

**INSIDE:** Award-winning actor Danny Trejo helps Corcoran artists raise more than \$5K



Story on Page 14

## Incarcerated women face new post-Roe challenges

By Jerry Maleek Gearin  
Staff Writer

In the already high-risk prison environment, incarcerated pregnant women are facing new challenges in the wake of the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* reversal, according to *The Hill*.

It was difficult even before the High Court’s new ruling for incarcerated women to access basic and essential healthcare items, including menstrual products, not to speak of reproductive care or abortions.


“Roe’s overturning significantly complicates an already difficult situation, raising questions of how women will be treated in federal facilities, state prisons and county jails that lie under different state laws,” wrote *The Hill* reporter Cheyanne M. Daniels in the July 9 article.

It is unclear whether federal prisons will

See ROE on page 4

## LABOR DAY

### Incarcerated workers continue toiling for miniscule wages



Archive photo, SQNews

By Marcus Henderson  
Editor in Chief

In 1852, Fredrick Douglass, the famous slavery abolitionist, gave a spirited speech titled “What, to the American Slave, Is the Fourth of July?” Douglass delivered the speech on July 5 in Rochester, New York, in recognition of the nation’s celebration of its Independence Day.

In 2022, as the country is set to observe another federal holiday, the national prison population can ask “What, to the incarcerated, is Labor Day?”

Recently, California Gov. Gavin Newsom’s administration, along with the state’s finance department, rejected consideration of amending the state’s constitution to eliminate indentured servitude as punishment for crime. If the bill had passed, it would have allowed prisoners to be paid minimum wage. State officials said it would cost the state billions of dollars annually to pay incarcerated people a minimum wage, according to *The Associated Press*.

“I hope the state legislators take another look at paying those of us that are incarcerated a minimum wage,” said SQ resident Kevin Robinson, 55, who makes eight cents an hour as a clerk in the prison’s building maintenance. “I’m at an age that it would be hard to

See LABOR on page 12

## SQNews wins again at California Journalism Awards

By David Ditto  
Associate Editor

The California News Publishers Association recognized *San Quentin News* writers with seven awards in its 2021 California Journalism Awards Print Contest.

For coverage of youth and education, Managing Editor Charles Crowe received Second Place and Spanish Journalism Guild Chair Edwin E. Chavez received Fifth Place. For editorials, Editor-in-Chief Marcus Henderson received Second, Third, and Fourth Places. In the sports feature category, Journalism Guild Chair Steve Brooks received Second Place. For a feature story, Senior Editor Juan Haines received Fourth Place.

“I was surprised!” said Crowe, “I didn’t know my article was nominated for an award. I’m honored for my writing to be recognized on a statewide level, outside of prison journalism.”

The *SQNews* competes with the other CNPA member publications with monthly or weekly printed circulation of 25,001 copies or more. In the 2020 contest, *SQNews* writers received five awards.

“Bravo! Well done,” said longtime *SQNews* adviser Jan Perry, relaying other volunteers’ congratulatory comments to the *News* staff.

Perry is one of a few advisers who regularly sit with the writers to edit and proof their articles for each issue of the *SQNews*. She commended the award-winning journalists for their stick-to-itiveness throughout *SQNews*’ rigorous training and editing, and noted the growth in writing confidence and skills she has seen them achieve.

The annual competition honors journalistic achievement and advances CNPA’s mission to strengthen newsmedia communities and “to foster the highest ideals, ethics and traditions of journalism, a free press and the news profession.”



Vincent O'Bannon, SQNews

Brand new Acer Chromebook computers like this one were issued to Coding 7370 participants, including Sherman K. Newman, who is creating an app that teaches people how to move and protect their money in the crypto world.



## Chromebooks for SQ coders

By Steve Brooks  
Journalism Guild Chair

San Quentin prisoners are participating in a first-of-its-kind program that allows them to take laptop computers back and forth to their cells.

Acer Chrome Book computers have been assigned to prisoners in The Last Mile’s Coding 7370 program.

“We get to use them in our cells to do our assignments, watch coding videos, read PDF books, and practice coding skills,” SQ resident Sherman K. Newman said. “We work off line in the cell without wifi connection.”

Coding 7370 was launched at SQ years ago, with the help of Hack Reactor and the California Prison Authority (PIA). It’s part of The Last Mile, a program that teaches career skills to prisoners, including entrepreneurial skills and programs to facilitate reentry.

The laptop program is sponsored by The Last Mile in partnership with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and the PIA. It first started as a pilot program at Pelican Bay State Prison in Crescent City.

Newman said he plans to use his computer to finish his thesis by creating an app that teaches people how to move and protect their money in the crypto world.

The self-described ex-gang member is also writing a book entitled “*Crip to Crypto*.” Newman has been a student in Coding 7370 for the past five years. He has been learning about Block Chain technology and cryptocurrency since 2015.

Newman wants to help poor people in the community where he comes from to gain financial stability. He believes that helping them move into crypto currency can create opportunities to build wealth and lower the

See CODING on page 4



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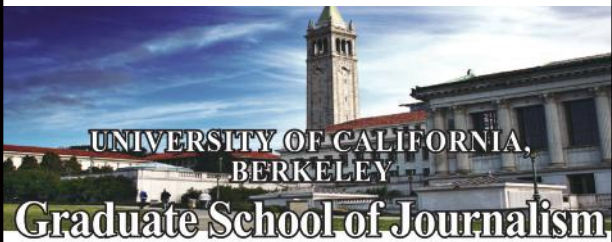


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PROFILES

# Ella Baker appoints new executive director

By Steve Brooks  
Journalism Guild Chair

When Marlene Sanchez was five years old, her father was swept up by the criminal justice system. Police raided her home and arrested him for drugs. He spent the next 25 years in prison. Sanchez also lost her mother to deportation. Soon, the young Sanchez took to the streets and was labeled as a gang member destined for a life of drugs and crime. But one day, while sitting on a crate on the streets of San Francisco’s Mission District, an 11-year-old Sanchez was approached by some outreach workers. They handed her a job application and she started working at the Young Women’s Freedom Center. Today, she is the first woman of color to become the Executive Director of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights.

Born and raised in San Francisco, Sanchez has been serving her community for over two decades. She co-founded and created the organization All of Us or None. She also created the Alliance for Girls and she is on the board of directors for Legal Services for Prisoners with Children. Sanchez has worked for Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice. She also served as the director of the Young Women’s Freedom Movement. The mother, organizer, and formerly incarcerated leader is now determined to help build power and leadership among others who are directly im-

Marlene Sanchez celebrates her new role as executive director for the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights. She is the first woman of color to serve in the position.

pacted by the criminal justice system.

Sanchez has always been under surveillance by the system, whether through welfare, housing or the school-to-prison pipeline. When she was 11 years old she got into a fight in school and was arrested. She wasn’t tall enough to be fingerprinted and had to stand on a stool. Sitting in juvenile detention facilities, she saw nothing but young women of color. She was also shocked when she found out her father was only making 30 cents an hour in prison. She became politicized while watching pregnant women of color being forced to give birth while shackled and then having their babies stripped away from them. Sanchez and other women inside organized to get anti-shackling legislation passed. At 15 years old Sanchez got certified as a pre-exposed HIV counselor and harm reduction practitioner.

Her most memorable moment was when she was 16 years old and weighed no more than 80 pounds. Sanchez said that she got beaten up by three San Francisco police officers. She was so badly beaten that co-workers, friends and the entire community organized a protest at the police station to hold the officers accountable. Seeing her community spring to action around her, she knew that she would always aspire to serve that same community.

At 19, she spoke at the first Critical Resistance Conference at UC Berkeley. She helped facilitate truces in L.A. and Chicago and did truth and reconciliation work with people actively involved in gangs. She and other organizers came together to work with people doing peace work. That’s when she met Angela Davis and other political prisoners on the inside who called in to be part of the conference.

Sanchez believes that dis-

mantling the prison industrial complex is one of the biggest issues of our time.

What drives her is what’s possible when you build power. The number of incarcerated people of color helps keep her accountable to lead the young people in her community in a better direction. Sanchez wants to leave a better world for her children and grandchildren. She perceives the top priorities to be self-sufficiency, resources for families to thrive, and less spending on incarceration. She also cares about youth justice, early intervention; de-carceration, decriminalization and making sure people don’t get ridiculously long prison sentences.

Her goal as executive director of the Ella Baker Center is to continue to build power among currently and formerly incarcerated people. She wants to focus on building up their leadership and help them invest in their self-determination. She believes that real dollars and resources can be used for people to do social justice work. Sanchez is committed to healing communities and to creating leadership that is driven by people of color. Sanchez said that the process of building community has brought her healing and sisterhood. But, as an organizer, she also believes you must always look at who’s missing in the movement. She believes sharing stories and experiences can help create common ground and bring people together to bring about change.

## Fashionista Runa Ray’s Peace Flag Project tackles social justice, climate change

By Marcus Henderson  
Editor in Chief

To tackle the lofty goals of climate change and social justice at the same time is a tall order, but fashion environmentalist Runa Ray launched the Peace Flag project to do just that.

The Peace Flag project aims to unite humanity using art and fashion. The project consists of converting old garments into canvases upon which individuals can artistically express themselves. Thousands of the canvases sent around the world garner returned submissions from individuals, schools, prisons and refugee camps. The artwork and expressions are then converted to flags. The goal is to connect 193 countries’ flags for display at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

“The Peace flag was born, to flip the script on fashion waste and repurpose it towards a cause,” said Ray to *SQNews* in an email interview. “The project aimed at educating people on their individual and collective choices which were necessary for the health of the planet and the advancement of the SDG’s (Sustainable Development Goals).”

In 2016, the UN introduced the 16 Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty, reduce inequality and build more peaceful, prosperous societies by 2030. Ray worked extensively with the Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Action at the UN.

Ray was able to get California’s city of Half Moon Bay, the county of San Mateo, and New York state to pass a peace resolution that allowed them

“The concept of reintegration seems to be lost in most cases and a wide gap exists between the aftercare and rehabilitation provided to the incarcerated.”

—Runa Ray ►  
Fashion environmentalist

to participate in the Peace Flag project together. Schools received canvases, made of upcycled clothes, upon which children and adults could write about what peace means to them.

“We had 900 submissions from most of the schools in Half Moon Bay,” she said. “So we collected them, and we constructed them into large flags. And all these flags are right now being displayed at the City Council in Half Moon Bay.”

Ray hopes to have all the flags moved to and displayed at the UN once she gets the canvases from San Mateo. Prisoners in San Mateo county jail also participated with a flag.

“By using the unifying power of art, we are ensuring that prison inmates, migrant workers, schools and the global north and south are engaged together on a common canvas which is displayed across locations around the world,” said Ray. “By explaining a garment’s journey, the people involved in making it, the lack of transparency, child labor, lack of women’s rights and low wages, people are made aware of fast fashion and the human price it has to pay.”

Through the simple concept of upcycling [recycling]



Photo courtesy of Runa Ray

old clothes, Ray seeks to create a paradigm shift in behaviors toward consumption of fashion, and then changes can be made for climate action.

“As a fashion environmentalist, I believe that environmental and social justice are inextricably linked, and have always used the power of creativity in fashion to help educate and advocate for policy change,” said Ray.

“Fashion as an industry is responsible for 20% of the global waste water and climate change because of fast fashion which ends up in the land fill. It is estimated that 20% of climate change abatement lies in the hands of the end users and that a shift in consumption patterns could greatly impact the march towards climate action,” she added.

The well-being of the planet and security of all also includes the incarcerated population and their contribution to the flags, notes Ray.

“While the flag has engaged the incarcerated, the migrant workers, [and] refugees, there always remains a black hole with regards to the future of those who should not be left behind,” said Ray. “The concept of reintegration seems to be lost in most cases and a wide gap exists between the aftercare and rehabilitation provided to the incarcerated.”

Ray aims to make a difference and continue to bring awareness to Sustainable Development Goal causes to end inequality.

“The future objective of the Peace Flag,” said Ray, “would be to encourage the rehabilitation of those who are left behind; to provide support, extend help and protection to those of the minority; to help them integrate, overcome mental, social and economic difficulties by showing them the path in environmental jobs and voluntary paid services which involve green jobs and require work force to make an impact.”



PROGRAMS



Photos courtesy of California Prison Industry Authority

San Quentin News

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Q&A with CALPIA's new General Manager

Bill Davidson's purposeful approach prepares prisoners to reenter the workforce

By Marcus Henderson  
Editor In Chief

Bill Davidson, CALPIA's new General Manager, sat down with SQNews to talk about his new role, COVID, and his vision for the program.

SQN: Hi, thanks for sitting down with SQNews. So what does a CALPIA General Manager do?

BD: The CALPIA General Manager leads development and operations of correctional job training programs and enterprises. I believe in our mission to provide incarcerated individuals with life-changing training opportunities for successful reentry into the community.

SQN: So what are some of the big projects you are working on to bring to CDCR? What are some of your goals for educating the incarcerated students or providing marketable skills?

BD: We are expanding our technology programs to include Auto-CAD inside the walls at Folsom State Prison, as well as Code.7370 (Computer Coding) at Folsom Women's Facility. This allows more individuals to have the opportunity to learn these valuable job skills. I am also excited about connecting employers to our graduates. We have had great success with participants securing jobs with private companies along with state agencies such as Caltrans.

SQN: That sounds great. What other training opportunities are you offering?

BD: We have expanded our soft skills training through the Essential Skills for the Workforce (ESW) program, which focuses on life and professional skills necessary to be successful in the workplace, building on research, common workplace practices, and curriculum for justice-involved individuals.

SQN: Tell us more about ESW.

BD: The ESW workbook is self-paced and self-reflective. This program aligns with the CDCR and CALPIA's mission to facilitate the successful reintegration of individuals to their communities. The workbook introduces the "basics" of soft skills and introduces life and profes-

"A top priority to me is to continue working with outside employers so that as many of our CALPIA workers as possible can have meaningful jobs as soon as they return to their communities."

—Bill Davidson ►  
CALPIA General Manager

Courtesy of California Prison Industry Authority

sional skills necessary to be successful in the workplace such as: communication, enthusiasm and positive attitude, teamwork, networking, leadership, problem-solving, critical thinking and conflict resolution, workplace ethics, creative thinking, time management, and flexibility and adaptability.

SQN: OK, that sounds like CALPIA is trying to provide a lot. What are some of the challenges and successes, since you have to meet so many students' needs (such as basic education, vocational, and Spanish-speaking students or workers)?

BD: Navigating our operations through the COVID pandemic has been, by far, the biggest challenge in my time in this role. But along with this challenge has come great success as CALPIA has risen to that challenge and sustained and maintained our operations while ensuring the health and safety of all of our employees. I see every challenge we face as an opportunity for growth. CALPIA has hundreds of success stories. CALPIA offers a wide variety of programs from Health-care Facilities Maintenance to Code.7370 to fit each individual's needs.

SQN: Speaking of COVID, how has the pandemic affected the PIA programing?

What can we expect in the future when faced with other outbreaks?

BD: COVID has definitely impacted CALPIA programming. Since the onset of the pandemic, we have worked very closely with CDCR to ensure that we have been able to sustain our operations and maintain the highest level of programming, while ensuring the safety and well-being of all workers within our enterprises. The health and safety of each one of our workers has been, and will continue to be, our number one priority. CALPIA follows all protocols and guidelines set forth by CCHCS and CDCR.

SQN: Now for the tough question. So with the rise of inflation and the protest by some prison advocates about some of the prison industry being slave labor — first, what are your views on this statement? Second, will there be any wage increases?

BD: I cannot speak on behalf of these questions since these topics are part of pending legislation.

SQN: Hey, I just had to ask what our incarcerated readers really want to know. So what is your vision to move PIA programs and industries forward?

BD: A top priority to me is to continue working with

outside employers so that as many of our CALPIA workers as possible can have meaningful jobs as soon as they return to their communities. I also want to continue to invest in our operations so that the equipment and machinery being used in our programs is state-of-the-art equipment that our workers will use when they have jobs outside of prison. And third, to continue to assess our current operations to make them as efficient as possible and identify potential new job training opportunities that CALPIA may be able to pursue. It is also a priority of mine to travel to each prison and meet all CALPIA participants and staff. I believe it is important to see for myself what programs are providing successful outcomes and make improvements going forward.

SQN: Thank you for taking the time to talk to us. Please add any thoughts of inspiration or words you want the readers to know.

BD: I want everyone to know how proud I am of all the hard work and dedication from each participant in our programs. I am humbled to be leading this incredible organization that truly believes in second chances. I am encouraged by each success story I hear and know there are many more to come.



# The Last Mile, CDCR collaborate to sponsor laptop program for SQ coders

**CODING**

Continued from page 1

desire for crime.

“I grew up in an unstable home environment, so I took to the streets,” said Newman. “I joined a gang, carried guns, ran from bullets, and hit licks [did crime] to eat.”

Newman believes cryptocurrency can offer a way for marginalized people to stop living hand to mouth. He believes block chain’s libertarian system can give everyone a shot at the American Dream, regardless of race or criminal stigmatization.

“Being Black and a felon, it’s hard to survive in this world,” said Newman. “We traditionally face difficulty getting bank loans and we face housing discrimination.”

One of Newman’s goals is to use his coding skills

“This book is a rallying cry to the community. We need to learn how to code. We are going to have to learn this stuff because this is where the economy is going.”

— Sherman K. Newman  
Code.7370 Participant

to create the “Calicoín,” a specific coin for California, to encourage new people to enter into the crypto market. Newman wants to incentivize the app for people of color to start learning, building their brand, and investing.

Newman hopes that his ability to use his new com-

puter in the cell will offer him a pandemic-proof opportunity to prepare his app without disruption. He hopes to get an opportunity to finish his book and to give back to his community.

These new in-cell computers have been in high demand since COVID-19 has caused so many program disruptions at SQ. Many incarcerated students in the GED and college program are anxiously anticipating getting one of these mobile devices to continue with their own rehabilitation.

As a coding student, Newman has already been receiving assignments and software updates during quarantines. With this newfound freedom he expects to finish his app and release his book in 2023.

“This book is a rallying cry to the community,” said Newman. “We need to learn how to code. We are going to have to learn this stuff because this is where the economy is going.”

# Formerly incarcerated women join battle to restore voting rights to ex-felons

By Jerry Maleek Gearin  
Staff Writer

Efforts are under way to restore voting rights to Georgia citizens convicted of a felony, the *Southern Poverty Law Center* reports.

Over five million people in the U.S. are prohibited from voting because of a felony conviction, 275,000 live in Georgia, and almost 60% of them are Black, reported the May 14 article.

The language of the Georgia law bans voting for those who have been convicted of felonies “involving moral turpitude.” The law fails to define what moral turpitude means, so in practice, the ban applies to all people convicted of a felony, noted the report.

In Georgia the ban includes probation, parole, or any supervised release, which can extend many years after serving time. A felon trying to register to vote can even land back in jail, according to the *Law Center*.

Two formerly incarcerated women, Kareemah Hanifa and Page Dukes, are part of the restore-voting-rights effort.

“OK, I committed a crime; I served my time in prison. Why shouldn’t I be allowed to cast a ballot and have a say in my government?” said Hanifa.

Hanifa, 44, served 29 years, and her long-time friend, Dukes, 35, served 15 years. They met through their interest in the prison’s choir called Voices of Hope.

The prison allowed them to travel by bus in order to perform. They often talked about their future dreams during these long rides, the report said.

Hanifa is now a bachelor’s degree candidate in psychology, and is the lead organizer at the Southern Center for Humanity. Dukes works as a communications associate with Inner-City Muslim Action Network, a non-profit.

The Southern Poverty Law Center is working on legislative action to restore the rights

Over five million people in the U.S. are prohibited from voting because of a felony conviction.

of Georgians with felony convictions, noted the story.

One in every 17 adults is on conditional release in Georgia, which has the highest supervised release rate in the U.S. This is twice the State of Idaho’s probation rate, which is the second largest to Georgia’s, reported the article.

The majority of felony convictions in Georgia are for drug offenses and non-violent crimes, according to the *Law Center*.

Many countries let people in prison vote. The only two states in the U.S. that do so are Vermont and Maine.

# Advocates push releases for FCI Dublin abuse victims

By George Franco  
Journalism Guild Writer

Advocates for women who were sexually abused in a federal prison in Northern California are requesting compassionate release for the victims, *The Associated Press* reports.

The women are inmates in the federal Bureau of Prisons’ women’s facility in Dublin, nicknamed the “Rape Club” by many who are familiar with it.

The request to the Justice Department came from criminal justice advocacy group

Families Against Mandatory Minimums. The group delivered the request letter to Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco, *AP* reported May 10.

Justice officials claim they are prioritizing reform at the FCI Dublin women’s prison, starting by replacing former Warden Ray J. Garcia, who was charged with sexually abusing and forcing females to pose nude and snapping photos with his government-issued cell phone.

FAMM President Kevin Ring said in a statement, “None of these women was

For more on FCI Dublin and the Federal Bureau of Prisons See Page 9

sentenced to violence and torture. Yet we now know they were trapped by their abusers, with no ability to protect themselves or flee, making their incarceration an exceptionally degrading and terrifying experience.”

Garcia is one the five FCI

Dublin employees since last June to be charged with sexually abusing prisoners on multiple occasions from December 2019 to March 2020. Garcia’s lawyer refused an interview for *The AP* article.

Since March 2022, prison officials placed nine other workers on administrative leave. “After failing to protect them, the very least BOP can do now is let these women leave and begin to heal,” Ring said.

