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Photo courtesy of CALPIAI

Mireya Flores showing off a tasty dish

Women complete culinary program

By William Earl Tolbert
Journalism Guild Writer

Eleven inmates graduated from the first Culinary Arts Management program at Folsom Women's Facility.

Vincent Moralez, supervisor of the program, and Jason Doolittle,

adjunct professor and executive chef, started the program in 2017 and taught their students everything from serving to cooking, as well as restaurant management, reported *The Folsom Telegraph*.

See *Culinary* page 6

United States leads world in locking up women



File Photo

A woman sitting in one of the United States' many jail cells around the country

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild Chairman

Individual states of the U.S., along with the federal government, lead the world in putting women behind bars, according to a 2017 report by the Prison Policy Initiative (PPI).

Women in the U.S. represent only 5 percent of the world's female population, but account for

nearly 30 percent of the world's imprisoned women, cites the report, titled *The States of Women's Incarceration: The Global Context*, by Aleks Kajstura and Russ Immari-geon of the Prison Policy Initiative.

"Across the globe, the 25 jurisdictions with the highest rates of incarcerating women are all Amer-

ican states," said the researchers.

Approximately 206,000 women are currently confined in U.S. prisons and jails. The United States jails women at twice the percentage rate of China and four times that of Russia.

See *United States* on page 4



A prison chapel served as a theater to dance, sing, rap and use spoken-word for an inmate performance, called *Site Unseen*. The audience of free people and men-in-blue walked across a makeshift stage and sat side by side to enjoy San Quentin's Artistic Ensemble.

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When the *San Quentin News* was revived nearly 10 years ago, a staff of five put together a four-page issue and distributed it to 5,000 inmates inside the prison

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Code.7370 host Lance Armstrong



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Lance Armstrong and Chris Redlitz walking across San Quentin's Lower Yard

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

In a small classroom with popular catch phrases like *Think Different* and *Believe in the Process* on its walls, about two dozen San Quentin prisoners waited for a surprise guest—the world-renowned, once

top cyclist, Lance Armstrong.

"I've never been in jail. But I know what it's like to run afoul of the system," Armstrong said, on Jan. 11, to inmates enrolled in a highly touted computer coding program.

See *Code.7370* on page 8



Photo by Adnan Khan

Kevin Neang (center) with his mom and sister

R.O.O.T.S graduates learned inter-generational trauma

By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer

The audience cried and laughed with recent graduates of the Restoring Our Original True Selves (ROOTS) program as they told stories of healing generations of inter-generational trauma and jokes.

"For a lot of groups coming from refugee and war-torn situations that have strong disconnections with the generations before them, inter-generational trauma is definitely one of the keys to healing," ROOTS Facili-

tator Roger "The Professor" Chung said.

ROOTS is an Asian Pacific Islander culture awareness group that focuses on teaching intergenerational trauma, domestic violence, LGBT tolerance and transformative justice.

On Jan. 21, ROOTS held a graduation ceremony at San Quentin State Prison hosted by incarcerated facilitators Phoeun You and Anouthinh "Choy" Pangthong.

See *R.O.O.T.S* on page 15



Golden State Warriors
GM, Bob Myers

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San Quentin News

San Quentin News Reports on Rehabilitative Efforts to Increase Public Safety and Achieve Social Justice

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Please use the following criteria when submitting:

- Limit your articles to no more than 350 words.
- Know that articles will be edited for content and length.
- The newspaper is not a medium to file grievances.

(For that, use the prison appeals process.) We encourage submitting articles that are newsworthy and encompass issues that will have an impact on the prison populace.

- Please do not use offensive language in your submissions.
- Poems and artwork (cartoons and drawings) are welcomed.
- Letters to the editor should be short and to the point.

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Behind the Scenes
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Photo courtesy of Nane Alejandrez

A friend of Danny Trejo, Trejo himself and Daniel 'Nane' Alejandrez

Chan Zuckerberg Initiative's Valentine visit

By Juan Haines
 Senior Editor

About a year and half ago, Aly Tamboura returned home after serving almost 14 years behind bars. He came back to San Quentin on Valentine's Day with several of his co-workers at the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI) for a tour of the highly touted rehabilitative prison.

CZI advocates for social justice and criminal justice reform. They seek to provide affordable housing in the Bay Area. The organization has social media operations aimed at changing the criminal justice narrative, specifically how prisons operate.

Tamboura is a manager for technology and program delivery. He is currently working on a housing program.

CZI got a look at the prison's mental health services, the cellblocks and prison yard and had a conversation with inmates enrolled in college.

"Why do we have prisons?" Adnan Khan asked the CZI employees prior to the tour.

Their answers varied: "reform people," "punishment" and "rehabilitation." Khan told the group a tourist once said, "That's where we hide the bad people."

Khan gave a short lecture about the challenges of serving time in a maximum-



Photo by Lt. S. Robinson

Anthony Ammons talking to the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative group

security prison. He brought up some of the obstacles to rehabilitation in violent and disruptive prisons, such as lockdowns and violence. The traumatic experiences, he said, transformed him into only wanting to survive racism was rampant.

Once Khan transferred to San Quentin, its 70-plus rehabilitative programs surprised him. He said hearing collegiate-level conversations seemed foreign.

Jody Lewen, executive director of the Prison University Project (PUP), said giving incarcerated people a first-rate education helps the public in immeasurable

ways, from reducing recidivism to reuniting families. She said one of PUP's goals is to change how the public perceives incarcerated people.

Several PUP students chimed in on their experience of attending college while incarcerated.

"I dropped out of school around the sixth grade," said PUP clerk Corey McNeil. "While in prison, I got my GED but was stuck as far as going further in my education. I needed more hands-on teaching, and I got that at PUP." He added, "PUP didn't save me. It fostered the stuff that was naturally in me."

Other PUP students said

the program gave them the confidence to continue their education, once returned to the community, and taught them how to think independently.

However, even with programs at San Quentin, such as ones designed to address victim awareness and impulse control, Tamboura pointed to waiting lists of three to five years for enrollment as well as the prisoners' huge technology gap.

Khan brought up the extra challenge of having youth offenders intermixed with an older population—sometimes the interactions add tension to the prison's rehabilitative routine.

The purpose of keeping the youngsters at San Quentin is two-fold—prevent their exposure to the violent and oppressive nature of maximum-security prisons and give them an opportunity to partake in the rehabilitative services at San Quentin.

However, they must sign contracts, stating that they will remain discipline-free. If they break the contract, they transfer to a higher-level prison, which happens a lot.

With 90 percent of the incarcerated getting out of prison, Khan asked CZI, "So, how would you like them to get out? Going through one of these kinds of programs or not?"

Actor Danny Trejo escaped the death penalty

By Joe Garcia
 Journalism Guild Writer

After facing a possible death penalty, Danny Trejo wove his prison experience and tough-guy persona into a successful movie career.

The now well-known actor spoke of how striking a corrections officer in the head with a rock during a prison riot inevitably changed his life, as contained in a Dec. 16 article for *LADbible*.

"I was throwing it at a group of guys, and he happened to be hit," Trejo said. "So we all had gas chamber offenses, and we were taken to the hole."

"I remember saying, 'God, if you're there, everything will turn out the way it's supposed to. If you're not, I'm f---ed.'"

No one came forward to testify against him, Trejo explained. Being able to walk away from the hole without any charges was the wake-up call he drastically needed.

After 11 years in and out



Photo courtesy of Nane Alejandrez

Danny Trejo holding SQ News

of prison for various armed robberies and drug offenses, Trejo realized it was time to give up alcohol and narcotics once and for all upon his release.

"I discovered AA and Narcotics Anonymous," Trejo said. "My sponsor took me to a program called RIF – Recover, Independence and Freedom – working with teen drug addicts."

"Even now, kids come up

and say, 'Trejo, what's up? You helped me years ago.' So that's been a blessing."

Mentoring one of the kids, Trejo got called to the guy's workplace to help him avoid the temptation of freely flowing cocaine. That workplace turned out to be the film set for *Runaway Train*, starring Jon Voight and Eric Roberts.

"You have to understand that this was 1985, and on movie sets you could walk into production and cocaine lines were right there on the table," Trejo recalled. "It wasn't even hidden."

The film's screenwriter instantly recognized Trejo and all his tattoos from Trejo's days as a prison boxing champion.

"I was lightweight or welterweight champion of every penitentiary I've been in," Trejo once told TMZ. "And I've been in all of 'em."

"He'd seen me box in San Quentin," said Trejo, who was hired on the spot to train Roberts. Trejo ultimately

would appear in *Runaway Train* and soon film role of fers came pouring in.

"I learned how not to behave on a movie set from Eric Roberts," explained the affable Trejo. "He was very demanding."

Trejo has been a favorite of directors Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez for years; he was notably featured in *Desperado*, and starred as Machete alongside Jessica Alba.

The actor's endearingly gruff demeanor is currently on display in a series of television ads for SlingTV.

"I remember the first time anyone interviewed me," said the 73-year-old Trejo. "It was this young Chicana, just out of college, real into La Raza – 'Danny, don't you feel you're being stereotyped? You're always playing the mean Chicano dude with tattoos.'"

"So I lifted up my shirt and said, 'What are you talking about? I am the mean Chicano dude with tattoos.'"

Unibody turns excons into personal trainers

By Joe Garcia
Journalism Guild Writer

A successful fitness entrepreneur recently launched his own nonprofit organization to train and prepare ex-convicts for employment as personal trainers in the thriving fitness industry.

"I spent 10 years in federal prison and spent most of my time there in the gym," said Hector Guadalupe, founder of Unibody Fitness. "When I left, I had to decide what to do for my career. I became a certified personal trainer and immediately found employment in a New York City Sports Club."

The unemployment rate for formerly incarcerated people is eight times higher than the average person, according to an *AlleyWatch*



Unibody Fitness members

File Photo

article. Unibody is trying to improve those statistics one personal trainer at a time.

After five years of working in the fitness community, Guadalupe started New York-based Unibody, along with its nonprofit branch, A Second U.

"Through job creation and the cultivation of a community, Unibody Fitness helps to reduce recidivism and improve morale post incarceration," Guadalupe stated. "We have employed close to 70 formerly incarcerated individuals in our first two years, which is more than most New York City businesses can say."

"We have personal training directors, recruiters and fitness managers all over New York City seeking to hire our trainers."

Guadalupe estimates the

U.S. fitness market as a \$30 billion industry with plenty of room for growth and upward mobility. Within this burgeoning network, A Second U provides support and resources to help soften the challenging reentry from incarceration to the societal workplace.

Guadalupe said his goal within the next six months is "to raise additional funding for A Second U so that we can expand to every major city throughout the country with a high recidivism rate and a strong market for fitness."

"I'd love to be in touch with Jay-Z, who is committed to exposing the injustices of the prison system," he added. He said he has "a lot to discuss" with the cultural icon.

John Jay College's new president worked for Obama

By Harry C. Goodall Jr
Journalism Guild Writer

John Jay College, the leading educational institution on criminal justice in the nation, has a new president. Karol Mason, a former assistant attorney general in charge of the Office of Justice Programs under the Obama administration, took over the position in August 2017, according to *The Crime Report*.

Mason said that there is already a large amount of research and evaluation that demonstrates the long-term value of programs focusing on the "front end" of the justice system and helping



Karol Mason

File photo

those currently imprisoned to develop the skills for successful reintegration into

society.

"Criminal justice is not something that operates in a silo," Mason said. "The need for reform reflects back on other failures in other parts of the system."

"People are (already) thinking outside their silos," Mason said. "They are recognizing that the justice system is the last resort, the last response to other failures."

Under Mason's leadership, John Jay College will continue to be a resource for research and innovative alternatives to traditional approaches to crime and punishment. It is a branch of the publicly funded City University of New York

(CUNY) with a student body of nearly 15,000.

"We're a safe space for people to have tough conversations about justice issues," Mason said.

Mason believes the critical tools for a "holistic" approach to criminal justice reform are in social services such as educational training, family counseling, substance abuse treatment, and job counseling, reported the article.

"We shouldn't be putting people in jail for addiction," stated Mason, commenting on the current opiate crisis.

Many jurisdictions around the country are already beginning to work

with social service organizations in diversionary programs that focus on drug treatment, mental health, education and housing, reported the article.

"Many people in our criminal justice system (now) were victims first," said Mason.

Mason plans to continue John Jay's Prison-to-College Pipeline program, which brings students and faculty members into prisons to help to prepare those inmates who are about to be released for higher education, reported to the article.

Last September, John Jay held a "Smart on Crime-Innovations" conference that

brought together academics, practitioners and advocates.

"There's power when you have people come together from different walks of life and different perspectives who all agree we need criminal justice reform," Mason said.

The conference, Mason said, demonstrated a movement for change around the country, especially at state and local levels.

To reform the U.S. justice system requires "thinking outside the silos" (the box) and providing alternative pathways to help justice-involved people become productive, law-abiding citizens, Mason said.

Video calls replace contact visits at many institutions

A growing trend to end in-person visits throughout the nation has had a huge impact on inmates and their families, forcing them pay \$12.99 for a 20-minute video call, according to, Shannon Sims in *The Guardian*.

A study by The Prison Policy Initiative shows that 74 percent of U.S. correctional facilities that implement video calling end up either reducing in-person visits, or eliminating them altogether.

"We should be moving toward more human contact and people connecting with other people, not less," stated Norris Henderson, a former inmate from Louisiana and the founder and director of the not-for-profit organization Voice of the Ex-Offender. "When you move away from that, it's easy to dehu-

manize," Norris said.

"How you gonna stop people's families from coming to see them? That's messed up. I thought that was a privilege we got here," added Christian Brown, an accused bank robber incarcerated in New Orleans, voicing his frustration on the new video-calling procedures.

The prison phone system is a \$1.2 billion-a-year industry, according to the *Guardian* article. Prisons can receive as much as a 20 percent commission on each call, said Lucius Couluote of the Prison Policy Initiative.

Video chatting has reduced in-person visits or eliminated them completely, according to the *Guardian* article.

In some states, ending in-person visits that allow con-

tact is an attempt to address security concerns aimed at controlling the introduction of contraband to the prison.

Many types of contraband, including drugs and weapons, can be introduced to the prison even in no-contact facilities, where glass separates inmates and visitors, according to Gary York, a retired Florida prison inspector.

"Inmate orderlies and officers might be picking up a bag of marijuana that a visitor leaves in the trash can and getting paid off to deliver it to the inmate. I've seen it hundreds of times," York said.

Proponents of the new system think it frees up officers to be in other areas. In a *Times-Picayune* article, Sheriff Joe LoPinto

of Jefferson Parish, La., said the video program allocates resources "where we think they're needed, on the streets."

However, according to research published by the Criminal Justice Policy Review, face-to-face visits decrease recidivism. Even though visits may be behind thick glass, they are critical to the emotional health of inmates.

"Visitation is so important to maintaining a prisoner's faith, so important. I can't believe they would simply take that away," stated Sister Alison McCrary, executive director of the National Police Accountability Project. She added, "The impact is going to be so real."

California and Texas have both passed legislation that



Webcam

File photo

requires in-person visitation to be maintained.

It "goes deeper than this issue of contraband. This is about money. I shouldn't have to pay you to come see

my child," said Henderson, former prisoner.

One exception to the fee policy is Jefferson Parish, where each week the prison offers one 20-minute call at an offsite video visitation center for free. Yet there are problems with the new system, and those who want more than one call per week have to pay.

"We had to pay money for something that didn't work," said Brown, the accused bank robber. "I couldn't even hear what she was saying, and I couldn't really see her."

There are even more complications with the new video system. A family must schedule an appointment ahead of time for the video call. They also must possess an updated tablet or phone.

- Harry C. Goodall Jr.

Documentary reveals men's struggles before and after incarceration

By Forrest Lee Jones
Journalism Guild Writer

A documentary film on ex-cons returning to freedom helps educate the public on the struggles these men face before and after release.

The documentary follows the lives of three formerly incarcerated men (Noel, Harrison and Chris) outside of prison. All three were imprisoned at a young age and spent decades behind bars. They talk about their different parole experiences, family reunions, locating work and enrollment in college, according to a Dec. 1 *newsuw.com* story.

The film "Life After Life," was shown to a live audience by its makers, the Law, Societies and Justice Department at the University of Washington.

The purpose of the film is to change the perception that the public has about the prison system.

The film is directed by Tamara Perkins and shown as part of a series titled: Human Rights at Home: Punishment in Contemporary America by the department in conjunction with the University of Washington Libraries and supported by the Friends of the Library Award, says the report.

"In my experience, film is a very effective teaching medium," LSJ Professor Katherine Beckett said. "And I think we saw this today. It's a much more intimate kind of real-life, textured portrait."

"We are trying to frame (incarceration) in terms of a human rights issue," said Emily Keller, the political science and public policy librarian. "We talk about human rights issues as something that happens in other countries, and incarceration is a human rights issue here in the United States. That's something we want to emphasize."

"This film puts a human

face on people who are incarcerated, who otherwise might have a very negative stigma attached to them," said Dolphy Jordan, who spoke after the documentary concluded. "When you hear about someone released from prison (many of whom) have committed a terrible crime, you dehumanize that person, and it's easy to exclude them from the basic necessities we have in life."

Jordan was incarcerated from the ages of 16 to 37. He is employed as a re-entry transition specialist. His job centers on intervention, prevention and reduction in incarceration and recidivism.

After testifying about his life, Jordan gave his perspective on the documentary.

"One of the things that stuck out the most to me was that feeling of anxiety," Jordan said. "The emotions that these guys are going through are real."

Jordan talked about the obstacles facing the formerly incarcerated, such as fear and uncertainty and how it is important to initiate the re-entry process once a person enters prison. He stressed the importance of providing those opportunities before they are released from prison.

"The message (I want to

impart) would be to treat people fairly. Allow people to have access, and I'm saying people so I'm not labeling someone who was formerly incarcerated or labeling someone on race or from a different country," said Jordan.

"We're all people; we all live in this community together, and what kind of community do you want to foster, to build? Do you want to build a strong and healthy one, or a divided, broken one? I would encourage people to give everybody fair and equal opportunities -- to education, to housing, to employment."

San Quentin accommodates all

By Jesse Vasquez
Managing Editor

San Quentin State Prison is the first general-population male California institution to accommodate inmates based on their program needs and their desire to interact with one another in spite of race, affiliation and custody concern.

The new configuration effective Jan. 2 contains no General Population or Sensitive Needs designations, which separated prisoners into categories. The mainline category is open to anyone with a Secure Level I or II housing designation who has been selected by a counselor to go there.

Death Row will continue to include inmates in East Block, the top floor in North Segregation, and a few tiers in the Donner section of South Block. Reception will continue to be parts of Badger and Donner sections of South Block.

"This is my community and I respect everyone's opinion," said Terry Burton, inmate coach of the San Quentin Giants. "I already deal with everyone regardless of their background and affiliation."

The new accommodations are a part of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's commitment to promote public safety and successful reentry.

California prisons have been criticized, and sued, for being the only race- and gang-segregated institutions in the nation.

The Ashker settlement led to the end of indeterminate Security Housing Unit (SHU) terms for prison gang members and their release back into the general population of the prison. The settlement also changed the department's approach to dealing with inmates based on their individual behavior instead of their gang affiliation.

That settlement resulted from a class action lawsuit by segregated prisoners in Pelican Bay, Corcoran and

Tehachapi.

The department says it recognizes and respects people's right to association and has flexible housing regulations that contribute to a safer environment.

Now, corrections officials have devised a positive programming model to help prisoners on their journey of rehabilitation and reentry.

The department's objective is to create prison environments that resemble the community at-large, have open-race relations and community support, are conducive to personal growth and responsibility, and foster rehabilitation.

Programming prisons benefit all inmates, especially those preparing for parole hearings and re-entry.

However, the shift will negatively affect certain groups in the GP because the alternative to adjusting to a programming prison is transferring to an institution with limited programs or no programming at all.

"I feel uncomfortable about the change because I don't know what kind of mentality the new guys might have," said Jose Melendez, a Hispanic inmate. "I don't know what kind of thinking the administration has done regarding the negative implications of this shift on those of us that have already been programming."

Prison officials understand that decades of incarceration and exposure to a specific set of prison values and circumstances can contribute to an abnormal perspective on race, authority, and group identity. Therefore, there is a need for an environment that allows individuals to make decisions for themselves.

The change aims to give all prisoners the opportunity for personal growth and rehabilitation, state officials report.

Programming prisons provide the rehabilitative environment in which inmates can learn cooperation, experience growth, and demonstrate accountability for their actions.

"There seems to be an intentional security oversight. I would have thought that inmates who asked for protective custody would never want to come back to the mainline," said Harlon Lacapa, incarcerated since 2001. "This change could possibly negatively affect the programming of impacted institutions."

Many prisoners' lives have been changed by San Quentin's academic and rehabilitative atmosphere, and now more inmates will be eligible to participate.

"San Quentin is the first

place where I've felt free and have been able to program because it has so many opportunities," Melendez said.

