daniel's is to create a social biography packet. When you create the social biography package and go in front of the parole board you might have to admit to charges that aren't truthful such as in Daniel's case where he had to admit to a robbery charge on top of second degree attempted murder.

In Daniel's social biography packet, he writes about being raised in an abusive household and the difficulties that ultimately lead to his incarceration. As a young man, Daniel often acted out of anger and thought he could fill the void created by a painful childhood with material things. He writes, "I was callous and angry and didn't care about anyone's feelings and was willing to do anything to fulfill my greedy and materialistic obsession that derived from my poverty and shame of having so little as a child. I decided to find a way to make some quick money, that's when I attempted to rob

[victim's name withheld] and when he struggled I shot him and for that I am now serving a life sentence. This was rock bottom, traumatizing someone and putting them through so much pain because of my hurt, my greed and my selfishness."

As Bryan Stevenson says in his book, *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*, "Each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done." But what does this mean for those who are sentenced to life in prison? To Daniel, it meant don't give up. "For me, I've never been willing to give up," Daniel says. "I can be up against every obstacle possible, I'm not giving up. I'm not giving up for nothing."

Daniel started taking classes because of a conversation he had with two older men who were serving time with him. They told him that he had a choice: he could either be about the "bullshit" or get in the law library, take classes, and figure out a way to get out of here. "Getting advice from these two individuals who have seen a lot in the course of their prison career, I take heed to that," Daniel says. "These older individuals have been through experiences and have wisdom and guidance."

The journey to freedom began with Daniel going to the law library, where he learned more about the parole process, as well as classes he could enroll in that would serve both his case and his personal

Continued on page 4



Gina and Robert Hernandez

## A Family Reunited

by TaSin Sabir, AOUON Newspaper Editor and LSPC Communications Manager

**T**he first time Robert Hernandez went before the court in hopes of being resentenced, he was denied. This was in 2021 and his wife, Gina Hernandez, was devastated and on the brink of giving up. However, she found a sliver of hope to hang on to and continued to fight for Robert's release, which ultimately proved successful.

The couple's reunion was a tearful and emotional moment. Last month, I had the opportunity to catch up with the two. When I called Gina, she assured me that she could talk, even though she was in the middle of making dinner for her husband and two youngest sons. I could hear the sounds of pots and pans clinking, and cabinet doors being opened and closed. Gina, an expert multitasker, called Robert in to join our conversation. I took a moment to imagine Robert sitting at the kitchen table, finally surrounded by his family after all those years of separation.

How long had Robert yearned for the simple pleasures of life, like having dinner with his wife and kids? Too long. Robert's case is just one of many met with a harsh and antiquated sentence, in which the offense clearly didn't warrant the sentence.

As I spoke to Robert, I could hear the emotion in his voice as he talked about his release. He thought he would never be able to hold his wife and kids again. In prison there was so much fear and loneliness that weighed on him, but even then he knew that his wife was fighting for him, a knowing that kept him going. Optimism, when combined with action, is powerful.

In August 2022, Gina in partnership with the Oakland Participatory Defense Hub's Resentencing Project, implemented a new strategy the second time around. The revised approach included testimony from an expert on gangs and Robert's social biography packet, which humanized him and highlighted his progress while in prison. This new strategy proved successful and Robert was released on February 17, 2023.

Gina remains humble about her role in the process, acknowledging the many organizations and people who helped along the way.

As we ended our conversation, I felt inspired. It was a reminder that even in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, hope and perseverance can make a difference. Every situation is unique, but hard work and connection building can make the most daunting efforts more manageable. Most importantly, in the fight for justice we can't let a loss become a defeat.

Welcome home, Robert. We are all thrilled to have you back.

To find out more about Oakland Participatory Defense Hub see page 4.



**ALL OF US OR NONE**  
NEWSPAPER

(Vol. 4, Issue 4)

**Cover Stories**

Journey to Freedom  
A Family Reunited

**Page 2**

Message from Dorsey  
Movement Maker  
Comic

**Page 3**

Jesse's Corner  
Discovering New Artists

**Page 5**

Oakland Participatory Defense Hub

**Page 6**

Participatory Defense Nationally

**Page 7**

Mailbag

**Page 8**

Chapter Contacts

*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 prison industrial complex. Through our grassroots organizing, we are building a powerful political movement to win full restoration of our human and civil rights.*

[www.prisonerswithchildren.org](http://www.prisonerswithchildren.org)



AOUON Newspaper Editor:  
TaSin Sabir  
4400 Market Street,  
Oakland, CA 94608



**SELF DETERMINATION  
PLEDGE**

**As members of All of Us or None,  
we pledge:**

**To demand the right to speak in  
our own voices**

**To treat each other with respect  
and not allow differences to  
divide us**

**To accept responsibility for any  
acts that may have caused harm  
to our families, our communities  
or ourselves**

**To fight all forms of  
discrimination**

**To help build the economic  
stability of formerly-incarcerated  
people**

**To claim and take care of our own  
children and our families**

**To support community struggles  
to stop using prisons as the  
answer to social problems**

**To play an active role in making  
our communities safe for  
everyone**

**Discovering New Artists**

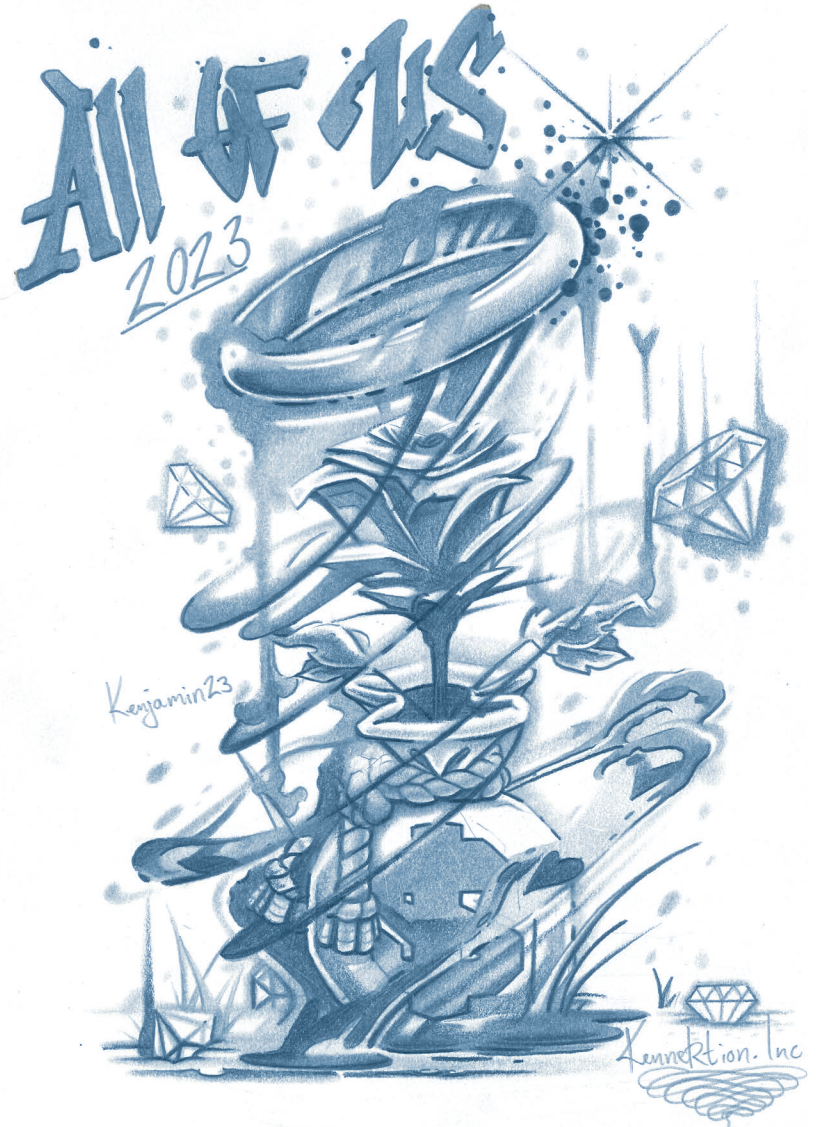
*Featured Artist Kenneth Linden - North Kern State Prison, CA*