*AP* investigators reported on numerous abuses in the federal prison system, includ-

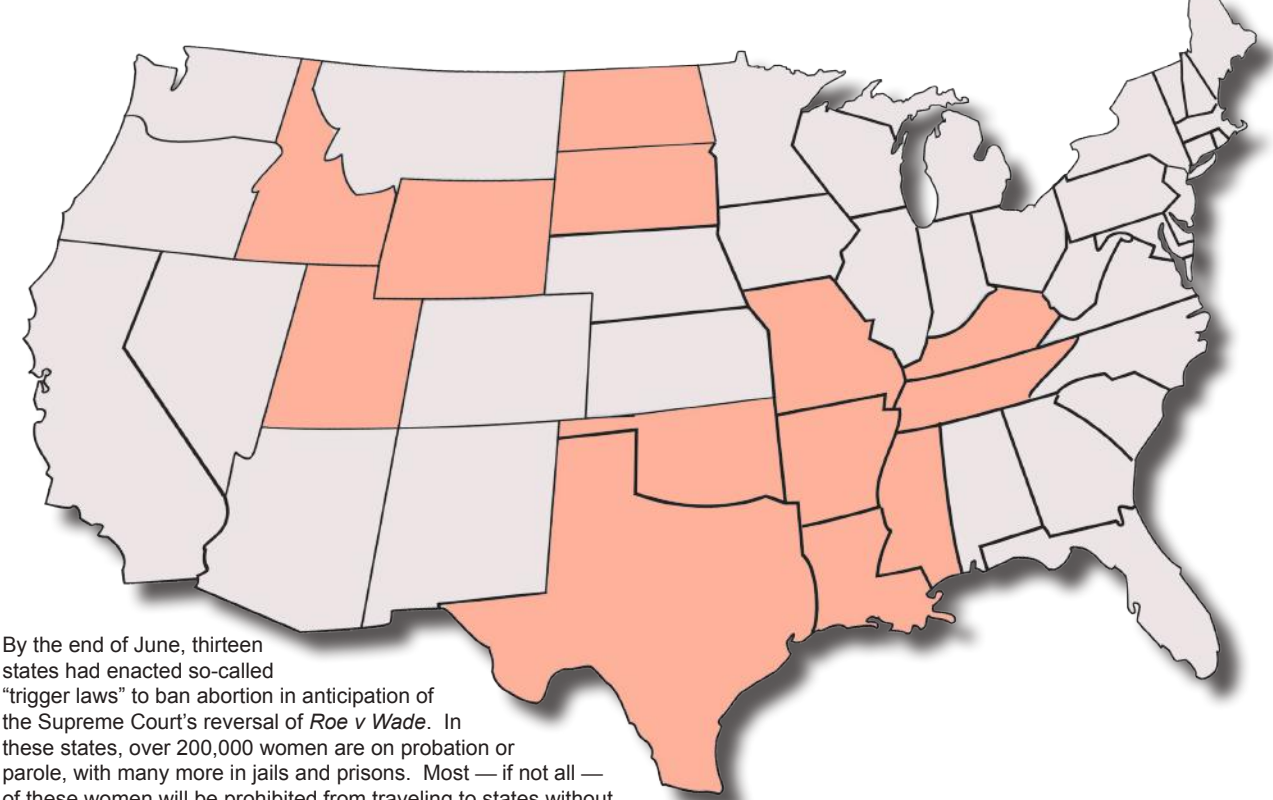
ing misconduct, bad leadership, and unrestrained sexual abuse by workers as well as severe staffing shortages, inmate escapes, and poor responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

These negative issues contributed to the recent resignation of the agency’s director. The Justice Department did not comment on the motion for compassionate release, but Monaco said she is committed to holding BOP staff accountable, including by bringing additional criminal charges as warranted.

# Advocates expect worsening conditions for incarcerated women following Roe reversal



Stock image



By the end of June, thirteen states had enacted so-called “trigger laws” to ban abortion in anticipation of the Supreme Court’s reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. In these states, over 200,000 women are on probation or parole, with many more in jails and prisons. Most — if not all — of these women will be prohibited from traveling to states without abortion bans to receive medical treatment.

SOURCE: Prison Policy Initiative

**ROE**

Continued from page 1

follow their own rules and regulations, or those of the state hosting each facility, said the report.

Before the reversal, incarcerated women had a right to abortion, but rules and regulations varied between federal, state and even county facilities, according to Dr. Carolyn Sufrin, obstetrician and director of the Advocacy and Research on Reproductive Well-

ness in Incarcerated People at Johns Hopkins University.

As a result, incarcerated women faced often-insurmountable difficulties accessing reproductive health services, especially in states with tight restrictions on abortions.

Even when abortion services were legally accessible, incarcerated women faced the additional obstacle of paying for the procedure and transportation to medical facilities where the procedure would be performed—typically \$500, said the article.

The difficulty was particularly acute in “abortion des-

erts,” which are areas or states where only one or two clinics are available.

“Such deserts will be expanded by Roe’s reversal,” wrote Daniels.

“Overturning *Roe v. Wade* is going to make a bad situation even worse for this population,” said Sufrin. “If someone is pregnant and incarcerated in a state where abortion is illegal, they don’t have the freedom of movement to try to travel to another state where abortion is legal. Maybe they would get released from jail while still pregnant, but they might be

too far along at that point to try to organize the logistics of going to an abortion-support-ed state.”

The reversal of *Roe v. Wade* will also impact women on post-release supervision.

“There are travel restrictions for people on probation or parole,” said Chelsea Moore, policy director for Dream Corps Justice. “If you want to leave even your county, but especially your state, you have to get permission from your community custody officer. If you live in a state where you would need to travel to get an abortion, that’s

going to be near impossible.”

“Women of color are statistically more likely to seek an abortion and to be incarcerated, highlighting why advocates worry they could be hurt by the decision,” said *The Hill*.

Sufrin is concerned that “vigilante policing” of pregnant women could force them to resort to self-managed abortions, and even greater incarceration.

Moore expressed the same concern. “The criminalization of abortion is going to further drive mass incarceration. And anytime we see any form of

new criminalization, it inevitably disproportionately impacts Black and indigenous people of color,” she said.

“We need to demand more of our legislators,” Moore added. “We need to let them know that this is an issue that we care about, that the issue of overturning *Roe* is not disconnected from the mass incarceration crisis that we’re experiencing. It’s related to it and it’s going to compound it and we’re tired of locking up people and throwing away the key and devastating Black and indigenous communities of color.”



# VOTING RIGHTS

Persons with a Criminal History



## DID YOU KNOW — YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE!

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

You can register to vote and vote if you are:

- A United States citizen and a resident of California,
- 18 years old or older on Election Day,
- Not currently serving a state or federal prison term for the conviction of a felony, and
- Not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court (for more information, please see [Voting Rights: Persons Subject to Conservatorship](#)).

### PERSONS WITH A CRIMINAL HISTORY WHO CAN REGISTER AND VOTE:

- In county jail:
  - Serving a misdemeanor sentence (a misdemeanor never affects your right to vote)
  - Because jail time is a condition of probation (misdemeanor or felony)
  - Serving a felony jail sentence
  - Awaiting trial
- On probation
- On parole
- On mandatory supervision
- On post-release community supervision
- On federal supervised release
- A person with a juvenile wardship adjudication

\*California Penal Code section 2910 allows the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to make agreements with local governments to house felons in a county jail or other correctional facility. A person serving a state prison sentence who is housed in a local jail or other facility under these circumstances is not allowed to register and vote.

### HOW TO REGISTER TO VOTE

You may request a voter registration card from the Secretary of State or your county elections office. If you are in jail and you are eligible to vote, you are entitled to receive a voter registration card.

You may also apply to register to vote on the Secretary of State’s website [RegisterToVote.ca.gov](#). Your voter registration application must be received or postmarked at least fifteen (15) days before Election Day to be eligible to vote in that election. In elections conducted by your county elections official, you can “conditionally” register and vote provisionally at your county elections office after the 15-day voter registration deadline. For more information please go to the Secretary of State’s webpage on same day voter registration and voting (<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/same-day-reg>) or contact your county elections official.

Voter registration cards and voting materials are available in English, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese. Voter registration cards are available at most public libraries and government offices. See the attached list for state and local elections office contact information.

### VOTE BY MAIL

If you are already registered to vote at your current home address, you may request a vote-by-mail ballot application by contacting your county elections office. Once you receive your vote-by-mail ballot application, you must complete and return it to your county elections office at least seven (7) days before Election Day.

If you are not registered to vote at your current home address, you may register or re-register to vote and request a vote-by-mail ballot on the Secretary of State’s website [RegisterToVote.ca.gov](#).

### RELEASE FROM CUSTODY

If you requested a vote-by-mail ballot but are released from custody before you receive your ballot, you can still vote. Just go to the polling place for your home address or any polling place in the county where you are registered and vote a provisional ballot.

If you change your name, home address, mailing address, or party preference you must complete a new voter registration card.

### RESOURCES

For more information contact your county elections office or the California Secretary of State:

#### CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE VOTER HOTLINES

English	(800) 345-VOTE (8683)
Español / Spanish	(800) 232-VOTA (8682)
Chinese / 中文	(800) 339-2857
Hindi / हिन्दी	(888) 345-2692
Japanese / 日本語	(800) 339-2865
Khmer / ខ្មែរ	(888) 345-4917
Korean / 한국어	(866) 575-1558
Tagalog	(800) 339-2957
Thai / ไทย	(855) 345-3933
Vietnamese / Việt ngữ	(800) 339-8163
TTY/TDD	(800) 833-8683

“We just completed another voter registration drive at our local jail, and in two days we were able to register 157 incarcerated people to vote!”

—Brendon Woods  
Alameda County Public Defender

### CALIFORNIA COUNTY ELECTIONS OFFICES

<b>ALAMEDA</b> 1225 Fallon Street, Room G-1 Oakland, CA 94612 (510) 272-6973	<b>MADERA</b> 200 W. 4th Street Madera, CA 93637 (559) 675-7720	<b>SAN JOAQUIN</b> P.O. Box 810 Stockton, CA 95201 (209) 468-8683
<b>ALPINE</b> P.O. Box 158 Markleeville, CA 96120 (530) 694-2281	<b>MARIN</b> P.O. Box E San Rafael, CA 94913-3904 (415) 473-6456	<b>SAN LUIS OBISPO</b> 1055 Monterey Street, Room D-120 San Luis Obispo, CA 93408 (805) 781-5228
<b>AMADOR</b> 810 Court Street Jackson, CA 95642-2132 (209) 223-6465	<b>MARIPOSA</b> P.O. Box 247 Mariposa, CA 95338 (209) 966-2007	<b>SAN MATEO</b> 40 Tower Road San Mateo, CA 94402 (650) 312-5222
<b>BUTTE</b> 155 Nelson Ave Oroville, CA 95965-3411 (800) 894-7761	<b>MENDOCINO</b> 501 Low Gap Road, Room 1020 Ukiah, CA 95482 (707) 234-6819	<b>SANTA BARBARA</b> P.O. Box 61510 Santa Barbara, CA 93160-1510 (805) 568-2200
<b>CALAVERAS</b> 891 Mountain Ranch Road San Andreas, CA 95249 (209) 754-6376	<b>MERCED</b> 2222 M Street Merced, CA 95340 (209) 385-7541	<b>SANTA CLARA</b> P.O. Box 611360 San Jose, CA 95161-1360 (408) 299-8683
<b>COLUSA</b> 546 Jay Street, Suite 200 Colusa, CA 95932 (530) 458-0500	<b>MODOC</b> 108 E. Modoc Street Alturas, CA 96101 (530) 233-6205	<b>SANTA CRUZ</b> 701 Ocean Street, Room 310 Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4076 (831) 454-2060
<b>CONTRA COSTA</b> P.O. Box 271 Martinez, CA 94553 (925) 335-7800	<b>MONO</b> P.O. Box 237 Bridgeport, CA 93517 (760) 932-5537	<b>SHASTA</b> P. O. Box 90880 Redding, CA 6099-0880 (530) 225-5730
<b>DEL NORTE</b> 981 H Street, Room 160 Crescent City, CA 95531 (707) 464-7216	<b>MONTEREY</b> P.O. Box 4400 Salinas, CA 93912 (831) 796-1499	<b>SIERRA</b> P. O. Drawer D Downieville, CA 95936-0398 (530) 289-3295
<b>EL DORADO</b> P.O. Box 678001 Placerville, CA 95667 (530) 621-7480	<b>NAPA</b> 1127 First Street, Suite E Napa, CA 94559 (707) 253-4321	<b>SISKIYOU</b> 311 Fourth Street, Room 201 Yreka, CA 96097-9910 (530) 842-8084
<b>FRESNO</b> 2221 Kern Street Fresno, CA 93721 (559) 600-8683	<b>NEVADA</b> 950 Maidu Avenue, Suite 210 Nevada City, CA 95959 (530) 265-1298	<b>SOLANO</b> 675 Texas Street, Suite 2600 Fairfield, CA 94533 (707) 784-6675
<b>GLENN</b> 516 W. Sycamore Street, 2nd Floor Willows, CA 95988 (530) 934-6414	<b>ORANGE</b> P.O. Box 11298 Santa Ana, CA 92711 (714) 567-7600	<b>SONOMA</b> P.O. Box 11485 Santa Rosa, CA 95406-1485 (707) 565-6800
<b>HUMBOLDT</b> 2426 6th Street Eureka, CA 95501 (707) 445-7481	<b>PLACER</b> P.O. Box 5278 Auburn, CA 95604 (530) 886-5650	<b>TEHAMA</b> P.O. Box 250 Red Bluff, CA 96080-0250 (530) 527-8190
<b>IMPERIAL</b> 940 W. Main Street, Suite 206 El Centro, CA 92243 (442) 265-1060	<b>PLUMAS</b> 520 Main Street, Room 102 Quincy, CA 95971 (530) 283-6256	<b>TRINITY</b> P.O. Box 1215 Weaverville, CA 96093-1215 (530) 623-1220
<b>INYO</b> P.O. Drawer F Independence, CA 93526 (760) 878-0224	<b>RIVERSIDE</b> 2724 Gateway Drive Riverside, CA 92507-0918 (951) 486-7200	<b>TULARE</b> 5951 S. Mooney Blvd. Visalia, CA 93277 (559) 624-7300
<b>KERN</b> 1115 Truxtun Avenue, 1st Floor Bakersfield, CA 93301 (661) 868-3590	<b>SACRAMENTO</b> 7000 65th Street, Suite A Sacramento, CA 95823-2315 (916) 875-6451	<b>TUOLUMNE</b> 2 S. Green Street Sonora, CA 95370-4618 (209) 533-5570
<b>KINGS</b> 1400 W. Lacey Blvd., Building #7 Hanford, CA 93230 (559) 852-4401	<b>SAN BENITO</b> 440 Fifth Street, 2nd Floor, Room 205 Hollister, CA 95023-3843 (831) 636-4016	<b>VENTURA</b> Hall of Administration, Lower Plaza 800 S. Victoria Avenue Ventura, CA 93009-1200 (805) 654-2664
<b>LAKE</b> 255 N. Forbes Street, Room 209 Lakeport, CA 95453 (707) 263-2372	<b>SAN BERNARDINO</b> 777 E. Rialto Avenue San Bernardino, CA 92415 (909) 387-8300	<b>YOLO</b> P.O. Box 1820 Woodland, CA 95776-1820 (530) 666-8133
<b>LASSEN</b> 220 S. Lassen Street, Suite 5 Susanville, CA 96130 (530) 251-8217	<b>SAN DIEGO</b> P.O. Box 85656 San Diego, CA 92186-5656 (858) 565-5800	<b>YUBA</b> 915 8th Street, Suite 107 Marysville, CA 95901-5273 (530) 749-7855
<b>LOS ANGELES</b> P.O. Box 1024 Norwalk, CA 90651-1024 (800) 815-2666	<b>SAN FRANCISCO</b> City Hall 1 Dr Carlton B. Goodlett Pl. Room 48 San Francisco, CA 94102-4635 (415) 554-4375	



REENTRY

# EX-PRISONERS FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

Urban Alchemy cleans up the streets while putting formerly incarcerated back to work

By Jerry Maleek Gearin  
Staff Writer

Urban Alchemy is a non-profit organization hiring the formerly incarcerated to make streets cleaner and safer, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

The company uses a strategy of hiring people who are struggling to find jobs, and in turn reducing the role of armed police officers when it comes to addressing homelessness, says the May 22 story. Urban Alchemy has grown to 1,100 employees, with projected revenue of \$55 million for the fiscal year ending June 30, said the report.

“What we’re trying to do is just make spaces safe and clean and raise the vibration, so to speak, in areas that in the past have been dirty and scary, particularly for peo-



Photo courtesy of Urban Alchemy

An Urban Alchemy worker literally cleans up the streets. The nonprofit has made a practice of hiring formerly incarcerated employees to create safer public areas in the city.

ple who are vulnerable,” said Lena Miller, co-founder and CEO of the organization.

The employees are making an attempt to get their own lives on track after incarceration. Most of them are people of color and some have been homeless, notes the story.

They might be instructed

to remove tents from side walks so children can walk to school, or clean up drug paraphernalia because of the frequent drug use that occurs in the city, the article reports.

Some critics complain that the workers are not licensed security guards, and that the organization is outsourcing

government functions to non-profits, which hinders evaluation of whether city spending on similar services is achieving results, said the *Chronicle*.

The company has been growing rapidly, but this doesn’t come without challenges. Two of its employees

have been shot in San Francisco since February.

Louie Hammond, a former gang member who served 21 years in prison for attempted murder, is Urban Alchemy’s employee training chief.

Hammond works with new hires to role-play scenarios that may take place on the streets. In one scenario, he got within one foot of a new hire’s face and said: “What are you going to say when someone comes at you like this and calls you a snitch-ass ... police?”

“I’ll say, ‘Have a good day, sir,’” a trainee responded.

The trainees laughed, but the answer was along the lines of the employees’ goal, of how to avoid confrontation.

“If you have no self-control, no discipline, or choose to take it personal, this is not a job for you,” said Hammond.

Despite this training, some community members have criticized Urban Alchemy employees of escalating situations that take place on the street. A homeless person named Arthur Bruce accused an Alchemy worker of hitting him during an argument, which sent him to the hospital for a wrist injury, according to the story. Bruce criticizes Urban Alchemy, saying it was a “recipe for disaster” having people with check-

ered background “acting as authority figures over the most vulnerable citizens.”

One recent morning in the city’s Tenderloin district, Hammond and his crew walked past drug users and dealers, asking people to clear out for the kids headed to school, and directing people to linkage center that helps connect people to housing. Several Alchemy Workers gathered around Sarah Snider, who injected fentanyl and cocaine into her thigh before packing up to leave, the *Chronicle* reported.

“Some of these guys have power trips, and they get pushy, but these guys here had the right thing going now. I’d rather see Urban Alchemy than cops,” said Snider.

An hour after making sure Snider had cleared out of the area, Hammond pushed a woman in a wheelchair while she was screaming and refusing to move. He took her into a coffee shop, bought her a sandwich, and prayed with her before taking her to the linkage center.

“Engaging in conversations and encouraging folks to care about their neighborhood is a much more effective approach than forcing people to move or having police write tickets to those who cannot afford to pay them,” Urban Alchemy told the *Chronicle*.

## ‘Gate Money’ legislation revised *Senate Bill 1304’s proposed Release Allowance cut by half — to \$1,300 if bill becomes law*

By Steve Brooks  
Journalism Guild Chair

Efforts to increase the amount of “gate money” allotted to prisoners upon their release have been resurrected after being placed in a legislative Suspension File.

Senate Bill 1304, authored by Sydney Kamlager, sought to increase the amount of gate money from \$200 to \$2,589. That effort failed and the bill went into the Senate Appropriations Committee’s Suspension File.

The Suspense File is a place where bills go to die. But instead, this bill was revived when Sen. Kamlager reduced the amount sought to \$1,300. On May 19, 2022, the Senate voted to move the bill forward.

“If your intent is to provide effective reentry, you have to give prisoners the tools and

resources they need to reenter society,” said SQ resident Deandre Brumfield.

SB 1304 seeks to amend section 2713.1 of the Penal Code to provide a sum sufficient for a month’s needs based on two reliable sources on the cost of living: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology living wage calculator and the federal government data for average monthly expenses for a single adult with no children in 2021. The bill also calls for the amount to be adjusted annually based on the inflation rate.

This bill would result in the first gate money increase in almost 50 years.

Kamlager, who represents a Los Angeles district, said her legislation makes good sense for the state.

“People often enter prison impoverished and are being thrown into poverty upon

release,” Kamlager told the *Guardian*. The system “perpetuates a fall deeper into desperation for folks who have just been released.”

At a time when the cost of living is historically high, people leaving prison after decades will face tough challenges finding adequate assistance because of their criminal records. The cost of food, housing, transportation, and maintaining their health can quickly turn into a serious situation. Raising the amount of gate money, many lawmakers and prisoner advocates say, is consistent with what is needed to help protect public safety.

“I think that something needs to happen. You need something to start with,” said SQ resident Brumfield. “Having just enough money to get to transitional housing to have a roof over your head isn’t enough.”

## Former SF prosecutor’s diversion program policies criticized

By Joshua Strange  
Staff Writer

Under Chesa Boudin, the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office resolved an increasing number of criminal cases through diversion programs, according to an analysis of data by the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

The analysis revealed that the most common types of cases accounting for the increase in diversions were petty theft, misdemeanor assault and battery, and driving under the influence. Overall, clearance rates for cases through diversion increased from eight percent in 2017 to over 30 percent in 2021. Diversion programs that focused on people with mental health and drug addictions grew the fastest.

“For some of these individuals, they may just need therapy. And I don’t know that incarcerating them endless amounts of times is going to actually be therapy that they need,” Jason Williams, an associate professor of justice studies at Montclair State University, told the *Chronicle*.

Diversion programs, which serve as an alternative to incarceration, are expanding nationwide and have been used in San Francisco since the 1970s. They typically focus on misdemeanor charges but can include certain felony charges as well.

Boudin, who was recalled in a special election in June, faced accusations for being “light on crime,” and his use of diversion programs was part of the reason for that criticism.

Don Du Bain, a former San Francisco prosecutor, told the *Chronicle* that “Diversion has ... historically, under both Kamala Harris and George Gascón, been reserved for lower-level-type felonies: Property crimes, drug possession crimes, that sort of thing.

Robbery and felony assaults have not typically been diverted.”