San Quentin is the first, but not the last, to benefit from the state prison system's mission to make California safer by offering alternative programming options that increase public safety and successful reentry.

"Out in the real world, everyone co-exists without worrying about what anyone else is doing, so eventually everyone has to learn those pro-social skills," Burton said.

Committee recommends better youth treatment

By John Lam
Journalism Guild Writer

A committee made sweeping recommendations on the use of pepper spray, shackling, visitation rights and vegetarian meal options for incarcerated youths.

"This time around was historic; we are advocating for changes that have never been addressed before," said Israel Villa, a formerly incarcerated youth and program and policy coordinator for Motivating Individual Leadership for Public Advancement.

The Executive Steering Committee of the State Board of State and Community Corrections held a panel with youth advocates in November in preparation for a Feb. 8 meeting, when the full board will vote on revising statewide regulations for incarcerated youth.

"Executive Steering Committee meetings are designed to provide direction and...identifying critical issues, providing direction to workgroups that propose revisions and making a final recommendation to the full board," the Juvenile Justice Information Exchange reported.

The executive committee

recommended the following:

Facilities must document the use of pepper spray on youth.

This requirement is a step in the right direction but using pepper spray should not be tolerated, said Sara Kruzan, a formerly incarcerated youth and program coordinator at Healing Dialogue and Action.

New regulations would require individualized assessment before the use of shackles on young detainees.

"I'm concerned about who will be making that discretion regarding shackles and why we are still OK with shackles being used on our youth," said Kruzan.

Facilities should be required to process requests for vegetarian meals.

Supportive adults should not be barred from visiting incarcerated youth because of adults' conviction history.

These regulations should guide facilities to treat youth in a trauma-informed manner, rather than with a punitive approach, said Kruzan.

"In my case, my trauma was never acknowledged, and the phrase 'child sex-trafficking survivor' was never used. No one knew how to handle me, so I was criminalized."

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1 Main Street
San Quentin, CA 94964

Questions linger over informant program

By Achilles Williams
Journalism Guild Writer

Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckus denied the existence of an informant program in his county's jail to a "60 Minutes" correspondent, the *Huffington Post* reported.

The District Attorney's Office faces three investigations over the use of informants, whose credibility has been brought into question. However, Rackauckus told "60 Minutes" correspondent Sharyn Alfonsi that informants shouldn't be believed.

"I think you should assume you're talking to an informant, and if he's talking, he's probably lying," Rackauckus said.

This "60 Minutes" segment featured an interview with a frequently used Orange County informant, Mark Cleveland, who described how he has helped Rackauckus and his office for years. A California appeals court decision also declared there to be an informant program.

"The magnitude of the systemic problems cannot be overlooked," the California appeals court ruled.

Assistant Public Defender Scott Sanders uncovered the use of the informant program by obtaining records maintained by the D.A.'s office.

Additional motions used by Sanders revealed informant Cleveland testified in five cases between 2008 and

2010, and as recently as 2013 in two other cases, including one argued by Assistant District Attorney Howard Gundy.

Despite a line in Cleveland's file labeling him as a "problem informant," prosecutors continued to rely on his information.

The use of jail informants with shady character is widespread in Orange County, and this practice was used by Rackauckus himself. He admitted that he used informants in "several cases" going back all the way to 1985.

Rackauckus even went as far as using one informant, James Cochrum, who the Los Angeles Times labeled, "the most used informant," and who Sanders called, "a consummate scam artist."

Cochrum has a colorful history of using 13 different names during the commission of crimes across three states and while in the military.

This same informant said he "overheard murder confessions and testified in three of them." He was considered so valuable that Rackauckus himself accompanied this informant back to Utah and spoke to the parole board on his behalf, according to the *Huffington Post*.

Rackauckus maintains that his office has not abused the jail informant program. A Justice Department investigation into Orange County's questionable practices is underway.

United States

Continued from page 1

Thailand is the first non-U.S. state that appears high on the list at number 26.

The United States also incarcerates women at a rate eight to 25 times higher than some of our closest allies from NATO countries.

The U.S. incarceration rate for women is 127 per 100,000, while in countries such as the United Kingdom, the rate is 13 per 100,000, in Canada 11 per 100,000 and in France it's 6 per 100,000. Denmark is the lowest of the NATO countries at 5 per 100,000.

"Women have become the fastest-growing segment of the incarcerated population, but despite recent interest in the alarming national trend, few people know what's happening in their own states," wrote Wendy Sawyer of PPI in *The Gender Divide: Tracking women's state prison growth*, a January 2018 report.

Illinois' incarceration rate for women is on par with El Salvador, where abortion is illegal and women are routinely jailed for having miscarriages, noted The Global



Women locked up behind bars in a United States jail

Context report. New Hampshire is on par with Russia, and New York with Rwanda.

Rhode Island has the lowest incarceration rate for women, but has a rate twice that of Portugal. If Rhode Island were a country it would rank 15 on the list. Nation-

ally, the incarceration rate for women is eight times higher than Portugal, said the report.

"Perhaps the most troubling finding about women's incarceration is how little progress states have made in curbing its growth — especially in light of the progress

made to reduce men's prison populations," wrote Sawyer in her report.

Between 2009-2015, Michigan state prisons reduced the number of men incarcerated by 8 percent, but women imprisonment grew 30 percent over the same period. Texas

cut its men's prison population by 6,000, but added 1,100 women into its prison system.

Idaho refilled half of the prison beds it emptied from its men's prisons by adding 25 percent more women to its prisons, reported Sawyer.

California, New York, and New Jersey are the few states that have reversed course and began sending women home from state prisons.

"States continue to 'widen the net' of criminal justice involvement by criminalizing women's responses to gender-based abuse and discrimination," wrote Sawyer. "Policy changes have led to mandatory or 'dual' arrests for fighting back against domestic violence, [and] increasing criminalization of school-aged girls' misbehavior."

Offenses include running away for survival or women turning to sex work, noted Sawyer. Drug use and minor involvement in drug networks also have driven women's prison growth.

"Women's incarceration demands more attention because of the distinct ways in which prisons and jails fail women and their families," wrote Sawyer. "Research consistently shows that incarcerated women face different problems than men and prisons often make those problems worse."

PPI used two incarceration datasets from the Institute for Criminal Policy Research and population data from the United Nations and other sources for its reports.

La pesadilla de un soñador encarcelado

By Tare Beltranchuc y Marco Villa
Contributing Writers

Luis Ojeda de 23 años, se encuentra en la Prisión de San Quentin cumpliendo una condena de seis años por asalto agravado. Después de cumplir su sentencia, Ojeda será deportado a la Ciudad de México. Jennie de 21 años, hermana de Luis, actualmente reside, estudia y trabaja en San Jose, Jennie, a pesar de ser una ciudadana modelo, teme ser deportada.

Luis comentó en una entrevista, “quería ser abogado para ayudar a mis padres, pero la regu y perdí la oportunidad que DACA me ofreció. Me siento avergonzado por haber cometido un crimen. Desperdicé la oportunidad que se me otorgó en este país. También me siento mal de que nos estén usando (DACA presos) como excusa para no renovar el DACA. Pienso que no es justo”.

En el año 2012, el ex-presidente Barack Obama creó el programa DACA para proteger de la deportación a los niños que entraron a los Estados Unidos antes de cumplir los 16 años de edad.

La historia de la familia Ojeda muestra como la cancelación del programa DACA puede llegar a separar a una familia. Luis y Jennie están entre los 800,000 inmigrantes indocumentados que fueron traídos por sus padres a los Estados Unidos a muy temprana edad, y ahora son conocidos como Soñadores.

Una vez que la admi-

nistración del Presidente Donald Trump anunció su intención de terminar con el DACA (Acción Deferida para la Llegada de Adolescentes), los Soñadores enfrentan a un futuro incierto.

Si las amenazas de terminar con DACA se materializan, Luis y Jennie enfrentarán una eminente separación.

Jennie mencionó, “me siento preocupada”, “si no hacen nada al respecto, no solo mi familia será afectada, sino también mucha gente. Destruirán nuestros sueños, no podremos seguir asistiendo a la escuela y tampoco podremos seguir trabajando legalmente”.

Jennie recuerda como DACA cambio su vida. El programa le permitió trabajar legalmente en los Estados Unidos. Actualmente Jennie trabaja como secretaria en una compañía de plomería durante el día y por la noche asiste al Colegio De Anza. Una de sus metas es llegar a ser una arqueóloga y antropóloga.

Jennie enfatizó, “me gusta aprender acerca de las personas que vivieron aquí hace mucho tiempo, del significado de las religiones, sus diferentes puntos de vista y las civilizaciones antiguas”, “si llegara a ser una antropóloga podría explorar el mundo”.

Es importante mencionar que la mayoría de los Soñadores contribuyen a la economía de los Estados Unidos y acabar con el DACA afectaría a todos los Soñadores –Incluyendo a los que no han cometido delito alguno.

De acuerdo al artículo *The Number Behind The Dreamers of the Daily Caller* By Will Racker, “desde la implementación de DACA en el 2012, un total de 2,139 (cerca del 0.3%) Soñadores han perdido su estatus migratorio por un comportamiento criminal”.

A pesar de estar en prisión, Luis expresa que se benefició del DACA. Tenía en su mente que su futuro se basaba en el Sueño Americano.

Luis admite sus errores y acepta el castigo impuesto por sus malas decisiones. Sin embargo, las amenazas de Trump “afecta emocionalmente” a los Soñadores como Jennie, quienes contribuyen a la economía de este país y obedecen las leyes.

Jennie revela, “estoy muy asustada y me da tristeza cuando miro las noticias – parece que están jugando con nuestras emociones, no nos toman en serio. ¿Cómo podremos tener un futuro? Me da mucha tristeza, me preocupo y me causa estrés”.

Roberto G. Gonzales un investigador de Harvard llevo a cabo una encuesta a 2,000 portadores de DACA. Gonzales descubrió que el 22% de Soñadores han obtenido un licenciatura, comparado con un 32% de la población total de los Estados Unidos que cuentan con un licenciatura, de acuerdo al *National UnDACAmented Research Project*.

Jennie y Luis llegaron a los Estados Unidos con sus padres y hermanito al igual que muchos Soñadores. Asistieron escuelas Ameri-



Photo Courtesy of Luis Ojeda

Jennie Ojeda, Luis Ojeda, and Lourdes Ortiz

canas, aprendieron el idioma inglés, adoptaron la cultura Americana y llegaron a formar parte de la esencia de América.

“Jennie mencionó, “estaba muy nerviosa el primer día en la escuela porque no sabía hablar inglés. Al siguiente día no quería regresar a la escuela porque

no conocía a nadie y no sabía cómo comunicarme”.

La cancelación del DACA creará estrés a los Soñadores porque la mayoría tendrán que realizar cambios drásticos en sus vidas. Algunos no tendrán otra alternativa que regresar a vivir en las sombras – en constante temor a la deportación. Para

otros, significaría regresar a sus países de origen de los cuales huyeron y conocen muy poco.

Luis expresó, “antes de la creación de DACA, cuando tenía la edad de 11 años, me estresaba pensando que la migra (ICE) me iba agarrar y separar de mi familia. A los 18 años obtuve DACA y esto me ayudo a obtener mi licencia de manejar y un permiso de trabajo, con el cual obtuve un trabajo como cocinero en un restaurante y continué con mi educación”.

Sin embargo, el futuro de los Soñadores tales como Luis y Jennie es incierto a partir de que la administración de Trump anunciara la posible cancelación de DACA. El futuro de DACA es un tópico de debate en el Congreso y las cortes federales.

Jennie mencionó, “mis padres me trajeron a este país cuando tenía 9 años, mi hermanito y yo fuimos afortunados por no tener que brincar el muro fronterizo como lo hicieron mi madre y mi hermano mayor. Mi padre nos trajo a este país para tener un mejor futuro. Mi madre me ayudo a investigar acerca del DACA y a reunir todos los documentos necesarios. También contratamos los servicios de un abogado y realizamos los pagos por el trámite del DACA”.

Jennie agregó, “tengo esperanza que el Congreso haga algo respecto al DACA”, para traer alivio a todos los poseedores de DACA y así mantener su estado legal en este país para que sus sueños se vuelvan realidad.

A nightmare for one incarcerated dreamer

Luis Ojeda, 23, is serving a six-year sentence in San Quentin State Prison after a conviction for assault with great bodily injury. Upon his release, he faces deportation to Mexico. His sister, Jennie, 21, is a law-abiding resident of San Jose, where she is studying and working. Nevertheless, she also fears deportation.

“I wanted to be a lawyer and help out my parents,” Luis said. “But, I messed up the opportunity DACA offered me. I feel ashamed for committing a crime. I squandered the opportunity given to me in this country. And, I feel bad they are using us as an excuse to not renew DACA. I don’t think it is fair.”

Former President Barack Obama created DACA in 2012 to protect undocumented children from deportation if they entered the U.S. before they turned 16-years old.

The Ojeda family’s story shows how ending the DACA program could separate a family. Luis and Jennie are among the 800,000 undocumented immigrants brought by their parents to the U.S. at a young age, and who are called Dreamers.

Since President Donald J. Trump’s administration announced his intention to end the humanitarian program known officially as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA), the Dreamers are facing an uncertain future.

Siblings Jennie and older brother Luis are facing emi-



Photo Courtesy of Luis Ojeda

Hoga Ojeda, Lourdes Ortiz, Hilario Ojeda, and Luis Ojeda in San Quentin’s visiting room

nent separation if DACA ends.

“I feel worried,” Jennie said. “If they don’t do anything, not just my family will be affected, but a lot of people. It will crush our dreams. We will not be able to go to school or to work.”

Jennie remembers how DACA changed her life. The program allowed her to work legally in the US. She works now as a secretary at a plumbing company during the day, and attends De Anza College at night. Her

goal is to become an archeologist and an anthropologist.

“I like learning about people that were here for a long time ago, about the significance of religions, their views, ancient civilizations,” Jennie said. “If I become an archeologist I will get to explore the world,” Jennie said.

The majority of Dreamers contribute to the U.S. economy. Ending DACA would affect all Dreamers — even those who have not commit-

ted a crime.

“Since DACA was implemented in 2012, a total of 2,139 (about 0.3 percent) Dreamers have lost their status because of criminal behavior,” according to the article “The Numbers Behind The Dreamers” By Will Racker of the *Daily Caller*.

Although in prison, Luis said he also benefited from DACA. He thought his future lay in the American Dream.

Luis acknowledges his wrongs and accepts the pun-

ishment for his bad choices. However, Trump’s threat “plays an emotional” game with the Dreamers, like his sister Jennie, who contributes to the country’s economy and obeys the law.

“I am super afraid. It makes me sad,” Jennie said. “When I just saw the news — they are playing with our feelings. They are not taking us serious. How can we have a future? It makes me sad, worried, stressed out.”

Harvard researcher Roberto G. Gonzalez surveyed 2,000 DACA participants.

Gonzalez found that 22 percent of Dreamers have earned a bachelor’s degree, compared to about 32 percent of the US population as a whole who hold a bachelor’s degree, according to *National UnDACAmented Research Project*.

Jennie and Luis came to the U.S. like most Dreamers with their parents and a little brother. They became part of the fabric of America. They attended American schools, learned English and embraced the dominant culture.

“First day in school I was super nervous,” Jennie said. “I didn’t know how to speak English. The next day, I didn’t want to go back to school. I didn’t know anyone. I didn’t know how to communicate.”

Ending DACA creates stress for Dreamers because many would have to make sudden changes in their lives. Some would have no alternative than to return to living in the shadows — in

constant fear of deportation. For others, it might mean going back to countries from which they fled or know little about.

“Before DACA at 11-years old, I often stressed thinking about *La Migra* (ICE) coming to get me and separate me from my family,” Luis said. “I received DACA at 18-years old. This helped me to get a driver’s license, and a work permit with which I got my first job as a cook in a restaurant while I continued with my education.”

However, the future of Dreamers like the Ojeda siblings lingers in limbo since the Trump administration announced the termination of DACA. The issue of DACA’s future is a topic of debate in Congress. It is also tied up in the federal courts.

“I was brought to this country by my parents when I was 9-years old,” Jennie said. “My baby brother, Luis and I were fortunate because we didn’t have to climb the fence like my mom and older brother did. My father brought us to this country to have a better future. My mom helped me start doing the research for DACA, gathering all documents and we have to pay a lawyer and DACA fees,” Jennie said.

She continues to “have hope the Congress will do something about” DACA to bring relief to all the DACA participants and maintain their legal status in this country to make their dreams come true.

—Tare Beltranchuc and Marcos Villa

Program making chefs



File Photo

DC Central Kitchen class in session

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild
Chairman

DC Central Kitchen is a nonprofit catering and educational organization. Its focus is to provide careers through its culinary job training program for overlooked citizens with histories of poverty, incarceration and homelessness.

"We care about our students' potential much more than their pasts," said Erica Teti-Zilinskas, the organization's director of communications and marketing, in a phone interview. "We specialize in equipping adults with those histories with the hands-on training and support they need to begin a culinary career."

DC Central Kitchen helps provide self-sufficient job skills to troubled people looking to transform their lives in the nation's capital. The organization partners with different nonprofits and small businesses to produce healthy snacks and meals from would-be wasted food.

"Each of our social ventures is designed to address the deeper intergenerational challenges of hunger, homelessness, incarceration and ultimately, poverty," said Michael Curtin, Jr., the chief executive officer.

The 14-week program is tuition-free and provides weekly transportation fees to help students attend classes. Most classes are held in downtown Washington, D.C.

Many students are overcoming and dealing with the trauma of addiction, homelessness and release from prison. Some are immigrants, who take the course to enhance their job qualifications, according to the website.

Graduates with a criminal

record are less likely to re-offend and return to prison than the national average, saving taxpayers money, the program highlighted.

Billy, a class participant, added, "You always have to keep your past in the front of your mind; you have to have a 'why' when you're going through life, because you can make it."

The program teaches hands-on knife skills, culinary theory, food sensitivity awareness, and food sanitation. Students learn interviewing skills, how to write a winning resume and workplace ethics. They are trained to obtain a nationally recognized ServSafe Food Handler's Certification. Also, students receive help with referrals for childcare and housing, for a minimum of one year after graduation.

"Thanks to our generous donors, all admitted students receive full scholarships to attend our program," Teti-Zilinskas said. "So there is no cost to our students at any point in their training or in the two years of post-graduation support we provide."

After seven weeks in the training facility, students have guaranteed internships where they are paired with a mentoring chef at an area hotel, restaurant or cafeteria. There, they spend four weeks, gaining hands-on experience and building a professional network.

"I didn't want to just learn how to do something and get a job; I wanted to acquire a skill that I could use to get other jobs," said Crystal, a class participant. "So, I focused on learning, as opposed to just being there. I showed up every morning on time, excited about being there."

The program touts a large percentage of job placement

for its graduates as well as hiring graduates to its own staff.

"We put our money where our mission is," said the website. Of the organization's 151 staff members, there are 66 graduates of the Culinary Job Training program working across five departments.

All DC Central Kitchen staff earn above the DC living wage and are provided with full health insurance coverage, among other benefits such as medical, dental, life and disability insurance policies.

"I have a second chance now," said William, a graduate. "I had a chance to work other places after graduation from the program, but I decided to stay here because giving back is really what I want to do."

"When I see a homeless person on the street, I can now say that I am helping him because of the work I do here," William continued.

The program provides food and services to at-risk afterschool programs, domestic violence shelters and transitional housing. It won the Golden Carrot Award, a national honor for healthy school improvement, and two Champion of Change Awards from the White House.

Entrepreneur Robert Egger founded the organization in 1988 and built on that model to form L.A. Kitchen on the West Coast. The companies are not affiliated.

"We're empowering the next generation of leaders to fight hunger and food waste," the website concluded. "We believe that hunger is a symptom of the deeper problem of poverty and that food is our chosen tool for changing individual lives while addressing systemic failures."

—Ahna Straube
contributed to this story

Training workshop gives ex-cons a chance to succeed

By Harry C. Goodall Jr.
Journalism Guild Writer

The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) offers a training workshop for formerly incarcerated inmates to give them skills they need for a new life, the *San Bernardino Sun* reported.

"I got goals. I'm aiming high. I'm very focused on what I'm trying to do with my life, and I thank CEO for that," said Carlos Cazares, who was formerly incarcerated.

CEO San Bernardino was started in 2013 and partnered with the California State Reentry Initiative, the San Bernardino Community College District and CalTrans.

There are 27 CEO centers in six different states, including New York. The overall program has placed more than 25,000 of the formerly incarcerated over the past decade into full-time employment positions.

The work program starts with a four-day life skills workshop, where CEO

coaches teach newly released participants about new technologies, resources, employment practices, and financial resources. They also stage mock interviews; participants often wear suits for their interviews donated by Men's Wearhouse.

"Putting on a suit made me feel presentable, made me feel like I was 10 feet high," Cazares said. "I couldn't be more grateful for the opportunity they present us. I have never been to another program where they've been really focused on bettering people and helping them get to a better point in life."