**T**his piece that I did for All of Us or None is simple. I keep three things in all of my artwork:

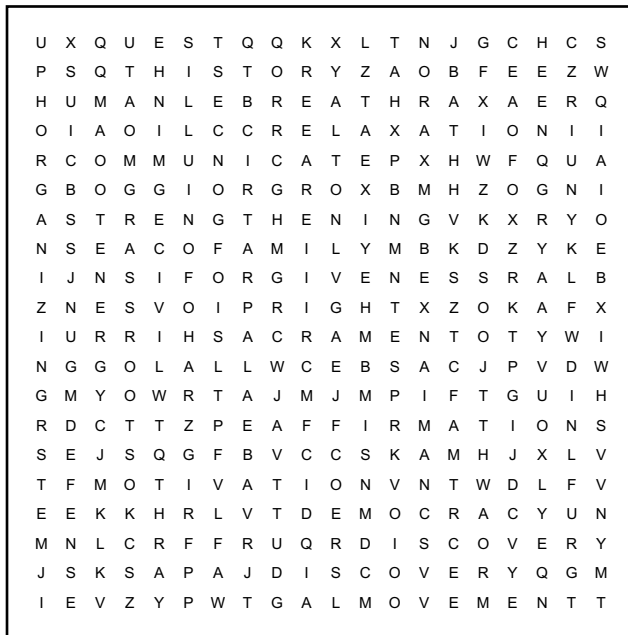
- 1) The Halo - A symbol of protection
- 2) Diamonds - Family & Friends
- 3) Money - Financial Freedom

I didn't want to focus on any downers, so I decided to leave out any bars, or cuffs. I wanted a piece that inspired power in positive thinking, keeping a bookmark on what is truly important to everyone's heart.

These diamonds that free fall become planted around us. These are existing and new relationships that we all develop. With financial freedom to rely on for support, we have the chance to grow big and strong. The halo is a crown of protection over all the things that are important to us.



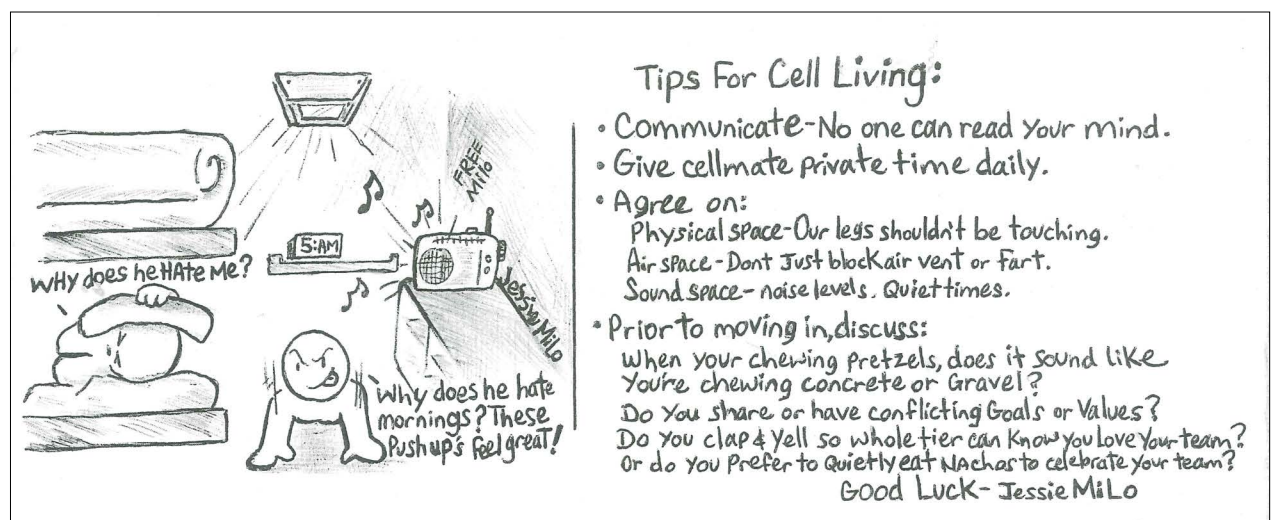
**Movement Maker**



- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| COMMUNICATE   | FAMILY        |
| MOTIVATION    | QUEST         |
| DISCOVERY     | DEMOCRACY     |
| ARTWORK       | SACRAMENTO    |
| HISTORY       | ORGANIZING    |
| PARTICIPATORY | GRASSROOTS    |
| DEFENSE       | MOVEMENT      |
| FORGIVENESS   | STRENGTHENING |
| BREATH        | HUMAN         |
| RELAXATION    | CIVIL         |
| AFFIRMATIONS  | RIGHT         |
| ENERGY        |               |
| DISCOVERY     |               |

Answer key on page 7

*Comic by Jessie Milo - California State Prison - Corcoran*



**Tips For Cell Living:**

- Communicate - No one can read your mind.
  - Give cellmate private time daily.
  - Agree on:
    - Physical space - Our legs shouldn't be touching.
    - Air space - Don't just block air vent or fart.
    - Sound space - noise levels, quiet times.
  - Prior to moving in, discuss:
    - When your chewing pretzels, does it sound like you're chewing concrete or gravel?
    - Do you share or have conflicting Goals or Values?
    - Do you clap & yell so whole tier can know you love your team?
    - or do you prefer to quietly eat Nachos to celebrate your team?
- Good Luck - Jessie Milo



**QUEST FOR DEMOCRACY**

SAVE THE DATE

**MAY 22**

CA STATE CAPITOL

Join hundreds affected by mass incarceration in Sacramento at the State Capitol for a day of advocacy training and legislative visits.