However, diversions began increasing most rapidly in 2018, two years before Boudin took office, and the biggest increases under Boudin were for misdemeanors and lower-level felonies. According the *Chronicle*, “the city has long been unusual in how many felony crimes it diverts.”

### Recently enacted laws supporting diversion programs in California:

**2021—Assembly Bill 3234**  
Allows judges to seek alternatives to jail or prison sentences for first-time offenders charged with most misdemeanors.

**2019—Senate Bill 394**  
Requires counties to create diversion programs for primary caregivers of children charged with misdemeanors and some felonies.

**2018—Assembly Bill 991**  
Allows diversion for people with certain mental disorders, even if facing felony charges.

Notably, other jurisdictions, such as Seattle’s King County, have had success with community-supported felony-level diversion programs, as reported by *SQNews*.

San Francisco has over 20 diversion programs, including pre-trial, drug, mental health, youth, neighborhood, and behavioral health diversion programs. In 2019, under a new state law, a primary caregiver diversion program was created specifically for parents who are the documented, primary caregiver of a child.

It’s likely the main reasons for the increased diversion rates are a slate of new, di-

version-friendly state laws, as well as a COVID-created backlog of court cases needing clearance, according to both Boudin and criminal justice experts.

People can be referred to diversion by the DA’s Office or the Public Defender’s Office, with approval by a judge. Judges can also order someone to diversion without a referral.

David Mauroff, CEO of the non-profit San Francisco Pretrial Diversion Project, said “The district attorney is one piece of a much larger system.”

Participants in diversion programs are assigned a case manager and a tailored treatment plan. Once the treatment plan is completed, their case is dismissed. In the event someone fails to complete the program successfully, their case returns to court, which can result in their incarceration.

“Participating in diversion isn’t easy,” said Johanna Lacoe of the nonpartisan California Policy Lab and co-author of a study on felony diversion in San Francisco. “It often takes a long time, [and] it can be very intensive. It’s not a free ride through the criminal justice system, which I think gets misinterpreted.”

Williams agreed, noting his research showed that some people would rather do their time locked up because diversion program requirements can seem too daunting.

Lacoe’s study found reduced recidivism rates for diversion program participants compared to traditional court, even when accounting for the potential lower risk levels associated with people that qualify for such programs.

“We meet them where they are. We develop a plan that sets them up for success,” said Mauroff, whose San Francisco Pretrial Diversion Project had a 97% completion rate in 2021.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

From Rev. Truth Akins

Dear 8 Degree of Yes Project Members:

This is to notify you that our program and center did not receive funding or meet the State’s criteria for grants, or support in accordance to the DHCS Level of Care Designation (<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/>).

If we gain support and resources to meet these qualifications, we will notify all members of our capabilities and ability to provide support letters to those who request them. Currently, we are not funded and recommend you to seek services from other social organizations.

**CTTSOUL.FAMILY**  
**8 DEGREES OF YES PROJECT**  
**PO BOX 2141**  
**TEHACHAPI, CA 93580**



# No strings attached

*Returning Citizen Stimulus program provides cash assistance to formerly incarcerated*

By Juan Haines  
Senior Editor

Giving financial support to people getting out of prison is having a positive effect on their lives. Last April, formerly incarcerated people in 28 cities in six states across the country began receiving an average of \$2,750 over three months.

Californians are part of the program through For the People, a nonprofit organization that advocates for reduced sentences for people serving what have been deemed unduly long sentences.

One of the success stories is in Stockton, Calif., where 125 low-income people received \$500 a month for two years – no strings attached. That project was initiated by a former mayor, Michael Tubbs, a frequent San Quentin visitor.

The Returning Citizen Stimulus began making cash payments to 10,500 formerly incarcerated people who did not qualify for federal pandemic relief because they lacked recent work histories, *New York Times* reporter Patricia Leigh Brown wrote on July 7.

The program, started by The Center for Employment Opportunities, a New York-based nonprofit group, also

provides paid transitional employment, job counseling, and related services for formerly incarcerated people around the country.

With 650,000 people released from U.S. prisons each year, the program affects less than 2% of the formerly incarcerated.

One in three American adults who have criminal records also suffer other “collateral consequences” that stem from incarceration, such as restrictions on housing and employment, according to the *Times* article. These restrictions directly relate to recidivism, studies show.

The Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law reports that many people get out of prison without savings or other financial resources. Annually, they earn on average around half of what people who have never been incarcerated earn.

According to the Brennan study, people who are imprisoned as young adults will have lost an average of \$484,000 in earnings by the end of their working lives.

An ongoing analysis suggests that the cash payments have had a positive effect on employment; 42% of recipients found employment within five months.

# Los Angeles drug diversion efforts fizzle

*Three-quarters of eligible offenders decline program; Gov. Newsom suggests mandated treatment for addicts, mentally ill*

By Jerry Maleek Gearin  
Staff Writer

The drug diversion program in the city of Los Angeles is not making any progress due to lack of interest, according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

The program, offered as an alternative to incarceration, is having little success as only 17 of the 283 eligible people have completed the program, said the May 20 story.

The program is designated for non-violent offenders, such as petty theft, drug possession, and the mentally ill, reported the newspaper.

“The individuals who are brought in believe they will be released very quickly, which they are. The court’s zero-bail practice is wreaking havoc on this program,” said LAPD Deputy Chief Kris Pritcher.

He oversees the program and stated the program has been “largely hampered” by policies put in place by court officials and District Attorney George Gascon.

Advocates say people who are suffering from mental illness and drug addiction believe the program requires too much time.

People with misdemeanor convictions must agree to stay in the program for 90 days, and those who are charged with a felony must agree to stay in it for 180 days.

Some may decline because of their job, childcare issues,

and worries that the treatment will not be culturally sensitive, noted the *Times*.

Almost 75 percent of the 283 people eligible for the program did not want to participate since the program was launched by the Los Angeles Police Department in 2021, noted the article.

The unwillingness of adults to involve themselves with drug diversion program when facing criminal charges shows a larger problem that public officials have when looking for solutions, the article stated.

The District Attorney’s Office and the LAPD can track participants’ progress and still file criminal charges if participants do not adhere to program’s requirements, according to the article.

Gov. Gavin Newsom suggested a plan to allow the court to compel people with serious mental illness and addiction to receive treatment, said the report.

Others saw the proposal as extreme overreach to force the sick and addicted into treatment.

Some observers that maintain better ways to help people out of crises would be offering more attractive services, instead of waiting on them to commit crimes, according to the *Times*.

The success of treatment “always depends on whether, from the point of view of the person involved, the alternative is better,” said Gary Blasi, a professor at UCLA law school.

# Author of 1893 parole law remembered

California’s first parole law crafted by state’s first female attorney

By Don Chaddock,  
Inside CDCR Contributor

Thanks to the 1893 parole law, those serving sentences in California’s two prisons were given an incentive to be on their best behavior: release. The new law marked a turning point for the state correctional system, created by the state’s first female attorney.

A pioneer in every sense of the word, as well as an agent of change, was Clara Shortridge Foltz.

The first woman to pass the state bar, she later sued for the right to attend California’s first law school. Foltz held the title of many “firsts” in California.

She was the first woman to:

- Serve as a legislative counsel;
- Prosecute a murder case;
- Serve as a deputy district attorney;
- Serve as a district attorney; and,
- Hold state office.

Lastly, at the age of 81, she became the first woman to run for governor of California in 1930.

She is credited with creating the public defender role as well as the parole system.

In 1891, there was a push to create a system for releasing inmates back into their communities with some skills so they could transition into law abiding citizens. An editorial in the *Sacramento Daily Union* called for passing a parole bill introduced by Senator Frank McGowan and Assemblyman Nestor Young, but authored by Foltz.

The *San Francisco Call* clearly credited Foltz with crafting the bill.

“The bill, drawn up by Foltz, (aims to) reform prisoners, give them an opportunity, (while reducing) (prison) expenses. Under the proposed law, the prisoners paroled would be under the control and supervision of the boards (but would) be returned to prison if they violate (condi-



Photos courtesy of California State Library // Illustration by Andrew Hardy, SQNews

Clara Shortridge Foltz was a woman of many firsts, including being the first woman in California to pass the state bar exam and become an attorney. She is credited with creating the public defender system and authoring California’s original parole law.

tions). If they leave the State, they (will be considered) escapes and returned to prison,” the paper reported.

The bill finally became law with Governor Markham’s signature in March 1893.

**What was life like in the 1890s?**

Headlines in 1893 varied from determining the boundaries of Alaska and possibly annexing Hawaii. Canada also sought independence from Great Britain.

A 10-room home in Los Angeles sold for \$6,500. A chicken ranch and six-room house with a barn, corrals and fencing sold for \$1,650. If buying a home was too pricey, one could rent half of a duplex with four rooms, bath and pantry for \$8 per month.

Foltz and those pushing for women’s suffrage lived in a time when women were thought too delicate to handle working life. An advertisement for a “vegetable compound” promised to fix a woman’s “displaced womb” caused by too much standing and the stress of working. A woman’s “outing” suit sold for \$6.50.

**The first people paroled in California**

Four people were granted parole in De-

cember 1893, two each from Folsom and San Quentin.

“(The) parole law was exercised yesterday at San Quentin for the first time by the State Board of Prison Directors,” reported *The San Francisco Morning Call*, December 10, 1893.

The first was forger Henry Haas, convicted in 1892. The other was James Capell, sentenced to five years in 1891 for killing Saul Harmon.

Meanwhile, Folsom granted parole to Pitt River Native American Chief Charles Turner. Convicted of killing the tribe’s medicine man, Turner was sentenced 10 years. Thomas Garity, sentenced to six years, was the fourth paroled person in California.

According to the newspaper, the board sparingly used the parole authority.

“The Directors, of whom there was a full board present yesterday at San Quentin, showed a disposition to be very conservative in granting the parole privilege,” the paper reported. “Several applications were denied.”

# AG Bonta recalibrates position amid political pressure

By Manuel Dorado  
Journalism Guild Writer

California voters are anxious about crime, putting pressure on left-leaning district attorneys and causing Attorney General Rob Bonta to recalibrate his position, reported Politico March 13.

Politico said that Bonta was “considered a rising progressive star” last year when he was appointed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, and that the outcome of his reelection effort

this year could be “a bellwether of Democratic voters’ commitment to criminal justice reform.”

Meanwhile, polls show a nine-point increase since 2020 in voters who perceive violence and street crime as a problem, said the article.

The recall of former San Francisco District Attorney Chesa Boudin was successful and Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascon faces a well-funded recall push endorsed by a Los Ange-

les prosecutors’ union.

“If you’re an elected official or you want to be an elected official, you need to address the crime issue, said Democratic strategist Darryl Sragow.

Sacramento County District Attorney Anne Marie Schubert and former U.S. Attorney Nathan Hochman seek to unseat Bonta. Hochman is a Republican; Schubert is a Republican-turned-independent. Both work to associate Bonta with Boudin and Gascon.

“Rob Bonta is aligned with those policies and those types of candidates,” said Schubert. “People need to understand that what’s happening in San Francisco and what’s happening in Los Angeles, that Rob Bonta’s aligned with those types of ideologies.”

Bonta is responding to the pressure, stressing the need to “repair our broken criminal justice system” and for “rebuilding trust between our communities and law enforcement.”

# Parole hearings create dilemma for innocent supplicants

By Vincent E. O’Bannon  
Staff Writer

Some people confess to a crime they did not commit to avoid the threat of a more severe sentence, the *New York Times* reports.

A result can be that a wrongly convicted person is reluctant to tell the truth for fear of being denied parole.

“Parole hearings create a terrible Catch-22 for those who have been convicted. If they admit guilt, they can undermine any attempt to overturn their conviction. If they continue to assert their innocence, they can doom their best chance at freedom — parole — because parole applications effectively require statements of remorse,” said David Leonhardt of the *New York Times*.

Tens of thousands of people have been wrongly convicted of crimes they did not commit, said the Dec. 6, 2021 *Times* article.

“Whatever the true number, it’s large enough for alarm,” wrote Leonhardt. “Our criminal justice system

regularly puts a higher priority on winning a conviction than on achieving justice — and Black and Latino Americans are disproportionately imprisoned as a result.”

There are more than two million people incarcerated in the U.S., and Leonhardt points out those wrongful convictions happen when police do not pursue active leads that may exonerate the innocent.

The *Times* cites the case of two Louisville, Kentucky, Black men, Jeffrey Clark and Keith Hardin, incarcerated in their early 20s. They spent more than 20 years in prison before lawyers from the Innocence Project helped to exonerate them based on DNA evidence and the detective’s dishonesty, the *Times* reported.

“Even in factual innocence, there are factors that still exist, such as, a person’s defects of character, childhood traumas, and a distorted belief system that must be addressed — which is required when appearing before the Board of Parole Hearings,” said San Quentin resident

Kevin “S.K.” Sample.

Analysts have found that 4.1% of Death Row prisoners deserved to be exonerated — which is a conservative estimate, reported the *Times*.

A 16-year-old New Yorker, Huwe Burton, was allegedly coerced into falsely confessing that he stabbed his mother to death. Attempting to gain parole, he dropped his claim of innocence. Later he was found factually innocent and a judge vacated his conviction.

“The starkest injustice is the large number of people imprisoned for crimes they did not commit,” wrote Leonhardt.

Suggested ideas for minimizing wrongful convictions and changing the narrative include banning the testimony of jailhouse informants, requiring that interrogations be recorded, expanding post-conviction DNA testing, and increasing the penalties for police officers who lie or manipulate evidence.

“A person must have actually and factually committed a crime in order to take responsibility for it,” said SQ resident Derek Pierson.

Factual innocence claims at parole board hearings have the consequences of having an innocent person serving decades in prison, Pierson noted.

“People who maintain their innocence remain in an impossible situation,” said Michelle Lewin, executive director of the Parole Preparation Project.

“Proving factual innocence at the board is like trying to checkmate an opponent using just a knight and a king” said Sample.

“One way to prevent parole dilemmas...is for parole boards to make decisions based more on a person’s rehabilitation and risk to the community and less on their stated guilt or innocence,” said Julia Salazar, a Democratic New York state senator.

Salazar has proposed a bill that would address these issues and has significant support in the Legislature.

“If a person is arguing factual innocence before the board, there is a 0.1 percent possibility of getting a [parole] date, if you have a life sentence,” said Sample.



TENNESSEE

# State’s first murder exoneration announced by Gov. Bill Lee

By Bruce Bowman  
Journalism Guild Writer

After 12 years in prison, Adam Braseel made history as Tennessee’s first convicted murderer to receive a full exoneration. Announced by Governor Bill Lee among 16 other executive clemency cases, Braseel’s case, the only exoneration, took a long time to resolve, said Tyler Whetstone in the *Knoxville News Sentinel*.

The article said that under Tennessee law, an exoneration counts as the highest act of clemency and means that the governor did not believe in Braseel’s guilt. “Interestingly enough, I can say I am completely exonerated today and not to have to worry about it no more ever again,” said Braseel.

Accused of killing a 60-year-old man on a rural road in 2006, without any forensic evidence, a photo lineup amounted to the only evidence against Braseel. After consistently maintaining his innocence, Braseel won a retrial in 2015 after a judge threw out his original guilty verdict. This freed Braseel for two months, but the Court of Criminal Appeals overruled the decision and sent him back to prison, Whetstone wrote.

The article said that two years later, fingerprints initially found on the victim’s car

“I can say I am completely exonerated today and not to have to worry about it no more ever again.”

—Adam Braseel

actually belonged to a local felon who committed suicide in 2008. The two men closely resembled each other in their slight build and their red hair. The emergence of new evidence led to a retrial.

Whetstone wrote that the retrial ended in 2019 with an Alford Plea that did not require admission of guilt but acknowledged the existence of sufficient evidence to convict of the lesser charge of aggravated assault. Faced with a choice of the plea and immediate release or with staying in prison and continuing to fight the case, Braseel entered the plea.

The article called Braseel’s choice difficult because it would leave him with a felony record. Finally, a 2020 unanimous decision by the Tennessee Board of Parole recommended him for exoneration. “Life is just full of uncertainties and you really don’t know until you know,” said Braseel.

OKLAHOMA

# Oklahoma poised to execute 25 prisoners

Death row prisoners in Oklahoma have exhausted their appeals, awaiting execution dates

By Amir Shabazz  
Journalism Guild Writer

Oklahoma is requesting execution dates be scheduled for 25 Death Row prisoners. The request to the state’s highest appeals court comes after a federal judge rejected their challenge to the state’s lethal injection method, *The Associated Press* reports.

Attorney General John O’Connor said there are no further legal impediments to resuming executions.

“For the sake of the victim’s families, many of whom have waited for decades — as many executions as possible are set four weeks apart,” O’Connor wrote.

The first incarcerated person expected to be executed is James Coddington. His March 10 execution was postponed when he joined the prisoners’ lawsuit. He was sentenced for a brutal hammer killing of co-worker Albert Hale, who had refused to lend him money for drugs, reported the article.

Next on the list is Richard Glossip, sentenced to death



Stock photo

for killing a motel owner. He has maintained his innocence.

Some Oklahoma Republican lawmakers questioned Glossip’s guilt and have requested a review of the case, according to the *AP*.

“Those findings could reveal exculpatory information previously unknown until this point,” said Don Knight, attorney for Glossip.

Oklahoma resumed capital punishment in October with the execution of John Grant, who convulsed and vomited while on the gurney before being declared dead.

NATIONAL

# Congress reexamines crack vs cocaine laws

By Randy Hansen  
Journalism Guild Writer

Congress is again considering eliminating the disparity between crack cocaine and powder cocaine penalties that has disproportionately impacted Black defendants.

The bill passed the House last September with bipartisan support and would apply retroactively if it makes it through the Senate. It is tagged the EQUAL Act, short for Eliminating a Quantifiably Unjust Application of the Law,

Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J., told *Axios*, “I think Republicans at-large really do care about fairness. And this is clearly the same chemical substance. It’s almost like saying, ‘You vape marijuana and somebody else smokes it, and you should have 18 times more the penalty.’”

Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., signed onto the EQUAL Act as the 11<sup>th</sup> Republican to support the bill, which has wide support from Democrats. Majority Leader Chuck Schumer described the bill as “a priority.” It passed the House with significant Republican support. President Joe Biden signaled he will sign this bill if it reaches his desk.

Some of the others supporting this legislation are Sen. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo.; Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine;

the Congressional Black Caucus, Republican Gov. Asa Hutchinson of Arkansas, and many advocacy groups, the April 6 story reported.

Advocate Janos Marton, national director of Dream Corp Justice, a nonprofit geared toward reducing the prison population, said, “Forty-one states treat crack and powder the same. So in many of our meetings with Republicans who believe in states’ rights, we say, ‘Just look at your own state’s policy; that’s all we’re asking.’”

In 1986 the Anti-Drug Abuse Act triggered the 100-to-1 disparity between crack and powder cocaine for federal minimum sentencing guidelines. This has saddled thousands of people, mostly Blacks, with extremely long prison sentences.

In 2010 the Fair Sentencing Act lowered the disparity to 18-to-1, and the 2018 First Step Act made that reform retroactive.

This new bill has received support from the law community, including police chiefs. Passing this bill can help release thousands from prison and help reduce mass incarceration, the story noted.

When he was a senator, Biden co-sponsored the 1986 bill creating the disparity. He has since reversed his stance. The Justice Department also endorsed the EQUAL Act.

**1. ALABAMA —** (*Associated Press*) Alabama’s plan to sell \$725 million in bonds to finance the construction of two new supersize prisons is being opposed by advocacy groups. The organizations formed the Communities Not Prisons coalition to fight the state’s plan for dealing with Alabama’s prison problems, saying it ignores the bigger problems of staffing levels and leadership and the underlying issue of mass incarceration. This project would “marry our state to mass incarceration for the better part of this century. It means that Alabamians, and Black Alabamians in particular, will continue to be incarcerated and brutalized by the Alabama Department of Corrections on a breathtaking scale,” said Veronica Johnson, executive director of one of the coalition groups. Alabama is facing an ongoing lawsuit from the U.S. Department of Justice over the conditions in its prisons.

**2. TEXAS —** (*AP*) Texas’ struggling juvenile prison system, which serves five states in total, is giving employees 15% pay raises to help address staffing shortages and high staff turnover. The staffing situation has become so dire it’s forced officials to stop accepting new children into their facilities. The pay raises are “the first step in stabilizing the agency,” said Interim Executive Director Shandra Carter.

**3. ARIZONA —** (*AP*) In a “blistering verdict,” U.S. District Judge Roslyn Silver ruled Arizona prison officials have been acting with “deliberate indifference” to the risks of inadequate care for prisoners that has led to preventable deaths. The judge criticized Corrections Director David Shinn for claiming that prisoners often have greater access to health services than people who aren’t locked up in his sworn testimony. Shinn’s claim “is completely detached

from reality,” Silver wrote. “Given the overwhelming evidence and repeated instances of insufficient care leading to suffering and death, Defendant Shinn could not possibly believe prisoners have the same access to care as people in the community.” Arizona could be headed for a federal oversight receivership of its prisoners health care, similar to the one ordered for prisons in other states such as California.

**4. ARIZONA —** (*AP*) A three-member U.S. appeals court panel from the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit has sided with Arizona Department of Corrections’ (DOC) ban on sexually explicit material for inmates, in the process denying *Prison Legal News*’ claims of First Amendment violations for censorship. An Arizona DOC rule prohibiting prisoners from “sending, receiving or possessing sexually explicit material or content seen as ‘detrimental’ to the safety and operation of prison facilities,” was enacted in 2010 after staff, mostly females, complained inmates were harassing them with sexual images. *Prison Legal News* won an initial lawsuit in 2019 challenging the ban, but the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit panel ruled the censorship was not a violation if officials were keeping incarcerated people from accessing content that “would make prisons less safe.”

**5. KANSAS —** (*AP*) A county government in Kansas has agreed to pay a \$12.5 million settlement to Lamonte McIntyre and his mother after he spent 23 years in prison for a double murder he did not commit. McIntyre and his mother sued the county government and its former police detective, Roger Golubski, who they accuse of coercing the mother into sex and then framing the then teenage McIntyre for a double homicide because she rejected the detective’s later sexual advances. They also allege that “Golubski abused dozens of Black women for years and

**NEWS BRIEFS**

many officers were aware of his conduct.”