The program gives opportunities to both men and women. It accepts all people regardless of their commitment offense. The program serves around 35 to 45 people at a time who are on parole or probation.

"If you're ready to change, if you're ready to turn that corner this way and not that way, we're here for you" said Michael Wahome, the CEO program manager.

While participants are being coached and counseled

by CEO, they are also working at paying jobs provided through CEO's partnership with CalTrans and San Bernardino Public Works. Their work days typically begin at 6 a.m. and end at 2 p.m. They work on removing roadside litter throughout the county. The pay rate is \$11 an hour. For many, this is their first paid employment.

Wahome told the *San Bernardino Sun*, "The nature of our program is they're here because they want to be here. They may be referred here, but it is not mandated."

"What gets me through the day is knowing I'm doing something in life," said Minerva Rivera, a former inmate. "I'm getting myself stable, realizing I'm doing what I need to do to become a productive member of society."

Wahome summed up, "We have in-depth conversations about financial education, goal setting. We help them build their vision of their future—any future they want other than incarceration—and light a fire under that vision."

Formerly incarcerated man now successful business owner

Former inmate Malik Wade launched a successful business called Malik Wade Ventures LLC, an umbrella company that houses a publishing and consulting business.

Wade, a 46-year-old author and mentor, is one of the success stories, according to a *Black Enterprise* article.

Wade is a San Francisco native who started selling crack during his teenage years.

HISTORY

"I started selling drugs at 15, and by the time I graduated from high school, I was already being investigated by the FBI," Wade said. "At the age of 21, I was actually indicted by the FBI, and they were seeking a life sentence, so I fled the country...and I remained a fugitive for the next several years."

Wade was placed on the FBI's most wanted list for his role in narcotics distribution in San Francisco.

Arrested at age 29 and facing a life sentence, Wade pled guilty to conspiracy to distribute cocaine and gun possession. He received a

14-year sentence in federal prison.

"When I went off to prison, I completely shifted my paradigm," Wade said. "I started to change my thought process. I started to educate myself."

He said he spent 10 to 12 hours a day studying.

TRANSFORMATION

Wade's transformation from drug dealer to legitimate entrepreneur came from his spiritual introspection and the mentoring he received from other men in prison, according to the article.

"If a young person committed a heinous crime at the age of 14 or 15 and they spend the last 25 to 30 years in prison, they're not the same person," he said. "A person can redeem themselves. A person can transform themselves."

Regarding his own transformation, Wade said, "There were a lot of different challenges because I never had a job before, so I had to teach myself a lot of things."

He realized he had learned

some lessons as an entrepreneur on the streets. "In the drug game, I learned how to do a SWOT analysis, which is to analyze your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats."

SUCCESS

Now a successful businessman, Wade has started a nonprofit that helps at-risk youth. In the past few years, he has taken 15 young men on an all-expenses paid college tour and chaperoned young inner-city students on a trip to Ghana in Africa.

Wade has guest-lectured at U.C. Berkeley's African American Studies and Criminal Justice departments. He also attended Stanford Law School's Project ReMADE program, a training program that gives the formerly incarcerated the tools to become successful business owners.

Recently Wade documented his life story in a memoir titled *Pressure: From FBI Fugitive to Freedom*.

"When I got out, I knew that I wanted to make a difference in my community," Wade said.

—Harry C. Goodall Jr.

Culinary

Continued from page 1

"It feels amazing and gratifying to finish the program because it makes me feel like I can accomplish anything," said Cherish Velez, class participant.

The women are taught by instructors from Cosumnes River College. They learn cooking, using the kitchen equipment correctly and basic management principles. The women will receive a culinary college certificate and college credit from this 10-month program.

Velez, who has always liked cooking, said it is now her passion. When she paroled, she hopes to travel to France, Italy and Spain to expand her culinary skills and experience as a chef, reported the *Telegraph*.

"It's a really awesome program," said Mireya Flores,



File Photo

The women of the first Culinary Arts Management program with their instructor

another class participant. "I'm also really looking forward to continuing my education because there is so much to learn in cooking."

Flores said her favorite thing about the culinary program was working with others. She enjoyed cooking Mexican dishes and, with her certification, plans to open a taco truck.

Speaking of the cooking demonstrations the students had to perform, Doolittle said, "They were all so excited when they were able to pull off

the recipes by themselves. I remember when I was a young chef and how I felt, so it's exciting to see."

With these skills of basic cooking technique, teamwork, and proper sanitation the women will be prepared to find work and benefit the community when they parole.

The program doesn't teach everything, Doolittle said. He hopes the women keep on learning and trying to better themselves after they are released.

Tablets benefit the incarcerated

By William Earl Tolbert
Journalism Guild Writer

Amid public controversy, the inmates of St. Lawrence County Jail in Canton, Ohio, were issued tablets in 2016 and have since reaped the benefits of the digital technology, according to a recent report from *North Country Now News* (NCNow News).

The tablets allow the county to provide many services to inmates that were previously only available on paper. Inmates with tablets can use them to place commissary orders, file Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) reports, file paperless grievances and many other services. "Prior

to tablets, inmates would have to submit requests and staff would then track down the necessary materials, because inmates couldn't easily browse for the materials," said Jail Administrator Peggy Harper. The tablets have improved access to such material.

NCNow News reported that "according to the manufacturer the tablets are linked to Telmate Verified, an automated identity verification system that authenticates every system user and action including deposits, photos and messages; and Telmate Investigator, an advanced suite of crime solving tools that gives investigators valu-

able insights into the personal networks of inmates."

Inmates can also use the tablets to access entertainment, which is controlled by the jail. This has been criticized by some, but Harper told NCNow News that both inmates and staff have benefited from the tablets, which have "really improved [the] efficiency of many services at the jail."

The tablets, which are paid for through the commissary system, provide the inmates with better access to legal help. These tablets were first offered to inmates four years ago and are now available in nearly 70 correctional facilities nationwide.

Kid CAT Speaks!

**By John Lam
Journalism Guild Writer**

A Sonoma State University professor filmed an educational video of the Kid CAT Youth Offender Support Group to teach the next generation of professional counselors.

"I wanted to create a training video to teach my graduate students, social workers and community-based counselors that counseling can be done in nontraditional and difficult settings," said Dr. Adam Zagelbaum, Counseling Department chair at Sonoma State University and Kid CAT volunteer.

"I got my inspiration to create this film because I am interested in bringing more counselors into serving populations that are underserved or don't have the resources to obtain professional counseling."

The training video is called "Working with Incarcerated Individuals: San Quentin Group Counseling," and can

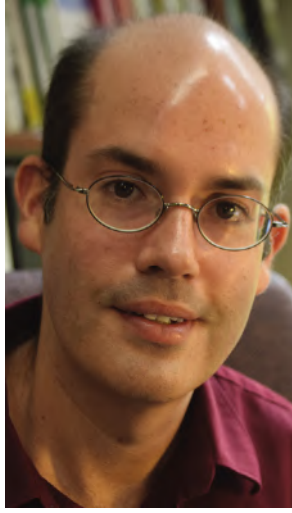


Photo courtesy of Adam Zagelbaum
Adam Zagelbaum

be viewed at www.alexanderstreetpress.com.

The film features the dynamics of peer group discussions on guilt, shame and remorse, led by Kid CAT's chairman, Charlie Spence.

"I believe professional counselors can learn a lot from the men on the inside,"

Zagelbaum said.

The film offers a unique opportunity for counselors to see what a collaborative approach can accomplish in an institutional setting.

"It is not just about professional counselors bringing knowledge and dictating what should be done. It is about mutual collaboration.

"Mostly, what my students and I do here in San Quentin has been about supporting and empowering the guys to lead discussions and help each other process what they're going through," Zagelbaum said.

"It is significant what we do in this setting because it is what a lot of people need. We help provide the environment that allows people to accomplish their goals of having greater clarity.

"If people don't have a safe space to talk in a real way, then they are missing out on a huge opportunity to make the best strides they can," Zagelbaum said.

Zagelbaum attributes his

passion for working with the underprivileged and disenfranchised to his father.

"My dad was a high school teacher in a very rough neighborhood in New York. Growing up, he would often bring me to class with him," Zagelbaum said. "What stood out to me from this experience was the students' motivation to learn.

"These students were there to learn and connect with my dad because he always provided a safe space that took them away from the troubles they faced each day.

"In the same sense, my work with Kid CAT has been about creating safe spaces where men can talk."

Zagelbaum has been volunteering with Kid CAT for the past nine years since he was introduced to the program by Kid CAT co-founder Nou Phang Thao.

"He was doing a lecture in another group I attended that was really eye-opening for me," Thao said. "At the time we were also trying to create a curriculum, so I thought he could probably help us, so I invited him to meet the guys."

Recalling his first impres-

sions, Zagelbaum said, "I was very impressed when I met the guys in the group. I was astounded by their level of accountability and dedication they had to serve their community—and I wanted to help them accomplish that goal."

"In the same sense, my work with Kid CAT has been about creating safe spaces where men can talk"

It wasn't long before Zagelbaum began inviting his students into San Quentin.

"Many of my students have told me that they get renewed energy to focus on the work they want to do professionally, and also how to reach more people in mainstream society, because of the work they do with Kid CAT," said Zagelbaum.

Zagelbaum's ability to convey genuine concern has

helped the men gain insight.

"Although he is a professor, he doesn't talk down to us; he is genuine and caring, and he means a lot to us," said Gregory Coates, Kid CAT member. "He has helped me gain a greater awareness of my negative choices and how it has affected my life."

Zagelbaum's work with Kid CAT has not only changed the lives of those he has helped, but his own as well.

"People would not think that you could find leadership in a place like San Quentin, but that's exactly what I found. These men have taught me how to be a more effective leader in my personal and professional life."

Zagelbaum has published two books, "Working with the Immigrant Family: a Practical Guide for Counselors" (2010) and "School Counseling and the Student Athlete: College Career Culture and Identity" (2014).

The Youth Offender Support Group that was filmed meets twice a month on Sundays. Discussions include parole board preparation, family struggles, and what it means to be a man.

New law keeps peace officers from interrogating juveniles

A new law makes it illegal for peace officers to interrogate youths 15 years old or younger without first allowing them to consult with an attorney.

"The bill would require that a youth 15 years of age or younger consult with legal counsel in person, by telephone, or by video conference prior to a custodial interrogation and before

waiving any of the above specified rights," the bill states.

The law was sponsored by California Senator Ricardo Lara.

"People under 18 years of age have lesser ability as compared to adults to comprehend the meaning of their rights and the consequences of waiver," the bill states.

"Additionally, a large body of research has established that adolescent thinking tend to either ignore or discount future outcomes and implications, and disregard long-term consequences of important decisions."

The bill was approved by the governor on Oct. 11, 2017.

— John Lam

Kid CAT curriculum now available

Attention Readers: Kid CAT Childhood development curriculum and facilitator manual is now available.

If you are interested in creating a Kid CAT branch/youth offender support group at your institution, please have your sponsor/volunteer or community partnership manager contact Kid CAT chief sponsor Ronda Wisner at (415) 454-1460 or email her at ronda.wisner@cder.ca.gov for a copy of our curriculum and facilitators manual.

The curriculum's objective is to help participants address the root causes of criminal thinking, childhood trauma and violent behavior. It accomplishes this by helping participants explore three phases of their lives:

- **Past (childhood to pre-conviction)**
- **Present (current incarceration)**
- **Future (post-release).**

The 26-week curriculum

is broken into eight modules:

- **Masculinity**
- **Self-identity**
- **Identifying emotions**
- **Consequences**
- **Communication**
- **Environmental influences**
- **Compassion**
- **Empathy and forgiveness**

A typical session consists of written assignments, self-exploration, lectures and group discussion.

Kid CAT Speaks

Dear Kid CAT,

I have been in prison going on 15 years, and I've tried to change my life for the best. I was 16 years old when I was alleged to be a part of a violent cocaine racketeering enterprise and was charged and convicted of murder and aiding and abetting under the RICO act (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization) and was sentenced to life in federal prison.

Despite the fact that I was a juvenile and incarcerated at a young age, I basically grew up to become a man behind these walls.

I have obtained my GED,

participated in a correspondence college program, obtained numerous certificates. I was also a suicide companion for the psychology department. I also taught several business and screen-writing classes.

I can truly say that I've been rehabilitating myself and trying to make something out of my life. In addition, I have published four books. One of those books is called "Bullied," which I wrote at my sons urging. It's a story geared to at-risk youth being bullied and can be obtained through Amazon. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A. Cooper,
United States Penitentiary Hazelton, West Virginia

Dear Mr. Cooper,

Thank you for your testimony of self-transformation. You serve as an inspiration to many youth offenders as to what is possible when we put our minds toward rehabilitation. It doesn't matter where we are incarcerated—whether in California or in West Virginia, we all want an opportunity to improve our lives and become productive members of our communities. We are proud of you; keep up the good work!

Irrational fear harms mental health

People who experience long-term hyper-vigilance may have unintended negative mental health consequences, some scientists say.

"Remaining in this state of wary hyper vigilance can contribute to issues like social anxiety, hypochondria, post-traumatic stress disorder, insomnia and all manner of phobias," according to an article in *The Wall Street Journal*.

The amygdala is responsible for the feeling of fear. It primes you to react — quickens your pulse, creates muscle tension and dilates your pupils when you sense danger, according to Ahmad Hariri, a professor of psychology and neuroscience at Duke University.

The amygdala served us well as cave dwellers warning us of lions and lurking tigers, but it can get in the way of our modern life. "Change has occurred so rapidly for our species that now we are equipped with brains that are super sensitive to threat," said Hariri.

For some inmates doing time, being locked in a cell for days to months at a time is normal.

Sometimes, they use the time productively like studying, reading or exercising. Inevitably, with extra time on their hands, the mind may wander to family, friends or their future, causing stress or fear.

"Remaining in this state of wary hyper vigilance can contribute to issues like social anxiety, hypochondria, post-traumatic stress disorder, insomnia and all manner of phobias"

"We essentially drive ourselves nuts worrying about things because we have too much time and don't have many real threats on our survival, so fear gets expressed in these really strange, maladaptive ways," said Hariri.

To calm an overactive

amygdala requires admitting unease and fear, the *Journal* reported.

"You are actually stronger if you can acknowledge fear," said Leon Hoffman, co-director of Pacella Research Center at the New York Psychoanalytic Society and Institute in Manhattan.

On the flip-side, when someone ignores their feelings of fear, they may compound the consequences.

"The more you try to suppress fear, either by ignoring it or doing something else to displace it, the more you will actually experience it," said Kristy Dalrymple, a clinical assistant professor of psychiatry and human behavior at Alpert Medical School of Brown University.

Healthy coping skills to reduce fear:

Talking to someone you trust about your fears

Remembering that you are loved or could be loved

Actively engaging your analytical thinking

Sense and appreciate the fear

Having a commitment to overcome fear that is consistent with who you want to become

— John Lam



Kid CAT and *The Beat Within* hold monthly writing workshops. *The Beat Within* conducts writing workshops in juvenile detention centers throughout the country. Kid CAT Speaks will publish one topic each month. Your writing should reflect a positive message that may help the youth make a better decision in life. Your stories will be read by the youth in detention centers. If published, you will receive a free copy of the publication. Your story can make a difference. Tell *The Beat Within* you read about them in Kid CAT Speaks!

Students must have initiative; they should not be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves and be free — Cesar Chavez (1927-1993) civic rights activist and co-founder of the United Farm Workers union. Do you agree or disagree with this quote? Share your thoughts from your own experiences and observations.

**The Beat Within
P.O. Box 34310
San Francisco, CA 94134**

Kid CAT (Creating Awareness Together) is a group of men who committed their crimes in their teens and were sentenced as adults to life terms. The group's mission is to inspire humanity through education, mentorship and restorative practices. Kid CAT Speaks wants to hear from all the juvenile lifers, educators, and policymakers concerning juvenile justice issues and rehabilitation. Contact us at **San Quentin News, Attn: Kid CAT Speaks, 1 Main St., San Quentin, CA 94964.**

Vietnam war allies' children face deportation for felonies

By John Lam
Journalism Guild Writer

Children of American allies that fought alongside U.S. troops in Vietnam are facing deportation if they have a felony conviction.

Prior to the Trump administration, many Vietnamese children of war did not have to fear deportation due to a unique U.S.-Vietnam repatriation agreement that limits the removal of individuals who came to the U.S. prior to 1995, according to *Asian American Press (AAP)*.

"Due to the specific provisions in the Vietnamese agreement, our community thought they would be protected from deportation," said Nancy Nguyen, executive director of VietLead, a

community-based organization in Philadelphia.

All that has now changed. "President Donald Trump's 'get tough' approach to immigration is now impacting—of all people—(those) who fought alongside the Green Berets in the Vietnam War," *Politico* reported.

One of those affected is Hieu Nguyen, a Vietnamese immigrant and inmate at San Quentin who may face deportation next year.

"My dad was a colonel with the South Vietnamese Army fighting alongside the Americans," said Nguyen, 37. "When the U.S. pulled out of the war in 1975, the Communist army threw my family into the concentration labor camp.

"It was at that camp where my father was executed by the Communist party in front of my family.

"At the camp, we faced constant starvation. Each week the camp allowed two scoops of rice and one scoop of salt for a family of five. So me and my brother would resort to digging for tree roots and manioc to eat."

After four years in the camp, "My grandmother sold her land and bought us out of the camp," said Nguyen.

Life did not become much easier for Hieu and his family as they faced constant persecution from their neighbors.

"My teacher was a Communist soldier. He lost one of his legs during the Vietnam War, so he always abused me in school, beating me for no

reason. He told me my father was a traitor and that he would kill me for wasting his time," Nguyen said. "I kept it to myself because it was normal for people to treat me and my family this way."

In 1994, under a humanitarian operation led by America, Hieu and his family received an opportunity to come to the U.S.

In total, more than a million refugees from Cambodia, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam sought asylum in the United States between 1975 and 1995.

Those who resettled escaped violence, genocide and starvation—the by-products of the Vietnam War according to the *Asian American Press*. "Vietnamese refugees were primarily resettled in

resource-poor areas in the U.S. As a result, they faced extreme poverty and racism in their adopted communities, leaving many re-traumatized and isolated," the news agency reported.

Many Vietnamese children, who grew up in this environment, were swept up in the rise of the prison industrial complex in the 1980s and 1990s, according to the report.

"When we came to America we had no money; the only thing we had was some clothes that our neighbors gave us," Nguyen said.

"We settled in a gang-infested neighborhood in San Jose," Nguyen said.

"When I went to school, I got teased all the time and bullied because I didn't speak English. So I began cliquing up with other Vietnamese immigrants and joined a gang to find protection."

After a year in America, at 15, the police arrested him for assault with a deadly weapon. By age 18 he committed his life crime of a gang-related murder at his high school.

"I know it's wrong to commit crimes; it's wrong to hurt other people, I deserved to be punished and to do time; however, today I understand my background to understand why I did what I did, and it helped me grow to understand to become a different person," Hieu said.

"Regardless of what happens to me, I want to help the next generation make better choices than I had and to value what their parents have gone through to give us the opportunity to be in America."

"I have to be honest; I'm afraid to go back to Vietnam. They might kill me because of my father, and I have no one there," Nguyen added.

Sadly, what happens to Nguyen isn't an isolated incident.

"More Vietnamese came into contact with the criminal justice system than any other Southeast Asian Community," said Tung Nguyen, founder of Asian Pacific Islander Re-Entry Orange County and former San Quentin inmate and Kid CAT co-founder, who served

18 years from the age of 16.

"However, there is still such a stigma in our community that keeps us silent on these issues."

"It was at that camp where my father was executed by the Communist party in front of my family"

The recent roundup of Vietnamese immigrants by immigration officials is due to "White House pressure on Hanoi to ... clear the backlog of deportation orders for Vietnamese nationals convicted of felony crimes in the U.S.," *Politico* reported.

Another person swept up in the fervor to remove immigrants was Chuh A, whose father fought alongside Green Berets in the Vietnam War.

"Chuh was being held at an ICE detention facility in Irwin County, Georgia. He had completed a state prison term for a first-time felony conviction in North Carolina (for) trafficking ... ecstasy," *Politico* reported.

After a video conference that lasted five minutes and two seconds to determine his status in the U.S., Immigration Court Judge William A. Cassidy of Atlanta ordered him deported and told Chuh "Buenos dias," according to *Politico*.

Shortly afterward, ICE sent Chuh back to Vietnam, a country he hadn't seen since the age of 13.

"I cry every night," Chuh said. "They were grabbing and dragging me out on the ramp ... I told them (ICE agents), 'You know I cannot get on the plane. I fear for my life to go back to my country.'"

Chuh left behind four children ranging from ages 5 to 12 and his common-law wife.

ICE estimates there are about 8,500 removal orders outstanding for Vietnamese nationals; this total does not make the distinction between those who came before or after 1995.

Reflections of a veteran: Davis Bennett

By Wesley Eisiminger
Staff Writer

Davis Bennett, 75, enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1961. He is one of the many combat veterans serving time at San Quentin State Prison.