REGISTER HERE  
[bit.ly/Q4D2023](https://bit.ly/Q4D2023) (all caps)



## Share this event with your family and friends

**Quest for Democracy**  
**May 22nd, 2023**  
**CA State Capitol in Sacramento**

Register at: [bit.ly/Q4D2023](https://bit.ly/Q4D2023)  
 (all caps)

Over the course of the last 10 years, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children/All of Us or None has organized Quest for Democracy to provide hundreds of directly and system-impacted people from dozens of diverse organizations the opportunity to advocate as experts about the devastating realities of the criminal justice system.

By facilitating this direct access to our elected representatives, we're

able to use our real-life expertise to draw attention to our humanity, while supporting legislation that helps our families and communities to lead comfortable, healthy lives.

We invite you to join us at our State Capitol in order to speak in your own voice, and voice concerns you may have for your communities to State Legislators. With everyone's participation, our collective voice and call to action will undoubtedly make this the biggest and loudest Quest for Democracy ever!

We will have robust discussions, live entertainment, and a digital megaphone to amplify our voices.

# Message from Dorsey

by Dorsey Nunn, Executive Director and Co-Founder of AOUON



Dorsey Nunn, holding the AOUON Newspaper's Inaugural Issue, Fall 2012.

I've been doing this work for 50 years because I started back when I was in prison. The first thing that happens upon arrest is that they tell you that you have a right to remain silent. My Job is to teach formerly incarcerated people they have the right to be as noisy as they need to be to secure fundamental rights that I think human beings are entitled to.

We built All of Us or None to lead a movement of formerly incarcerated people. We were tired of other people speaking for us.

**We want to hear from you!**

### Here are some topic ideas to write about:

- Personal stories about your experiences in prison
- Opinion pieces on criminal justice reform
- Reviews of books
- Articles about prison educational programs
- Commentary on current events or political issues
- Articles on health and wellness, including mental health and addiction recovery
- Travelogues of places you have been or would like to visit once released
- Reflections on your own personal growth and development
- Involuntary Servitude
- Visitation Rights

# Jesse's Corner

by Jesse Burlison LSPC/AOUON In-Custody Program Coordinator

I recently had an experience that reminded me just how grateful I am to all of the people, in and out of custody, who took the time to provide me with guidance, knowledge, and support when I was younger. I don't remember all of the names of those who contributed to my growth and development, but to everyone who imparted—or tried to impart positivity to me—THANK YOU!

In March, I had the opportunity to go inside the San Francisco County Jail at San Bruno as a contributor to the reentry programs Resource Fair. There were close to 20 Community Based Organizations (CBO) in attendance. After spending the majority of my life locked up, it was interesting to go inside as a service provider rather than in handcuffs.

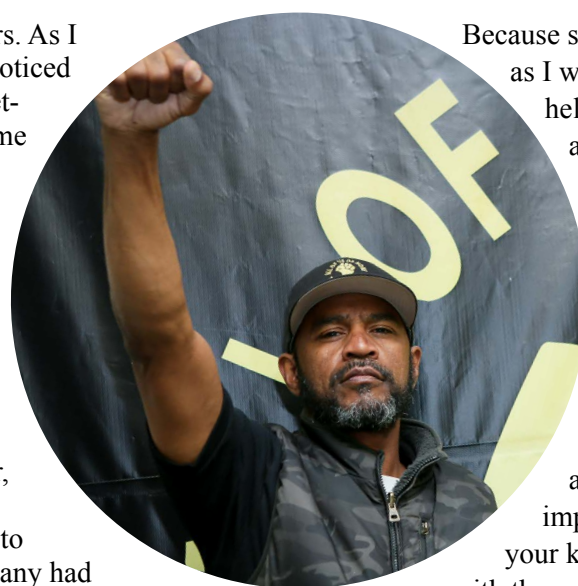
I hadn't been inside a county jail in decades, and the jail in San Bruno is a new facility, so I didn't know what to expect. They didn't make it hard for us to get in. The sheriffs there, at least the ones that greeted and supervised us visitors, seemed rather cordial. The Chief Sheriff also seemed nice.

San Bruno is an all-men's jail, so all the participants were men. We were in a large room and every CBO had its own table. I was with our outreach coordinator, John Cannon, and our table was near the exit. The guards let groups of men inside 12 at a time and only allowed them 20 minutes in the room.

One of the things that stood out to me was how the faces changed between groups. The first several

groups were short timers. As I spoke with the men, I noticed that all of them were getting released soon—some as early as the next day but none longer than a month from that day. I also noticed that out of dozens of men getting released soon that only one of them was Black. After a couple of hours and several groups later, groups of mostly Black and Latino men started to appear. I learned that many had been in for long periods of time—one said he has been in the San Bruno jail for seven years! Others were fighting lengthy sentences for either having priors or having enhancements added to their primary cases.

I noticed also that there were a lot of young men filing into the room. Many of them looked younger than 25 years old, and were facing time that would keep them locked up until they were 40, 50, even 60 years old. I was 18 when I was locked up for life and seeing these younger men reminded me of just how young I was back then. Although I didn't see myself as a child when I was that age, today, at 54 years old, I better understand just how young these men are—and how much they really don't know, just as I didn't know.



Because some men, who were locked up as I was, put the time and energy into helping me learn, I grew and became a more responsible person. And now I know that it is my honor, duty, and privilege to help guide, direct, and pass on what I know to others, especially younger generations. So, this is a Shout Out to those who helped me, and a Call Out to those of age to organize and educate those around you who are still young and impressionable. Share a book, offer your knowledge, become a mentor, go with them to school or to a program that you

know would benefit them—whatever it takes to get them to participate. Be a friend, a brother, a somebody to somebody. You may not see the change right away, but every lesson learned or knowledge gained may help them one day when they most need it.

*Note: If you are from an Unincorporated Area in Alameda County, please write your County Board Supervisor asking them to support Fair Chance Housing (FCH). Ask your family and friends to reach out too. FCH will make people with felonies eligible for Section 8 housing, as well as remove from apartment applications the question, "Have you ever been convicted?"*

## Journey to Freedom (Continued from page 1)

development. What started as Daniel trying to please the parole board, grew into a process of self discovery and attempt to heal his childhood trauma. To learn new skills and how to make positive behavior changes, he took classes that helped him identify the types of coping strategies he had used in the past, why they didn't work, and, most importantly, how to replace them with new ones that were beneficial to his growth.