**6. VIRGINIA —** (*AP*) Virginia lawmakers recently approved a budget amendment from Republican Gov. Glenn Youngkin that excludes an estimated 8,000 incarcerated people with violent offenses combined with a non-violent offense from receiving earned sentence credits for good behavior under an expanded 2020 state law. Relatives and advocates for the affected incarcerated people contend the retroactive reversal cruelly cancelled reunion and homecoming plans and caused hardship for incarcerated people and their families. “Using this back-door method days before they were supposed to get out was, to me, hugely wrong,” said Christopher Ford, whose father was scheduled to be released after serving 25 years of a 28-year

sentence for a murder-for-hire scheme. “I understand the fears some people have (about releasing him from prison), but there are people who have changed during their time. My father is not the same person he was in 1997 when he committed these crimes.”

**7. OREGON —** (*AP*) Administrators at the Federal Correctional Institution in Sheridan, Oregon, are denying showers to prisoners engaged in a hunger strike, according to a court filing by a federal public defender. The hunger strike was to protest conditions inside the facility’s detention center, and the day after it started, the filing claims prison warden DeWayne Hendrix issued a memo saying showers were postponed indefinitely in that unit “due to continued threats of assault to staff.” Deteriorating conditions in the Sheridan

prison have been causing complaints and concerns since the pandemic started in 2020.

**8. PENNSYLVANIA —** (*Bloomberg Law*) A prison health-care provider, Corizon, has been ordered to turn over documents related to an incarcerated man’s death after been denied that it was shielded from discovery by the Patient Safety Quality Improvement Act’s privilege clause for “patient safety work products.” Jonathan Gleaves Jr. died while in the custody of the Philadelphia Department of Prisons while Corizon conducted the mortality review to assess the circumstances and cause of his death. Gleaves’ estate sued the department and Corizon, requesting a copy of the mortality review as part of the discovery process.

**9. PENNSYLVANIA —** (*WHYY-PBS Philadelphia*) The United Way is

offering residents of the City of Brotherly Love the opportunity to clear their criminal records for free by sponsoring 30 record-clearing clinics staffed with lawyers. “This is just a mathematics game. If you increase the number of clinics, and you spread them around the city in an equitable way... it should provide equal access to individuals,” said Michael Banks, who is helping with the effort on behalf of the city and the United Way. Under Pennsylvania’s Clean Slate law, non-convictions, summary offenses, and most nonviolent misdemeanors, including drunk driving, shoplifting, and prostitution, can be sealed after 60 days and most other convictions after a decade, as long as another crime has not been committed since and all court fines and fees have been paid in full.



MISSOURI

By Jerry Maleek Gearin  
Staff Writer

Former prison sites have often used spooky and grotesque prison props to entertain visitors. But instead of scaring visitors, some sites have switched to educating them about mass incarceration, according to an article published by *The Marshall Project* in partnership with *Mother Jones*.

At San Quentin State Prison, one of the most infamous prisons in the United States because of its violent and bloody reputation, residents lead tours, educating visitors on rehabilitative programs and mass incarceration.

“I have been incarcerated for 21 years and a San Quentin tour guide for five-plus years. I went inside SQ’s infamous dungeon and never wanted to go back,” said Tommy Wickerd. “My efforts toward rehabilitation and accountability in 20 years would make me an asset to the community instead of spending lengthy time in prison.”

Just a few miles from San Quentin, “The Big Lockup” is an exhibit about mass incarceration at Alcatraz, formerly a United States Penitentiary in California. This exhibit educates people about the untold stories concerning the country’s history of incarceration.

# ‘Haunted’ prisons offer insights into mass incarceration



Photos from Wikipedia

West Virginia State Penitentiary (left) and Missouri State Penitentiary (above)

On the other side of the country lies Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining, New York, opened in 1826. It still houses 1,500 people, which complicates the ethics of building a museum to tell the prison’s history, said the article.

“We’re not at all interested in pandering to voyeurism. And we’re not interested in exploiting, as some museums do, the paranormal interest,” said

Brent Glass, executive director of the soon-to-open Sing Sing Prison Museum.

Prison tourism in the past has relied heavily on spookiness and gruesomeness as entertainment, at the expense of prisoners’ dignity, noted the article.

This type of tourism is taking place in a country where criminal justice reform movements have gathered steam in recent years.

An interest in mass incarceration has been sparked by the rise in prison populations and outbreaks of deadly violence. The change in public perception of prison tourism reflects the stresses and inequities of the penal system, reported the article.

“The way the United States approaches prison tourism re-inscribes the kind of politics that support mass-incarceration,” said Jill McCorkel,

a professor of criminology at Villanova University.

Some prisons are less educational and more grotesque. At the West Virginia Penitentiary, people can sit in a non-operational electric chair. There are pictures of smiling children sitting in the electric chair.

Museum curators for years have debated the appropriateness of haunted houses in prisons; this is a part of rethinking how history is memorialized.

The United States Prison system faces the same problems as before: overcrowding, the spread of infectious diseases, gang violence, solitary confinement, mental illness, and a disproportionate number of Black and Brown incarcerated people, said the article.

Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola is built on a former slave plantation. When visitors enter the prison they are greeted with an image of a White man on horseback overseeing a group of Black men in the fields.

At Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, an event called “Terror Behind the Walls” has enticed visitors every Halloween for years with a haunted house featuring evil doctors and zombie inmates. But last year, the museum changed direction and decided to emphasize education instead. “The whole subject of incarceration is less a source of amusement than it was 10 years ago in America, but there’s still like a layer of people thinking that it’s funny. But it’s not funny to us,” said Sean Kelly, Eastern State’s senior vice president and director of interpretation.

FEDERAL BOP

## Widespread negligence in BOP exposed

By Amir Shabazz  
Journalism Guild Writer

An *Associated Press* investigation has disclosed widespread sexual abuse, criminal misconduct, staffing shortages, prisoner escapes, neglect and leadership failures in the Federal Bureau of Prisons,

The resulting stories grabbed the attention of federal legislators.

A May 5 *AP* story reported, “Sen. Jon Ossoff, D-Ga., introduced legislation that would require the Bureau of Prisons to fix broken cameras. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, went to the Senate floor and read *AP* stories into the Congressional record as he demanded Attor-

ney General Merrick Garland fire the agency’s director, Michael Carvajal.”

This led to the announced resignation of Carvajal and his top deputy.

The investigation started in 2019, when a high-profile prisoner, Jeffrey Epstein, committed suicide at the Metropolitan Correctional Center in New York. *AP* reporters Michael Balsamo and Michael Sisak uncovered a failing prison.

A shortage of prison staff created an atmosphere of chaos, *AP* reported. Staff was using the internet while at their work stations, others being pulled off of their assignments and redirected to other parts of the prison. Staff and guards were too exhausted to work because

of too much overtime.

*AP*’s investigative team then turned its attention toward other federal prisons throughout the country.

During and after COVID-19 outbreaks, executions of federal prisoners were mandated. They turned out to be COVID super-spreader events, where the majority of execution witnesses caught COVID and spread it to others.

Since 2019, over 100 Bureau of Prisons workers and prison guards were arrested, convicted or sentenced for allowing prisoner escapes, predatory sexual abuse, and mishandling of the COVID-19 crisis.

Other problems uncovered by the investigation were that, at some institutions,

doors were left open, security cameras were broken, and prisoners escaped unnoticed for hours, leading up to at least 29 known escapes, half of them still at large.

These crimes and infractions were kept out of the public’s eye for years, the story noted.

At a female prison in California, the women prisoners were molested and sexually abused for years. Prison guards, a chaplain and the warden have been criminally charged.

“These stories aren’t possible without the help of whistleblowers, inmates and their families, and anyone else who suspects wrongdoing or knows what’s going on and tells us about it,” said the *AP* story.

PENNSYLVANIA

## Number of juveniles charged as adults on the decline

By Pheng Ly  
Staff Writer

Fewer juveniles offenders are being sent to adult courts as a shift works its way into the American justice system, *The Associated Press* reports.

The percentage of juveniles offenders across the county referred to adult court dropped from 8% in 2010 to 2% in 2019 and 1% in 2020, according to data compiled by the FBI.

“This has meant second chances for untold thousands of youths,” the June 6 *AP* story commented.

The story cited the 2015 case of David Harrington, who spent a harrowing eight months of his teenage years at a jail in Philadelphia, fighting a charge for robbery.

Only 16 at the time, the system charged him as an adult, but a judge sent his case down to juvenile court. A sentence of house arrest and probation allowed him to finish high school.

“I think if I would have stayed in the adult system, I would have came home probably a little worse,” said Harrington, now 24. “I would have came home listening to the ways on how to get better at ... certain illegal things, and I would have came home and been doing nonsense.”

*AP* writer David Collins wrote that community programs, counseling, peer mediation, and similar services for teenagers have increasingly replaced adult prison sentences. Nationwide, the number of children prosecuted as adults fell to 53,000 in 2019 from an estimated 250,000 in the early 2000s, reported the National Center for Juvenile Justice.

These statistics correspond with a general decrease in crime, including a 58% drop in youth arrests between 2010 and 2019, the story noted.

Many in law enforcement have supported such reforms and several states

have raised the age of adult criminal responsibility to 18. Others maintain the changes go too far.

The Sentencing Project, an advocate group for minimal imprisonment, said that only Georgia, Texas, and Wisconsin prosecute 17-year-olds in adult courts.

Collins said that the “raise the age” movement has shown scientifically that teenage brains have not fully developed key decision-making functions. Other research has shown that children serving sentences in adult institutions experience risk of physical and psychological harm, which can lead to more criminal behavior.

“We see across the board for young folks, regardless of what they may be charged with, that what works is community-based intervention, what works is connecting young folks with people in their own communities, letting communities lead reform efforts,” said Naomi Smoot Evans, executive director of the Coalition for Juvenile Justice, a Washington nonprofit that works to keep children from involvement with courts.

Disagreeing is Giovanni Circo, a criminal justice professor at the University of New Haven. His research showed no correlation between raising the age of adult criminal liability to 18 and crime increases.

“When we look at more widespread impacts of these sort of policies, we just don’t find any evidence that it has any impact on overall crime rates,” Circo said.

Harrington now works for the Youth Art & Self-Empowerment Project, helping teenagers charged as adults.

“You’d rather be at a juvenile facility getting the proper care and treatment there,” he said, calling the juvenile system “better because you’re able to go home and be with your family.”

FEDERAL BOP

## Rampant BOP abuse and cover-ups ignored

By Bostyon Johnson  
Staff Writer

An intensive investigation and personnel changes are under way at the Dublin federal women’s prison where widespread sexual abuse has been reported by *The Associated Press*.

Inmates and staff at the Dublin prison reported rampant sexual abuse and cover-ups. They said that authorities ignored their cries for help.

The facility has lost a lot of its credibility, but replacing the warden and two associate wardens at the Federal Correctional Institute in Dublin is a sign of progress, *AP* reported.

At least five employees, including the warden, were charged with sexual misconduct against female prisoners. After an *AP* investigation and an angry call from a congresswoman, the head of the federal BOP submitted his resignation.

“Staff misconduct, at any

level, will not be tolerated, and our efforts to root it out are far from over,” said Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco, who was briefed on the issues within the federal prison system.

Newly installed Warden Thahesha Jusino said, “It’s horrible... I’ve never been part of a situation like this. This is really unprecedented.”

Jusino is the daughter of a former federal prison warden. Since 1998, she has been the associate warden at two prisons and warden at the federal prison in Victorville, Calif.

The numerous complaints that were filed by inmates and staff members ranged from sexual harassment and misconduct to violations of the Prison Rape Elimination Act and federal Equal Employment Opportunity laws.

Attorney General Merrick Garland discussed the Dublin problems during a U.S. Senate budget hearing. He gave credit to Manaco for forming the task force

that is investigating Dublin’s failings.

During the week of March 7, the *AP* investigators and the task force, which consisted of senior agency officials, visited the facility east of San Francisco to investigate the abuse claims.

Those in charge at the facility were known to demoralize the workforce, *AP* stated. The institution was known to many as the “rape club,” according to *AP*.

Three female inmates sued the Bureau of Prisons in 1996, when some males were incarcerated at Dublin. The women claimed they were “sold like sex slaves” to male inmates who raped them.

No one was arrested; however, the agency settled the lawsuit for \$500,000. In the early 2010s, about a dozen employees were removed from the facility for sexually abusing inmates. None of the employees in that incident were arrested, *AP* reported.

One employee was al-



COVID

# No immunity for CDCR in SQ outbreak suit

## Federal judge denies officials’ bid for protection under PREP Act following deadly wave of Covid infections in 2020; prisoners’ lawsuits allowed to move forward

By Bostyon Johnson  
Staff Writer

A federal judge has refused to dismiss a handful of lawsuits by San Quentin (SQ) residents, saying that prison staff and executives orchestrated a prisoner transfer that caused a deadly COVID outbreak at the prison in 2020, according to a *Courthouse News Service* report.

The outbreak, which killed one staff member and 28 residents, happened after SQ officials decided to transfer 122 medically vulnerable residents from the California Institute of Men (CIM) in Chino, Calif, where there was an active COVID outbreak. According to the California Attorney General,

the transfer was intended to protect medically vulnerable CIM residents from the virus. However, some transferees were already experiencing COVID symptoms at the time they were loaded onto the bus to SQ.

Prior to the transfer, there were no COVID-19 cases at SQ, but immediately afterward, 15 of the transferees tested positive, according to the report. Three weeks later 1,135 residents were infected. By the end of August, that number had jumped to 2,237 residents and 277 staff members. Lawmakers in California have called the transfer and ensuing COVID outbreak the “worst prison health screw up in state history,” the report notes.

After the lawsuits were filed, officials claimed immunity under the Public Readiness And Emergency Preparedness Act (PREP), saying the law—which is intended to shield public officials from liability during public health emergencies—protected them in their failure to take effective countermeasures against the outbreak. However, District Judge William Orrick III ruled that the officials mishandled the transfer and failed to quarantine infected transferees. Orrick said this constitutes a violation of the Eighth Amendment’s protection against cruel and unusual punishment. He also said that the PREP Act does not cover a prison transfer or advise protection to all COVID related

decisions within the prison setting, according to the report.

“Just because we’re locked up, doesn’t mean we don’t have feelings or needs,” said Carlos Smith, a resident of SQ who is included in the suit. “California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) wants us to be accountable and responsible when we go to the parole board, yet when they are wrong, they want to minimize their wrongs,” he added. Smith is still dealing with long term COVID-19 symptoms from the outbreak.

The defendants named in the prisoners’ lawsuits include Retired CDCR Secretary Ralph Diaz, former San Quentin Warden Ronald Da-

vis, and current Warden Ronald Broomfield. They also include Mona Houston, the warden at Chino from August 2019 through Jan. 4, 2021, as well as a number of head physicians and health care “executive officers” at both prisons. Orrick recognized that each of the officials named in the suit somehow contributed to the circumstances surrounding the prison transfer, increasing the incarcerated individuals’ COVID risk, the report said.

Orrick said that prison officials had “fair warning” that exposing prison residents to a communicable disease would constitute a violation of their Eighth Amendment rights, the report noted. “I cannot agree that defendants were not on

notice that their conduct might violate the Constitution,” Orrick said.

Kevin Schrub, the incarcerated person at SQ who initiated the lawsuit, said “I do empathize with these vulnerable Chino prisoners... but I also adhere to the theory of self-preservation; don’t harm me because you want to save someone else.” When asked what he would have wanted from CDCR had he been one of the transferees, he went on to say, “I would have wanted CDCR to treat me with compassion and not place someone else in danger.”

CDCR Spokesperson Dana Simas said that the department is reviewing the recent ruling, and determining next steps.

## State releases updated ‘Roadmap’ for reopening

On July 7, 2022, the CDCR and the California Correctional Health Care System (CCHCS) released an update to the state-wide **Roadmap to Reopening**. Here, we reproduce selected sections pertaining to the plan’s Covid-19 Outbreak Phase, as well as the Open Phase, also known as the “New Normal.”

This information is taken directly from the CDCR and CCHCS joint memo.

**Outbreak Phase**

An outbreak is defined as three or more epidemiologically linked cases of COVID-19 among incarcerated persons (IP) within the past 14 days.

During Outbreak Phase, operations, programs, and services will be modified to minimize the risk for ongoing transmission of COVID-19.

When an outbreak is identified in a facility, all IP who program together within that facility shall be placed in Outbreak Phase. An exception can be made for housing units within the outbreak facility that do not program with other units, such as administrative segregation units, COVID-19 isolation units, and reception center units to include intake quarantine units.

Once an outbreak is identified, the institution shall progress from routine surveillance COVID-19 testing to enhanced outbreak response testing of employees and IP. The purpose of this enhanced testing is to identify additional infected

individuals and outbreak areas within the institution. The enhanced testing plan will be developed by the CEO and Warden in consultation with the Regional Health Care Executive (RHCE) and Associate Director (AD).

If not all IP consent to testing, the Warden and CEO shall consult with the RHCE, AD, and CCHCS Public Health to determine if response testing has been adequate to transition from Outbreak Phase to Open Phase. In the absence of testing, the Outbreak Phase will in most cases be extended and monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms will be essential.

Any quarantine that extends past 21 days shall require consultation with the RHCE, AD, and CCHCS Public Health to determine why programming has not resumed.

**General Provisions for Institutional Operations, Programs and Health Care Services during Outbreak Phase:**

Every effort shall be made to continue essential health-

care during Outbreak Phase. In addition to face coverings, enhanced hygiene, and improved ventilation, modifications may be necessary, including:

- Cell front or in-unit clinical encounters
- Mental Health in-cell activities and programming
- Cell front or ion-unit medication distribution
- Temporary postponement of routine services that are not deemed to be high priority or emergent

Outbreak facilities/buildings will be closed to in-person, video, and family visiting during quarantine and isolation.

Outbreak facilities/buildings will be closed to media access, film requests, and stakeholder tours.

No outside vendors, non-essential contractors, or non-employees will be permitted in outbreak areas other than those who are essential for supplying needed goods. Essential vendors, contractors, and non-employees include:

- Integrated Substance Use Disorder Treatment program providers, including Alcohol and Other Drug Counselors
- California Department of Veterans Affairs representatives
- Design and construction activities performed by consultants, general contractors, and the Inmate/Ward Labor program

IP workforce will be limited to essential functions within their outbreak units.

Yard access shall be by housing unit.

Meals will be provided with-

in the housing unit or controlled feeding in the dining halls.

Showers and phone calls shall be provided with cleaning in between uses.

Dayroom access within the same living quarters.

Sports equipment may be issued if used only by IPs who live within the same unit IP; equipment is to be cleaned after use.

Recreational activities (card games, board games, etc.) may be issued to IP who live within the same unit, with disinfection of the items between uses.

Students will be eligible to receive independent study packets.

Students shall be administered educational assessments within their housing unit.

Law Library: Paging only. Recreational reading books made available to IP in housing units; access to assistive devices shall be provided in libraries or housing units, including devices for vision impaired individuals, upon request.

The following programs will not be provided to IP housed in outbreak areas: Offender Mentor Certification Program, in-person college, and Innovative Grants Program/Arts in Corrections/Volunteer programs. Every effort will be made to provide in-cell activities.

Congregate/group religious activities may be provided to IP within their units.

IP received from county jails shall be placed into cohorts on quarantine status in a single housing unit/dorm and continue to receive program and ser-

vices separate from isolation or quarantine housing units/dorms.

**Open Phase (New Normal)**

To move to Open Phase, the facility, or housing unit must have no new IP outbreak cases for 14 days as noted above.

Individual housing units may move from Outbreak Phase to Open Phase independently as long as they are conducting enhanced COVID-19 response testing, have had no new IP outbreak cases for 14 days and they have not been programming with other housing units.

In the absence of sufficient testing, the Warden and CEO shall consult with the RHCE, AD, and CCHCS Public Health. In most cases, the Outbreak Phase will be extended.

IP who are housed in a facility or housing unit that is in Outbreak Phase shall not be permitted to program with IP in other facilities or housing units.

If a facility experiences a COVID-19 outbreak among IP, the facility shall revert to Outbreak Phase restrictions as described above.

**General Provisions for Institutional Operations, Programs and Health Care Services:**

Facilities and housing units within facilities that have progressed to Open Phase shall return to normal operations for all IP programming and activities.

COVID-19 precautions shall continue to be observed consistent with latest direction.

### SAN QUENTIN ISSUES NEW COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

On August 5, 2022, San Quentin’s Chief Medical Executive, Dr. Alison Pachynski, issued an update to the prison’s facility-specific Covid operations:

Quarantine isolation of residents with Covid symptoms or a positive test will continue;

Individuals who come into close contact with a Covid-positive individual will be quarantined unless they are fully vaccinated and boosted. Those who are not fully vaccinated/boosted will be confined to quarters and tested on Days 5 and 10.

Housing units will not be placed on quarantine without three linked Covid cases.

Testing will continue according to the Movement Matrix and Public Health recommendations. Transfers will be tested prior to transportation and again on Days 5 and 10 following transfer. Outside medical appointments will be tested on Day 5 following their return to the prison.

To prevent severe illness, those who test positive may be offered treatment with Paxlovid, remdesivir and/or molnupiravir Covid medications.

In the memorandum, Dr. Pachynski encouraged SQ residents to continue masking, hand washing, and testing.

“This is ultimately about finding a sense of balance and learning to ‘live with’ COVID-19,” she wrote.

The memo noted that these new procedures are subject to change if circumstances warrant, as with the emergence of a new variant.

## Prisoners released under federal CARES Act returned to prison

The U.S. 2020 Federal Cares Act, (FCA) authorized the release of incarcerated individuals to home confinement to help lower the spread of COVID-19 within the prison system, *Reuters* reports.

Of the 10,000 people released, 406 violated the terms of their release and were returned to prison.