Bennett served in Vietnam in October 1967 and December 1970.

"I was assigned to the 1st Armored Division and was a machine gunner on an APC (Armored Personnel Carrier)," Bennett said. His unit consisted of three tanks, three APCs, a company of about 150 infantry men and a mortar squad of about 12 men.

"I was wounded three times while in an APC. Once a VC (Viet Cong) rocket-propelled grenade, better known as an RPG, was fired at the vehicle, and it exploded on the side of the APC. I was hit in the jaw by shrapnel fragments. It took two of my teeth."

Bennett was wounded twice more. He was hit in his lower back side, coming out of the APC's turret. The other injury came after his APC hit a mine, throwing him off the turret and damaging his right arm. When the APC hit the mine, most of its crew was killed and the rest were seriously wounded.

"It was very bad," Bennett said. "We were trying to help



File Photo

Davis Bennett, far right, toasting with army brothers and sisters

the wounded, and there were body parts on the ground and in the trees. I'll never forget that day." His APC unit was awarded the Vietnam Gallantry Cross.

Bennett was awarded several medals and ribbons for his service:

- Bronze Star with two Oak Leaf Clusters
- Three Purple Hearts
- Five Good Conduct Medals
- National Defense Ribbon
- Vietnam Service Medal
- Three Non-Commissioned Officer Development Ribbons
- Army Service Ribbon
- Two Overseas Service

Ribbons

Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation
Vietnam Campaign Medal
Combat Infantry Badge
Expert Rifle M-16

Today, Bennett is being treated at the prison hospital for cancer that developed in his jaw. He thinks the cancer is related to the old war injury he sustained when the RPG hit his APC.

Bennett was born Feb. 10, 1942. He was raised in Winona, Miss., and is the youngest of 10 brothers and six sisters. All the boys have served in the U.S. Army. Bennett was in the U.S. Army 21 years and nine months. He retired as a

First Sergeant.

The Bennett family moved to California, along with an uncle, in 1955. They moved to Oakland the following year.

Bennett was living with one of his brothers in 2008. There they befriended a homeless man, Nemo. They would let him hang around their house and sleep in their yard. Bennett would also help Nemo by giving him \$5 a day, and from time to time they'd have a drink.

One day in 2012, Bennett went to the bank and withdrew \$3,000. He sat on his porch counting the money. Nemo asked for some.

"I give you money all the time, and I am not going to give you anymore," Bennett said.

Bennett says Nemo threatened to beat him up. Bennett picked up a shovel and told Nemo to leave. However, Nemo responded by attacking and punching Bennett. In the chaos, Bennett said he got his handgun. Nemo hit him once again, and Bennett shot Nemo in the chest. Nemo walked away and died later.

"They at first wanted to charge me with first-degree murder and then second-degree. They lowered it to manslaughter. I received a seven-year sentence. I will be released on June 5, 2018," Bennett said.

Code.7370

Continued from page 1

Venture capitalists Beverly Parenti and Chris Redlitz created Code.7370 in conjunction with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and California Prison Industry Authority.

"What do you expect?" Redlitz probed the students about Armstrong's visit. "The unexpected," several inmates chimed in. "You guys can relate to how life changes," Redlitz replied.

Armstrong told the class that his life previously revolved around cycling and after falling from grace, he had to rebuild his life.

"I barely squeaked through high school and didn't attend college," Armstrong said, adding, "If it weren't for cycling, hell, I may have ended up here."

The classroom went silent, and then everyone burst out laughing.

Armstrong said he made himself an easy target for the



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Code.7370 and their instructors posing with Lance Armstrong

doping investigation by how badly he treated people.

"It was the level of arrogance that got me," Armstrong said. "Once they compiled all the evidence, the case was made against me."

In an attempt to rebuild his image after his fall from grace, Armstrong went on *Oprah* and sheepishly admitted wrongdoing... It did not go over well — he became the

face of sports doping.

"The fall was so dramatic that people didn't want to associate with me," he said.

Armstrong has continued to address his past.

In an article written last year by *Outside Magazine*, Armstrong was portrayed as "a humbled man who is working to try to deserve the forgiveness of millions of people who once believed in him."

He told the students that they didn't have to endure the kind of public ridicule that he underwent. They could build a fresh start. However, he previously thought it would be difficult to convince an employer to hire someone who had been in prison for murder.

Armstrong, a huge believer in image rebuilding and branding, said he began

thinking differently after meeting Redlitz.

"When I asked Chris [Redlitz] how many people got out and came back, and he told me none, I was surprised. That's the brand. That's a super powerful message. You guys are part of a movement that is pretty damn surprising."

He suggested that the men embrace their pasts and go forward. "It's never straight. You can't run from it," Armstrong said. "In 2018, everybody knows everything."

"Your reputation precedes you. Mine precedes me," he said. "That's a hurdle, but you have to get over it. Most people don't even get to the door."

"You guys are the example of forward," Armstrong said, after learning that Mark Zuckerberg visited the program in 2015.

Damon Cooke graduated from the coding program in 2015.

"Once I decided it wasn't about what is done to me, but how I respond, I found a deeper meaning to my life," Cooke said.

In a continuing effort to

address his conflicted past, Armstrong hosts a weekly podcast, called *Forward*.

According to *Outside Magazine*, "Forward is a very deliberately chosen word, and in fact, it defines Armstrong's new narrative: others may want to or expect to see him curled up in a fetal position in the dark, but he is moving ahead, not allowing himself to be crushed by the weight of the past."

Ultimately, Armstrong believes that having close friends and family are the most important things in life.

"Some of your friends stay with you," Armstrong said. "Some lean in. Some lean out. When you get out of here, you're going to know who your real friends are."

Armstrong, the ultimate competitor, walked out of the classroom and across the prison yard. He saw the pull-up bar and jumped right on it, pumping to 10 quick chin-ups.

Not to outdo himself, after finding out about the San Quentin Marathon, he challenged the reigning champion, Markelle Taylor, to a run-off at the November meet.

Protestant banquet honors Chaplain Mardi Jackson

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild
Chairman

The sounds of gospel shook San Quentin's Protestant Chapel as it hosted more than 250 inmates and 60 guests at its Annual Christian Banquet to close out 2017.

Chaplain Mardi Ralph Jackson and 30 Christian volunteers were honored at the Dec. 9 event for their service within the institution. Certificates of Appreciation were also presented to multiple churches and organizations for their contributions.

Derrick Holloway, representing the prison congregation, surprised Jackson with a wooden plaque for her tireless work, sacrifices, and for nurturing the spirits of the men in blue.

"I'm so humble to be honored by God," said Jackson, who paused for several seconds as tears rolled from her eyes. "I'm honored to stand in a place of men of the Almighty God. I understand who you are," added the small-statured woman with the big heart.

Jackson thanked her husband for "holding down the



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Chaplain Mardi Ralph Jackson

fort" in Los Angeles while she is miles away doing God's work. Jackson, respectfully known as Mother Jackson, knows most of the large prison congregation by name and her office door is

always open to the young, the old, and men of different faiths.

"It's obvious—these men needed a good mom while they are here," said Minister Linsie Arroyo, a volunteer

from Well Christian Community Church. "It's nothing like the family of God. The local churches need you out there. You have many teachers but no fathers. There is no prison like San Quentin, so pray for your brothers at other prisons, for much is given, much is required."

Holloway added, "Mother Jackson helps us become leaders and that leadership is about helping others. She is the model of that for me. She teaches us to be a light in this dark world. I thank her and what I have learned from her will always be a part of my life."

The audience enjoyed a variety of performances. The Praise and Worship Team (the prison choir) had people dancing in the aisles when they sang "Jesus a Wonderful Child." The inmate group Prodigal Son sang an original piece called "Encourage" that received a standing ovation.

Volunteers Elder Rash and Pamela Bates had the congregation bowing their heads and swaying their hands in the air as their powerful voices echoed throughout the chapel. They sang "I Love You Jesus More Than Anything."

Their vocal chemistry put one in the mind of gospel team CeCe and BeBe Winans.

"Being a part of this congregation keeps me grounded in my relationship with God," said Mike Boutta, singer with Prodigal Son. "Mother Jackson holds us accountable. She is committed to God's work, and she instills that in us."

Sister Linda Jackson (no relation) and Tammy Crane's soulful voices bought the audience to its feet when they performed their individual sets.

"It's an honor to walk with a sister like Chaplain Jackson," Linda Jackson said. "Many chaplains have walked through that door, but none like her."

Charles "Pookie" Sylvester told a couple of jokes about family and church. One that had the audience laughing: "Our congregation reminds me of the Smurfs with all these men-in-blue and one female."

The youth of the prison flock represented with gospel rap. Wisdom Arbee and Jamere Harris performed "I'm Doing Better" and received a round of applause. LeMar "Maverick" Harrison

and A.J. Gonzales rocked the house with "Oh Lord," a rap and singing duet.

"It's encouraging to see how many volunteers are committed to these men," said Mattie Zito, a certificate recipient from the Urban Ministry Institute. "Men are being paroled and you can recognize that hope is raising and that's reassuring."

After receiving his certificate, Pastor Bernard Emerson said, "God is building an army here to take back our streets for Jesus. These men are being prepared not to be paid pastors but pastors who are trying to get to heaven."

Others who received awards were Cornerstone Church, the New Faith Cathedral Church, Valley Christ Center, and Pastor Tom Pham of Red Hill Vietnamese Church. David Mack and Aldo Yannon were honored for conducting services when Chaplain Jackson wasn't available. In addition, the Well Community Church; the Malachi Brothers, who taught a fatherhood class; Mervin Watkins; Citizens of Zion Baptist Church in Compton; and San Quentin News adviser John Eagan of Tiburon Church were recognized.

Javier Stuarig brings victims and offenders together

By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer

Javier Stuarig organizes healing dialogues between families of people who have a loved one murdered with families of loved ones serving life sentences for murder. He wants to see the criminal justice system changed to incorporate the healing needs of both families.

"Our current system overrelies on punishment," said Stuarig, the executive director of Healing Dialogue and Action. "We have a justice system where a crime occurs, we punish them and that's it. That really just continues the cycle of hurt and pain."

He told a story about a mother whose son was killed.

"My son was murdered 17 years ago, and nothing has helped me more than sitting with the mom of the son who committed the murder; nothing has healed me more," the mother told him.

Stuarig said, "I've always thought of the work I do in spiritual terms — horrible things happen in the world because people have free will, but the true divine moments happen with how folks respond after a tragedy happens. Those are God's moments—when you see humanity at its best."

He has seen many of those kinds of interactions. The organization's team holds full-day retreats where they break into small groups with moms of a murdered child and moms of a child serving life for murder.

The team includes Stuarig, Brenda Ramirez, Sara Kruzan and Rebecca Weiker.

"What happens is they find a piece they identify with in each other," Stuarig said. "The mom with a child sentenced to life talking about her struggle, and the mom with a murdered child see the similarities. That kind of human interaction has the power to be transformative."

The Healing Dialogue and



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Antione Brown, Javier Stuarig and Borey 'PJ' Ai

Action team has suffered firsthand experiences like the ones they help people heal from. Weiker's sister was murdered. Ramirez had a 16-year-old brother sentenced to life without possibility of parole (LWOP). Kruzan herself was sentenced to LWOP at 16. She served 20 years before making it home.

"These are folks that have experienced horrible situations and gone through the processes of reflection," Stuarig said. "They have made a commitment to turn that pain into a light that they can share with others."

Stuarig believes the justice system continues the cycle of pain by failing to address the needs of crime survivors.

"I've met families who the murder happened 20 years ago, but the pain is still present and so raw. We don't do enough to offer support to survivors. What's worse is that the system contributes toward that anger."

"The system many times encourages people to stay in that angry place. There are too many times DAs call and

say, 'This person is up for parole. You need to testify, and you need to be there or this person is gonna get out.'"

Stuarig feels the system keeps the idea going that the person who committed the offense is the same old evil person and that this burdens survivors with having to speak out against parole grants instead of creating ways for survivors to find out how the person who committed the offense used their time, whether they felt remorse and whether they have changed their lives.

Seeking to improve the system, he sat in a circle with survivors of crime; offenders; prosecutors; Executive Officer Jennifer Shaffer of the Board of Parole Hearings; and Notice Edwards, chief, Office of Victim and Survivor Rights and Services. They brainstormed ways to improve the system for survivors.

He wants to see more opportunities for victims and offenders to come together for healing dialogues and create a letter bank system where people inside can write letters of apology and,

if the person offended wants to, they can receive the epistles expressing remorse.

In the past, Stuarig has won awards for successfully advocating changes in treatment of juveniles. He received the 2004 Human Rights Watch Award and The Children's Nobel Peace Prize from Sweden.

The awards stem from speaking out to stop detention facilities from housing children 17 and under in what he calls, "the worst place I've ever been too — 23-hour lockup in tiny cells."

At the time, Stuarig was doing a detention ministry for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The Catholic lay chaplain held that job for 27 years.

He took action after seeing what he deemed the mistreatment of juveniles in the Los Angeles County Jail.

"It took years of organizing and working with probation, sheriffs, DAs — everybody who had a hand in sending kids to the juvenile module," Stuarig said. "I met with the *LA Times*. It wasn't until two young men tried to commit suicide that the *LA Times* picked up the story. We had a press conference at the jail. They pulled my clearance for sharing confidential information, and I had to sue to get clearance back."

After the press coverage, the juvenile module was shut down, and 16-year-olds could no longer be shipped to adult prison yards. Additionally, a rule was changed

that prevented volunteers at the county jail from speaking with the media without permission from the sheriff.

"Javier is one of the best humans in the world," said Alex Mallick, formerly of Human Rights Watch, who is now the executive director of Restore Justice.

Stuarig evolved from doing detention ministry to the director of the Office of Restorative Justice while holding support groups for parents with children sentenced to life sentences. As time went by, he realized he needed to address the harm to victims—hence the need for restorative justice, which focuses on dialogues to heal both the person harmed and the person who committed the harmful act.

He believes people who have committed acts of violence and participate in self-help, figure out where that behavior came from and seek to make amends, can have a huge value to society.

"Those inside go deep. I don't see the type of reflection out here," Stuarig said. "It's unique and creates unique people — people we want to mentor our kids and help our communities heal."



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Javier Stuarig (center) sits in a circle dialoguing with officials, people harmed by crime and men convicted of crimes about how best to meet both parties needs.

Artistic Ensemble showcases its talents



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Artistic Ensemble group showing separation by a wall

Ira Perry being detain by ICE

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

A prison chapel served as a theater to dance, sing, rap and use spoken-word for an inmate performance, called Site Unseen. The audience of free people and men-in-blue walked across a makeshift stage and sat side by side to enjoy San Quentin's Artistic Ensemble.

"Prisoners, equality is not important to them ... they like their plight. Like Prisoners, they like their plight," expounded Chris Marshall at the Jan. 24 performance. His commanding voice echoed as the audience found their seats.

"I've been in this room hundreds of times and each time it's transformed differently," observed Billie Mizell, executive director of Insight Prison Project.

Amie Dowling directed the performance for an audience of about 125.

"It's amazing the amount of spaces that we occupy and then occupy them in new ways," Dowling said.

"It's a metaphor that those in them can be transformed."

THE OPENING SCENE

Rauch Draper sat on the top of a desk in the middle of the stage. His white tie and oversized glasses gave him the look of a news-caster. His dreadlocks hung over his shoulders as he read from cue cards.

"I have to keep reflecting on how I see myself," Draper said referring to collaborating with the other actors. "It's really hard to deal with everybody. Before, it used to be all their fault. Now, I'm able to look at myself and see I have issues, too."

Cell doors painted on sheets hung in the stage's background to create a prison look.

"At this time, you may choose to use your perspective adjustor," Rauch told the audience.

A small square cut-out hole in the program's center served a viewer for the audience to look through as "God Bless America" blared.

SITE UNSEEN: SCENE TO SCENE

By way of spoken-word and rap, Nythell "Nate" Collins took the stage to talk about social justice and equality.

Next to Collins, four actors sat in chairs to form a square. In the distance, two others sat with bowed heads; two others stood stoically with fists in the air — like the Black athletes' civil rights protests at the 1968 Olympics.

Jimi Hendricks' "Star-Spangled Banner" blared as actors kneeled, stood at attention, held hands over hearts and saluted as inspired by the music.

LeMar "Maverick" Harrison stood in front of a USA map with mysterious borders. Harrison used spoken-word to talk about the effect of U.S. criminal justice policy on society.

Draper cut in: "Many nations choose to round-up its men with the criminal gene."

Edmond Richardson took center stage to talk about the adversity he faced as a youngster. His absent father affected him emotionally. Several actors represented Richardson's emotional pain by violently

running into him as he tried to stand his ground.

"Your piece was the most visceral," an audience member told Richardson during a Q&A session afterward. "I felt it when your body was being hit. Your storytelling in that piece was amazing. I don't know how you controlled yourself."

THE SCENES CONSTANTLY CHANGED

Chris Marshall played a quarterback and lined the actors in an offensive formation—the point, "my body is a tool," Marshall said. "To be connected, you have to 'listen' to body language. These are stories told without words."

Collins talked about prison being a dark safe place of sanctuary— "there I could escape ridicule and judgment. I dreamed the impossible. In my space, I became limitless."

THE FINAL SCENE

Ira Perry sat center stage and indicated he was hiding in plain sight.

"You don't know me," he

began saying in different languages. He then began telling his history from living in Los Angeles.

During the Q&A session, the actors were asked what they found out about their lives from participating in the artistic project.

"Some guys have movement, some language. There are many talents, and we put it together to make it work," Anouthinh "Choy" Pangthong said. "We are stronger together, more efficient."

Collins added, "The diversity helps us become better at things we may not be good... being able to take experiences in our life, and tell them in ways that society could understand what we experience."

When asked how they are about working together, Emile DeWeaver said, "We argue a lot, then we make up and hug. Draper added, "It's really tricky."

A spokeswoman from California Lawyers for the Arts: "I came here for inspiration, and you gave that to me. You are doing good work for our country. We want to expose the nation to the artists in prisons. Other states need to know about the work that you are

doing. We need you outside." George Galvis of All of Us or None: "We have to speak in our own voice. Culture is healing."

Harrison: "We have to find the truth. Before we can help others, we have to ourselves. That's what IPP teaches us."

One inmate said, "Look at what we can do, if we come together. I have never in my 23 years in doing time, seen anything like this. I would like to encourage you, brothers, to continue. It was flawless."

Bay Area Media Coalition filmed the performance.

Performers: Anouthinh "Choy" Pangthong; Antwan "Banks" Williams; Chris Marshall, Sr.; Emile DeWeaver; Gary Harrell; Ira Perry; Carlos "Juancito" Meza; LeMar "Maverick" Harrison; Maurice "Reese" Reed; Nythell "Nate" Collins; Rauch Draper; Edmond Richardson; Amie Dowling; Freddy Gutierrez; Selby Wynn; Tiersa Nureyev; Sebastian Alvarez; Soundboard Operator; Stephen Pascascio.



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Chris Marshall, Nythell "Nate" Collins, Carlos "Juancito" Meza and LeMar "Maverick" Harrison



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Nythell "Nate" Collins explaining how incarceration affects him



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

The perspective adjustor



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Edmond Richardson dealing with life as a youngster

Prison University Project wins ethics debate



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Audience member questioning PUP Debate team



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Kyle Robertson moderating the debate

A team of philosophy students from University of California at Santa Cruz ventured inside San Quentin on Feb. 13 for an ethics debate against inmates from the prison's college program.

Nearly 100 people sat in the audience, including fellow inmates, more than a dozen volunteer teachers from the Prison University Project (PUP, also known as Patten College), Deputy Warden Ron Broomfield and Warden Ron Davis.

Davis acknowledged the volunteers and their contribution to public safety.

"As a warden, who comes from a security background, when we held a TEDx a couple years ago, the lights went out and the lieutenant governor was in the audience. I couldn't relax. I didn't sit down," Davis said. "But, now I understand the impact of having volunteers come in to give their time for programs that add to public safety. I'm appreciative and proud to see rehabilitation first-hand."

In addition to providing higher education to incarcerated people at San Quentin, PUP brings awareness about the need to expand access

to higher education to more prisons as well as the need for criminal justice reform.

"Teaching here isn't that different," said moderator Kyle Robertson about his experience teaching at UC Santa Cruz and the Prison University Project, adding, "UC students can access information easily, where incarcerated students can't, but are just as inquisitive."

The debate topics were: assessing the mental stability of government officials and the social impact of building a wall to separate Palestinians on the West Bank from Israel.

Judging were Sandra Dreisbach, Robert Ladenson and Kareem Weaver.

The debate used a format invented by Ladenson in 1996, called The Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (IEB). The IEB has grown into an annual national event with more than 200 universities fielding teams. The top 32 teams, determined by a set of regional around the country, compete at the nation every year.

IEB is one kind of event that UC Santa Cruz's philosophy department organizes to "foster more thoughtful and engaged communities of

thinkers, doers and change makers."