"Through my years in prison, I have achieved a deeper understanding of my crime and myself," Daniel says. "Even though I've made so many mistakes in my life, with the time I've spent incarcerated, I've been able to focus on my behavior and learn more about myself by taking the self-help groups that were available and even talking with the clinician. They have helped me to understand my character defects, and my actions, and how to correct my unhealthy way of thinking to become a better decision maker, which will allow me to have a successful reentry into society."

In his social biography packet, Daniel created a detailed "Healthy Relationship Maintenance Plan." He explores his history of numbing himself through marijuana and alcohol, which only exacerbated already unhealthy relationships. He went on to make lists titled "Red flags in a Toxic Relationship," and "Warning Signs, Exit Strategies, Relapse Prevention, and Support System." He closes this section with a paragraph that asks the question: "What is a healthy relationship?" To summarize his answer, a healthy relationship consists of mutual respect and boundaries.

While Daniel was doing all this work inside, his cousin Abel was busy on the outside researching bills that could help with reducing Daniel's sentence. In March 2022, Daniel came across Oscar Flores' name in the *AOUON Newspaper*. Oscar represents AOUON on the Oakland Participatory Defense Hub. Daniel suggested that Abel call

him. Abel did and started attending weekly family support meetings with Oscar, where they discussed strategies to petition for his release. One of the steps was for Daniel to complete a social biography packet. Every step was instrumental to the process and done with intention and detail.

Daniel and Abel talked on the phone every Saturday, and Abel would relay the information that was shared in the meetings he had with Oscar. Meanwhile, Abel printed and mailed the social biography packet template to his cousin. Daniel had already been doing the work to better himself for 10 years; so completing the packet was a matter of gathering all that information and organizing it in a way that would communicate to the court the changes he'd made within.

"Initially, Oscar gave me a template of the things that he should do for the social biography packet," Abel says. "A lot of those things Daniel had already done, just from the different programs he was in. For example, writing to the victim and accountability letters and things like that. Daniel and I had really good communication and on the weekends he always called me and I would tell him what Oscar wants and if I needed to mail anything to him I would mail it."

Abel describes Daniel as a motivated and genuinely good person. While in the past, his trauma caused him to react in negative ways, Daniel never liked to cause chaos and didn't want to be a troublemaker. "Daniel isn't a lazy person, and if he sets his mind to something he sticks to it," Abel says. "Just from observing him while he was inside, he was always working, and he knew that eventually that it would help him heal as a person because he did have a lot of trauma growing up."

When asked what made him put in the effort to help his cousin, Abel replies, "For me, it never felt like I was giving up too much of my time. It's just

something that I knew that he would do for me. I just wanted to do anything I could so that he could come home."

Although the resentencing process is structured through weekly meetings and templates, there are outside factors that can make it difficult. "You have to be diligent," Daniel says. "You have to be patient. This process can be lengthy, and there can be a lot of obstacles for the family members or for you when having to deal with correctional officers or counselors finding out that your C-File is being requested, because they may retaliate and use forms of deterrence. I actually suffered a retaliation once my C-File was requested and my cell was searched twice within two weeks and I have never been on the radar. They try to find any type of dirt on you or put you in a position to get a write up because the California Department of Corrections, in no type of way wants you to go home. They want you to serve out the rest of your life in prison because you are the biggest commodity they have. Patience, diligence and just keep on hustling and keep on grinding and getting them classes in. Getting those support letters in and networking. Really talk to individuals about the programs that are out on the street. How volunteers who come into the prison can help after incarceration or how they can help with the process of trying to get somebody resentenced. There are a lot of people out there fighting for us, so being vocal and willing to communicate with individuals that can lend a helping hand is one of the most vital things."

When asked how he feels about the work that his cousin Abel put in on his behalf, Daniel pauses, laughs uncomfortably, then says, "Abel knows how I feel about him. I mean he showed me that I am valued. I love him, you know."

Love and hard work can make the impossible possible. Welcome home Daniel!

# Oakland Participatory Defense Hub

by Oscar Flores All of Us or None National Organizer



I represent AOUON at the Oakland Participatory Defense Hub along with coalition members CURYJ, Young Women's Freedom Center, and Urban Peace Movement. Each coalition member has devoted a percentage of staff time to coordinate the coalition and its activities.

The Resentencing Project started in November 2021 with Silicon Valley Debug hosting a gathering of about 10 different hubs to facilitate an orientation and training.

### The training covered these topics:

- Resentencing Laws, including SB2942, which is the "Prosecution Initiated Resentencing." Their self identified title is a bit problematic, because they do not do much of their own, mostly CDCR referrals and what private attorney and organizations like ours do.
- Retrieving and Review of C-Files
- Documents composed by incarcerated person

to address issues of concerns, and prospects for their future release.

- Social Biography Resentencing Packet

After the training, I had the information to develop a process to work with families seeking resentencing. The process includes intake, C-File retrieval and review, strategy planning, making formal requests to DA at monthly Co-Governance meeting and scheduled zoom meetings with families. This is an intensive process but necessary. To get an idea, one completed Social Biography Resentencing Packet was 300 pages and this person was released February 22, 2023. I am currently working with 22 families seeking resentencing.

### What to expect:

#### Timeframe:

- Family representative attends weekly community meetings
- During the week spend approximately 10 hours working on resentencing
- Periodically go in person to court for hearing 3-4 hrs each court date
- Oakland Participatory Defense Strategy Sessions (once a month)

#### Cases:

- Resentencing Post Conviction
- Pending Criminal Cases (not very many)
- Expungement
- Immigration Deportation Proceedings

#### Activities (all in conjunction with family members, not doing it for them):

- Orientation to Participatory Defense and Oakland Hub
- Review of Abstract of Judgment with a set strategy on how to move forward to get incarcerated person back to court
- C-File Review to get information on:

- Good: Jobs, Education, Program, Chronos, Certificates, Classification Scores, California Static Risk Assessment Score
- Concerns: Probation Report, Security Threat Group Validations, Form 810 Confidentials, Rule Violation Reports, Counseling Chronos, & Certificates
- Create a Social Biography Resentencing Packet that includes information of Past, Present, & Future
  - Past: Mitigating information, Past Criminal Convictions, Controlling Offense
  - Present: Date of admission to prison until present date
  - Future: Prospects of Housing, Employment/Social Security and other state/federal benefits, & Education and/or Further Rehabilitation
  - Pictures (to further humanize the incarcerated person to decision makers): Child, family, community participation, teenager, adult (including family visits in prison)
- Prepare families to make the request to District Attorney
- Community Meetings: Facilitate, Notetaker, Roster tracking, offering feedback to family's work plan.

#### You can contact Oscar Flores at:

Work (415) 625-7048  
Cell (510) 703-0020  
oscar@prisonerswithchildren.org  
4400 Market Street  
Oakland CA, 94608

# Participatory Defense Is Happening Throughout The Country!

Republished from [www.participatorydefense.org/hubs](http://www.participatorydefense.org/hubs)

**P**articipatory Defense is a community organizing model for people facing charges, their families, and communities to impact the outcomes of cases and transform the landscape of power in the court system.