There were a variety of reasons for people violating the terms of their release, but the majority fit into two categories: 199 for abuse of drugs or alcohol abuse, and 132 were for various administrative offenses, according to the *Reuters* report.

Several of the individuals who returned to prison filed a lawsuit against the action.

The Reuters report notes that Eva Cardoza, of New York, was returned to prison for possession of marijuana, which is legal in the state.

Cardoza’s fiancé, Eric Alvarez, told Reuters that she had not used marijuana. Alvarez said he believes the test was

*“Her due process was violated. She wasn’t even given an opportunity to go to a hearing or to contest what she was being accused of. That’s not America.”*

—Eric Alvarez  
*Fiance of returned prisoner*

inaccurate and Cardoza was not given a chance to contest the test results.

Cardoza, who has a teenage daughter and helps care for Alvarez’s four children, has been back behind bars since June 2021.

“Her due process was violated,” Alvarez, told Reuters in a phone interview. “She wasn’t even given an opportunity to go to a hearing or to contest what she was being accused of. That’s not America.”

The prosecutors contend that the violators of the terms should stay in prison, because they have “no protected liberty

interest.”

The defense disagrees.

“These cases could help shed light on the black box of how the BOP (Bureau of Prisons) goes about deciding who to re-imprison, and a favorable ruling could certainly lead to additional litigation around the country,” said Marisol Orihuela, a law professor at Yale University, who represents a plaintiff in the suit.

The spokesperson for the Justice Department declined to comment beyond the court filing in the case, *Reuters* reports.

The lawyers for the individuals who returned to prison said the officials’ disciplinary approach conflicts with the FCA’s goal to lower mass incarceration and reduce low-level offender sentences.

The litigation could bring on further legal challenges on behalf of the 300 other prisoners who were released and then re-incarcerated for similar low-level offenses.

—Bostyon Johnson



LAW & POLICY

# Susanville

## Injunction temporarily halts closure of California Correctional Center



File photo

By Steve Brooks  
Journalism Guild Chair

Employees at the California Correctional Center (CCC) in Susanville will need to find new jobs by June 2023, according to an article in the *Sacramento Bee*. Gov. Gavin Newsom first announced the closure of CCC in April 2021. By August, the citizens of Susanville filed for a preliminary injunction citing a violation of California’s Environmental Quality Act and the California Penal Code. The injunction was granted by a Lassen County Superior Court judge. “CCC is the second largest employer in our town, so it’s

devastating. It’s devastating to our families and to these people who have worked here,” Mayor Mendy Schuster told the *Epoch Times* in 2021. “We have generations who have worked here at CCC. The prisons have become who we are as a community.” The state’s new budget, passed by lawmakers and signed by Gov. Newsom, now bypasses those environmental reviews. The court’s injunction remains in place for now, according to Vicky Waters, spokesperson for the corrections department, in a June 30 email statement to the *Bee*. “We will notify our staff, incarcerated population and stakeholders of any updates or changes.”

*“Some Susanville residents believe that propping up their economy through the caging of human beings ... is justifiable.”*

—Duane Palm & Tim Peoples  
CCC Residents

As of March, CCC employed about 1,000 people and held 1,600 prisoners. In June, two incarcerated residents of CCC reported that they filed three petitions in 2021, citing various examples of harm inflicted upon them at the prison. Their story was shared with *TruthOut* news, an online publication. “Rather than reading more stories about the woes of the

town’s free residents, its well past time that Gov. Newsom and all Californians hear from us, the imprisoned population of Susanville,” wrote Duane Palm and Timothy Peoples. “Our abuse continues and could escalate the longer this closure is stalled,” they told *TruthOut*. The two complained that CCCs closure needs to be expedited due to deplorable living conditions. Allegations include dangerous conditions due to COVID-19 and prisoners being used as “product and property for the benefit of [Susanville’s] economic growth. “It seems that some Susanville residents believe that propping up their economy through the caging of human beings—like the two of us, who are incarcerated in CCC—is justifiable,” said Palm and Peoples. The men argued that Susanville residents need to make big changes in how their economy is organized and should get away from the belief that caging human beings for profit is acceptable. It appears the Newsom administration agrees, at least in part, that the facility is no longer necessary, and that the closure should move forth.

## Experts cite Covid risks, recommend additional releases

A new report about the effects of COVID-19 on California’s prison system encourages lawmakers and prison officials to reduce the prison population in order to save lives. “We found that many California prison officials and staff did heroic work under incredibly difficult circumstances, But in many cases, it still wasn’t enough,” said Dr. Brie Williams, a professor of medicine and director of the Amend organization at UCSF who helped lead the research team. California prisons were at a disadvantage because of old and sometimes antiquated buildings. It is nearly impossible to practice preventive measures like social distancing and isolating ill prisoners,

because the institutions house thousands more inmates than they were designed to hold, according to the report. There were 50,000 documented COVID-19 cases among prisoners by December 2021. There were also 16,000 cases among prison staff. COVID deaths included 240 prisoners and 26 staff, according to prison headquarters and the report. Death rates among prisoners were higher than those in the non-incarcerated populations of the state of California and of the United States as a whole. More than 1,000 inmates too sick to be treated in prison health facilities were admitted to local community hospitals

during the pandemic. More than 150 were admitted to intensive care units. Inmates of color had higher risks of hospitalization than White inmates, the report noted. The report recommends reducing overcrowding, increasing vaccination rates (especially among staff), prioritizing release of elderly and high-risk prisoners, and improving ventilation and heating systems. It noted many prison windows are welded shut. “We believe that state policymakers and prison managers should look closely at the lessons learned in this crisis to help assure we’re better prepared in the future,” said Williams. “This includes giving attention to massively re-

ducing the prison population in our state in the interest of public health, as overcrowding is likely the single greatest health threat in a respiratory pandemic.” The report titled “California State Prisons During the COVID-19 Pandemic,” was produced by researchers at University of California, Berkeley, and University of California, San Francisco. It was done under the auspices of CalPROTECT (California Prison Roadmap for Targeting Efforts to Address the Ecosystem of COVID Transmission), a joint project between the two universities investigating COVID-19 transmission in California prisons.

—Steve Brooks

## Labor shortages create opportunity for returning citizens

By Jad Salem  
Journalism Guild Writer

A labor shortage sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic is helping formerly incarcerated people find jobs, according to *The Associated Press*. At least 11.3 million jobs opened up in the U.S. “amid a dire national labor shortage” sparked by the pandemic, according to the July 10 *AP* story. When Antonio McGowan walked out Mississippi’s Parchman State Penitentiary in 2014, and after 17 years, he had trouble finding a stable job and paycheck. “Things weren’t in place” McGowan said. “They weren’t where I wanted them to be as far as being an individual back in society. It was a struggle.” McGowan found himself working from one odd job to the next, including landscaping and painting, but it was not enough to pay the bills. It was difficult finding a permanent job with a criminal record. In recent years, McGowan was able to find employment with the help of the Hinds County Reentry Program and MagCor, companies that provide job training for people in Mississippi correctional facilities and formerly incarcerated people seeking employment. These jobs provide stable

hours and a paycheck. “We think the pandemic, in a sense, was a big help,” MagCor recruiter Eric Beamon said. “If no one wants to work anymore, or if everyone wants to work from home, employers are begging for employees.” Studies show that having a stable job reduces recidivism. Even though not everyone is willing to hire people with criminal records, a 2021 survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management Foundation and the Charles Koch Institute shows 53% of professionals say they are willing to hire people with criminal records, up from 37% in 2018, according to the *AP*. With the help of Upchurch Services, a company that allows workers to take classes in repair services and gain experience in the field, McGowan found a fulltime job in air conditioning and heating repairs, working 40 hours a week. He earns \$15 an hour plus overtime and has full health care coverage. “Summer, winter, spring or fall, you’ll need either heat or air conditioning,” he said. “So I found something I can help people out with. At the same time, it can keep me in the working class, so I don’t fall back into the

things I used to do.” McGowan said his work means more than just a job. “It’s the look on someone’s face,” he said. “When you fix something of theirs that’s been broken, they just smile. I spent so many years hurting people. So I know the look people have when they feel hurt. To see the

*“We think the pandemic, in a sense, was a big help. If no one wants to work anymore, or if everyone wants to work from home, employers are begging for employees.”*

—Eric Beamon  
MagCor Recruiter

reverse of that, it’s enough to make me happy.” Other companies such as Amazon, Waffle House, and Columbus-based Lyle Machinery are among firms willing to hire ex-prisoners. There has been an increase in new jobs and in wages, some as paying as much as \$20 an hour.

The workforce reentry program also provides parolees with mentors to help with the challenges after incarceration. Cynetra Freeman was Savannah Hayden’s mentor after she was released from prison in November for five felony convictions. Freeman is the founder of Mississippi Center for Reentry, an organization that prepares inmates to leave prison and be ready and prepared for the workforce. The day after Freeman was released from prison, she recalls taking the bus to the employment agency, only to be told she would never get a job because of her criminal record. “This crushed me and made me think about others who felt the same devastation,” Freeman said. “Employment is one of the toughest aspects for a person who is just returning home.” Freeman encouraged Hayden to think long-term for a stable job. Hayden now works as the mental health and drug addiction coordinator for Freeman at the Center for Reentry. “After so many doors are slammed in your face, you get tired of asking,” Hayden said. “But there will be a person who says ‘yes,’ and that will change your life.”

## LA supes strike down motion to close juvenile detention camp

By Bruce Bowman  
Journalism Guild Writer

An LA County Supervisor’s effort to close a deteriorating youth detention were thwarted after other supervisors voted the proposal down, according to an article by the *Los Angeles Daily News*. Supervisor Kathryn Barger said Camp Kenyon Scudder, a Santa Clarita juvenile hall, should permanently close because the 74-year-old facility is not suitable for focusing on rehabilitation, or for housing “secure youth track offenders” who require longer-term placement. However, three fellow supervisors voted no on a motion Barber put forward to close the site. “I am extremely surprised and disappointed with the outcome of today’s vote by the Board of Supervisors,” Barber said. “Their failure to approve my motion to close Camp Scudder directly conflicts with the very policies they have claimed are backed by science and best practices.” Barber viewed closing Camp Scudder as part of a “larger effort toward decarceration and rehabilitation” rather than an emphasis on imprisoning people, said the article. In a state probe, Camp Scudder was cited for numerous abuses and unsafe living conditions. The county’s other juvenile detention sites were cited as well, the article said. The county is struggling with housing decisions for youth offenders in the face of its antiquated facilities—some worse than others—that are all under criticism for being unsafe and uncondusive for rehabilitation. Making matters more challenging, in July 2023, the California Department of Juvenile Justice will no longer operate its “secure facilities,” which previously received the secure youth track offenders from the state’s counties. Others involved with Camp Scudder support Barger’s effort to close the troubled facility. “I personally have worked with juvenile justice youth in county operated camps as a

mental health professional,” said Nicole Vienna. “I can attest to fact that Camp Scudder was a very challenging environment. Space was lacking and security breaches were common. Our youth deserve a setting that is both rehabilitative and secure.” Proponents for the closure, for their part, admit that the question of where to move young people in longer-term custody poses a problem for county officials, given the problems with the existing juvenile facilities available, said the article. Regardless of which sites are ultimately chosen, county officials are facing pushback from communities that do not want youth offender facilities in their neighborhoods. Numerous cities in the Santa Gabriel Valley, as well as the Malibu and Santa Clarita areas, have opposed plans to house juvenile offenders convicted of serious crimes in county facilities in their communities. However, proponents for closing or repurposing the most outdated camps point to the necessity of providing safe and rehabilitative facilities that don’t create unjust circumstances, or violate the Eighth Amendment’s protection against cruel and unusual punishment. Legal precedent appears to be on their side. In the 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *Roper v. Simmons*, which determined that the death penalty for offenders under 18 was unconstitutional under the Eighth Amendment, triggered a new era of case law benefiting youth offenders. In that case, the court cited “evolving standards of decency that mark the progress of a maturing society,” saying that the context of what constitutes just punishment has evolved to be informed by the ways in which a young person’s developing brain impacts their behavior and decision-making. “Today’s vote demonstrates lack of consistency and follow-through on that commitment,” Barger said. “To make meaningful change, our board cannot speak out of both sides of its mouth.”

## Lompoc Covid suit settled

Federal prisoners who filed a class action lawsuit requesting releases due to COVID-19, have reached a settlement agreement with the Bureau of Prisons (BOP), according to the *Santa Maria Times*. Shawn Fears, Andre Brown, Yonnedil Torres, Vincent Reed and Felix Garcia, filed suit on behalf of themselves and 2,700 other prisoners at Lompoc Federal Correctional Complex. The suit was filed with the help of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). The suit alleged that the Director of BOP Michael Carvajal and Warden Bryan Birkholz violated eighth amendment prohibitions against cruel and unusual punishment by not doing enough to stop the spread of COVID-19 at the beginning of the pandemic. “Under the terms of the settlement agreement, officials agree to review all inmates within the settlement class for home confinement pursuant to [then U.S. Attorney General William Barr’s] memo,” the article reports. Barr wrote a memorandum on March 26, 2020 and April 3, 2020, authorizing home confinement for prisoners medically vulnerable to covid-19. Officials at Lompoc have agreed to review all federal prisoners to determine who qualifies for release under the memo. Prisoners with underlying medical conditions including heart conditions, HIV, asthma, Type 2 diabetes, obesity and other immune-compromised conditions are eligible for home confinement. Officials were also ordered to “continue to make a full and speedy use of their authority” under the CAREs act when evaluating each prisoners eligibility for home confinement and coronavirus risk factors, the article said. Both parties agreed that no admission of liability would result from the settlement agreement. This settlement agreement will remain in effect until Dec. 17, 2022 or the time when the new U.S. Attorney General announces emergency conditions “no longer materially affect” the BOP functions, whichever comes first, the article reports.

—Jad Salem



# PRISON LABOR

## LABOR

Continued from page 1

pay into my Social Security. It would be nice to make enough money to save when I parole.” Incarcerated workers are not covered by minimum wage laws or overtime protection and are not afforded the right to unionize, said a newly released ACLU report. The research report, titled *Captive Labor: Exploitation of Incarcerated Workers* (2022) was jointly released by the ACLU and the University of Chicago Law School Global Human Rights Clinic (GHRC).

According to the report, U.S. law explicitly excludes incarcerated workers from most universally recognized workplace protections.

“From the moment they [prisoners] enter the prison gates, they lose the right to refuse to work,” said the report. “This is because the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution, which generally protects against slavery and involuntary servitude, explicitly excludes from its reach those held in confinement due to a criminal conviction.”

Incarcerated workers produce at least \$2 billion in goods and provide more than \$9 billion worth of prison maintenance services annually, noted the report. Incarcerated workers nationwide are paid on average between 15 and 52 cents per hour for non-industry jobs. The CDCR inmate pay-scale for laborers ranges from eight to 37 cents per hour, according to the department.

Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, and Texas pay nothing for the vast majority of prison work, said the report. The same is true for the states of Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, prisoners nationwide were tasked with manufacturing hand sanitizer, masks, medical gowns, face shields, and other personal protective equipment that they were then prohibited from using to protect themselves, said the report.

Some incarcerated people also worked in morgues, transported dead bodies, dug mass graves and built coffins. They washed soiled hospital laundry, disinfected supplies and cleaned medical units.

During COVID outbreaks, incarcerated workers throughout CDCR’s institutions, including San Quentin, were added to critical workers lists to perform labor in food preparation, maintenance, laundry and cleaning, sometimes working double shifts. Prison hospital incarcerated workers cleaned medical units, bringing them in close contact with the novel virus.

“Kudos to those who worked in the hospital, the porters and kitchen workers, because they were our first responders,” said Robinson. “I don’t think they get enough recognition for keeping the prison running.”

The U.S. spends more than \$81 billion to run its corrections system including prisons, jails, parole and probation for the more than two million people behind bars, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). State governments spend nearly \$50 billion a year for their departments of corrections.

Currently, more than 68%

*ACLU: ‘Captive Labor Exploitation’ of incarcerated workers produces billions of dollars’ worth of goods and services*



California Department of  
Corrections and Rehabilitation  
Department  
Operations Manual  
Chapter 5

The following is adapted from DOM §51120.6  
Inmate Pay Scale. Inmate pay is dependent  
upon five different skill levels:

Level 5 — Laborer  
\$0.08 - \$0.13/hour \$12.00 - \$20.00/month  
General Janitorial Worker  
Server, Cook, Assistant/Helper  
Laborer (Laundry, Store, Salvage)  
Porters, Shoe Shiner, Gardener

Level 4 — Semi-Skilled  
\$0.11 - \$0.18/hour \$17.00 - \$27.00/month  
Clerk, Teacher's Aide  
Dog Groomer  
IAC Secretary  
Machine Operator  
Lead Porter

Level 3 — Technician  
\$0.15 - \$0.24/hour \$23.00 - \$36.00/month  
Baker, Cook, Barber  
Firefighter, Heavy Equipment Operator  
IAC Chair, Lead Clerk  
Library Assistant, Technical Assistant

Level 2 — Special Skills  
\$0.19 - \$0.32/hour \$29.00 - \$48.00/month  
Auto Mechanic, Welder  
Plumber, Electrician, Painter, Carpenter  
X-Ray Tech

Level 1 — Lead person  
\$0.32 - \$0.37/hour \$48.00 - \$56.00/month  
Provides training to newly assigned inmates  
Assists in communicating with inmates at  
lower skill levels

Report: Incarcerated workers produce at least \$2 billion in goods and provide more than \$9 billion worth of prison maintenance services annually.

Above: Incarcerated workers in the Building Maintenance program at San Quentin built a modular office unit for correctional officers and are shown here installing the building on the yard after laying its foundation (inset) in 2017.

Below right: SQ’s Firehouse offers training in CPR and firefighting, and employs incarcerated EMTs as first responders within the institution.

Below left: Incarcerated workers in 2018 removed the worn and dated flooring in the Catholic Chapel, installing brand-new laminate in its place — a labor-intensive, three-day undertaking.

\$ 0.32/Hr. = 31.57 Years

\$ 0.15/Hr. = 67.34 Years

\$ 0.08/Hr. = 126.26 Years

0 Years 30 60 90 120 150

A prisoner earning 8 cents per hour, working 7.5 hours per day and 22 days average per month, would require more than 126 years to pay off a \$10,000 restitution fine.



## State Senate won’t ban forcible prison labor

By Steve Brooks  
Journalism Guild Chair

The state Senate has decided that forced labor will remain in effect in California prisons.

Assembly Constitutional Amendment 3 failed to get the two-thirds majority vote needed by the Senate to go on the November 2022 ballot.

“Way to go, Confederates,” tweeted the author, Sen. Sydney Kamlager, D-Los Angeles, the *Associated Press* reported June 23.

ACA 3 would have removed a clause in the state’s Constitution that allows criminal punishment to include involuntary servitude.

Many Democrats did not vote for the bill out of concern for how it would impact the state prisons.

“Banning the work requirement in our prisons would undermine our rehabilitation programs and make the prisons more difficult to manage safely,” Sen. Steve Glazer said, according to the *AP*.

About 65,000 incarcerated persons support essential prison operations, such as providing cooking, cleaning, and laundry services, according to Aaron Edwards, an analyst

with the California Department of Finance. “If the department were required to pay those workers minimum wage, which is one potential outcome in our view, the cost could be in the range of \$1.5 billion annually,” said Edwards.

In March the Assembly overwhelmingly voted 59-0 to allow the measure to go to the voters.

However, Gov. Newsom’s administration warned that to pay prisoners the minimum wage in California, \$15 an hour for companies with 26 or more employees, could be too costly.

According to the Prison

Policy Initiative, incarcerated people are paid between 8 cents and 37 cents an hour for support service jobs. But they make up to a \$1 an hour for Prison Industry Authority jobs which are known to generate millions of dollars in profits.

“Slavery is still alive and well and nicely packaged in the form of involuntary servitude,” Kamlager said, according to the *AP*. “California is a plantation state.”

California now lags behind Colorado, Utah, and Nebraska, which have outlawed both slavery and involuntary servitude in their prison systems.

## Involuntary servitude amendments face uphill battle

By Joshua Strange  
Staff Writer

In 2018, Colorado was the first state to amend its constitution to abolish all forms of slavery and involuntary servitude—and did so without its prison system collapsing. However, the California Senate has refused to support a similar measure, arguing the state’s prisons would collapse and they’d have to pay prisoners minimum wage.

“Banning the work requirement in our prisons would undermine our rehabilitation programs and make the prisons more difficult to manage safely,” said Sen. Steve Glazer, according to *The Associated Press*.

Many incarcerated people would disagree.

“They say working jobs is good for us,” said San Quentin’s

Patricio Gonzalez, who was stuck with a full-time kitchen job. “But it harms a lot of us because it prevents us from going to rehabilitative programs, which is a lot more important.”

Utah and Nebraska have also banned forced labor. Yet their prisons have continued to function without bankrupting their budgets, according to reporting by *Prison Legal News*. This was the other primary concern expressed by hesitant lawmakers in California.

“Regardless of how people feel about the criminal justice system, the ultimate outcome shouldn’t be slavery,” said Jumokie Emery, co-chair of Abolish Slavery Colorado.

According to reporting by *Colorado Public Radio*, Colorado avoided paying its incarcerated workers minimum wage by

making work voluntary, per the amendment.

But the “voluntary” part is debatable, raising concerns as to whether such amendments are simply symbolic gestures that states can easily violate.

A class-action lawsuit filed earlier this year on behalf of incarcerated people in Colorado alleges the state violated its slavery ban by forcing them to work.

“There is no choice. This is a work camp basically. You have to have a job here,” said Harold Mortis, a member of the lawsuit.

Mortis declined work during the pandemic. As a result, he said he was threatened with loss of “good time”—time off a sentence for good behavior—and removal from the “incentive living program.”

Richard Lilgerose, another member of the lawsuit, refused

kitchen work due to mental health struggles made worse by the pandemic. Consequently, he lost some good time credits and said he was threatened with loss of family visits.