The San Quentin team consisted of Forrest Jones, Nelson Butler, Wayne Boatwright, Angel Falcone and Randy Akins.

"I always wanted to leave prison with a college education," Akins said. "I want to go out a better person than when I came in. I have to study every day to keep up. I've been doing it for two years, so I'm entrenched into it. When the ethics bowl came up, it was my dream. At least I believe it is, to expand my horizon." He added, "I would like to educate myself in life until I earn my Ph.D. and be called Dr. Akins."

Akins has been at San Quentin for three years. He is serving a life term with the possibility of parole. He is scheduled to appear before the parole board sometime in 2019; however, recent changes in law may allow him to appear this summer.

The UC Santa Cruz Team consisted of philosophy students Marlo Eslao, Anna Feygin, Pedro Enriquez, Carissa Chu, Emma Hair, and Pablo Fitten.

The debate on the mental

stability of government officials focused on the Goldwater rule.

The Goldwater rule forbids psychiatrists from assessing public officials whom they have not personally interviewed.

"Should we change the Goldwater rule and if so, how?"

After the UC students brought up the mental stability of President Donald J. Trump, the inmates replied that Trump is democratically elected. Furthermore, if the public wanted him out, they'd go to the polls in the next election and choose a different president. They also claimed that changing the rule would politicize psychiatry and that the American Psychiatric Association instituted the rule. Finally, the inmates said that nothing precludes congress from setting limits on presidential powers.

The Santa Cruz students responded that for the sake of openness, psychiatrists should be able to give their expert opinion more freely.

They argued that Trump is an exceptional case, so he should be treated exceptionally.

During the intermission, several of the outside guests agreed that the inmates came out better in the first part of the debate and that their argument was clearer. The guests thought that because the inmates are older, they have a better grasp on the issue.

After intermission, the Santa Cruz students proposed that divestment from companies that do business with Israel is an ethical way to seek a non-violent solution to something "the world recognizes as illegal," referring to the wall that separates Palestinians on the West Bank from Israel.

They argued that it is wrong for a country to profit from oppression and that the sanctions are aimed at bringing awareness to the problem. The key is that it is a non-violent means of protest, the students argued.

According to the students, it's not an anti-Semitic argument. It is an anti-oppression action. The movement is not targeted at individuals, but institutions and companies. The students seek to recognize human rights under international law for the Palestinians.

Sanctions and boycotts inspire people to do something

against corporations that profit from oppression. It allows people to understand the power that corporations have over people, they agreed.

The PUP students replied by asking for the reason for building the wall and suggested that the wall was built because the actions of Hezbollah. They also questioned that economics could solve a political problem.

The UC students stated that democracy is absent in the West Bank, and it's not a free and fair society—that the economic and political factors are the same. The UC students cited Israel's history of ethnic cleansing. "Human rights come first, national rights come second," one of the UC students said. "Israel is doing the same thing as other colonizing nations have done, like in South America."

Weaver questioned the UC students about the passive violence from boycotts and sanctions and that "any unjust barrier creates harm."

The final score cards from judge Sandra Dreisbach read SQ 54 UC 51; Robert Ladenson, SQ 51 UC 46; and Kareem Weaver, SQ 52 UC 41.

— Juan Haines

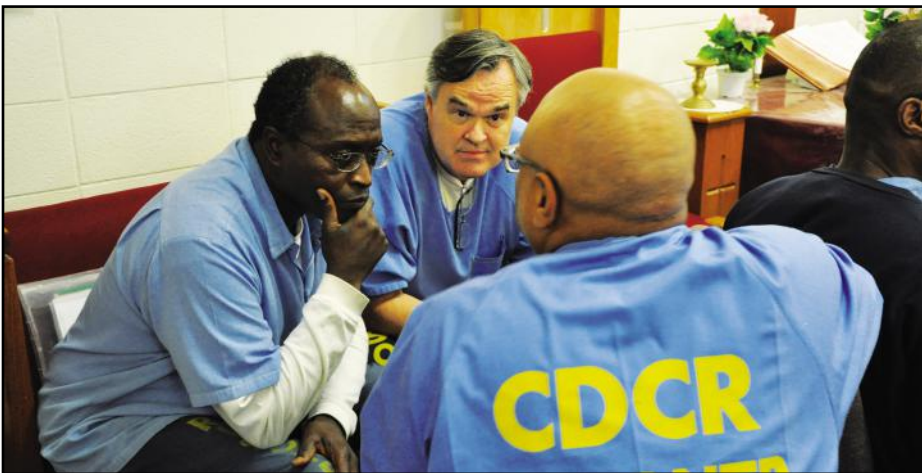


Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

PUP students discussing their strategy to argue



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

UC Santa Cruz Team trying to figure out their solutions to win



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Jessie Rothman discussing the event with the guest



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Warden R. Davis watching the event with the audience

Around the World



Photo courtesy of Zoe Mullery

Creative writing teacher Zoe Mullery with family and friends at the palace of Emperor Menelik II in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



File Photo

Correctional Supervising Cook, S. Sylvester with San Quentin News at the Great Wall of China February 2, 2018

Snippets

Universe, in which we live, is thought to be 13.75 billion years old.

Bacteria are the oldest living organisms on Earth.

Iodine is an element essential for health and derives from the Greek words meaning Violent or Purple.

Each year, Southern California has about 10,000 earthquakes. Most of them are so small, they're not felt.

Tuatara, a beak-headed reptile of the Rhychocephalia, has sidestepped extinction for at least 200 million years.

Yawning is called Pandiculation in scientific terms.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

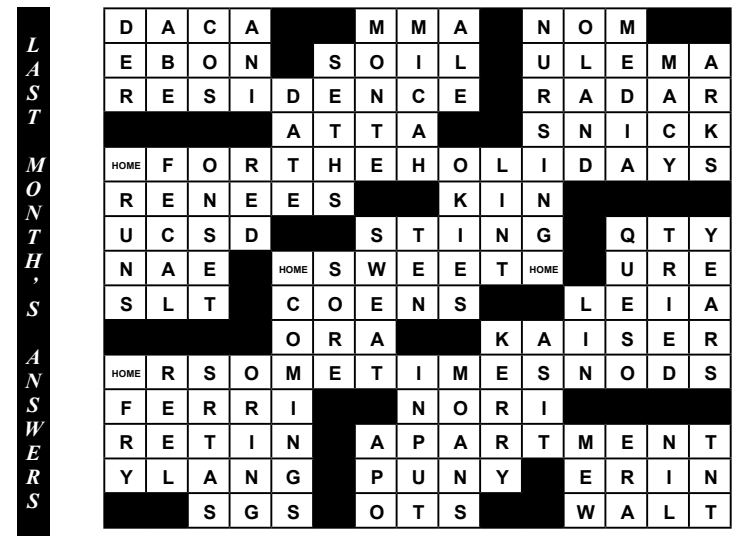
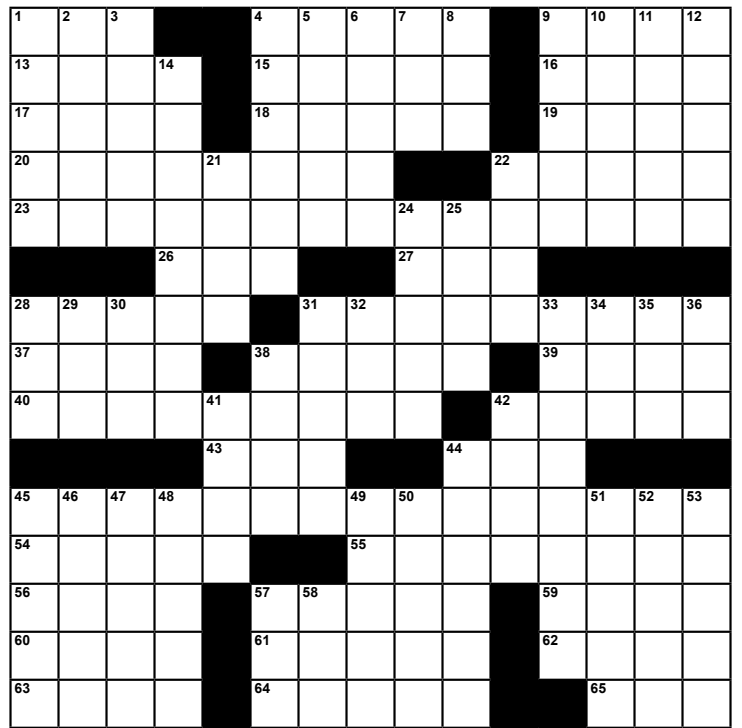
By Jonathan Chiu / Edited by Jan Perry

Across

1. Former commercial jet airline (Abbrev.)
4. Extremely small
9. Passing grades
13. Brand of hair remover
15. Poet Wilcox and singer Henderson
16. Type of fruit or shape
17. Ye ____ Shoppe
18. Cheerful
19. Robert De ____
20. Line placed along the continental shelf of Southeast Asia
22. Type of wood saw
23. Large Eurasia fish-eating bird
26. Medical saver at Walmart
27. US org. founded in 1871
28. *Morning Joe* network
31. Cop car, for example
37. His temper was in a ____
38. Brand of footwear
39. Syphilis
40. Expensive possession you're happy to get rid of
42. Azerbaijan's monetary unit
43. Okinawa dagger
44. Michael ____ Black
45. US chief justice from 1910-21 appointed by Taft
54. Farm buildings
55. Romantic's quest
56. Sportscaster Andrews
57. Bible queen
59. Squirrel's nest
60. Get up
61. Niall of "Too Much To Ask"
62. Proficient
63. Prisoners' art
64. City near SW Minneapolis
65. Catholic's Peter and Paul (Abbrev.)

Down

1. Disney princess
2. Daily prayer
3. Swinton of *Snowpiercer*
4. Central Cali. city
5. I'm sorry that...
6. Instructor's domain
7. Dashed
8. Film's music, (Abbrev.)
9. Sleep disrupter
10. Existence
11. Rooney Mara movie
12. Spy craft
14. Trustworthy
21. Actor Guinness
22. Shipbuilding lumber
24. Authorize
25. Curves
28. *Reservoir Dogs* character
29. Secret WWII British military service (Abbrev.)
30. A goose egg
31. Cornrow
32. Actor Chaney
33. Actor born Alphonso Joseph D'Abruzzo
34. Ruler's enforcer
35. US crime fighting org.
36. Blackest opp.
38. Sudan's neighbor
41. Prison lockdown reports (Abbrev.)
42. ____ chauvinist pigs
44. American lizard
45. Screenwriter and critic Roger
46. MTV's cartoon char.
47. Carpel Tunnel victim
48. Actresses Hathaway and Bancroft
49. SNL alum Cheri
50. Keith of "Til Summer Comes Around"
51. People from Brandenburg
52. Slender or elegant
53. Small Old World songbirds
57. ____-devil
58. A coal scuttle



Sudoku Corner

1	5			6	3	2			
	2		8		5				
							7	1	
	9	5		7				6	
			5		1				
	3			2		7	5		
5	1								
			2		4			1	
		4	1	5				2	9

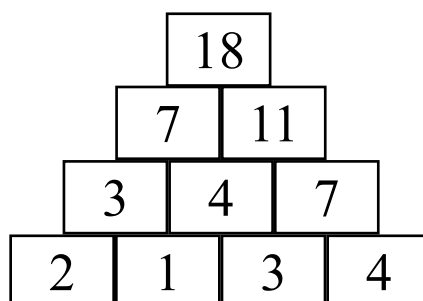
	2	6	8				7	9	
9		1		6					
7			5						
	3	7	9						
1									4
					6	3	2		
					9				3
				7		8			2
	1	8			3	5	7		

Last Issue's Sudoku Solutions

6	1	2	5	3	8	9	7	4
9	8	7	1	4	6	3	2	5
3	5	4	2	7	9	8	1	6
4	2	1	3	8	7	5	6	9
8	3	5	9	6	1	7	4	2
7	6	9	4	5	2	1	8	3
2	4	8	7	9	3	6	5	1
5	9	6	8	1	4	2	3	7
1	7	3	6	2	5	4	9	8

6	4	3	1	8	7	9	2	5
1	8	5	9	2	4	7	3	6
2	9	7	5	3	6	8	1	4
7	3	8	2	5	1	6	4	9
4	1	9	6	7	3	2	5	8
5	2	6	8	4	9	3	7	1
3	7	1	4	6	8	5	9	2
8	5	4	3	9	2	1	6	7
9	6	2	7	1	5	4	8	3

Answer to last month's Brain Teaser:



SUM TOTAL

Replace the question marks with mathematical symbols (+, -, x or /) to make a working sum.

$$9 ? 2 ? 3 ? 9 = 6$$

X and O

The numbers around the edge of the grid describe the number of X's in the vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines connecting with that square. Complete the grid so that there is an X or O in every square.

1	2	4	4	3	2
6					4
3					4
2		X			3
2			X		1
2	3	2	2	5	1

A man's life conversion testimony from Death Row

Jeffrey Theodore
Contributing Writer

I was arrested on Oct. 1, 1983, just 55 days after my 21st birthday. A jury in California then convicted me of the charges, which were held against me, and sentenced me to death. The very next morning, in the early hours, I was abruptly taken out of the county jail and transported to San Quentin State Prison, where I was handed over to the warden on California's death row.

The classification board cleared me to participate in the exercise yard program, so each morning after being strip-searched and handcuffed, I am escorted to a concrete "yard," 40 by 60 feet in size, where I may mingle with other inmates for several hours before being escorted back inside.

The first executions to occur in my time on Death Row occurred after I had been



Jeffrey Theodore

here eight years. The first was in April 1992 and the second followed in August 1993. In the eight years previous, I had come to know these two men quite well out on the exercise yard and when each of their executions took place something very profound happened to me. I took their deaths very hard at first and soon became depressed. In my cell one

night in October 1993, with that quiet cell door closed, I fell to my knees on that floor with tears streaming down my face and I begged God to help and repented of all my sins.

I had been reading the Bible, but my dyslexia had made it quite hard to understand. I was on that floor, despondent and brokenhearted (see Psalms 51:17) when a peace I had never known before came washing over me (see Philippians 4:7). Jesus had become my Lord and Savior that night. I started reading the Bible more, especially the first thing in the morning, and the Spirit and the Word became my teacher and my counselor (see John 14:26, 15:26, and 16:13; 1 John 2:20 and 2:27). I was transformed into a new creation (see 2 Corinthians 5:17) and then the renewing on my mind (see Romans 12:2 and Eph 4:23). I soon began going to sleep earlier each night

and was awakened in the twilight hours by the Spirit of God so that in these early quiet hours I could read and re-read God's Word.

Everywhere I went and everything I did, my faith grew ever stronger and the Holy Spirit, Jesus, God and His Word became more and more real to me. The very first thing I wanted each and every morning was more of God's presence, peace and His love. As I began living my life through God, with his son, Jesus, as my high priest, I began taking baby steps in my life's renewal. I began fasting, just a couple of meals at a time at first, in order to clear my mind and body, and before long I was able to fast for several days at a time, consuming nothing but water. God's control over my life and the sheer power of his Holy Spirit surpassed anything I had ever known or experienced before and reading his living Word pierced

my spirit and soul more clearly than any mere blade could do (see Hebrews 4:12).

Soon I began doing Bible studies by mail and listening to Christian radio and television programs whenever I could. Praise and worship music began filling my idle hours as the Lord taught me the meaning of faith! "...so then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (see Romans 10:17), for "...without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:16)." I found that the more I was denying my "self" (see Mark 8:34), the easier it became to allow myself to be led by his Spirit.

I learned that He is my heavenly Father and that He sent His only begotten son, Jesus (see John 3:16) to cleanse me of all my sins (see Acts 2:38; Heb. 9:22; 2 Cor.

7:1) and to reconcile me to a glorious relationship with Him (see 2 Cor. 5:18; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:20; and Heb. 2:17).

God had both forgiven and pardoned me of my sin-debt, as; "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake; and I will not remember your sins" (see Isaiah 43:25 and Hebrews 10:17).

The Holy Spirit, Word and God's holy presence repeatedly convicted me of my sins and upon repentance I was duly converted so that my sins were blotted out entirely in the presence of the Lord (see Acts 3:19, 4:29, and 13:52).

I have been praying to reach out to others whom Satan has in bondage. It is my desire to reach, teach, comfort and encourage our youth in juvenile hall centers all over the world.

I hope this testimony has been a blessing to you.

Low execution rate in 2017

By Forrest Lee Jones
Journalism Guild Writer

Though 2017 had the second fewest annual prison executions in several decades—23 executions to be exact—the controversies surrounding capital punishment have yet to decline, reports *Newsweek*.

In the five death penalty cases *Newsweek* featured, issues of mental health, overlooked or incorrect use of evidence and neglect of inmates' rights were brought to the forefront. Similarly, since all of the inmates were executed by lethal injection, disputes over the use of a new drug in the cocktails were also featured.

FIRING SQUAD

Ricky Jovan Gray was on Death Row for 10 years for brutally murdering seven people on a six-day killing spree in 2006. His lawyer requested he be killed by firing squad as lethal injection was essentially "chemical torture."

The judge denied the argument on the grounds that Gray's lawyers were given the option of the electric chair and also failed to prove the drugs in the cocktail would cause Gray unnecessary suffering.

Ledell Lee was on Death Row for 21 years for murdering and sexually assaulting 26-year-old Debra Reese in 1993. Lee's first lawyer had been drunk during court proceedings, neg-

atively impacting his case.

DNA

After receiving new lawyers, Lee's legal team requested DNA testing of hair samples that were used as exculpatory evidence. The request was denied despite the fact that the sample used to put Lee behind bars had been discredited by the FBI and the Department of Justice.

Mark James Asay was on Death Row for 18 years as the first White man in Florida to be put on death row for killing a Black man. He also was convicted for killing a White and Hispanic man who was dressed as a woman.

Asay was Florida's first prisoner to be executed with a cocktail containing the drug etomidate. His lawyers argued before the court that the drug cocktail was unconstitutional due to the pain it can cause.

Further complicating his case, Asay also faced ineffective assistance of counsel when his lawyer was placed under investigation for missing critical deadlines for appeals and for storing Asay's records in a shed, where they were destroyed by water and vermin.

As 2017 progressed, lawyers continued to argue the use of lethal injection as cruel and unusual punishment under the Constitution's Eighth Amendment to little avail. Some witnessed what onlookers called botched executions.

Governor may stall death penalty

By Charles David Henry
Former Staff Writer

Gov. Jerry Brown is in control of how fast executions resume in California, according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

Currently, there is an injunction against further executions pending in state court while an injection protocol is being litigated.

Litigation has stalled any execution in the state for more than 12 years.

In November 2016 California voters approved Proposition 66, a process to speed up executions.

After the California Supreme Court upheld Proposition 66, "both backers and opponents of the death penalty concede that executions at San Quentin Prison might be more than a year away," the *Times* reported.

If Brown "doesn't want it to move forward quickly, it won't move forward quickly," said Michele Hanisee, president of the Association of Deputy District Attorneys for Los Angeles County.

CDCR has unveiled a single-drug method of execution - On January 29, 2018, CDCR gave notice to OAL that it will not proceed with that rulemaking action and filed a new lethal injection protocol in compliance with Proposition 66.

Erwin Chemerinsky, Dean of UC Berkeley School of Law, along with other lawyers said it's conceivable that the governor could postpone execution until his term of office ends in January 2019.

Brown could try to commute death sentences to life without the possibility of pa-



File photo

Gas chamber

role, but the California Constitution limits his power. He would need support from four of the seven Supreme Court justices to commute the death sentence.

Brown has three appointees on the court and a fourth vacancy to fill. "Two of them, Justices Goodwin Liu and Mariano-Florentino Cuellar, are moderately liberal, but Justice Leandra Kruger, the third, has voted with conservatives on criminal justice issues," the *Times* reported.

Attorney General Xavier Becerra testified that despite supporting the death penalty, he disagrees with how it has been handled.

Becerra expects prosecu-

tors to pressure the state to move quickly to overturn any court orders preventing executions, but he represents Brown and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, an aide said to the *LA Times*.

U.S. District Judge Richard Seeborg, who presides over the Northern California federal case that stopped the state from performing executions, could allow crime victims or Proposition 66 sponsors to intervene, but he is not required to do so by law, Chemerinsky said.

"There is no enthusiasm inside the administration to do anything to hasten executions," Michael Rushford,

founder of the Criminal Justice Legal Foundation, told the *Times*. "There are laws in this state that if the administration doesn't want to enforce, they don't, and this is one of them."

Before his retirement Judge Alex Kozinski of the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals wrote, California "has no functional death penalty," despite the law to speed up executions.

"It's as if we're all performers in a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. We make exaggerated gestures and generate much fanfare. But in the end it amounts to nothing," Kozinski wrote. California has failed to come up with "a workable protocol" for more than 10 years.

Texas executes Mexican national regardless of public's disapproval

The state of Texas executed a Mexican national despite international outcry and his repeated claims of innocence, according to a news report. The state also denied a request for new DNA testing of the victim.