The connection of marching in the streets to oppose police violence, and standing with the community in the courtroom to challenge mass incarceration go hand in hand. Connecting the movement from advocacy in the streets to packing courtrooms led us to creating an approach called participatory defense -- an organizing model we've developed at Silicon Valley De-Bug's Albert Cobarrubias Justice Project. Led by the very families whose loved ones are facing charges in the system, participatory defense is a community organizing model for people facing charges, their families, and communities to impact the outcome of cases and transform the landscape of power in the court system. It is a model that has been developed in the last eleven years in San Jose, CA. Since then, we've shared the model and participatory defense is being implemented in various cities across the country.

## PARTICIPATORY DEFENSE HUBS

### ATLANTA, GA

Metro Atlanta Participatory Defense Hub  
Contact Email: [tianate@yahoo.com](mailto:tianate@yahoo.com)

### AUSTIN, TX

Central Texas Participatory Defense Hub  
Collaboration between Grassroots Leadership, ICE Out of Austin, Texas Advocates for Justice, and Mujeres Luchadoras  
Contact Email: [criminaljustice@grassrootsleadership.org](mailto:criminaljustice@grassrootsleadership.org),  
[immigration@grassrootsleadership.org](mailto:immigration@grassrootsleadership.org)  
Contact Phone: (512) 499-8111

### BIRMINGHAM, AL

Birmingham Empowerment and Advocacy Hub (Alabama Justice Initiative)  
Contact Email: [latonyatate413@gmail.com](mailto:latonyatate413@gmail.com)

### BOSTON, MA

Families for Justice as Healing  
Contact Email: [mhanora@justiceashealing.org](mailto:mhanora@justiceashealing.org),  
[cel4justice@gmail.com](mailto:cel4justice@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (617)992-7185

### BRIDGEPORT, CT

Women Against Mass Incarceration  
Contact Email: [Twbain@wamict.org](mailto:Twbain@wamict.org)  
Contact Phone: (917) 600-2747

### CAMP SPRINGS, MD

Community Defense of Prince George's County (Life After Release)  
Contact Phone: (240) 200-4472  
Contact Email: [communitydefensepg@gmail.com](mailto:communitydefensepg@gmail.com)  
Contact Website: [lifeafterrelease.org](http://lifeafterrelease.org)

### DURHAM, NC

Bull City Participatory Defense  
Contact Email: [Participatorydefense@gmail.com](mailto:Participatorydefense@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (919) 344-9757

### EAST PALO ALTO, CA

San Mateo County Participatory Defense  
Email: [epapartdefense@siliconvalleydebug.org](mailto:epapartdefense@siliconvalleydebug.org)  
Contact Phone: (650) 339-9200

### GAINESVILLE, FL

LEAH – Legal Empowerment and Advocacy Hub  
Email: [participatorydefenseville@gmail.com](mailto:participatorydefenseville@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (352) 559-4719  
Contact Website: [www.leahforjustice.com](http://www.leahforjustice.com)

### GILROY, CA

Community Agency for Resources Advocacy & Services (CARAS)  
Contact Email: [sarmendariz@carassouthcounty.org](mailto:sarmendariz@carassouthcounty.org),  
[rarmendariz@carassouthcounty.org](mailto:rarmendariz@carassouthcounty.org)  
Contact Phone: (408) 847-4978

### KNOXVILLE, TN

Community Defense of East Tennessee  
Contact Email: [communitydefenseet@gmail.com](mailto:communitydefenseet@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (865) 297-3203

### LAS VEGAS, NV

Las Vegas Participatory Defense Hub (Mass Liberation Nevada)  
Contact Email: [leslie@massliberationnv.com](mailto:leslie@massliberationnv.com),  
[jagada@massliberationnv.com](mailto:jagada@massliberationnv.com)  
Contact Phone: (323) 926-6998

### LOS ANGELES, CA

Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition, Young Women's Freedom Center and Youth Justice Coalition  
Emails: [christine@youngwomenfree.org](mailto:christine@youngwomenfree.org),  
[marilyn@youngwomenfree.org](mailto:marilyn@youngwomenfree.org),  
[emily@youngwomenfree.org](mailto:emily@youngwomenfree.org),  
[phal.sok@youth4justice.org](mailto:phal.sok@youth4justice.org)

### NASHVILLE, TN

Participatory Defense Nashville (Free Hearts)  
Email: [nashvillepartdef@siliconvalleydebug.org](mailto:nashvillepartdef@siliconvalleydebug.org)

### NEW HAVEN, CT

Family Justice Hub  
Contact Email: [jewu@ctbailfund.org](mailto:jewu@ctbailfund.org)  
Contact Phone: (203) 290-1603  
Contact Website: [www.ctbailfund.org](http://www.ctbailfund.org)

### NEW ORLEANS, LA

Participatory Defense Movement NOLA (PDMNola)  
Contact Email: [pdmnola@gmail.com](mailto:pdmnola@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (225)278-0644  
Website: [richfamilyministries.org/pdmnola](http://richfamilyministries.org/pdmnola)

### NORRISTOWN, PA AND POTTSTOWN, PA

MontCo Participatory Defense  
Contact Email: [montcopartdef@gmail.com](mailto:montcopartdef@gmail.com),  
[Heather@reunitingfamilybailfund.org](mailto:Heather@reunitingfamilybailfund.org)  
Contact Phone: (610) 349-2297, (484) 222-0437

### OAKLAND, CA

Oakland Participatory Defense Hub  
Collaboration between All of Us or None, CURYJ, Urban Peace Movement, Young Women's Freedom Center  
Contact Email: [alamedapdhub@googlegroups.com](mailto:alamedapdhub@googlegroups.com)  
Contact Phone: (510) 768-8434

### PHILADELPHIA, PA

Best Outcomes (Mothers In Charge)  
Contact Email: [sheedy\\_mac1958@gmail.com](mailto:sheedy_mac1958@gmail.com),  
[val1tim3@gmail.com](mailto:val1tim3@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (215) 228-1718, (267)357-6241  
Website: [www.facebook.com/westphillydefensehub](http://www.facebook.com/westphillydefensehub)

### Germantown Participatory Defense Hub

Contact Email: [gtwnpdhub@gmail.com](mailto:gtwnpdhub@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (267) 277-3117  
[www.philadefender.org/participatorydefense](http://www.philadefender.org/participatorydefense)

### Haddington Hub

Contact Email: [pleasant4322@gmail.com](mailto:pleasant4322@gmail.com),  
[ardellashouse@gmail.com](mailto:ardellashouse@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (610) 931-3925