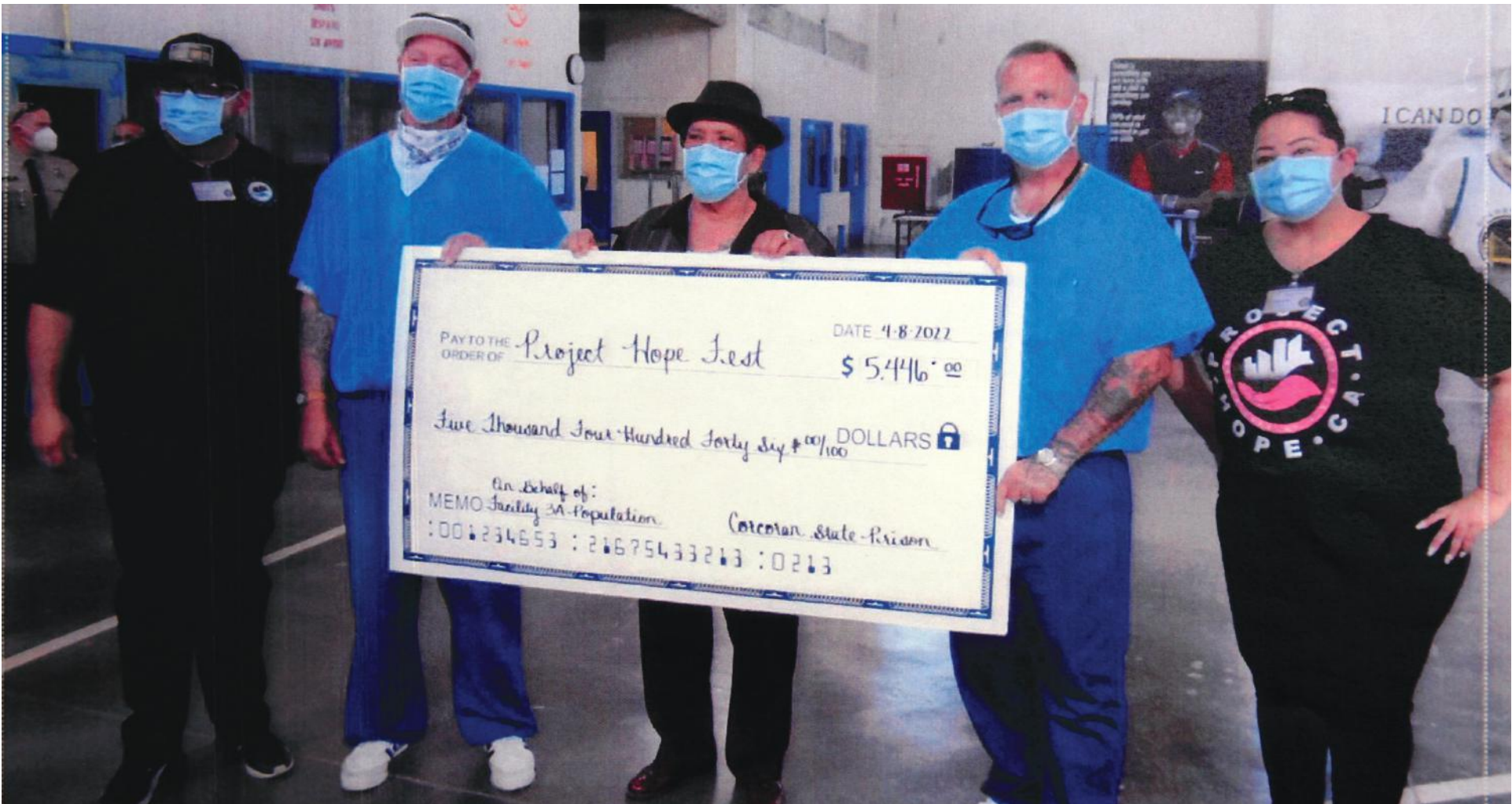
“You know, we deserve a certain form of punishment, we messed up,” Lilgerose said. “But then you have another element, where you’re forced to work positions where you do not want to work... It’s horrible to be treated that way as a human being.”

Back in California, Gonzalez said he hopes his state will eventually amend its constitution to ban involuntary servitude for incarcerated people.

“I know that if they didn’t make me have a job, I would take as many rehabilitative programs as I could,” Gonzalez said. “I take programming very seriously.”



SUPPLEMENTAL ARTS SECTION



Photos courtesy of Michael Knight

By Michael Knight  
Contributor  
Corcoran State Prison,  
IAC Chairman

Many tears were shed when prisoners, guests, and staff celebrated HopeFest 2022 at Corcoran State Prison on the Facility 3A yard.

The early April event was to honor and support Project Hope, a non-profit organization that provides community support, gang prevention and intervention and access to employment ready documents.

The incarcerated population raised \$5,446 for the organization, and presented a check along with art projects during the event.

“This was good to see, despite the numerous setbacks and several roadblocks,” said Chris Jergerson, who regularly donates to such causes. “With little to no programs in the past three years, I was grateful to see the incarcerated population make this happen for the Project Hope charity.”

The event was hosted by Project Hope co-founders Jaime and Roberta, along with actor Danny Trejo. The co-founders spoke about how difficult it is to raise funds in these economic times, and that to receive so much from the incarcerated population was energizing. Trejo, the “Machete” movie star, shared with the crowd his own prison experiences and how he overcame obstacles to become the success he is today.

The rest of the festivities consisted of words of wisdom, a DJ, a comedian and singing and dancing. DJ Cheatos had the crowd going with his music selection, while comedian Concrete provided much need laughter.

Trejo’s Angels — which consisted of singers Amora, Twixxy, and Tarah New — energized the audience. Amora sang “Como La Flor,” a song by the late great Selena, that had the crowd singing along. Twixxy’s performance had the audience up and dancing. Sleepy Malo and Bad Vic of Los Yesterdays bought back memories with their song selection. It was a celebration like none the prison has ever seen before.

“This yard has the potential

for greatness,” said LaQuan Parker, Inmate Advisory Council (IAC) vice-chairman. “Our struggle is getting others to see the same vision we see as for rehabilitation programs taking place here on Facility 3A.”

An added bonus came when everyone viewed the donated artwork. Trejo was excited to discover a pair of Vans slip-on shoes that were decorated with his portrait. He officially declared that those were the best looking pair of shoes. There were also shoes with artwork of skull faces surrounded by a clock, a ship and a colorful octopus, and an Aztec warrior princess. The artwork will be auctioned at a Fox Theater event to support community activities.

“Project Hope staff really liked our art and were happy to see us using our talents to support those in need,” said Joshua Palomino, who donated artwork. “That made the whole event worth it. Danny Trejo thought that the art was amazing, and I got to take a picture with him.”

With institutional count time fast approaching, Pastor Octavio of Living Word in San Gabriel Valley gave the crowd a moving message of hope, love, and forgiveness. He then held a prayer circle for those who wanted to participate. The Project Hope staff, Trejo, and the rest of the performers closed the event by signing hats and t-shirts for the population.

The IAC organized the event with the help from Corcoran’s administration and the prison’s Community Resource Manager’s office. The IAC said throughout the year the incarcerated population has donated to support the local community, including the Corcoran Unified School District and the Fresno Skateboard Salvage. The population also held a Christmas Toy Drive.

The IAC statement added that the incarcerated population has made a firm commitment to rehabilitation and making amends with their communities.

“Corcoran has a notorious reputation for violence and corruption, but we’re trying to change that narrative,” said Jergerson.

Corcoran prisoners raise more than \$5,400 for Project Hope









PROGRAMS

BEHOLDING BEAUTY IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

By Vincent E. O'Bannon  
Staff Writer

Visitors, volunteers marvel at SQ Chapel Garden's therapeutic 'gateway'

San Quentin's program volunteers, newly arrived prisoners and the many visitors that enter the Q have heard about San Quentin's notorious history. But what have they seen?

Outsiders may be surprised to know that more than 1,000 volunteers come to San Quentin to facilitate self-help groups, tutor students, and teach college courses in the only accredited on-sight liberal arts prison college program in California.

With the prison's dark history in mind, outsiders trek from the parking lot to the massive concrete entrance. Within they find the unexpected.

For many first-time visitors, the sight of a towering New Zealand Pine planted around 1883, surrounded by the manicured landscape, begs the question: what other calming elements are hidden within?

"The conflict between darkness and beauty was what I thought as I passed through the gates of the prison," said Jason from the San Francisco Public Defender's Alternate Defenders Program.

"Laid out before me was the beauty of a well-cared



Nature knows exactly what to do when given the care it deserves.



Archive photos, SQNews

As visitors, volunteers, and staff step through the interior entrance of San Quentin each day, they see a view of manicured landscape and well kept garden of roses, geraniums, hibiscus, and African lilies.

for garden that I had not anticipated seeing," said San Quentin resident and groundskeeper clerk Alex Bracamonte. "Nature knows exactly what to do when given the care it deserves."

The beauty Jason is speaking of is San Quentin's chapel garden. Along with its array of roses, geraniums, African lilies, hibiscus, and birds of paradise, the garden hosts a memorial honoring officers

who died in the line of duty at San Quentin.

"It's a wonderful testament to commemorate the tragic loss of life," said SQ resident Ben Tobin. "The garden is well kept and has sort of a drawing effect to it that makes you want to inquire more about it."

In the garden sits a bench with the Latin inscription 'Requiescat in Pace'... Rest in Peace. A fallen officer's

family funds the memorial.

Tending to the landscape are San Quentin residents who find solace in its luxuriousness and their contribution to the serene garden chapel setting.

During the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak, some wondered about the garden's maintenance absent the workers who were quarantined to their cells.

Former groundskeeper Car-

los Meza, who paroled shortly after the prison reopened in 2021, told *San Quentin News* that there are seven types of soil in the garden.

"The soil has lots of organics and holds water well," said Meza. "As long as it receives water, rest assured that this garden ... should not have any major maintenance problems if a long lockdown should ever occur."

San Quentin groundskeep-

ers work five days per week and receive approximately \$20 a month for their efforts.

"It is not about the compensation I receive," said Meza. "I find peace and enjoyment when I am just relaxing and watching newcomers' faces fill with awe as they enter into what I refer to as the 'gateway to a changed mind.'"

"It's like, once a person who has never been inside the walls of San Quentin spies the chapel garden, it gives them pause for thought, and they are taken aback."

Alex Bracamonte added, "The guys do wonderful work on ... the garden. New visitors to the prison often call us over and ask what we were doing to keep the garden looking so radiant."

"Our trade secret is that after the grass is cut, we add shredded paper that has no dye in it which adds to the minerals. That makes the dirt stronger and more potent. We also add oranges, apples, bread, and oatmeal to the soil and let nature take its course," added Bracamonte.

"We were told a long time ago, do not plant anything while you are upset or angry because [of] the negative energy you are carrying."

JPay contract expires

Emails, photos to prisoners will soon go through new vendor

By Steve Brooks  
Journalism Guild Chair

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has ended a contract with JPay, which allowed incarcerated people to receive emails on almost a daily basis.

Beginning July 1, 2022, prisoners are no longer allowed to receive emails through JPay, but a CDCR spokesperson said a new contract is currently in effect.

"The emails have not been discontinued," Krissi Khokhobashvili wrote in an email to the *San Quentin News*. "They are transitioning to a different vendor, Viapath, but they have to deliver the printers and toner to the institutions and there have been some supply-chain issues. As soon as the printers arrive the service will be back up."

Khokhobashvili is Chief of Strategic Communications and External Affairs for CDCR.

Since the contract with JPay ended, many prisoners have complained that their mail has either stopped completely or slowed to a snail's pace. This disruption in communication with family and friends has been frustrating, especially during a pandemic that has seriously curtailed contact and family visiting.

Khokhobashvili is unable to say when these supply chain issues will be resolved and when each institution will again be generating the emails.

However, CDCR says that it remains committed to providing the incarcerated population and their support systems with the ability to keep in touch through electronic messaging services.

"We recognize the impact families' support has on incarcerated people's success," CDCR's Secretary wrote at the start of the pandemic. "In our understanding of how vitally important it is for family and friends to stay connected for emotional well-being, these efforts were designed to keep families in touch."

Insight Garden Program celebrates Earth Day across state

By Karen Hsueh  
Deputy Director of the  
Insight Garden Program

**CMF rejuvenates garden after Covid hiatus:** This month at California Medical Facility, we celebrate Earth Day by planting hardy succulents, colorful sun-loving flowers, and summer vegetables. After four months of closures due to COVID-19, our garden was overrun with weeds. We've been busy pulling those weeds, adding them to our compost pile, so they can decompose into nutrient-rich soil. This is also a great habitat for worms and beneficial microbes. The fresh soil will feed our new plants, creating a bountiful harvest this summer. Like composting in the garden, we learn to take things in our lives no longer serving us and transform them into opportunities for growth.

**San Quentin's medicinal plants:** At San Quentin, the group



Courtesy of Insight Garden

Incarcerated gardeners at Folsom Women's Facility prepare for a summer harvest that will provide fresh produce for the prison's Salad Bar Project.

is learning about native and medicinal plants, rediscovering our deep connections with them. Many of the participants remember these plants from their lineage or have memories growing up in relation-

ship with them. One participant recalled his grandmother using the *ruda* plant to cure earaches and other ailments when he was younger. This month we planted 38 new medicinal plants in the garden. This helps us continue deepening our relations with these plants and our ancestors.

**Folsom Women's Facility grows fresh produce:** The women at Folsom Women's Facility are gearing up for our "Salad Bar Project" this month. We are expecting a summer harvest with nutrient-dense leafy greens, cherry tomatoes, radishes, and carrots. For IGP, this means growing fresh produce and sharing the bounty with participants, and the facility's incarcerated women and staff. We use the act of growing food to nourish ourselves and each other, cultivating generosity and kindness. We do this while also creating safe spaces for the entire prison community.

Marin Shakespeare's 'Losdini' rises again — in the community

By Jerry Maleek Gearin  
Staff Writer

The pandemic at San Quentin hindered the Marin Shakespeare Company's classes, but Juan Meza prevailed and still pursued his passion for acting.

Meza felt pain in his back and neck, his temperature and blood pressure were at very high levels, and he felt he was about to die, according to *KQED*.

"There was a lot of fear, there was a lot of anxiety, there's a lot of unknowns, there was a lot of misinformation going around. In a matter of two weeks, we were now locked in a cell again, unable to move, scared, frightened," said Meza.

"Acting, performing — doing these things were a release, a very lethargic process of getting stuff out that we needed to and everything. We didn't have the avenue anymore and we didn't know if we were going to get it back," he said.

Marin Shakespeare had been working with the incarcerated at San Quentin for 17 continuous years, providing creative and social outlets for the residents, until the outbreak in 2020, the *KQED* noted.



Archive photo — pre-pandemic

Juan Meza, (at center) in his role as "Losdini" during his stay at San Quentin

Meza, whose stage name is Losdini, says the company's acting program helped him uncover an untapped side of himself.

When the pandemic hit, Meza's artistry was put on hold. The Shakespeare classes had to redirect their teaching methods since instructors were not allowed to enter the prison.

In response, Marin Shakespeare recorded a production of *Romeo and Juliet*, played by some formerly incarcerated actors who were taught by the company. They sent

the video to the men inside San Quentin.

Then the prison stopped the acting program from sending in videos, so the program started sending in educational packets, to enhance the men's creative skills. Some assignments were themed around friendship, loyalty, and self-care.

San Quentin men get "a lot of positive benefits" from Marin Shakespeare's visits and training, said Lesley Currier, its managing director.

When Marin Shakespeare re-

turned to San Quentin, the first classes centered on conversations about how the residents experienced the quarantine.

At that point, Meza had already been paroled and he connected with Marin Shakespeare on the outside, as a member of their Returned Citizens Theater Troupe.

In May of 2021 Meza co-directed his first production and is still pursuing his passion for acting and directing.

"If I had never stepped into that first class in San Quentin with Marin Shakespeare Company, I would not have been able to reveal my humanity," said Meza.

COVID continues to hinder the programming at the prison, but the company managed to stage three performances before live audiences in December 2021. A production of *Henry IV* is scheduled for August 2022.

"Now that I'm not incarcerated in prison anymore, I still want to go back to the humans that are inside to sit with them and say, 'Look, we can do this,'" said Meza.

Meza's motive for returning to San Quentin with Marin Shakespeare is to pay forward what they did for him, reported *KQED*.



EDUCATION

Mississippi lifer and New York professor collaborate

This article is being reprinted by permission from College Inside, a newsletter about the future of postsecondary education in prisons.

By Charlotte West  
Open Campus Reporter

**The prisoner and the professor:** A prisoner from Mississippi and a professor from New York make an unlikely research team. Leigh Ann Wheeler, a historian at Binghamton University, was first introduced to Glen Conley in 2017 by a prison chaplain familiar with her work on Anne Moody, a civil rights activist who published *Coming of Age in Mississippi* in 1968.

Conley, who is serving life without parole, began doing research on Moody after he read her autobiography through a prison book club. He was writing his own book of poems, *Reflections in Black: Remembering Anne Moody and Others Who Paved the Way*, and asked Wheeler to write the foreword.

Since then, the pair has been collaborating: co-authoring book reviews, presenting at virtual academic conferences, and engaging with Wheeler's undergraduate students in class discussions. In 2021, Conley is believed to be the first prisoner in Mississippi to participate in an academic conference when he was invited to present on Moody to the Western Association of Women Historians.

"Scholarship...behind bars is possible, but achieving it is



Courtesy of Leigh Ann Wheeler // Reprinted by permission of College Inside newsletter

Glen Conley, a Mississippi prisoner serving life without the possibility of parole, appears on-screen in a college classroom. Conley is currently pursuing a post-graduate degree in theology from Nations University.

not a simple process," Conley said.

While they've met in person several times when Wheeler travels to Mississippi, they primarily rely on phone calls and the U.S. Postal Service — limited to 5 pages printed from the internet at a time — to collaborate.

"Phone calls are pricey. I can't call him but must wait

for him to call me. Mail is slow. Email and texting are not available. In-person visits are infrequent and difficult to arrange," Wheeler said.

When Conley, who is currently working on his master's degree in theology from Nations University, was at a different prison, he often had to rely on prison staff to conduct online searches and locate pri-

mary sources. They were often reluctant to help him:

"On numerous occasions when I asked...for assistance I was told that they already had enough to do and had no time to do volunteer work for inmates. One teacher even opined that inmates should be doing hard labor, not academic research."

Staff often gave him nick-

names such as "Mr. Smartass" and "Dr. Know-it-all."

"Not to mention the dirty looks," he added.

**A new kind of collaboration:** Their co-writing process involves Conley sending handwritten drafts, Wheeler typing it up and sending his typed draft and her own revisions back, and then editing over the phone.



Open Campus is a nonprofit newsroom focused on covering higher education. More at [www.opencampusmedia.org](http://www.opencampusmedia.org)

"I would read him my latest version and we would edit it together on the phone with me rereading passages aloud, him correcting, arguing sometimes over the word," she said.

"I was also surprised to discover that such a writing collaboration is possible, and over the phone...and with the possibility...that someone else is listening in and, possibly, even recording our call."

Currently, Wheeler and Conley are working with a group of 20 others in the Anne Moody Scholars Workshop to produce an edited collection of essays and website on the activist.

For Wheeler, working with Conley has given her new insight into what she thought she knew about prison. "I'll be honest — as a 'liberal' I was, of course, concerned about mass incarceration, but I had no real understanding of how this vicious phenomenon affected people who are imprisoned and their families," she said.

"Glen's insights on prison, race, feminism, and a whole host of other issues are really interesting. I treasure our conversations and know that they are deepening my ability to understand and...to know that I can't fully understand what his life is like."

Mount Tamalpais College laptop program a success

By Timothy Hicks  
Staff Writer

San Quentin students in Mount Tamalpais College (MTC) classes gained access to new Dell laptops earlier this year, and they are getting work done more efficiently since the introduction of the computers. Mt. Tam students and staff see the program as a success so far.

"This was a long time coming. We have always wanted our students to have access to the same technology as other college students. As we expand our use of laptops, we hope this will better prepare students for school and work on the outside," said Research and Program Fellow Kirsten Pickering, who helped start the Computer Lab.

Mt. Tam has recently established its own accreditation and is officially standing on its own as the only full-time college on prison grounds in the nation. Access to modern technology couldn't have come at a better time.

"We first started to advocate for student computer use in 2019, before the pandemic. It has taken a long time, but we are so happy to see students typing and printing their assignments," said Pickering.

The college's students now feel that they can keep up with the outside world. "These laptops bring me up to date with modern society and I don't feel left behind," said student Terry Kitchen.

Computers have long been an essential part of college education. And though it's not a competition, the equipment makes it possible for Mt. Tam to stay abreast of



Phoeun You, SQNews

A Mt. Tam student takes one of the college's new computers for a test drive earlier this year. For students who have been incarcerated for many years — even decades — the program offers their first close contact with modern tech.

their counterparts outside the prison's walls.

"Most colleges have computers for their students to use, so if we are offering real college degrees we need to also be able to say that we offer computer courses," said Amy Jamgorchain, the college coordinator. "It's easier for faculty and students. Research shows that it's better for students to have them in school. Some jobs of today require computer skills; it's not just about the education."

Some students are sea-

soned veterans of computer use. Others don't know how to turn a computer on. "It's amazing for me to show them how to use a computer," SQ resident Quincy Paige said. Paige has 13 years of computer experience that he learned in school on the outside. "One guy came in who didn't know how to use a computer. He kept coming and he eventually advanced. To see him progress was gratifying to me."

Amy Brunson, the new MTC director of IT and library services, is impressed with the

experience some of the students already have with computers. She said she learned something new herself about Microsoft Word within 15 minutes of beginning her duties. She witnessed one student help another set up a password and she noticed positive interactions in the classroom.

"Two main aspects of my job are expanding student access to technology and building up our library services," said Brunson. "I came in at an exciting time, with this new computer lab. I'm looking forward to assisting the students as they learn this new technology skills, whether they are brand new to computers or experienced users."