Ruben Cardenas Ramirez claimed innocence of the rape and murder of his 16-year-old cousin from 20 years ago in the Rio Grande Valley, reports the *Houston Chronicle*.

Cardenas professed inno-

cence up until his execution on Nov. 8.

The victim's sister, Roxanna Laguna, said, "Justice was finally served." She said she witnessed a man coming through their bedroom window and kidnapping her sister from the bed they shared.

International organizations such as Amnesty International, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and the United Nations criticized the handling of the case.

Cardenas sent a written note to his family before the execution. It said, "I love you all very much. And I know that you love me too. ... I will not and cannot apologize for someone else's crime, but I will be back for justice."

Police closed in on the Guanajuato native as the key suspect hours after Mayra Laguna's disappearance on Feb. 22, 1997. Investigators questioned Cardenas and his friend Tony Castillo. The two first confessed to party-

ing with booze and cocaine, but after hours of intense questioning, admitted to her murder.

After the admission, authorities claimed Cardenas led them to Mayra's body, which had been tossed in a canal.

But defense counsel claimed the opposite: police forced Cardenas into confessing to the killing, and the police led him to the body, rather than the other way around.

"This guy is guilty as sin," Hidalgo County prosecutor Ted Hake said.

According to court documents, Hidalgo County did not inform Mexican authorities about Cardenas' arrest or apprise him of his rights to talk with a Mexican consulate, a violation of Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

Cardenas' attorney, Maurice Levin, filed several appeals in the federal courts requesting new DNA tests.

Carrying out the execution without more testing "violates the most basic notions of fairness and justice," Levin said.

"I am extraordinarily disappointed with this outcome and at the same time overcome with pride at the efforts made by his lawyer, Maurice Levin, and her team of lawyers," said Gregory Kuykendall, an Arizona attorney authorized to speak on behalf of Mexico.

— Forrest Lee Jones

Lawyer says: 'Get prepared for freedom'

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

The path to freedom is narrow for the men and women incarcerated in California's prisons, Stanford law professor Mike Romano told an audience of about 150 inmates, on Jan. 19, in San Quentin's Catholic Chapel.

"I know it's very difficult for Mike to come here and tell you these things," said Kevin "Bilal" Chatman, who accompanied Romano with two of his staffers. "I had six life sentences and 150 years. I thought I'd never get out. I



Mike Romano speaking in the Catholic Chapel

stayed in trouble. But then Prop. 36 passed in 2012, and I wanted to go home bad, so I changed my behavior to show that I wasn't the same person as before."

Romano said passing Prop. 36 was "historic." He said that he believes it was "a first in the nation"—a voter-approved law, releasing people from prison.

The new law allowed Chatman's release in 2013. He attained employment as an operations manager at a logistics company. He also works at Levi Stadium, where in 2014 he was employee of the year.

"There are jobs out there," he told the audience as he spoke about ending the practice of employers asking job applicants if they'd been in prison.

"We are working on ban-the-box," Chatman said. "We are returning citizens. We don't call ourselves ex-cons."

Romano took Chatman to

the state capitol to meet with lawmakers and show them what a rehabilitated returned citizen looks like.

The legislators, intrigued by Chatman, listened carefully to his story.

Romano said that he was upset at the state leadership because they were the very people who created prison overcrowding.

"They were the same people who sent him to prison," Romano said. "They acted like they met someone who survived a plane crash. They created the plane crash."

Romano and his staff worked successfully with other prison reform groups to roll back mandatory sentencing guidelines. The team of prison reformers is seeking to expand time reduction credits for prisoners. They are also asking the California Supreme Court to force prison officials to consider early parole for nonviolent three-strikers.

"Even if the court ac-

cepts the case, it could be two years before they decide on it," Romano said. "That gives you guys two years—stay out of trouble. Get programs. The best case is that a lot of you guys would go before the parole board."

Many of the questions the inmates asked Romano concentrated on how the parole board operates. Romano responded to most of the questions by saying that Gov. Jerry Brown wants to let more people out of prison, but wants inmates to take more programs.

"I didn't know how blessed I was to have all these programs at San Quentin," Chatman said. "If you're not getting into programs and getting in touch with yourself, you're making a mistake."

Romano added, "Keep getting prepared so when you come before a court, the board, or the governor, you are showing that you're ready."

CDCR ordered to rewrite regulations for Prop. 57

By Forrest Lee Jones
Journalism Guild Writer

Sacramento County Superior Court judge Allen Sumner preliminarily ordered prison officials to rewrite the early parole regulations consistent with Proposition 57's language.

Sumner ruled the state of California erred when writing regulations that didn't specifically exclude some non-violent sex offenders from early parole consideration, reports *The Associated Press*. The voter-approved Proposition 57 allows many California prisoners to be considered for early release.

However, during the 2016 general election, Gov. Jerry Brown told voters that all sex offenders would be excluded from consideration under the proposition, according to the article.

In his Feb. 9, 2018 decision, Sumner said CDCR does not have broad authority to exclude certain inmates from parole consideration. Specifically, the judge said the exclusion exceeded CDCR's authority, which had to be consistent with the language in Proposition 57.

"If the voters had intended to exclude all registered sex offenders from early parole consideration under Proposition 57, they presumably would have said so," said the judge.

Janice Bellucci, attorney

and president of Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws, who filed a lawsuit on behalf of non-violent sex offenders, said the ruling could allow early parole for half of the 20,000 sex offenders incarcerated in state prison.

Bellucci argued in her suit that the regulations written by CDCR conflicted with the proposition's language and the voters' intent. She further argued that only those crimes defined under the penal code as violent offenses, such as murder, kidnapping and forcible rape, are excluded.

According to the *AP* report, that could potentially allow early parole for those convicted for crimes not defined as violent under the penal code, such as raping an unconscious person, inappropriately touching someone who is unlawfully restrained, incest, pimping a minor, indecent exposure and possessing child pornography.

Sumner said corrections officials may make the case for excluding these offenders as they rewrite the regulations, even though they are not on the violent felony list (Penal Code 667.5(c)). Bellucci said she will sue again if the rewritten regulations go too far.

"Until they figure something else out, they have to consider anybody convicted of a nonviolent offense even if it was a sex offense," said

Bellucci. "We believe we've won a battle, but the war continues."

Mark Zahner, chief executive of the California District Attorneys Association who opposed the Prop. 57 initiative, told the *AP*, "There's a great danger of truly violent people being released early and people who commit, in this case, sex offenses that involve violence being released early."

Karen Pank of the Chief Probation Officers of California countered that she still believes the measure does exclude sex offenders.

"We hope the issue will be more fully vetted on appeal," said Pank.

Currently the California Public Safety Partnership is sponsoring a 2018 ballot initiative (entitled: "Reducing Crime and Keeping California Safe Act of 2018").

Asked how this new initiative might affect Sumner's recent ruling, Attorney Milena Blake of the Stanford Three-Strike Project told the *San Quentin News* that it would reduce the number of crimes that would qualify for the Proposition 57 early parole consideration.

"If the November initiative qualifies for the November ballot and passes, it will supersede any future court ruling in favor of nonviolent offenders and eliminate the number of people who qualify," Blake said.

Court ruling aids sex offenders in early parole consideration

By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer

California's latest attempt to regulate who qualifies for early parole consideration hit a snag when its Superior Court ruled that the state cannot automatically exclude sex offenders from the list of eligible people.

Under Proposition 57, voted into law in November 2016, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) can make nonviolent offenders eligible for parole consideration after they complete the full term for their primary offense. Now, CDCR needs to determine what constitutes a violent crime, a definition that varies across state, federal and CDCR regulations.

Sacramento Superior Court Judge Allen Sumner ruled that the regulation's definition of all sex offenses as violent crimes is too broad. Sumner sent the case back to prison administrators to define "nonviolent crime."

The CDCR defines a non-

violent offender as someone who, among other things, has not been convicted of a sexual offense requiring registration.

The case before Sumner was brought by the Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws and an incarcerated person identified as John Doe.

They argued that CDCR's definition is in conflict with the California penal code, under which some sex offenses are not listed as violent crimes.

According to the writ filed, the Alliance also argued that CDCR's regulations are also overbroad because they "preclude early parole consideration for any one ever convicted of a registerable sex offense, even if the person is not currently incarcerated" for such a crime.

Though some sex crimes requiring registration aren't listed in the penal code as violent crimes, some people may agree that they are violent. Those crimes include: rape of a drugged or unconscious person; touching the

intimate part of another person while that person is unlawfully restrained; pimping a minor; incest; sodomy with a person confined to state prison; sending or exhibiting certain harmful (i.e., sexual) matter to a minor; sexual penetration with a foreign object while the victim is unconscious; and advertising or possessing child pornography.

Still, some of those registerable sex offenses which the Legislature has not designated "violent felonies" may not be violent, for example indecent exposure.

The court also found that CDCR did not point to any "language in Proposition 57" that barred a person serving time for a current nonviolent offense for a past sex offense.

Superior Court remanded the case back to CDCR to define what a nonviolent offender is under Proposition 57 (see Alliance for Constitutional Sex Offense Laws, et al., v. California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, case number 34-2017-80002581).

R.O.O.T.S

Continued from page 1

Those in the program housed in H-Unit couldn't attend due to a lockdown.

Graduate Kevin "K" Neang, a 23-year-old from San Jose, shared a story that made many "eyes sweat."

The ABC (American-Born Cambodian) lived a gang lifestyle that glamorized the streets and Khmer pride while not even knowing what that meant.

"All I knew was that Angelina Jolie loves our country," Neang said. When the audience laughed, he responded, "What? She even adopted a baby K."

He learned from ROOTS that he needed to know his history in order to heal.

"It allowed me to go back and call my mom and asked about her history—the Killing Fields," Neang said. "I told her, 'I need to know where I came from. You

don't have to hurt alone no more."

She visited and opened up about being a little girl run out of her home by Khmer Rouge, seeing kid soldiers killing, blood everywhere, finding her father with his throat slit, hands and feet cut off and chest opened, whole family being executed, and about her being tied to a tree, shoes taken, and beaten. She took off her shoes in the visiting room and showed Neang the scars on her feet.

"I couldn't take the visit no more," Neang said. "We were both crying. She told me, 'Please do not have hatred toward Khmer Rouge because they too were victims.'"

When Neang called her after the visit, she said, "Thank you. I've been needing to let that out. I love you."

Neang added, "That very first moment my mom opened up to me about her life is when I started living my own. Now conversations have begun throughout the family. Now we're reconnect-

ing with family in Cambodia. ROOTS helped my family get stronger."

Graduate Si Dang followed with his quest to know his history. ROOTS sparked him to ask his mother about their family history. She told him about growing up in Vietnam during the war. Helicopters fired on her village. She saved a child, but that same child was killed a little while later—survivor's guilt.

Dang, born in 1975, said his father was in a re-education camp until 1981.

In the United States, they were poor and discriminated against.

In 1989, a car accident claimed the lives of his father, two uncles and a pregnant aunt. Despite everything, his mother raised six children.

"I see courage, sacrifice and hope when I see my mother," Dang said.

The Hawaiian community lifted spirits back up with a Haka dance performance.

A comedy routine by San Quentin News crossword

designer Jonathan Chiu followed. The mixed crowd gave each other permission to laugh at his unique sense of humor.

The evening ended with skits performed by volunteers, graduates and facilitators.

The other graduates were: Raven Jenkins, Yeng Lee, Wilson Nguyen, Ezequiel Roman, Sou Saechao, Vah Saechao, Satnam Singh, Glen Tufuga, Angel Villafan, Phouc Vong, Jimmy Vue, Tith Ton, Jerome Watts, and Vadim Zakharchenko.

Facilitators also received certificates. They were Rafael Cuevas, You, Pangthong, Moua Vue, Lamar "Maverick" Harrison, Lee Xiong, Chanthon Bun, Eusebio Gonzales, David B. Le, Joe Hancock, Damon Cooke, and Kamsan Suon.

The day also marked the retirement of You and the return of Nighiep Ké Lam.

You, who had been with ROOTS since Eddie Zheng and Ben Wang started it in

2012, stepped down from the chairman role.

Ké Lam, known as "Mr. San Quentin" for participating in everything from baseball to ROOTS before paroling, visited.

"I cried the first time I drove by here because I miss y'all," Ké Lam said. "I don't have that same sense of brotherhood out there that I have here. A lot of people out there are still in prison because they never learned how to deal with their emotional trauma. We need more strong men to be role models, not just for other men, but for kids and people in leadership today."

Ké Lam gives back to his community as an Asian Prisoners Support Committee reentry coordinator. He helps with getting identification, peer support, counseling, transportation, mediating with parole officers and picking people up from the gate on their release dates.

Many volunteers who came in to teach, learned in

the process.

Cambodian volunteer Lina Khoeur added, "I never really had the experience working South East Asian identities. So coming here and learning about the trauma helps me bring that back to my family."

Volunteer Xanh Tran, a jack of many trades, said, "All of our traumas are passed down from our families. If we don't heal, the fruit will be rotten. If we can heal ourselves, we don't have to pass down those rotten apples."

Tracy Nguyen, who taught the LGBT segment, said, "If we really dissect our lived experiences as LGBT people and incarcerated people, you will find that our oppressions are similar—that is otherization from society, shame within our communities, policies that restrict our freedom. When we get in front of each other to share those stories, the unity and power we can build is part of the pathway to our shared liberation."

California's skyrocketing prison budget

By William Earl Tolbert
Journalism Guild Writer

California leads the rest of the nation in prison spending with a skyrocketing prison budget, according to a report by *PolitiFact*.

During Gov. Jerry Brown's 16th and final State of the State Address, he lectured legislators on California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's budget.

CDCR's spending budget has ballooned from around \$40 million in 1970-71 to \$12 billion this year. Prison spending will make up almost 9 percent of this year's state budget.

Brown has been following a 2009 order from the U.S. Supreme Court to work to end prison overcrowding. But despite a decrease in the inmate population, there has been no corresponding

decrease in CDCR's staff numbers, and prison staffing costs have climbed.

PolitiFact found that California now leads the nation in per capita inmate cost, but because of the court order to eliminate overcrowding, the state cannot close prisons to alleviate some of the excess spending.

"So long as the order is in effect we cannot close

prisons because to do so would reduce our capacity, thereby pushing us back above 137.5 percent" level of prison crowding, state prisons spokesman Jeffrey Callison told *PolitiFact*.

In his address, Brown cautioned legislators to consider legislation that supports the criminal justice system as a whole by taking a holistic approach rather than passing more and more

crime laws that continue to fill prisons.

"California's prison population exploded from 1980 through the late 1990s, and prison building metastasized in the state," said Franklin Zimring, a U.C. Berkeley criminal justice professor. "We went from a little over 24,000 prisoners in California prisons to over 170,000 prisoners in 2010 and 2011."

Zimring told *PolitiFact* that California's tough sentencing schemes, like the Three Strikes Law, had increased the prison population during the 1980s and '90s. Since the 2009 federal order, California's prison population has sharply fallen. This year the estimated inmate population is about 119,000, compared to the population peak of 163,000 in 2006.

Restaurando una comunidad por medio del dialogo

Por Jorge Heredia
Escritor Contribuyente

Más de dos docenas de sobrevivientes de crimen cruzaron las pesadas y cautivantes puertas de acero en San Quentin para enfrentar a prisioneros convictos de crímenes serios, incluyendo asesinato. Una de las conclusiones claves fue de que el diálogo de sanación es necesario para mejorar la comunicación entre sobrevivientes y ofensores.

El evento tomo lugar en Oct.27-28 en la Iglesia Protestante. Participantes incluidos prisioneros, víctimas de crimen y familiares de víctimas, fiscales y organizaciones del sistema penal.

Dina Phillips ha vivido el efecto del crimen en ambos lados.

"Hace más de 22 años mi mundo fue sacudido - no sé de qué hubiera estabilidad alguna antes, pero esta fue mucho peor. Perdí a mi sobrina a los 2 meses de haber nacido y mi hermano de 16 años de edad fue enviado a prisión," Phillips dijo.

"Escogí reprimir mis sentimientos y evadí cualquier conversación acerca de esa parte de mi vida. Esa era una muy sensitiva y destrozada parte de mi corazón y alma que yo no permitía a nadie mirar debido al miedo de ser criticada."

Por casi dos años, Phillips sacó a todos de su vida, porque ella creía que nadie entendería su dolor, hasta que ella se puso en contacto con el director de Healing Dialogue and Action.

"Nunca ni en un millón de años me hubiera imaginado que había tantas personas afuera a quien les importó escuchar mi historia sin juzgar," Phillips dijo. "Healing Dialogue and Action, Human Rights Watch, ARC (Anti-Recidivism Collation), Restore Justice y todos los hombres de San Quentin, todos ustedes son parte del camino a mi sanación."

No fue la primera vez, dentro de San Quentin para Nolle Swan Gilbert. Ella asistió al evento del 2016.

Aunque Gilbert sabía que los reclusos estaban nerviosos, se sintió tranquila porque los hombres "(han) estado haciendo la ardua labor de trabajar en sí mismos mientras cumplen sus condenas."

Gilbert sabía que la mayoría de ellos son también sobrevivientes de crímenes.

"Ellos son hombres valientes al confrontar sus pasados y al aceptar responsabilidad por sus crímenes," Gilbert dijo. "Esto es más de lo que la mayoría de las personas fuera de prisión tienen el coraje de hacer."

tatal de San Quentin por toda la programación de autoayuda que ofrece, porque estos programas me ayudaron hacer el trabajo de introspección acerca de mi niñez para conectar los puntos de cómo y porque yo fui tan destructivo, provocándole la muerte a una persona inocente por la violencia callejera entre pandillas."

Pangthong reconoció que él no puede cambiar el daño que ocasionó, pero "Yo puedo cambiar cómo reaccionar hoy al estar al servicio de mi comunidad," añadiendo, "Éste es el por qué hoy estoy aquí, como mi promesa hacia ustedes y a quienes lastimé y pasaré el resto de mi vida promoviendo la no-violencia."

Pangthong hizo una pausa para contener sus emociones y terminó al compartir que después de 21 años tras las rejas, fue encontrado elegible para salir bajo libertad condicional.

Después, todos los participantes del simposio formaron siete grupos pequeños.

Los círculos proveyeron espacio para que cada persona hablara o escuchara las desgarradoras historias sobre cómo se siente ser un ofensor o sobreviviente de crimen.

Un sobreviviente dijo, "Durante todo el proceso desde el asesinato de mi hija y nieta, a mi familia y a mí nunca se nos preguntó sobre nuestras necesidades. Me sentí sin apoyo y utilizado por la oficina del fiscal. Anhelábamos el apoyo emocional. En su lugar nos sentimos presionados para asegurar la más larga condena posible contra la persona quien asesino mis seres queridos, como si esto fuese ayudar a mi familia y a mí a encontrar la paz que desesperadamente necesitábamos."

"Así de que mi esposa y yo tomamos la oportunidad de este simposio del diálogo de sanación para ver qué nos ofrece este proceso para continuar encontrando clausura en nuestras vidas."

Para pintar un retrato de sus queridos difuntos, los sobrevivientes compartieron la personalidad de esos seres queridos que perdieron a manos de la violencia. Ellos hablaron acerca del amor a sus seres queridos, sus metas en la vida y su actividad favorita durante reuniones familiares.

La sobreviviente Nora Agredano más tarde reveló, "Al sentarme con los maravillosos hombres de San Quentin y contar mi historia, ellos escucharon con intensidad, y ellos estuvieron muy pendientes con mi bienestar. Se tomaron el tiempo para asegurarse que yo estuviera bien por el resto del día."

"Escuche la historia de cada hombre y que los trajo a este lugar con intensidad. Escuche (el) cuán lejos cada uno de los hombres ha recorrido



Photo courtesy of Dina Phillips

"Estos zapatitos representan nuestra buena disposición de caminar en los mismos zapatos de ustedes hombro con hombro de hoy en adelante," un recluso dijo. "Y para unir esfuerzos en contra de nuestra violencia sin sentido para vivir en paz y armonía."

para llegar al punto donde ellos ven cual daño ellos han causado y su deseo en contribuir a la sociedad. Cada hombre ha trabajado muy duro para lograr ser el maravilloso hombre en quien ellos ahora se han convertido. Yo estoy muy orgullosa en llamarlos mis amigos."

A pesar del hecho de que los sobrevivientes y reclusos eran completos extraños, los reclusos dejaron salir sus encrudecidas emociones sin restricciones.

Eusebio González compartió la historia de su niñez.

"Nunca conocí a mi padre, y mi madre me abandonó por irse con su novio cuando yo tenía 4 años de edad, dejándome con mis abuelos. No la he mirado desde entonces," González dijo. "A los 14 años de edad mis abuelos me enviaron a vivir con parientes aquí en los EE.UU., en donde nunca me enviaron a la escuela."