### Philly Youth Hub (YASP)

Contact Email: [info@yaspproject.com](mailto:info@yaspproject.com)  
Contact Phone: (267)571-9277

### North Philly Hub

Contact Email: [gvnorton@zionbaptphilly.org](mailto:gvnorton@zionbaptphilly.org)  
Contact Phone: (215)490-5884

### South Philly Participatory Hub

Contact Email: [circlemobilizing@gmail.com](mailto:circlemobilizing@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (484) 440-9560  
Website: [www.facebook.com/southphillydefensehub](http://www.facebook.com/southphillydefensehub)

### West Philly Participatory Defense Hub

Contact Email: [westphillydefensehub@gmail.com](mailto:westphillydefensehub@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (267) 766-0097  
[www.facebook.com/westphillydefensehub](http://www.facebook.com/westphillydefensehub)

### PHOENIX, AZ

Metro-Phoenix Participatory Defense Hub  
Contact Email: [thetadinihouse@gmail.com](mailto:thetadinihouse@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (480) 590-0919  
Contact Website: [thetadinihouse.org](http://thetadinihouse.org)

### RICHMOND, CA

Reuniting Families Contra Costa  
Contact Email: [reunitingfamiliescc@gmail.com](mailto:reunitingfamiliescc@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (510) 703-0020

### RIVERSIDE, CA

Participatory Defense of Inland Empire  
Contact Email: [toya@startingoverinc.org](mailto:toya@startingoverinc.org)  
Contact Phone: (951) 230-6856

### SAN DIEGO, CA

Free San Diego  
Collaboration between Pillars of the Community San Diego, ACLU, and Think Dignity  
Contact Email: [Laila@potcsd.org](mailto:Laila@potcsd.org)  
Contact Phone: (619) 255-9950

### SAN FRANCISCO, CA

San Francisco Participatory Defense Hub (Young Women's Freedom Center)  
Contact Email: [emily@youngwomenfree.org](mailto:emily@youngwomenfree.org) or  
[marilyn@youngwomenfree.org](mailto:marilyn@youngwomenfree.org)  
Contact Phone: (510) 980-1447  
Contact Website: [www.youngwomenfree.org](http://www.youngwomenfree.org)

### SAN JOSE, CA

Silicon Valley De-Bug - Albert Cobarrubias Justice Project  
Contact Email: [alicia@siliconvalleydebug.org](mailto:alicia@siliconvalleydebug.org)  
Contact Phone: (408) 971-4965  
Website: [www.siliconvalleydebug.org](http://www.siliconvalleydebug.org)

### SANTA ANA, CA

Rapid Response Network of Orange County  
Contact Email: [info@resilienceoc.org](mailto:info@resilienceoc.org)  
Contact Phone: (657) 210-0157  
Contact Website: [resilienceoc.org](http://resilienceoc.org)

### ST. PAUL, MN

We Resolve  
Contact Email: [weresolve@minnesota@gmail.com](mailto:weresolve@minnesota@gmail.com)  
Contact Phone: (651) 505-3288  
Website: [www.weresolve-mn.com](http://www.weresolve-mn.com)

### TACOMA, WA

Pierce County Participatory Defense  
Contact Email: [piercecountypd@gmail.com](mailto:piercecountypd@gmail.com)

### UNION CITY, CA

A. L. Costa Community Development Center  
Contact Email: [info@alcostacdc.org](mailto:info@alcostacdc.org)

### WASHINGTON STATE

Participatory Justice-Washington State (located in Snohomish, County but works in various areas)  
Contact Email: [info@participatoryjustice.org](mailto:info@participatoryjustice.org)  
Contact Phone: (206) 492-9213

## Call For Art

*AOUON wants to feature your original drawings, paintings, or comics!*

**Submit your artwork**  
AOUON News Editor  
4400 Market Street  
Oakland, CA 94608



# Mindfulness-Based Writing Activities

*Republished with permission from the book  
Mindfulness-Based Art Therapy Activities  
by Jennie Powe, MFT, REAT*

**M**indful writing can help you develop self-awareness and self-compassion by expressing your thoughts and feelings in a way that creates compassionate distance, allowing you to be a non-judgmental witness to yourself and your experience. Writing also fosters insight, helping you see yourself in a new way and consider new perspectives on your own familiar story. As you engage in these writing exercises, I encourage you to practice developing a kind, compassionate voice. This new way of communicating—even with yourself—will have a profound effect on your overall well-being.



## Offering Forgiveness

When you think about the idea of forgiveness, what comes to mind? While we often think about forgiveness in the context of forgiving others, it's important to consider yourself as deserving of the kindness and compassion that comes with forgiveness.

### Steps:

- 1) Begin seated or in a position that makes you feel alert but relaxed.
- 2) Imagine that you're asking yourself for forgiveness. What images come up?
- 3) Take a moment to sit with and breathe through whatever comes to your imagination. You can imagine turning towards those experiences and yourself with kindness, compassion, and understanding.
- 4) Now, imagine offering genuine forgiveness to your younger self that was confused or unable to act in your own best interest.
- 5) Write a letter of forgiveness to yourself, connecting with any feelings of warmth, kindness, and love.

### Mindful Reflection:

- Was there any part of you that felt that you weren't able or ready to forgive yourself? You can write a forgiveness letter to the part of you that's not ready to forgive.
- What do you need to let go of in order to offer and receive forgiveness?

## Narrating the Breath

Mindfulness can increase "interoceptive awareness," which means feeling and understanding sensations inside your body. Developing this sense increases your ability to give your body what it needs. The intention of this exercise is to give you an experience of mindfully tuning in and developing the vocabulary to describe your inner experience.

### Steps:

- 1) Begin seated, with your eyes closed.
- 2) Focus your attention on any noise you hear, including the sound of your own breathing.
- 3) Follow your breath as you inhale and exhale.
- 4) Pick up your pen and begin to narrate the path of your breath as it enters your body until you exhale. Imagine that you're describing breathing to someone who's never experienced it. Include the way your breath feels, other sensations within the body, and any feelings, ideas and images that connect to the experience of tracking your breath.
- 5) Finish writing and come back to the breath for a final minute.

### Mindful Reflection:

- How does narrating the breath change your experience with it?
- Consider the impact of tracking your thoughts, feelings, and sensations. How can you become a compassionate witness to your inner experience?

## Describe Yourself as a Friend

Describing someone else can be easier than describing yourself with the benefit of distance and perspective. Putting yourself in the position of a kind and warm-hearted witness can give you a chance to see yourself in a new light.

### Steps:

- 1) Bring to mind someone in your life who sees the best in you. Imagine the warmth and kindness of this person, as if they were in the room with you.
- 2) Now imagine that this person is describing you to a friend of theirs.
- 3) Begin to write out what they would say to describe you, knowing that they see and recognize your best qualities.
- 4) Include any stories or observations they might have about you.
- 5) When you're finished writing, take a moment to sit with your eyes closed, noticing how it felt to write from the perspective of a kind and loving witness.