San Quentin resident C. Davis has been incarcerated for 47 years. A student of Mt. Tam for more than five years, he is three courses away from obtaining his Associates Degree. He is an experienced computer user. However, this is his first time using a laptop.

"As a teacher's assistant, I learned how to use a computer at another prison," said Davis. "I was using the more bulky one then though. Using this laptop will make doing my homework much easier. Also, it will make me more ready for society."

Students have access to the computers five days per week. They check the computers out for one hour with personal passcodes. Several teachers' aides help Mt. Tam faculty assist the students. Anila Yadavalli, STEM coordinator for Mt Tam, is part of the team.

"This is historic and long overdue," said Yadavalli. "Exposing students to computer skills and computer literacy is great."

By Imam Muhammad Fasih  
SQ Islamic Chaplain

"We have forgotten who we were meant to be, because we have forgotten that we find God not in ourselves, finally, but in our care for our neighbor, in the stranger, including those outside the nation and the faith. The religious life is not designed to make you happy, or safe or content; it is not designed to make you whole or complete, to free you from anxieties and fear; it is designed to save from yourself, to make possible human community, to lead you to understand that the greatest force in life is not power or reason but love."



— Chris Hedges

The Almighty will say on the Day of Resurrection: O son of Adam, I was sick but you did not visit Me. He will say: My Lord, how can I visit You when You are the Lord of the worlds? The Almighty will say: Did you not know that my servant was sick and you did not visit him, and had you visited him you would have found Me with him?  
*Source: Sahih Muslim*



ESPAÑOL

# Ómicron BA2 retrasa rehabilitación

Por Edwin E. Chavez  
Spanish Journalism  
Guild Chairman

En lo que va del año 2022, la prisión de San Quentin ha enfrentado una tercera ronda de cuarentena, ahora por Omicron. Las visitas de toda clase fueron canceladas, dejando a todos sus residentes encerrados en sus celdas impidiéndoles participar en programas de rehabilitación, educativos, o religiosos.

La nueva variante de Ómicron BA.2 cerró la prisión por segunda vez consecutiva desde mayo.

Esto ha dejado a muchos confundidos y con el temor de ser re-infectados con el virus y ser aislados del resto de la población en el área de segregación administrativa, “AC” por sus siglas en inglés (Adjustment Center).

Por miedo de perder sus cosas personales, sus compañeros de celda o las celdas donde viven, los prisioneros se niegan a voluntariamente tomar el examen de Covid-19. Algunos a pesar de tener los síntomas, prefieren no reportar sus condiciones de salud por miedo de ser aislados en el “AC” o “el hoyo”.

En junio 29, se repitió la historia cuando la unidad de West Block fue puesta en cuarentena de nuevo. Esta fue la tercera vez en los últimos seis meses, cancelando todo acceso a programas de auto ayuda. En su propio mundo de encarcelamiento, los hombres de azul continúan siendo dominados por la incertidumbre que las cuarentenas ocasionan.

Tranquilino Figueroa de 65 años, residente de San Quentin, fue aislado por dos semanas en el “AC”. Al ir a una cita con el dentista, le hicieron un examen rápido de Covid-19 y resultó positivo. “Cuando me llevaron al hoyo solo pude llevarme mi biblia y unas so-

pitass”, dijo Figueroa, “Me dio miedo estando en ‘el hoyo’ porque no comprendía lo que me decían en inglés. Esto me dejó más confundido y temeroso”.

Muchos emigrantes encarcelados tienen dificultad para comunicarse apropiadamente con el personal médico ya que no hablan inglés.

Figueroa reportó a SQNews, que hasta este día él se siente nervioso y no quiere ir al doctor porque siente que lo van a llevar al “hoyo” de nuevo.

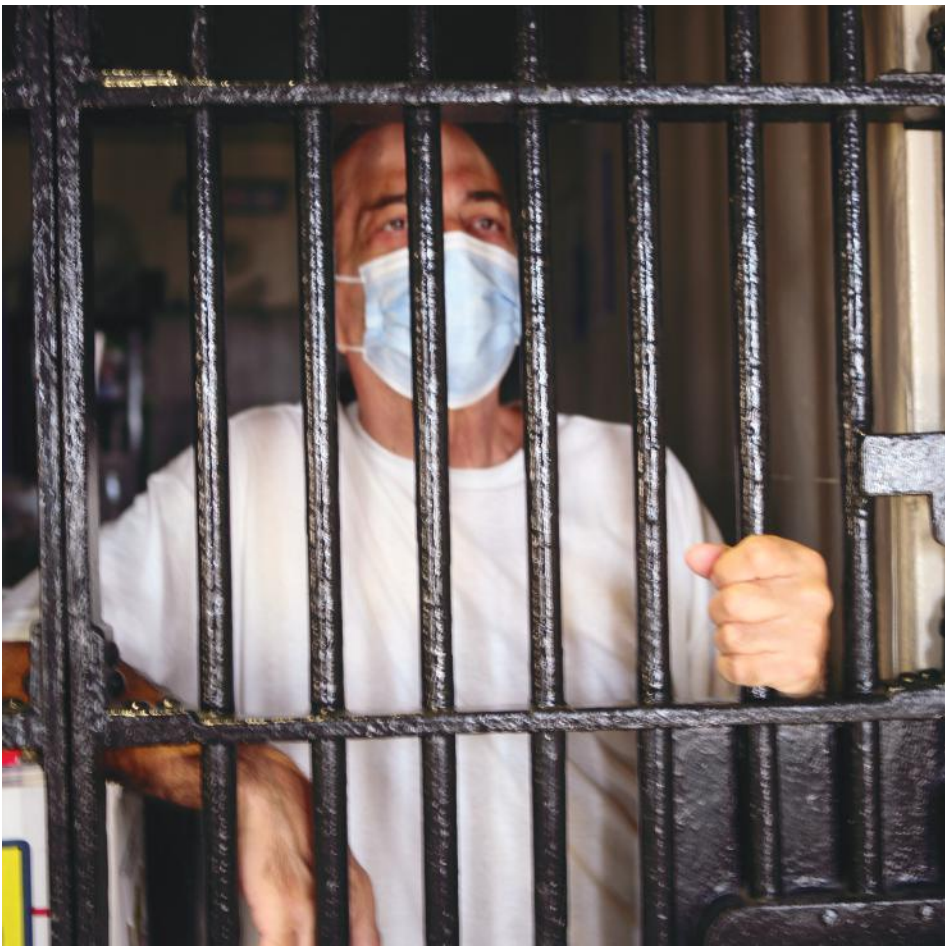
Al principio del año, la prisión fue puesta en cuarentena por dos meses y el 3 de mayo, la unidad de West Block fue puesta en cuarentena de nuevo después que se anunció la emergencia en las bocinas de la yarda deportiva.

“Atención en la yarda, este es un anuncio solo y para todos los residentes de la unidad de West Block,” dijo el oficial en la bocina, “La yarda está cerrada. Repórtense a sus celdas inmediatamente.” La administración de la prisión y el departamento médico había anunciado un brote.

Los residentes de esta unidad fueron examinados por el virus, revelando que cuatro reos estaban infectados con Covid-19, y se implementaron las instrucciones que los residentes usaran los cubre bocas N95.

Después de casi dos meses, la unidad fue reabierto y los programas y actividades regresaron a la normalidad por 11 días. El 29 de junio, esta misma unidad fue puesta en cuarentena, cancelando de nuevo todas las actividades.

Según el reporte diario de CDC&R, conocido en inglés como (“Daily Program Status Report”), anunció en su resumen que el miércoles junio 22, la unidad de Carson fue puesta en cuarentena por



Phoeun You/SQNews

Durante el encierro por Omicron los prisioneros no tienen acceso a programas religiosos, educativos o de rehabilitación.

múltiples casos positivos del Omicron BA.2.

El domingo 26 de junio, la unidad de North Block fue reabierto con programas y actividades en conjunto con el resto de la población en la prisión. La prisión continua sufriendo los efectos del virus, experimentando brotes en diferentes unidades, separando las unidades habitacionales por secciones durante sus propias cuarentenas.

“Pienso que no están llevando bien la cuarentena los encargados por la manera

en que la administración lo está manejando”, dijo Carlos E. Herrarte 53, un residente de San Quentin.

Herrarte comento que le daba miedo enfermarse de nuevo, ya qué hay gente que no están vacunados y andan afuera de sus celdas mientras los que están vacunados están encerrados.

“Por la gente que no se vacunan, pagamos todos”, dijo Herrarte, “Esta es la razón por la cual nos enfermamos de nuevo”.

El departamento de salud

reportó el 11 de mayo que el 93% de los reclusos y el 87% del personal que trabajan en la prisión estaban vacunados. Esto significa que el riesgo de ser hospitalizado o de morir por el virus es bajo.

Recordando que no todos han tomado su vacuna de refuerzo, el departamento invita a los prisioneros que sometan el papel de servicio médico CDCR-7362 pidiendo la vacuna de refuerzo.

“Físicamente, afecta porque no puedes practicar tus deportes, o hacer tus ejer-

cicios”, dijo Oscar Aguilar, 39, “En el nivel académico, te afecta porque no puedes ir a la escuela”.

Prisioneros como Aguilar han estado estudiando por años para poder obtener el “G.E.D.” (Por sus siglas en ingles General Equivalency Diploma), equivalente a graduarse de la preparatoria. “Las encerradas, automáticamente detienen los exámenes y esto hace más difícil el aprendizaje y poder salir adelante”, dijo Aguilar.

El impacto no solo es irreparable para los reos, pero también afecta a los familiares al no poder visitarlos. Muchos prisioneros sufren de depresión y ansiedad estando encerrados sin actividades físicas. Esto incrementa la soledad.

No poder participar en grupos de rehabilitación como alcohólicos y narcóticos anónimos, impide que muchos puedan continuar su rehabilitación. Los reclusos no pueden recibir buenos créditos por buena conducta y participación en los programas, lo cual los ayudaría a obtener la libertad antes de la fecha convenida.

“Esto es algo estresante, especialmente teniendo hijos pequeños”, dijo Jacob Rice 45, “Hay como mil personas tratando de hacer llamadas telefónicas, cuando solo hay 12 teléfonos en el edificio y no nos quieren dar las tabletas”.

Tanto para los reclusos y sus seres más queridos, el no poder comunicarse puede causar mucha tristeza y ansiedad.

Finalmente, el no poder mirar, ni darle un abrazo a nuestras madres, hijos, familiares, y miembros de nuestras comunidades durante estas cuarentenas puede crear una separación y tener varios efectos drásticos y negativos en la relación familiar.

—Editado por  
Tare Beltranchuc

## Encarcelamiento masivo problema nacional

La ola masiva de encarcelamientos en EE.UU. no se detiene. Aproximadamente 2 millones de personas están encarceladas, según un reporte en abril 4, 2022 en la página “Informe mundial de Human Right Watch”

El encarcelamiento penal en EE.UU. es considerado el más grande del mundo, el cual incluye a millones de personas que están en libertad condicional bajo la supervisión de las autoridades penales.

Según el reporte, demográficamente los más afectados en el encarcelamiento son los afro-americanos. A pesar de las nuevas reformas para la reducción de sentencias en el sistema penal, esta población sigue siendo sobre representada monumentalmente en cárceles y prisiones.

En el 2009 la población penitenciaria comenzó a disminuir constantemente, pero sin realizar cambios fundamentales en el sistema carcelario masivo, lo cual dejó todo como estaba anteriormente.

Desafortunadamente los millones de reclusos en Estados Unidos no han sido protegidos lo suficiente contra el devastador virus de Covid-19. Según las es-

tadísticas, un tercio de todas las personas encarceladas han contraído el virus y más de 2,700 han fallecido a causa de Covid-19, añadió el reporte de los derechos humano en abril del 2022.

El público hizo un llamado en general sobre una reforma sistémica durante el verano de 2020. “Especialmente se enfocaron en reducir la enorme dependencia de la policía y tratar los problemas sociales con la inversión en servicios de apoyo pocas jurisdicciones implementaron medidas significativas” dijo el reporte.

Sin embargo, ciertas municipalidades han tomado la iniciativa de emplear a profesionales de salud mental en vez de la policía en situaciones apropiadas. Algunas ciudades y distritos han financiado equipos de personas independientes que intervienen en casos de violencia. Aunque los presupuestos policiales en general no se han visto reducidos.

De acuerdo a la página de derechos humanos, “El Congreso no ha aprobado ni siquiera las reformas débiles propuestas en la Ley federal de Justicia Policial (*Justice in Policing Act*).”

En su mayoría los departamentos de policía

“El Congreso no ha aprobado ni siquiera las débiles reformas propuestas en la Ley federal de Justicia Policial”.

— Human Rights Watch

en EE.UU. se resisten a informar al público acerca del uso de la fuerza. “Hasta el 3 de Noviembre la policía había matado a más de 900 personas en el 2021 cifras similares a los años anteriores.

El reporte concluyó que la policía mata a personas afro-americanas a un ritmo tres veces superior a las personas blancas.

—Edwin E. Chavez;  
editado por  
Tare Beltranchuc

## Reclusos podrían estar envejeciendo prematuramente

By Raymond Torres  
Journalism Guild Writer

Las condiciones de vida dentro de la prisión causan envejecimiento prematuro en los reos, según investigadores de la Universidad de Iowa.

El estar encerrado en una prisión puede acelerar el proceso de envejecimiento de los reos en un promedio de 11 meses más allá de su edad actual, según investigaciones de ADN conducidos por el Profesor Mark Berg y sus colegas de la universidad de Iowa.

Sufriendo violencia en prisión aumenta el proceso de envejecimiento por más de dos años según la Revista de Salud y Comportamiento Social.

“Gracias a Dios que la evolución nos dio la tendencia para estimular nuestras emociones y huir,” dijo el Profesor Berg, “Todavía tenemos esa capacidad y nosotros la usamos ocasionalmente, pero si eso pasara muy seguido, sería muy, pero muy enfermizo.”

“Para mi gran sorpresa, nosotros descubrimos efectos muy duraderos entre un grupo de personas que apenas llegan a su cuarta década de vida quienes de otra manera

estarían saludables”, él dijo.

Los estudios deberían ser tomados en consideración al tomar decisiones de pólizas de la prisión. “¿Y porque es eso?” pregunto él. “Porque estas personas básicamente, están saliendo de la prisión con una sentencia extendida.”

Berg dice que los datos “Son los más ampliamente examinados en grupos de adultos en los Estados Unidos.” La disponibilidad de datos de las mismas de personas con el tiempo- analizando a los niños desde que estaban en las escuelas primarias- permite que los investigadores puedan estudiar el impacto que la encarcelación causa en la edad, según el reporte.

Investigadores han usado análisis de ADN para calcular si esos 410 adultos son biológicamente más viejos que su edad actual de acuerdo al calendario. Las pruebas fueron conducidas considerando niveles de metilación en el ADN, lo cual puede afectar el proceso esencial biológico de expresión genética y puede conducir envejecimiento prematuro y atrofia, explica el artículo en *USA Today*.

Los factores del medio ambiente como ser expuesto al plomo, calidad de aire, agua

de beber y enfermedades han sido la conexión para acelerar el proceso de envejecimiento. También los factores fisiológicos y psicosocial como Estrés y discriminación racial, Berg dijo. El se ha referido a la violencia en prisión, pero también a la falta de privacidad y autonomía, siendo las principales tensiones-nerviosas que pueden impactar a los encarcelados, explica Berg.

El equipo de investigación hizo esfuerzos para excluir otros factores que podrían explicar la aceleración de la vejez, como Trauma infantil y el fumar cigarrillos. Ellos también excluyeron los factores que causan efectos opuestos a la vejez, tales como el ejercicio. “Nosotros controlamos todos esos detalles, y no hubo cambio significativo,” dijo Berg.

Berg tiene la esperanza que, cuando menos, los resultados de la investigación pueden ayudar a hacer la prisión menos violenta. “Si podemos hacer algo, podemos hacer los lugares [prisiones] mucho más seguros para ellos, y en mostrar que nosotros podemos traer un gran beneficio para la salud de ellos “, concluyó Berg.

—Editado por  
Tare Beltranchuc



# COMUNIDAD HISPANA CELEBRA GED EN ESPAÑOL

Por Edwin E. Chavez  
Spanish Journalism  
Guild Chairman

Llegaron los exámenes de bachillerato en español conocido por sus siglas en ingles *G.E.D.* (*General Equivalency Diploma*). Lo anunció la superintendente Shannon Swain del Departamento Educativo de la División de Correccionales del Programa Rehabilitaciones en su memoranda el 15 de julio.

La Oficina de Educación Correccional (*Office of Correctional Education*, Por sus siglas en ingles *OCE*) ha decidido proveer los exámenes de práctica del *G.E.D.* en español.

Los requisitos para poder obtener la elegibilidad para los exámenes de *G.E.D.* son los siguientes:

A) Los requisitos en el área de Literatura pueden ser alcanzados en el idioma español a través de una de las siguientes opciones:

- Una puntuación de 145 o mayor en *GED Ready literacy*
- Una puntuación de *Lexile* de 1150 o mayor en (*Spark 3000*).
- Alcanzar el requisito de *G.E.D.* en la puntuación del sistema '*Aztec Software Spanish GED Prep Series*' en español (una pre series que estará disponible en futuro cercano).

B) Los requisitos en matemáticas pueden ser alcanzados en el idioma español a través de las siguientes opciones:

- Una puntuación de 145 o mayor en *GED Ready math*
- Una puntuación en *Quantile* de 850 o mayor en '*Achieve3000 Math*'
- Pasar el examen de *Aztec Software's Spanish GED Prep Series* (una pre series que estará disponible en un futuro cercano).

Actualmente, los exámenes de *G.E.D.* son conducidos primordialmente en computadoras. Al administrar los exámenes, el dirigente encargado del *G.E.D.* puede seleccionar el lenguaje del examen individualmente, confirmó el comunicado del 15 de julio del 2022.

Este comunicado estará disponible a todos los directores, asistentes directores y dirigentes de los exámenes de *G.E.D.* en todas las prisiones de California.

La comunidad hispana en la prisión de San Quentin han recibidas con gran alegría estas noticias ya que los motiva y les da esperanza para obtener sus diplomas de bachillerato más rápido.

"Me siento contento porque tengo la oportunidad de practicar los exámenes del *G.E.D.* en mi idioma nativo, español. Por siete años he tomado exámenes de prácticas en el idioma Inglés," dijo Fausto Fabián 40, un residente de San Quentin. "En el pasado me deprimía y me ponía triste y hasta enojado conmigo mismo por no saber el lenguaje o poderlo leer." Ahora, él tiene la certeza que pasará los exámenes y obtendrá su *G.E.D.*

En la primer semana, un total 27 alumnos hispanos voluntariamente sometieron sus peticiones para tomar los exámenes de práctica. Algo que no se había visto en años.

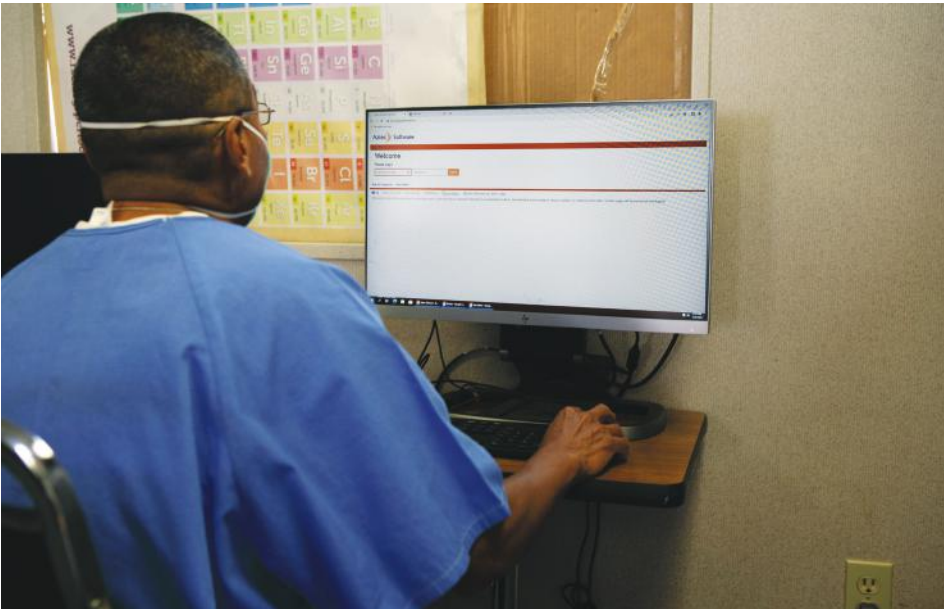
Para que la persona pueda ser elegible en el examen de práctica él o ella tienen que obtener un nivel del 70% o más de preparación, para que puedan calificar para el examen del *G.E.D.* y graduarse.

El director del Departamento Educación de San Quentin, Mr. Wheelless, com-



Vincent O'Bannon, SQNews

Estudiantes hispanos agradecen la noticia de tomar el examen de GED en español.



Vincent O'bannon, SQNews

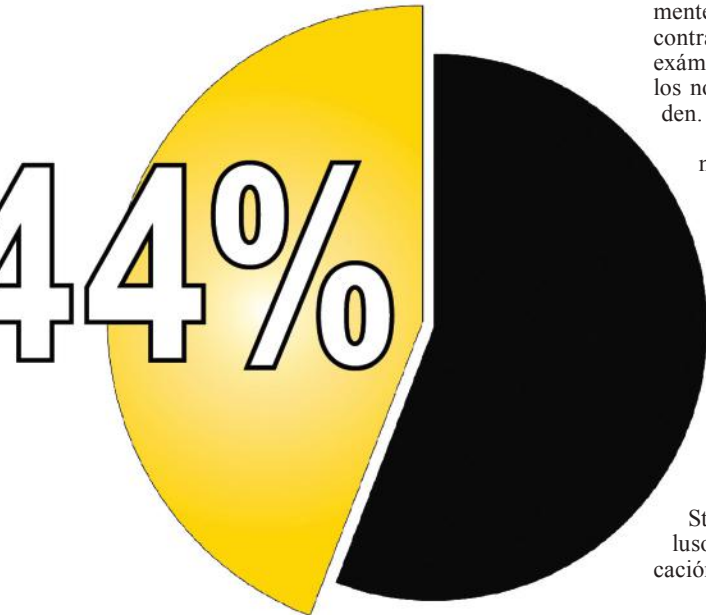
partió que este nuevo cambio puede tener sus beneficios y sus conflictos. Ya que hay otras personas de diversas nacionalidades que no hablan el idioma inglés y no son parte de la comunidad hispano-parlante y podrían considerar exigir el mismo servicio en su idioma natal. Otros grupos étnicos se pueden sentir excluidos por no haber sido considerados en este cambio, por hablar otro idioma que no es español, explicó Wheelless.