"Durante mi crianza mire a mi abuelo y tíos beber alcohol para cubrir sus sentimientos y emociones. Yo seguí sus pasos e implemente su sistema de creencias de que los hombres controlan-el-uso-del alcohol y no al revés."

Mariah Lucas más tarde reflexionó diciendo, "Yo siento que como víctimas y sobrevivientes somos constantemente relegados al olvido cuando se trata del sistema penal - nuestras preocupaciones, nuestras necesidades, y nuestras voces no le importan a nadie. Sin embargo, ir a la prisión y compartir mis experiencias con otras víctimas y con los hombres quienes han

creado victimización y ser capaces de llegar a una mutua conclusión que necesitamos más acción, yo me sentí validada y escuchada."

Lucas añadió, "Durante el simposio también llegamos a un acuerdo mutuo que necesitamos un camino que podamos recorrer juntos para remover la barrera que la sociedad a impuesto entre la relación de la víctima-ofensor así para poder unirnos y crear un mejor camino de sanación unificado, y nosotros poder derrumbar la actual creencia que estos grupos devén permanecer separados el uno del otro."

"Continuando hacia adelante no podemos mirar a las personas como criminales y como víctimas. Nosotros necesitamos mirarlos como sanadores, personas que quieren trabajar juntos para crear una paz común, una que todos anhelamos, una por la que todos soñamos. En el simposio de San Quentin, se nos dio la oportunidad para hacer esos sueños una realidad."

La sobreviviente Jody Ketcheside reflexionó del evento, "Como sobrevivientes de homicidio, se nos pregunta constantemente el compartir nuestras historias. Algunas veces esto es en un esfuerzo para educar, algunas veces para ayudar a legisladores entender los desafíos y deseos de los sobrevivientes. Algunas veces esto es para vincularse con los hombres en prisión, trayendo entendimiento y sanación para todos nosotros, y algunas veces esto es para crear cambio

positivo en un sistema que lo necesita muy desesperadamente."

La siguiente mañana todos se abrazaban con amabilidad, empatía y cariño.

El momento culminante del día llegó después de que los grupos pequeños se reunieron después de hacer una puesta en común de ideas y sugerencias en cómo satisfacer mejor las necesidades de los sobrevivientes. Un portavoz fue escogido de cada grupo pequeño para informar acerca de sus sugerencias. Asombrosamente, la sugerencia número uno para dar comienzo al diálogo de sanación - proveer comunicación entre sobreviviente y ofensores.

Clare Senchyna reflexionó, "En el segundo día los reclusos en mi círculo expresaron que ellos esperaban que nosotros los sobrevivientes estuviéramos bien después del día anterior, ya que ellos tenían nuestro trauma hubiera sido reactivado. Yo les conté como estaba reflexionando mientras manejaba a San Quentin esa mañana lo mucho más ligera que me sentí, que haber participado en el círculo el día anterior me había dado ese regalo, que yo sé que tengo todo el derecho de sentir odio y coraje y rabia hacia la persona quien asesino mi único hijo. Pero eso en sí mismo es una tan pesada carga de soportar, y el haber pasado el día anterior con ellos, esa carga fue aligerada un poco."

"Yo participe en estos círculos para ayudarme a continuar viviendo, para tranquilizar los demonios que aparecieron después de la muerte de mi hijo. Esto ha sido una de las formas más terapéuticas para encontrar paz. ¿Quién lo hubiera pensado? El estar en un círculo con esos quienes han cometido homicidio y esos quienes han sido victimizados, y por momentos darme cuenta que todos nosotros hubiéramos podido estar en los mismos zapatos. Todos somos humanos imperfectos compartiendo nuestra humanidad común. Nosotros no tenemos esa oportunidad muy seguido en el mundo diario."

Jody Ketcheside también reflexionó, "De esa sesión de la puesta en común de ideas y sugerencias salieron ideas para ayudar a las personas encarceladas tener acceso a los servicios para víctimas, ayudar a sobrevivientes tener acceso a información para aliviar sus preocupaciones con respecto a la libertad condicional, y una oportunidad para muchos sobrevivientes de poder hablar sobre como la mayoría de nosotros no queremos prisiones que son dirigidas punitivamente y nuestra preocupación con el proceso del sistema penal

desde el comienzo de los procedimientos en las cortes."

"En este diálogo de sanación yo pude expresar mis sentimientos en como los sobrevivientes son tratados en corte y como somos entrenados para odiar al acusado y cuán inquietante eso era para mí mientras yo estaba intentando encontrarle sentido a algo tan sin sentido. Nosotros no podemos aprender el uno del otro si nos tenemos miedo."

Gilbert reflexionó, "Yo estaba increíblemente conno-vida con las conversaciones que nosotros tuvimos dentro de mi círculo pequeño. Nosotros establecimos una casi inmediata confianza mutua, quizás por nuestras experiencias compartidas o tal vez por la manera en que el día fue organizado. Nosotros pudimos dejar nuestras historias desarrollarse al natural, de manera más orgánica, envés de comenzar con el crimen. Esto nos permitió comenzar con el lado humano de nuestras historias, lo cual nos ayudó para conocernos uno al otro como personas primero."

El evento no solo impacto las vidas de los sobrevivientes presentes pero también las vidas de sus familiares ausentes.

Una de las sobrevivientes, a quien le asesinaron un hijo dos años antes del evento de este simposio, comentó que ella estaba escéptica al venir a San Quentin. Sin embargo, al final del primer día, ella había cambiado su pensar, diciendo, "Antes de venir a esta reunión yo pensaba acerca de los presos como si fuesen monstruos. Después de escuchar sus historias, yo pude ver su humanidad y arrepentimiento por los crímenes que ustedes han cometido. Yo pude sentir sus emociones lo cual me ayudó a cambiar mi percepción acerca de los prisioneros."

Al final del primer día, ella compartió su experiencia con una de sus hijas quien le había aconsejado no venir a San Quentin.

"Después que yo le conté a mi hija sobre la tan poderosa experiencia que tuve, ella estaba intrigada y le gustaría tomar parte del proceso de este diálogo de sanación la próxima vez que la oportunidad se presente."

Gilbert compartió que los simposios son un paso importante para que las personas independientes y oficiales encargados de la seguridad pública, "entiendan que los sobrevivientes y personas quienes han cometido un crimen violento, están conectados por el dolor. Dolor es dolor. Nosotros necesitamos reconocer esto para comenzar a sanar y para ser un mejor sistema de apoyo para los sobrevivientes de crimen violento. Existe dolor en ambos lados de un crimen, y este va más allá de las familias inmediatas por años, y el dolor no acaba con una sentencia en prisión."

Arnulfo's dream continues to prosper

By Ted Swain
Contributing Writer

This newspaper has previously reported on the life and untimely death of former editor Arnulfo T. Garcia. However, Garcia was much more than editor of the *San Quentin News* (SQN), he was a towering visionary and dreamer.

Unlike most dreamers, he had the rarely bestowed persistence and determination to carry out his dream. The result was the newspaper's Social Forums and the respect of news organizations from around the world.

Under the guidance of Garcia, the *San Quentin News* transitioned from being a reporter of news to being a source of news. Through the News forums, Garcia was able to let criminal justice decision makers experience the results of their decisions.

Those decision makers

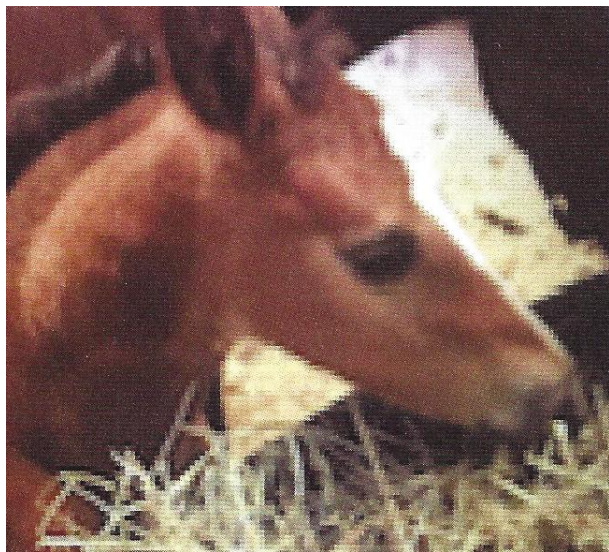


Photo courtesy of the Garcias

One of many horses that will be part of the program

were then able to get feedback from inmates regarding inmate families and the communities. The reach of Garcia's went well beyond the prison walls. His

determination to make SQN into a respected source of criminal justice information cannot be overstated.

In December 2017, Garcia's family began

the Arnulfo T. Garcia Foundation to carry on Arnulfo's dream. Supported by the Horse Club Foundation and the Con-Ex Restorative Justice Project, the Arnulfo T. Garcia Foundation is developing its initial program of a horse ranch style reentry facility.

As a former writer on this newspaper, I had both the honor and pleasure to know and work with Garcia. Arnulfo's powerful impact on inmates and aspects of the corrections system, led me to believe that Garcia's dreams were built on a solid foundation. He had expansive dreams and wanted to provide solutions and reforms that would generate results, not more effort.

Arnulfo's idea related to reentry facilities and expanding *San Quentin News* as the voice of the voiceless. He wanted to address inequalities created by flaws in the criminal justice

system. One of the biggest difficulties for paroling inmates is successful reentry back into the community. As Arnulfo and his family grew up with horses, he knew the value of caring and providing for horses as a way to learn responsibility.

With over 150 years of combined horse experience, the value of horse sense is well recognized in the Garcia family. The Arnulfo T. Garcia Foundation associated with the Horse Club to allow paroling inmates to experience the responsibility associated with being an equestrian.

The Horse Club is a membership association providing sanctuary, refuge and a retirement haven to horses for which there is no caretaker. By teaching parolees how to care for horses, the Arnulfo T. Garcia Foundation believes that Arnulfo's dream and mission will be

fulfilled. Paroling inmates will learn to provide for horses while learning to reenter the community as a contributing member.

From illegal immigration and reentry facilities to criminal justice news, Arnulfo had broad and extensive ideas to be part of the solution, not part of the problem. He continuously reported that it all begins with acknowledging responsibility for our actions. From that basis, Arnulfo taught that one can then begin a new journey of progress.

As directors of the foundation, Arnulfo's siblings, Carmelita, Nick, Jesus and Art, are committed to the fulfillment of Arnulfo's dream. Arnulfo's sisters Leilani and Maria are also pledged to the pursuit of Arnulfo's dream. Through Arnulfo T. Garcia Foundation, Arnulfo's dream, mission and legacy live on.

News Briefs

USA – According to new data from the government's Bureau of Justice Statistics, the number of people incarcerated decreased 1 percent to 1,505,400 people by the end of 2016. At the end of that year, states had about 1,316,205 incarcerated, while the federal system had 189,192. Maine has the lowest incarceration rate with 137 people incarcerated per 100,000 residents, while Louisiana has the highest rate at 760 per 100,000.

USA – *The New Jim Crow*, a book by Michelle Alexander that explores the phenomenon of mass incarceration, has sold well over a million copies in the eight years since its debut, *The New York Times* reports. But for the adults in prison in Florida, the book is banned. The book points to the racial disparities in sentencing policy, and the way that mass incarceration has negatively affected the Black population.

USA – According to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), 12 immigrants died in detention in the 2017 fiscal year, the most since fiscal year 2009, the *Houston Chronicle* and *Injustice Watch* report. Nationwide, more than 30,000 immigrants are held at any one time in ICE detention facilities. Last May, two people died in Georgia facilities and on May 31, a 44-year-old Honduran immigrant, Vicente Caceres-Maradiaga died at Adelanto Detention Facility in Southern California. He was the third immigrant to die at Adelanto in 2017 and the sixth death at the privately owned GEO Group facility since 2011. Since ICE was created in 2003, 85 detention centers nationwide have reported 176 deaths.

Washington, DC – Keith Tharpe will have another chance in federal court to prove that his death sentence was tainted by a white juror's reference to Tharpe as a "n-----" and other racist remarks, *USA Today* reports. "I have wondered if Black people even have souls," juror Barney Gattie



said in a sworn affidavit. US Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Anthony Kennedy joined the high court's liberal justices in the 6-3 decision.

Trenton, NJ – A state law that limits what phone companies can charge for phone service for prison inmates has led to a court fight between the state and a Texas firm that has contracts with two of the state's county jails, *KYW Newsradio* reports. "These private phone vendors were charging absolutely astronomical rates for folks to call loved ones on the outside," attorney Liza Weisberg told *KYW Newsradio*, "and the facilities themselves were collecting kickbacks from these phone vendors."

Tennessee – Three death row inmates are scheduled for execution this year, which would be first executions in the state since 2009, *USA* reports. The state's Supreme Court and Department of Corrections confirmed the executions, scheduled to start in May. Neysa Taylor, a spokeswoman for the department, said the state "has the drugs necessary to carry out execution by lethal injection."

Indianapolis, Indiana – The state will become the first state outside of California to adopt the program known as The Last Mile, which prepares inmates for employment upon release, *Inside Indiana Business* reports. Governor Eric Holcomb announced the coding program with The Last Mile founders,

Chris Redlitz and Beverly Parenti, along with program graduate Kenyatta Leal. Indiana will first begin training women how to code at the Indiana Women's Prison as part of the pilot program. The Last Mile coding program, Code.7370, debuted in 2014 at San Quentin State Prison.

Indiana – The Indiana Department of Workforce Development found 15,000 ex-offenders are released from state prisons each year, *The Associated Press* reports. Currently the recidivism rate is at 38 percent. The *Indianapolis Business Journal* reports that the state wants to expand its job placement program for ex-offenders. Gov. Eric Holcomb said his administration would work these revolving doors that we so often see in our prison system."

Minnesota – A proposed class action lawsuit was filed in Los Angeles federal court against Sunrise Banks and the prepaid card company JPay for forcing thousands of prison inmates nationwide to accept high-fee debit cards to receive their own money when they are released, reports *Reuters*. The lawsuit alleged "unconscionable profiteering and self-dealing" by forcing the cards on financially unsophisticated ex-inmates. The cards have a \$3 monthly maintenance fee and a \$9.95 fee to cancel the card and receive money with a check or money order, according to the lawsuit.

Book Review

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

The famed incarcerated poet, Ed "Foots" Lipman was born New Year's Day 1941. After he spent nearly half his of 34 years behind bars, he died of natural causes on Sept. 8, 1975.

"I have never been so affected by poetry...I looked up his name on the internet, found little to nothing, and felt overwhelmingly compelled to change that," said researcher, S.J. Lawrie.

By publishing *Only By Flashlight*, Lawrie brought to life Lipman's collection of 55 raw and blunt poems.

I had the opportunity to experience Lipman's work while attending Zoe Mullery's creative writing class. Our group of about a dozen incarcerated men sat around and read some of his 1970s-style poems. We smiled, shook our heads to affirm a familiar feeling reading his work gave us. We understood Lipman's perspective. It wasn't surprising for us that the outside world missed literature relevant to how society operates. We constantly discuss and write about the ease of overlooking the locked away population — out of sight, out of mind. As a consequence, outsiders aren't well-versed in how incarceration can evoke penitence in so many different ways.

When I opened *Only By Flashlight*, I did what I always do when reviewing an anthology of poetry. I scanned through the titles and read the ones that stood out to me.

"Because Truth is Seldom Silent" is about poetry's ability to speak truth to power. "Losing & Lasting" is about guarding one's dignity in spite the inhumane nature of prisons. "Harry Houdini was Right After All," a poem ahead of its time as Lipman spoke about the failure of mass incarceration.

Going through *Only By Flashlight*, poem by poem, is an adventure worth taking.

Lipman thrusts readers into the sense of an

Only By Flashlight

A collection of Poetry by
Ed "Foots" Lipman



Introduction by
S.J. Lawrie

incarcerated perspective. Outsider readers discover the damaging effects of accepting the powerlessness created through mass incarceration.

Only By Flashlight delves into topics relevant to San Quentin, such as how correctional officers and prisoners treat each other, medical care (or lack thereof), or doing time while missing the tender touch of a loved one, and of course, the food.

Many of Lipman's poems are short and to the point:

Untitled for brjw
*Sitting at this grill-gate
Early in the morning
Waiting for something beautiful
Reminds me to write
this poem slowly
because Beauty passes quickly
and doesn't carry keys
untitled number 30 for susan*

*this prison tells its own tales
i listen & am unable to decipher*

*any particular moral;
you have hidden
in your rustic gaze
any hope of my salvation,
any
chance of my survival*

What I appreciate are Lawrie's effort to bring quality literature to light by investing time, energy, and money into giving a respected place in history to someone, despite reservations: "I am aware that to speak about a man having never met him is a dangerous endeavor."

He relied on scant history about the man — history that was obscure in every facet except his criminal history.

Lipman now has a way to speak in a very silent way to the moral costs mass incarceration inflicts on our communities.

Formerly incarcerated helps reduce violence in Richmond

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

James Houston used what he learned in San Quentin Prison to help reduce the murder rate and mentor young men in Richmond, the city across the bay.

After paroling in 2013, he took on the job of program coordinator for the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS).

The organization was started by DeVone Boggan in 2007. He believed that the worst offenders needed to be hunted down, not to arrest, but to transform.

When the program began, Richmond had the ninth-worst murder rate in the United States with 45 killings per 106,000 people. By 2013, the rate dropped to 15 per 100,000, according to a 2014 *Mother Jones Magazine* article by Tim Murphy.

Boggan met Houston when he visited the Richmond Project at San Quentin State Prison. From inside, Houston worked to make Richmond safer while serving 15-to-life for second-degree murder.

As the chairman of the Richmond Project, he led incarcerated residents from rival Richmond neighborhoods in a think tank that met with city officials. They posed solutions to street violence.

"Because San Quentin and Richmond are so close, and there was all that violence going on, especially when it was

formed, it made sense to connect with the community," Houston said. "It made sense for men who have created or furthered the problems in prison, to give solutions and let them (the youth) know the consequences of their actions."

The meetings with community members like Boggan and Gail McLaughlin, the former mayor of Richmond, now a City Council member, resulted in a curriculum, Public Service Announcements with the flair of positive hip-hop videos, an essay contest asking the youth, "What would you do if you were the mayor?" and other ideas.

The San Quentin administration shut down the Richmond Project in 2016.

In the Richmond community, Houston seeks out young men who are active firearm offenders to present credible alternatives to violence. Some of the Office of Neighborhood Safety techniques involve street outreach, transformative travel and both referring the youth to different resources, walking them through the process of obtaining help, and paying stipends for meeting life goals.

"Every day I go out into the neighborhood and look for ways to support them with resources," Houston said. "I enjoy what I do. From the men (inside), I've learned that



File Photo

James Houston

we have a responsibility—whether it's just to your blood relatives—we have a responsibility to hold ourselves with integrity, to show the young men in our community. Even if they're just seeing me from a distance, it's important to show integrity."

On the transformative trips, they take rivals to places as far as Africa to show them the world is bigger than Richmond, and their beefs. A recent trip to Tahoe paired five young men from North Richmond with five rivals from South Richmond.

"Transformative travel gets young people to see something different," Houston said.

Young men who have been in the program for at least nine months can receive a stipend between \$300-\$1,000 for reaching milestones on their "life maps," a list of goals set to achieve a productive life. Sacramento is now adopting the program, Houston said.

A self-help group that helped prepare Houston for his walk is Victim Offender Education Group (VOEG).

"From my perspective, VOEG is a restorative justice program," Houston said. "It helped me understand the trauma that I went through, and it changed who I was. I never knew the impact my trauma had on my life on a day-to-day basis or the impact that trauma had on others' lives and my community."

"One of the main things was I grew up with a single mother: I had no male figure. So what I thought was a man was totally opposite to what I learned inside. I (used to) overreact and had a lot of anger. It could never be *too much* violence. Violence, that's what a man does, so that's...what I lived by...I didn't want you to get close, because...I was in fear...of being hurt."

Now Houston understands that anger is a secondary emotion fueled by pain and sadness.

"To release emotions like that in front of men...was life-changing," Houston said.

He currently works with the Insight Prison Project (IPP) to create a VOEG curriculum for the youth in Richmond.

"It's a little bit different: some of the youths haven't committed a crime," Houston said. "I'm focused on some of the things that they consider

normal that aren't normal—like losing one of their peers. It's not normal for a 14-year-old to go to a funeral for another 14-year-old that's been murdered. You come away with something, a sense of a lack of security in your community."

"It makes you more susceptible to committing that crime; you're just trying to survive. You'll shoot someone over the smallest thing. It's different in that we tailor the language to meet them where they're at."

Houston learned the value of community while getting his education through the Prison University Project, mentoring youth in the SQUIRES program, learning how to be a counselor in the Addiction Recovery Program and playing flag football on the San Quentin Lower Yard.

"I grew up playing Pop Warner," Houston said. "Kids from different sides of the city all played on the same team. I had a good relationship with a lot of people from different areas. Even at SQ, it bridged a lot of gaps; people I wouldn't have otherwise met, even though it's such a small place."

Houston talked about his views toward community before, during, and after his release.