### Mindful Reflection:

- What was it like to write from the position of both observer and observed?
- Developing the ability to compassionately witness yourself takes time. How can you embody this kind witnessing of others in your life and accept their reflection of you?

# Mailbag

## A Letter of Perfect Love for My Young Incarcerated Comrades

by LaDeric McDonald  
Missouri Department of Corrections. Courtesy of SF BayView Newspaper

Dear young incarcerated person,

Keep your head up. Stand tall and stay strong. Prison life is harsh. You will need your strength to overcome the many challenges that you will face, especially once you leave the county jail for a prison cell. You will run into all kinds of obstacles that will try to steer you down the path of more suffering. You will meet counterfeit people, who use lies as weapons of manipulation. They will try to destroy you, to tempt you into doing things you may not otherwise. No matter what, stay solid, be disciplined, remember who and what you are—for you are somebody. Your habits and choices while you are away from home will reveal the shape of your character. Follow your morals. Never join a group or click to fit in, even if it gives the illusion of safety. Even when you feel alone, you are never

alone. You always have yourself, and you are your own best friend. Detach from others but stay fully attached to yourself. In the end, you are the only one who knows what you've been through and will always be there for you. Trust and continue to believe in yourself. Having faith will allow you to shine bright, like a diamond. My young imprisoned person, remember faith is not believing in nonsense. Faith is not learning to accept unacceptable things. Faith is not dumb. It is smart, focused thinking. It's earned and learned. It's being hungry for education and understanding. Faith counters ignorance. It is not naive, contrary to the counterfeiters who will try to supply you with misinformation and keep you in the dark. It will give you the strength to overcome all the obstacles you will face. Faith is perfect love, my dear young incarcerated person—and no one can take that away.



## Unbroken

Anthony lee Allen Jr.  
CA State Prison, Corcoran

*Isolation attempts to antagonize my soul  
Have my heart inside colder than before*

*A frozen pool of darkness  
In search of light inside a tunnel  
Life leaking slowly through a funnel*

*Isolation special*

*Am I just a shadow seen, but untouched?  
But my faith in God keeps my spirits up  
When I am in a rut  
But sometimes I just don't give a f—*

*Unbroken codes, words unspoken  
The proof is in the pain we manifest  
Unbroken souls harder than the torments of war  
Battle scars from before  
I thank the Lord I'm still here  
It takes a toll on you but never fear*

*Steps far behind  
but knowledge keeps one in front  
In front of  
Unbroken*

## I'm not a freedom fighter—but isn't freedom worth fighting for?

by Quentin Laforest Jones  
Jefferson City Correctional Center, MO. Courtesy of SF BayView Newspaper

I'm typing out this article on a computer. I'm also enrolled in college. Oh, and by the way, I'm in prison—and I have been for 24 years. I'm not saying I'm special. That's not it at all. However, I do recognize that I'm doing something special and something special is happening within me.

People in my position don't often talk about themselves this way. Maybe that's because they're not particularly pleased with how life has turned out. Maybe it's because we endure an almost constant barrage of insults meant to keep us from achieving any accomplishment that substantiates our lives. I'm often unsure what Allah/God wants for my life, which can be a torturous uncertainty. This is a real problem, even with people out in society. Thanks to Covid, this lack of meaning has separated the masses from each other more than ever.

In the prison that I write to you from, the suicide rate has nearly tripled over the past few years. This is partly because many of our friends, mentors and loved ones have gotten sick, died or just left us behind. Such emptiness can make a person believe that life isn't precious or worth preserving. Maybe I'm not the most appropriate person to talk about this. My crime involves murders, and my co-defendant also died from the death penalty. All of this death resulted from my thinking and actions around the time that I committed the crime. My life since has consisted of a multitude of choices and steps to try to distance myself from that place I was in back then. I'm realizing, though, I can't do it on my own because I alone can't change culture.

For me, a Freedom Fighter is someone who is on the front lines of a revolutionary idea or purpose. But what if we redefine the term to include freeing ourselves from the negative associations that we take on from internalizing messages that we don't matter from those in authority? This lack of self worth and purpose has produced some of the most hardened criminals within the justice system. How do we change that? Well, I know I can't do it by

myself, and I know we can't do it alone from the inside of prison.

In this fight for freedom, I'm seeking the help of all of those in society who believe that we matter, we can do better, and we can make a difference. My experiences in life have taught me that when we know better, we can do better. Me being in college is showing the world that I matter in this life, and that is one way I'm fighting for change. With my example, I implore others to continue to move forward blazing a path that is positively charged, free from socialism, capitalism, communism or any other "isms" that might be out there. My plight is not politically motivated, nor is it motivated by racial pride or American exceptionalism. It is rooted in the hope that help is really out there and that through connection we can continue the fight for freedom and a better way of life.

I thank you for your time, and I hope that my words show that people in prison are also trying to live meaningful, responsible lives.

*Quentin Laforest Jones is a student of Hannibal-LaGrange University, Freedom On the Inside Program*

*Hannibal-LaGrange University is proud to sponsor Freedom on the Inside, a Christian studies bachelor's degree program in partnership with the Missouri Department of Corrections (MODOC).*

*HLGU offers a course of study for inmates within the Missouri prison system. Each year, 20 students from prisons around Missouri are selected for this program. The MODOC agrees to transfer students to the Jefferson City Correctional Center (JCCC) in Jefferson City, Missouri, where they will remain until graduation.*

*The MODOC provides space for classrooms, a library, and offices, as well as works to facilitate students' schedules in order for them to be in class and have time to study each day. The enrolled students do not pay the cost of tuition, textbooks, or computers. Freedom on the Inside covers the full costs through donations and grants.*

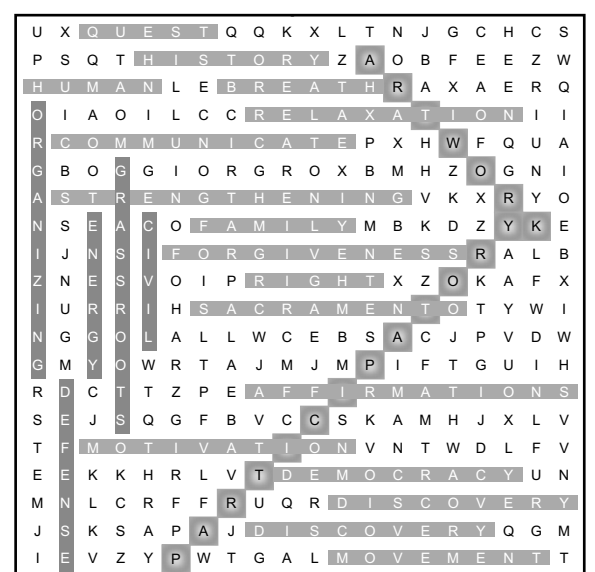
<https://www.hlg.edu/academics/academic-departments/christian-studies/freedom-on-the-inside>



**MAIL YOUR SUBMISSIONS TO:**

**Freedom & Movement Center  
AOUON Newspaper Editor  
4400 MARKET STREET  
OAKLAND, CA 94608**

*Inside News Articles. Opinion Pieces. Reviews. Features:  
Creative or exploratory. News Analysis. Poetry. Art. Comics  
We can't wait to hear from you!*



# ALL OF US OR NONE

Slave, who is it that shall free you?  
 Those in deepest darkness lying.  
 Comrade, only these can see you  
 Only they can hear you crying.  
 Comrade, only slaves can free you.  
 Everything or nothing. All of us or none.  
 One alone our lot can't better.  
 Either gun or fetter.  
 Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

You who hunger, who shall feed you?  
 If it's bread you would be carving,  
 Come to us, we too are starving.  
 Come to us and let us lead you.  
 Only hungry ones can feed you.  
 Everything or nothing. All of us or none.  
 One alone her lot can't better.  
 Either gun or fetter.  
 Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Beaten one, who shall avenge you?  
 You, on whom the blows are falling,  
 Hear your wounded comrades calling.  
 Weakness gives us strength to lend you.  
 Come to us, we shall avenge you.  
 Everything or nothing. All of us or none.  
 One alone his lot can't better.  
 Either gun or fetter.  
 Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Who, oh wretched one, shall dare it?  
 We who can no longer bear it.  
 Counts the blows that arm our spirit.  
 Taught the time by need and sorrow,  
 Strikes today and not tomorrow.  
 Everything or nothing. All of us or none.  
 One alone our lot can't better.  
 Either gun or fetter.  
 Everything or nothing. All of us or none.

Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956)

**AOUON is a grassroots organizing project of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC) fighting to restore the civil and human rights of formerly and currently incarcerated people and our families. Started in California in 2003, AOUON currently has chapters all over the country advocating effectively to Ban the Box, restore voting rights, increase access to housing and education, and end mass incarceration. We demand a voice in building healthy communities.**

**LSPC organizes communities impacted by the criminal justice system and advocates to release incarcerated people, to restore human and civil rights, and to reunify families and communities. We build public awareness of structural racism in policing, the courts, and prison system, and we advance racial and gender justice in all our work. Our strategies include legal support, trainings, advocacy, public education, grassroots mobilization, and developing community partnerships.**



# Chapter Contacts

## National AOUON Headquarters

c/o Legal Services for Prisoners with Children  
 4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608  
 Phone: (415) 255-7036 x337 | Fax: (415) 552-3150  
 AOUON National Organizer: Oscar Flores  
 oscar@prisonerswithchildren.org

## Oakland, California

4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608  
 Regional Chapter Coordinator  
 Paul Briley: (415) 361-4637  
 paulb@prisonerswithchildren.org  
 Outreach Organizer: John Cannon  
 (415) 625-7045 john@prisonerswithchildren.org

## Bakersfield, California

Ucedrah Osby: AOUONBakersfield@gmail.com

## Los Angeles/Long Beach, California

c/o A New Way of Life Reentry  
 PO Box 875288, Los Angeles, CA, 90087  
 Phone: (323) 563-3575  
 Fax: (323) 563-3445  
 Stephanie Jeffcoat (657) 262-0670  
 sjeffcoat@anewwayoflife.org

## Orange County, California

Stephanie Jeffcoat:  
 stephaniejeffcoatocaouon@gmail.com  
 Danielle Dancer: ddancertnap@gmail.com

## Riverside, California

1390 W. 6th St.  
 Corona, CA 92882  
 Shaun Leflore: shaun@startingover.inc  
 Fidel Chagolla: fidel@startingover.inc

## Sacramento, California

PO Box 292967, Sacramento, CA 95829  
 Henry Ortiz: henry@prisonerswithchildren.org

## San Bernardino, California

c/o A Time for Change Foundation  
 PO Box 25040, San Bernardino, CA 92406  
 Phone: (909) 886-2994  
 Fax: (909) 886-0218  
 Kim Carter: kcarter@timeforchangefoundation.org

## San Diego, California

Curtis Howard: allofusornonesandiego@gmail.com

## Las Vegas, Nevada

MariaAgnes Jones  
 mariaagnesjones87@gmail.com

## Idaho

Mary Failing: maryfailing@my.cwi.edu

## Central Illinois

P.O. Box 3026, Peoria, IL 61612-3026  
 Phone: (309) 232-8583  
 General Parker: centralillinoisouon@gmail.com

## Chicago, Illinois

Richard Wallace: Chicago.IL.AOUON@gmail.com

## Louisville, Kentucky

Savvy Shabazz: AOUONLouisville@gmail.com

## Hopkinsville, Kentucky

Cinnamon Watts  
 cinnamonwatts40@gmail.com

## St. Louis, Missouri

Patty Berger: AOUON.StL@gmail.com

## Durham, North Carolina

Andrea "Muffin" Hudson:  
 AOUONNC@gmail.com

## Eastern North Carolina

Corey Purdie: AOUONENC@gmail.com

## Charlotte, North Carolina

Kristie Puckett Williams:  
 AllOfUsOrNoneNC@gmail.com

## Greater Cincinnati, Ohio

Zaria Davis: CincyAOUON@gmail.com

## San Antonio, Texas

Steve Huerta: AllOfUsOrNoneTexas@gmail.com

## New York

Ivelisse Gilestra: AOUON.NewYork@gmail.com

## Northern New Jersey

P.O. Box 9812, Newark, NJ 07104  
 Tia Ryans: AOUON.NJ@gmail.com

## South Jersey

Ronald Pierce (732) 608-4752  
 rpierce@njisj.org

## Eastern Washington

Megan Pirie: EasternWAAOUON@gmail.com

## Madison, Wisconsin

Caliph Muab-el: WIAOUON@gmail.com

## Georgia, Atlanta

Waleisah Wilson  
 (404) 860-2837

## Greenville, South Carolina

Angela Hurks  
 (864) 991-1388 (m) (854) 236-1393 (f)  
 stepbystephopeproject@charter.net  
 www.stepbystephopeproject@charter.net

## All of Us or None Membership Form | Yes, I want to become a member of ALL OF US OR NONE!

Name & Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Country of Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have children? YES / NO. Do you need support with family issues? YES / NO

Earliest Parole/Release Date: \_\_\_\_\_ County of Parole/Probation: \_\_\_\_\_

- I can organize & facilitate group meeting
- I can help with membership outreach
- I can distribute materials & resources
- I can address & pass along feedback

Mail this form & any questions to:  
 AOUON  
 4400 Market Street  
 Oakland, CA 94608