Before: "When it feels like you're not a part of the community, it makes it easier to paint the picture that like, the

community is a target. You feel like you are alone, like no one cares about you. (You're) not listening, and I believe it's because they weren't listening. When most people fear you, so they cross the street, you become that person that they fear."

During: "The right kind of community is so important. You hear so much about people preying on each other. But when I was there, men who had done twice as much time as me were working toward helping me get my time reduced, pointing me in the right directions. It blew me away; I kept looking for the flaws. Men before prison came at me for a reason; they had an angle, something they were trying to get out of it."

After: "Transitional place, each step to get my life back on course: The Last Mile, the men who went above and beyond to help me gave me the feeling that I hadn't lost so much, that I was going to be all right."

Houston, who is now married and has a son, has this advice for the men awaiting a release date:

"Come out knowing that it's not the 'pink cloud.' Know that you still have to apply yourself and it's going to be hard work; there will be hurdles. To the Richmond Project: if you ever get out, you know you got a job."

—**Katie Wolffe**
contributed to this story

Retired NFL Player Devon Still visits SQ

Just weeks after Defensive Lineman Devon Still retired from the National Football League at 28 years old, he visited San Quentin State Prison to record an episode for his new podcast, *Undefeated*.

Undefeated features the stories of people who overcame huge obstacles.

Scheduled for the first season is Curtis "Wall Street" Carroll, whose TED talk received more than 2.8 million views.

"His TED talk caught my attention," Still said. "I work with a lot of people who are trapped mentally. To see someone in prison so free—you can always find the good in any situation as long as you change how you think."

Still proceeded to interview Carroll, digging into his upbringing on the streets of Oakland.

Carroll shared that his mother and grandmother were addicted to drugs, so no one held him accountable as he ran the streets. His peers praised him for committing crimes, and he eventually landed in prison. Once incarcerated, he took an interest in the stock market. He was motivated to learn to read in order to study the market. After making money on his first successful trade, he began to see himself as a financial wizard and so became one. His focus evolved to teaching financial empowerment and emotional literacy to others.

On Jan. 12, Still walked through the Lower Yard with Charlie Todd and Corey Pinkney—two friends of his from Wilmington, Del., where Still was raised, to visit Carroll's class.

The day ended with Carroll interviewing both Still and Todd before 70 students at the Financial Literacy class. Pinkney, of House of Visionz, helped video-record



Photo by Adnan Khan

Alexandra Diaz, Charlie Todd, Anna Pons, Devon Still, Corey Pinkney and Tamara Reyes

the events.

Still commented, "To see this kind of turnout at Wall Street's class—that's motivating to me. That changes the way I look at life."

When Still was interviewed, he spoke of the pivotal event in his life: A week after he and his wife were baptized, doctors diagnosed his daughter with cancer.

Still gained notoriety when he walked away from the Cincinnati Bengals to be by his 4-year-old daughter's side. The distraught 6-foot-5 man cried in front of his teammates and on camera. He couldn't focus on football and had to break away.

In sharing his pain, he created a movement not only about his daughter's life but also for other kids fighting cancer. Showing his vulnerability created an atmosphere where people felt safe enough to share their traumatic experiences on his social media pages.

Selling his jersey raised more than \$1 million, and the Bengals re-signed him, just so he could have medical insurance for his daughter.

Ultimately Still received an Espy award for his work for children with cancer.

He returned to the football field as a Houston Texan while his daughter's cancer was in remission. Early in the season, he ripped a ligament in his foot, which required screws. While healing, he contemplated his next move.

Injuries had haunted Still his whole career. At Penn State, he blew out his knee. Doctors thought he wouldn't make it back, but he did. As a Bengal, he dislocated his elbow. Once healed, he then blew out his back in a game against the Steelers. Next, he suffered from blood clots.

"Nothing was going right," Still said. "I worked hard to get to that level but never got to enjoy it."

After he healed from his

fifth major injury, he decided to retire and use what he learned as an athlete to be a motivational speaker with his own business called Still in the Game.

"I grew up thinking football was the only way to make money, but I don't have to beat my body up," Still said. "If I didn't go through the injuries, I would still want to play. But with the injuries, how could I beat up



Photo by Adnan Khan

Curtis "Wall Street" Carroll interviewed by Devon Still

my body living my dream and take away from my kid's dreams?"

Still spoke about how football prepared him to be a motivational speaker and help save his daughter.

"Basically ... every lesson we learned in sports we can apply in life," Still said. "That's what I taught my daughter. She didn't know how to beat cancer. Football was conditioning me to think a certain way. I conditioned my girl to think like an athlete, and it worked."

His daughter is in her third year of remission. The experience has brought Still closer to God.

He went on to say that you must prepare your mind for the success you want so when your chance comes, you will be prepared to accept and make the most of that chance.

"Don't make these permanent decisions because of temporary circumstances," Still said. "I had to put in 13 years of work for no money to make it to the league. Players play until the clock hits zero."

Later Todd told his story:

While a college football player, Todd showed out at his pro-day before scouts. That night he celebrated by drinking at clubs in Philadelphia. When he left the party, a car flipped over and smashed into him, breaking

his leg. It took him a year to recover, but the injury ended his NFL dreams.

He realized he couldn't rehab with a typical resistance band because of his injury. Todd, a personal fitness trainer, designed his own attached to a vest, and he mass markets it under Total Resistance.

"Once I found what my true calling would be, I didn't care about football," the CEO/co-owner said. "After that, I put the same energy into the fitness lifestyle. People can make millions of dollars by selling water bottles, by convincing you that their water bottle is better than your water bottle."

Todd mentioned that he Googled San Quentin before arriving.

"What you see on TV clearly ain't real to me now," Todd said. "Now that I kind of see what's going on, I knew it. I met people 10 times smarter than me; I'm feeling stupid. I just want to listen."

Still valued himself over the money he made playing football.

"Trump has said he made \$600 million a year and to all his friends that wasn't a lot of money and I'm risking my body for \$2 million," Still said. "We're risking our body and it's their entertainment."

"I grew up thinking football was the only way to make money, but I don't have to beat my body up. We think football is a career, but it's an opportunity. What can I do to make sure I'm making this kind of money when football is over? It's believing in yourself."

Addressing his audience, he urged, "You have to train your mind to be outside these walls. If you don't have a plan, you are going to be right back here."

—**Rahsaan Thomas**

The Religion of Sports reaches behind the wall

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

Sports is a religion according to Tom Brady, Michael Strahan and the other producers of *The Religion of Sports* TV series. On Jan. 9, *The Religion of Sports* screened an episode at San Quentin featuring Forty-Niner Pastor Earl Smith, formerly incarcerated legends like Marvin Mutch, current San Quentin A's players and their families.

The documentary, produced by NFL icons Brady and Strahan (who didn't attend but sent best wishes) along with Gotham Chopra, Chris Uttwiller, Gattanella and Giselle Parets, makes the case that sports is a religion.

"Baseball is the religion; it is the faith," said Chopra, executive producer and creator of the series. "Sports is universal. Every religion, every race, every lifestyle—baseball brings them all together."

Executive Producer Uttwiller added, "I think sports is more inclusive than religion."

The Thomas Leach-directed documentary is told through a glimpse into the lives of four characters: John "Dunnie" Windham, Branden Riddle-



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Branden Riddle-Terrel, Marvin Mutch, producer Mike Gattanella and John "Dunnie" Windham

Terrel, Chris "Stretch" Rich and Mutch.

Smith, who resurrected the baseball program when he was a minister at San Quentin, provided perspective.

"My job as a minister was to give guys a sense of hope, sense of light, and baseball does that," Smith said. "Big games transform people. It gives you a sense of hope that

you no longer have to be what others think of you."

Windham, Riddle-Terrel and Rich shared their crimes, remorse and how baseball played a role in helping them cope and better themselves.

The movie opens with SQ baseball sponsor Elliot Smith warning a visiting team about the rules for entering a prison. One: you can't give or accept

anything from an incarcerated person and two: the staff do not negotiate for the return of hostages.

From there, the film avoids the typical "Lockup" sensationalism by digging into past issues that contributed to the crimes committed and the rehabilitation.

Windham's journey from troubled latch-key kid to aiding in a homicide focuses on how baseball helped him interact with folks from all walks of life.

Windham walks the viewers around a yard self-segregated by race and onto a baseball diamond, where all races play together as one team.

"Baseball is my way of healing," Windham, a power hitter, said in the film. "You want us out on that field because it builds community."

His sister talked about growth.

"He was 18 when it happened," Kathy Williams said. "He was a child, but he grew into this amazing man behind bars."

Riddle-Terrel shared the night he broke his mother and father's heart by going into a drug-and-alcohol-induced blackout during which he

killed his best friend. He was subsequently incarcerated for manslaughter.

"When he played baseball, he was a sophomore playing with the seniors," Branden's dad, Doug Joerger, said. "He was that good. He might have had a chance at a higher level."

Now Riddle-Terrel, pitches for the SQ A's as he pays for his mistakes.

"It's therapeutic coming out here," Riddle-Terrel, said.

Chris "Stretch" Rich pitched for the San Quentin baseball program before he paroled after serving 21 years. His brother, a police chief, supported him the whole time.

In society, C. Rich went astray after a freak accident cracked his chin and destroyed a promising baseball career. In prison, he found light on the diamond.

"Some of my best games were here, and some of my last games were here," Rich said.

Mutch, the other formerly incarcerated man featured, served 41 years in prison on a seven-to-life sentence. For 38 of those years, he represented incarcerated people before the administration as a member of the Inmate Advisory Board.

Mutch still fights for incarcerated people as the director of advocacy for the Prison Re-entry Network.

While he didn't play baseball, he said he did help to get the field put in through bringing Metallica into the prison. The rock band donated \$10,000 to make it happen.

In the film, Mutch provided a philosophical view by comparing prison to Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*.

He attended the film screening in the Protestant Chapel and participated in a question-and-answer session along with Windham, Riddle-Terrel and Producer Mike Gattanella.

San Quentin Public Information Officer Lt. Sam Robinson fielded the first few questions. He asked producer Gattanella how his preconceived perceptions evolved over the course of filming the documentary.

"From the start everybody was friendly and open," Gattanella said. "And I'm like, all right, who's trying to play me? I became comfortable after a couple of days. Once we talked to John and Branden, I knew it was going to be awesome. This is my favorite thing that I put together. I never expected that."

Riddle-Terrel was asked how it felt to see how much he let his dad down.

"It was a reminder of the let down and how much he really does love me and what he thought of me as a kid," Riddle-Terrel said. "We still have a future ahead of us and just because we let someone down doesn't mean they stay down forever."

Mike Adam asked Mutch what motivated him to be part of the documentary, even

though he didn't play baseball.

"The walls don't just keep people in; they keep people out," Mutch said. "The best thing you can do as a prisoner is throw tethers over the wall. The more people that see the lives locked up in prison, the more people will ask about the things being done in their name."

"I was always eager to have people come in. I believe in sports programs. I never bought into the boundaries. In 1975 there were a lot of boundaries, until baseball crossed those boundaries."

The question came up as to what wasn't shown in the one-hour film.

"The life I was living, I deserved a life sentence," said Riddle-Terrel, who is serving 11 years. "What wasn't shown in this story is: you have thousands of inmates in the state of California that are doing life for something they should have been home for."

Someone asked how the producers kept from sensationalizing the film.

"We had an amazing leader and partner, DirecTV, that allowed us to tell the show," Co-Executive Producer Parets said. "Sam (Robinson) and Bill Sessa really paved the way; we never thought we would be able to have a screening inside San Quentin."

Uttwiller added, "Being able to tell authentic stories—we can only do that when people are authentic with us. You guys really opened up in a world you might be more guarded in. That took strength and vulnerability. We use sports as a background. Interesting stories is the tapestry for it."

After seeing the movie, SQ baseball player Trevor Bird approached a producer and said, "Seeing film of the Pirates playing at San Quentin from another prison kept me walking the straight and narrow for the possibility of getting to San Quentin to play baseball. Now the possibility has become a reality, and seeing this film brought it full circle."

Windham revealed that he saw the film just in time. The next day, he was shipped to Jamestown, a minimum-security prison, which he views as one step closer to home.

"It's the best documentary I've seen yet," said SQ's incarcerated play-by-play announcer Aaron "Showtime" Taylor. "The honesty and raw emotion... that was raw—probably the best documentary representing who we are as a whole."

Gattanella said, "My biggest fear was putting together something that wasn't honest. It felt like a responsibility...it's having an effect. It's at a film festival in Montana. I don't care if it wins; that you guys liked it is all that matters."

The Religion of Sports airs on DirecTV Audience Network and, internationally, on Netflix.



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Lt. Robinson, Branden Riddle-Terrel, Marvin Mutch, Mike Gattanella, Gotham Chopra, John "Dunnie" Windham, Chris Uttwiller and Giselle Parets

'Future of SQ Warriors' learned to play in prison

San Quentin Warrior Montrell Vines goes by many nicknames on the basketball court. Some people call him "Mad Defense" for his lock-down de. Other's call him "Jack that thing up" for his quick release three-point attempts. His coach, Rafael Cuevas, calls him the future of the team. What many people don't know is that Vines never played basketball on the streets.

"I learned to play basketball in prison," Vines said. "I never thought I would make the team, then I did and I got to foul Mark Jackson a few times."

Vines' upbringing didn't include a path to the blackout. He grew up without a father figure. His mother raised six kids, with Vines being the oldest, in a low-income housing project in San Francisco's Bay View Area. He dropped out of high school in the 10th grade and sold drugs. Caught up in the fast life, he said he didn't play games.

His lifestyle resulted in a conviction for attempted murder. Vines started playing basketball at Pelican Bay Prison, on the mainline, back in 2001.

He used basketball as a way to cope with the stress of serving a life sentence and dealing with the passing of his



Photo by Sam Hearnes - SQ News

Montrell Vines (#7) looks as Mark Jackson cries foul in 2012

brother, Alvin McEldry, in 2001, and his mother, Patricia Vines, in 2008.

"Basketball is a stress reliever; when I'm on the court, nothing else exists," Vines said. "It's therapy. It's crazy that I came to prison and found that out."

He started developing his game where most people just learning how to play do—on the defensive end. He out-hustles and harasses opponents. From there, his game developed a long-range shot.

When he arrived at SQ in 2012, he wanted to play for the Warriors but almost missed out.

"He went on a visit and missed tryouts," said former SQ Warriors' Coach Daniel "Bear" Wright. "I told him he could come to 'hell week' practice. I didn't believe he would make the team, but he came and worked hard. I love his game and his positive attitude."

Vines said, "It meant a lot to me. I appreciate him (Wright) for giving me a chance to be a part of this organization. Nobody has ever done that for me. It's just amazing. I'll never forget."

Making the Warriors wasn't supposed to include playing against Golden State

players. G.S. General Manager Bob Myers, Assistant GM Kirk Lacob and Ben Draa came in occasionally on Saturdays to play against the SQ Kings over-40 basketball team. Originally, they scheduled NBA Hall of Famer Mark Jackson to come in with them and play against the Kings, until Wright got wind of the game.

"I convinced them that they should play the Warriors because we're the better team," said Wright. "When Duck (Orlando Harris, coach of the Kings) found out, he agreed with me. We added a couple of his players to make it like an all-star game."

In 2012, the SQ Warriors became the prison team, representing San Quentin in the annual games against the Golden State Warriors coaches and front office staff.

Vines has played every year since he made the team, even when new Warriors coach Cuevas took over in 2017. Cuevas views Vines, Jessy Blue and point guard Tyrell Price Sr. as the future of the team.

"I expect him (Vines) to step into a bigger role as a leader and player this year," Cuevas said. "He's well on his way to doing so."

—Rahsaan Thomas



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Tommy Wickard and Branden Riddle-Terrel watching the screening

Prison's newspaper celebrates 100th edition

By Kate Wolfe
UC Berkeley Contributing
Writer

When the San Quentin News was revived nearly 10 years ago, a staff of five put together a four-page issue and distributed it to 5,000 inmates inside the prison.

Today, the newspaper has a circulation of 30,000, distributed across 36 prisons across the state as well as to individual inmates in 43 states. In addition to news stories and features, the paper includes a crossword puzzle, cartoon, book reviews and columns.

San Quentin News staff, volunteers and supporters in and outside of the prison celebrated the publication of its 100th issue in a sun-drenched hall at the Protestant Chapel in late January.

The pews were removed for the evening and replaced with small tables, decorated with shiny, gold and blue centerpieces. Outside guests and friends of San Quentin News mingled with blue uniform-clad inmates and prison officials. More than 200 guests attended the event.

Editor-in-Chief Richard "Bonaru" Richardson opened the event by honoring Warden Ron Davis with a plaque for his support of the newspaper.

The warden shared a story of how he had visited the newsroom during his first week on the job three years ago, and the staff had spoken to him about wanting their newspaper to be distributed in every prison in California.

A short while later after attending a wardens' meeting, he convinced the other wardens to allow the paper inside their prisons.

Richardson told a story of a childhood bereft of love and a criminal history that began when he was just 10 years old.

"Today, as I stand before you as editor-in-chief of a newspaper that so many people are invested in, I am humbled," he said. "I am humbled



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Supporters, volunteers and advisors honored for their contributions to and for the SQ News



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Michael Bott, Kate Wolfe and Yukari Kane watching the event

because every story, every achievement, every milestone, every accomplishment, every step the San Quentin News makes is because of you."

Television staff member Eric Phillips also spoke about what his involvement with the newspaper has meant to him. "We never thought that we could be here," he said. "It shows that we can go anywhere."

According to a presenta-

tion by Associate Editor Kevin D. Sawyer, the paper first began in the 1920s as a newsletter under the name Wall City News. It got shut down once in the mid-1930s and then again in the mid-1980s when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that prisoner-run newspapers could not be censored by prison administrations.

In April 2008, then-warden Robert Ayers Jr. decided to take a chance and revive the newspaper because he saw

the benefit of inmates sharing information. In the last decade alone, the paper has survived numerous challenges including the print shop shutting down, limited funding, a 45-day suspension, and tight deadlines to work around lockdowns.

Sawyer also spoke about the advisers, donors, volunteers and fellow prison media, who helped the staff reach the milestone. In 2014, the San Quentin News won the James Madison Freedom of Information Award from the Society of Professional Journalists, which the staff belong to. "We've become, in effect, a professional journalism organization," Sawyer said.

Some of the men, who have worked for the newspaper, have gone onto be criminal justice advocates after their release. The crowd applauded when Sawyer spoke about the zero percent recidivism rate of former staffers.

The joy in the room, however, was also accompanied by an undertone of grief as the community mourned the absence of former editor-in-chief Arnulfo T. Garcia, who died in a car accident last September. Garcia's family represented him at the ceremony.

"He would want us to move forward and I will move forward with him with me," Richardson said after a tribute video was shown in his memory.

During the ceremony, former warden Ayers challenged the staff to be a news agency of integrity that challenges the status quo and changes the prison mentality in addition to the public's perception of criminal justice. "A medium like the San Quentin News can be a conduit for change," he said.

Managing Editor Jesse Vasquez shared plans for upcoming projects such as a forum with law enforcement, a newsletter for the juvenile



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Steve and Kay McNamara's family at the event



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Aly Tamboura and Harry Hemphill after the event

justice system, and a program to bring awareness to prison culture.

In an interview after the event, Marisa Rodriguez, assistant district attorney and director of community relations for San Francisco County, expressed a desire to further strengthen the relationship between the district attorney's office and the people incarcerated in the state. San Francisco district attorney George Gascón had been one of the first to participate in the district attorney's forum started by Garcia in 2012.

"We want to continue the dialogue so the criminal justice system is working not only for society, but also for those affected by it," said Rodriguez.

Also in attendance was Richard Alden Feldon, the director of programs and a board member for the Jonathan Logan Family Foundation, which granted \$250,000 to the San Quentin News over the past two years. The funding has allowed the newspaper to plan its long-term vision and expansion plans.

"We empower world-changing work, and we think San Quentin News is a world-changing newspaper," said Feldon.



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Lisa Adams

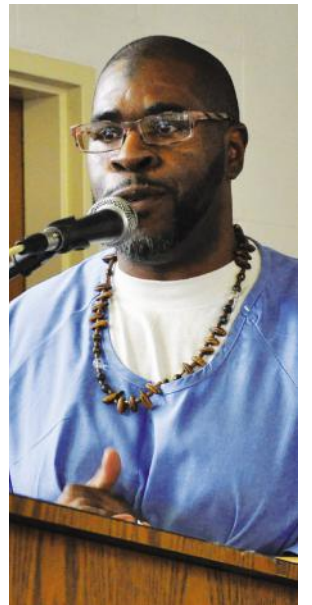


Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Marcus Henderson



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Nick Garcia, Angela Seven, Arturo Garcia and Carmelita Vargas



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Richard "Bonaru" Richardson



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Kevin Sawyer



Photo by

Eddie Herena and David le



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

SQ News staff and writers answering questions



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Artist Bruce Fowler



Photo by Eddie Herena - SQ News

Jesse Vasquez