"Estos cambios pueden debilitar el interés de los estudiantes por aprender el inglés y de que algún día apliquen para un buen trabajo o darse la oportunidad de ir a alguna universidad en California," dijo el director Wheelless.

El Departamento Educativo de Correccionales continuará con la Educación Básica de Adultos y Educación Secundaria de Adultos, ofreciendo las clases en inglés. El único cambio es que los alumnos pueden tomar sus exámenes de práctica o examen del *G.E.D.* en español.

La *OCE* está enfocada en continuar educando a sus alumnos en inglés y ayudar al desarrollo de literatura y competencia en ese idioma.

"Ellos todavía son responsable por el examen," dijo H.



En las primera dos semanas desde que el programa de exámenes en Español de GED comenzó en la prisión de San Quentin, once de los veinte-cinco prisioneros que tomaron el examen, 44% fueron examinados en Español.

Fuente: Sr. Long, San Quentin jefe coordinador en GED

Lucas, maestra de *G.E.D.* "Nada ha cambiado, la única diferencia es de que el examen es en su propio lenguaje".

Los estudiantes siguen teniendo la responsabilidad de hacer el trabajo para alcanzar los estándares de aprendizaje

de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos como cualquier otro estudiante quien tomaría el examen en inglés. El currículo es el mismo.

El Departamento de Educación de San Quentin reconoce que este nuevo cambio no

va tener el mismo impacto en todos sus alumnos. Existen aquellos que continúan luchando académicamente en sus propios lenguajes.

La expectativa no es clara en las mentes de los maestros, pero estan ansiosos en poder ver los resultados. Por ejemplo en la clase de la maestra Lucas el 75% de sus estudiantes son de habla hispana. "Yo estaré dándoles los exámenes a algunos de los estudiantes que voluntariamente han pedido ser examinados," dijo Lucas.

Jorge Cuevas 40, es un nuevo residente, espera poder tener la oportunidad de registrarse y llegar a ser un alumno de *G.E.D.*

Al entrevistar estudiantes hispanos sobre los exámenes en español escuchamos diversas opiniones. Oscar Aguilar mencionó que el lenguaje no está traducido apropiadamente, debido que se han encontrado con preguntas en los exámenes de práctica, que ellos no reconocen o comprenden.

"Pienso que es una buena oportunidad para que los estudiantes hispanos puedan demostrar su nivel académico de su lenguaje natal", dijo Ramiro Badajoz 55, un estudiante y residente de San Quentin. El ya aprobó tres exámenes y le falta el último examen para poder graduarse de *G.E.D.*

Según la maestra Stanciu, hay ciertos recursos que para ellos la educación no es tan importante, en comparación de su libertad. Ella agregó, "Tal vez, este nuevo cambio los motive a poder ganarse su libertad más pronto," dijo Stanciu. "Cada examen que pasan reciben créditos por méritos de educación y pueden obtener su libertad más pronto."

Cuando un estudiante obtiene su *G.E.D.*, es elegible para recibir una reducción de hasta seis meses de su sentencia; esto permite puede regresar a su comunidad seis meses

antes de su fecha de libertad condicional.

A partir de la implementación de los exámenes de práctica en español, diez estudiantes han sido recomendados para el examen final del *G.E.D.* Maestros y estudiantes consideran este progreso como una victoria.

"Estamos aquí para ayudar a todos," dijo la maestra Sufi. Una de las observaciones de la maestra es que el no poder hablar inglés no significa que las personas son tontas. Ella ha tenido estudiantes que son muy inteligentes pero el no poder hablar el lenguaje los hace sentir inferiores cuando no lo son.

Al respecto, la maestra Stanciu dijo "Muchas personas sufren de baja-estima. Ya que ellos luchan con el lenguaje aun cuando ya tienen conocimiento."

"Si tú te gradúas del *G.E.D.* todavía queremos ayudarte a mejorar tu inglés," dijo la maestra Sufi.

Las cuarentenas por Covid-19 siguen siendo un gran obstáculo. Los estudiantes no tienen suficiente tiempo en las clases para estudiar y ser guiados por sus mentores de alfabetización entre pares.

"Nosotros tratamos de ayudar a los estudiantes de la mejor manera que podamos," dijo Rubén "Cuba" Hernández un residente de San Quentin. "Cuando tenemos el tiempo libre nos acercamos a nuestros estudiantes y les animamos a prepararse con los exámenes de practica en la yarda."

Hernández, forma parte del grupo de asesores conocido en inglés como "The Peer Literacy Mentor Program (PLMP), cuyo objetivo es ayudar a los estudiantes a obtener su *G.E.D.*

El ofrecer el *G.E.D.* en español es una gran oportunidad para los estudiantes hispanos que desean mejorar su nivel educativo, aumentar su auto-estima, regresar a sus comunidades antes del tiempo previsto, y tener mejores oportunidades en la vida.

—Editado por  
Tare Beltranchuc



SPORTS

By Timothy Hicks  
Sports Editor

More support is needed to free WNBA All Star Brittney Griner, who is locked up in a Russian prison for a cannabis violation, reported the *Daily Beast*. She has been criminalized for possessing a cannabis substance when she was stopped by Russian airport security. Griner recently pleaded guilty to the charges in Russia and had not been sentenced as of the June 26 story date. The article said that it is time for LGBTQ+ advocacy organizations and cannabis criminal justice reform organizations, such as Last Prisoner Project, to band together in a unified front for the release, record-sealing and reentry of those like Griner.

Griner has a host of support from all spectrums of the field standing up and speaking out on her behalf, urging legislators to convince Russian authorities to release her. The NBA and other sports franchises have supported Griner too. “Free Brittney Griner” campaigns have sprouted up all across the nation. GLSEN, Human Rights Campaign, and the National Black Justice Coalition condemned the acts against Griner by Russia as racist and homophobic and have released statements in support of Griner, said the article. Russia has draconian laws against cannabis, but so does the U.S., which still has laws

FREE BRITTNEY GRINER

*Sports communities across the nation campaign in support of WNBA star’s release*

*There are two sides to this situation: The war on drugs and cannabis, and the discrimination aspect on the LGBTQ+ and racism.*

in place that criminalize marijuana offenses. *Daily Beast* reported that there were 350,000 arrests in the U.S. for marijuana law violations in 2021. The article points out that Griner could have been arrested and sentenced to jail time if she had been stopped in any of 19 states in America. Federal law also criminalizes marijuana. The burden of cannabis criminalization lands disproportionately on the backs of people of color and the LGBTQ community, said the article. The 2019 National Survey on Drug Use and Health disclosed that “sexual minority” adults were at least twice as likely to have used



WNBA All Star Brittney Griner in her days playing for the Phoenix Mercury. Griner recently pled guilty to drug charges in Russia, and has been sentenced to 9 years in a Russian prison.

marijuana within the past year as the general population at 43.6% and 17.9%, respectively, said the article.

UPDATE: GRINER PLEAD GUILTY AND WAS SENTENCED TO 9 YEARS IN A RUSSIAN PRISON.

SPORTS MEMORIAM

Fast-pitch softball Hall-of-Famer Joan Joyce

By Vincent E. O’Bannon  
Staff Writer

Hall of Fame fast-pitch softball legend Joan Joyce died on March 26 at the age of 81 in Boca Raton, Florida. Joyce was named one of the best softball pitchers of all time, according to *The New York Times*. She won the World Series of women’s professional softball in four consecutive seasons. At the age of 16, Joyce played in several exhibition games facing legendary hitters including Henry “Hank” Aaron. “She was something else,” Aaron was quoted as saying after facing Joyce in an exhibition game in 1978, said the article. “That softball comes at you and rises up around your head by the time you swing at it.” Joyce also faced off against Ted “Splendid Splinter” Williams in another exhibition game.

Williams, a left-handed hitter, swung at and missed almost everything that Joyce, a right-hander, threw at him, making him finally throw the bat down in frustration, said the *Times*. Joyce amassed an impressive 753 wins and 42 losses, 150 no-hit no-run games, 50 perfect games, and a batting average of .324 over her career. Joyce was inducted into the National Softball Hall of Fame in 1983. She was inducted into the International Softball Federation Hall of Fame in 1999, one of only three Americans so honored, according to the article.



Courtesy of nhregister.com

Joyce played softball for the Raybestos Brackettes (1954-1963; 1967-1975) and the Orange Lionettes (1964-1966). She also played on the USA’s Women’s National Basketball Team (1964-1965) and competed in the LPGA tour as a golfer. Joyce became head coach of the Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Owls in 1995 and became the only FAU softball coach in program history to amass 1,002 wins and win conference coach of the year titles in three different conferences. In her first year as FAU head coach, Joyce earned her

first Atlantic Sun Conference Coach of the Year Award with a 33-18 season record. She was also named Palm Beach County Coach of the Year. Notable accomplishments: Eight consecutive conference championships, (1997-2004) – (2006, 2007, 2016, 2018) -12 in all, and eight straight NCAA Tournament appearances (1997-2004) – (2006, 2015, 2016) – 11 in all. Joyce was named one of the best pitchers of all time. She built the FAU program on a foundation of strong pitching. “Many would say that Joyce was one of the greatest female athletes of her generation,” said the *Times* article. At 5-foot-9-inches, Joyce was an imposing presence on the mound and possessed an arsenal of pitches she delivered with a slingshot-like underhand that included curveballs, sliders, fastballs, and her trademark “drop ball,” which sank over the plate and deceived many batters.

SQ A’s continue tryouts despite Covid setbacks

By Anthony Manuel  
Carvalho  
Staff Writer

The crack of the bat deafened the sound of the gun range as the San Quentin baseball diamond auditioned residents for the San Quentin A’s team’s 27<sup>th</sup> consecutive season. During spring tryouts, the prison fell victim to COVID-19. Players and coaches were locked away as rotating closures of cell blocks threatened this year’s schedule. But the consecutive-season streak continued because one single practice game was played when participants from hardball and softball suited up. This game represented the only competition during a year of hard work, where practices occurred without any games. A no-visitation policy kept visiting squads out the past year. This year’s schedule is threatened again due to COVID-19 closures.

Annually, 25 teams visit to compete. “Administration approved two teams and hopefully another two will get approved,” said outside manager Michael Kremer. Raphael Casele, assistant to the Chief Deputy Warden, traditionally processes visits for 700 sports volunteers per year.

The 2019 team returned this spring for a new season and planned a June start. Now, most of the season’s regular schedule is lost through the second lockdown, which ended in August and threatens the team’s hopes for any outside team to visit. The visitations would greatly reenergize the 102-year-old tradition. San Quentin’s 2019 team had a 35-game winning streak and an unprecedented record of 38-2.

Tryouts restarted in August let manager Richard “Coach Will” Williams acknowledge his returning players, who showed more perseverance than any team he’s ever coached. “Last year, practicing two to four days per week without the guarantee of any games, and now practicing just between the players in their own cell blocks, shows a lot of dedication,” said Williams. Williams’ adjusted expectations still do not guarantee any player a spot on the team. “Coach” still demands players never lose sight of their top priority — preparing to go home. “Your family and programming comes first,” Williams said. Players reviewed San Quentin baseball’s history. The sport started in 1902 as the first teams enjoyed road trips outside the prison walls to face opposing teams. Since then, SQ baseball is played inside the prison walls. The COVID outbreak of 2020 hit star player and new captain Chris “Max”

Hickson. “Man, 2020, men were dying and families were scared to death...we willingly sacrificed for the good of our community. But *this* year is too much. The world, which includes San Quentin, has proved it needs sports.” “Not returning and losing the opportunity for another record-setting season. We were going to go undefeated. Now all of our coaches advise focusing on going home. That is important, but no ball? This is terrible,” said infielder Kolby Southwood. Tryouts allow incarcerated residents a chance to compete for the nation’s only 18 roster spots in any prison. Ready to pick the team, Coach Williams now promises a two-day audition before beginning play. “We know who we were going to keep... The additional tryouts give us one last chance to find any diamonds we may have missed,” said coach Rob Tyler.

In major league baseball, 24 players are on a team. This equates to 900 professional positions. The incarcerated population of approximately 2.3 million in the United States has only 18 positions to compete with outside clubs. All the positions are here at San Quentin. “Our opportunity we take seriously,” said rookie pitcher Everett Wiley. “We are fortunate and work hard, knowing we are held to a higher standard.” Team leader and new catcher Matt Negus stated the team’s ultimate goals and aspirations. “Remember, since outside coaches Michael Kremer and Steve Reichardt have taken over the organization, everyone eligible for parole has left, and no one has come back,” said Matt.

The coaches preach emotional intelligence, rehabilitation and humility through “The Grand Ole Game.” At the end of every game, all team members circle up with outside teams, sharing their rehabilitative stories and praying at game’s end. This ritual is led by the team’s spiritual leader, Elder Carrington “The Natural” Russelle. This circle is a restorative healing circle for inside and outside participants. “Allowed to participate in a sport where no other prison in the nation does...,” said assistant manager Mike “The Body” Pulido. “I only hope we continue to appreciate what the administration does for us ... as well as the volunteers who come in.” Enduring and surviving 600 days of COVID-19 became the only competition that mattered to the entire world. Yet, after two years of quarantining, the men of SQ baseball eagerly await the return of outside competition to hear opening day umpires yell, “Play ball!”

TIER TALK

Michael Pulito and Lamar Paschall on their new roles in SQ softball

The San Quentin Hard Timers softball team has been rocking balls across the SQ Field of Dreams for decades now. One man’s journey from being the equipment manager to becoming the now general manager of the team is a story within itself to make the history books. However, when GM Michael Pulito had to choose a new head coach, he looked deeper than what the game itself really meant. He looked to the heart of the person who would become the new head coach for the team. He picked

Lamar “Coach P” Paschall. I was able to get both guys for some questions. **Hicks:** Mike, it is an inspiration for those around here in prison to see you rise up from being the equipment manager to being the now GM of the team. How does that make you feel? **Pulito:** It still amazes me to believe that I am now the general manager of a team I used to cheer for as a fan. But that is the power of the San Quentin sports program. **Hicks:** And now you have this guy sitting here as your

new head coach. That had to be a tough decision. But I wonder how you as the choice must have felt when you were asked to be in this new position. **Paschall:** I’m lucky to be the head coach of the San Quentin Hard Timers. This position was offered to me twice and each time I refused. At that time I was feeling like I wasn’t deserving of it. A voice in my head would tell me, “You just got here.” I felt that it would be disrespectful to this community to fill such an honorary position as the

head coach of such a historical team. However, my respect for the team superseded my personal aspirations. **Hicks:** Yeah, I heard you say that you had only been here for eight months. I can imagine how all of the other veterans must have felt when Mike overlooked them and chose you. Mike, did you take flak for that choice and why did you choose Coach P over the other guys? **Pulito:** Yeah, there were guys who didn’t understand why I made this choice, but eventually they will see the

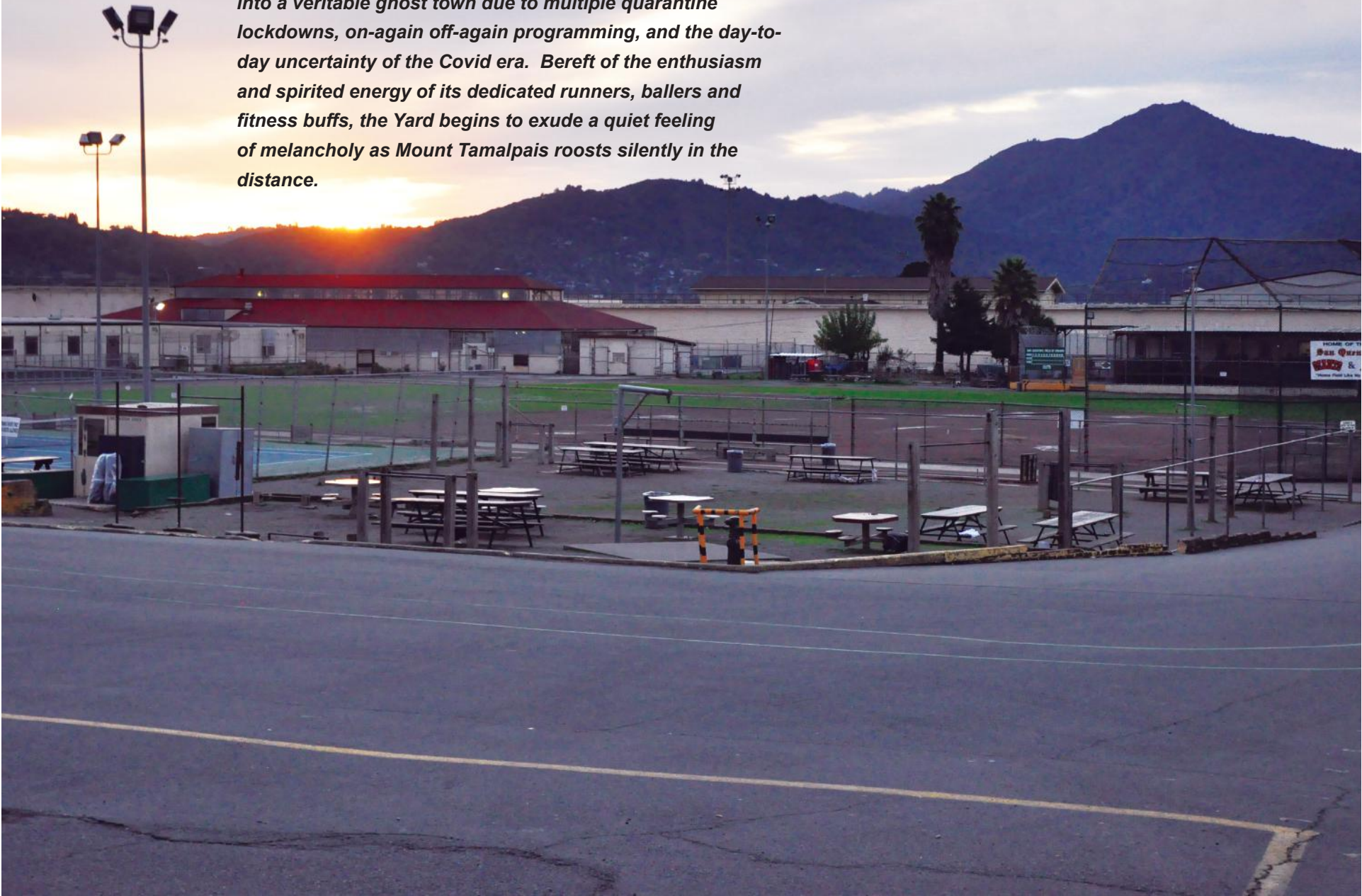
big picture. I chose Lamar as the coach because I could recognize him as a leader. I was blessed to be around some great leaders and see him as one of those special people. He is a leader that not only has knowledge and integrity but he also shared my vision of what the Hard Timers are about and what I want them to be. **Hicks:** Coach P, tell me why you think Mike chose you? **Paschall:** I believe why Mike chose me for this position was for the way I treat

people, with humanity. I learned from my journey through life as an all-star baseball player once, football player with multiple interest in me from different colleges, I worked at a law firm, I’m a loving father to my children and family. From the streets to serving a life sentence to now trying to find a way to heal those affected from the harm I caused. Even myself, I just want to give back in some form. My experiences have humbled me and I think that’s what Mike saw in me. —Timothy Hicks



# THE LOWER YARD MISSES HER ATHLETES

Since 2020, San Quentin’s Lower Yard has been transformed into a veritable ghost town due to multiple quarantine lockdowns, on-again off-again programming, and the day-to-day uncertainty of the Covid era. Bereft of the enthusiasm and spirited energy of its dedicated runners, ballers and fitness buffs, the Yard begins to exude a quiet feeling of melancholy as Mount Tamalpais roosts silently in the distance.



Archive photo, SQNews

## SQ athletes prove the power of perseverance through Covid setbacks

By Timothy Hicks  
Sports Editor

Since this COVID era began and hit the San Quentin population with its brutal force and unrelenting prominence, sports at The Q have been a missed presence on the Lower Yard.

Normally there would be all sorts of games happening — baseball, soccer or football on the Field of Dreams. From head-to-head matches happening between the SQ Warriors and the SQ Kings on the basketball court, to tennis matches with outside volunteers. They are not happening now and haven’t been for way too long.

There were over 3,000 volunteers who frequented the prison annually and many different sports franchises that would be coming into the prison to compete with the incarcerated, including the Golden State Warriors. COVID has basically all but stopped that from happening.

Nowadays the incarcerated sports enthusiasts involve themselves with pickup games in their favorite sport just to fill in that void of sports indulgence. In a pickup basketball game there might be anywhere from a two-on-two to a five-on-five. A basketball pickup game is similar to the cofounder hip-hop mogul Ice Cube’s “The Big 3” — a basketball league that faces off against other teams in a three-on-three matchup.

Usually in a baseball game it takes the entire nine players to have a good game. But whatever your sport is and you decide to pick up a player, that is what defines the term “pickup game.” That is what’s been happening at The Q since the COVID era.

Different housing units with different team players being locked down has led to creating skeleton crews or filling in the blank positions just to have the pickup games. The matchups are not age or ethnically biased, neither.

Remarkably, when you look out on the field or on the court of the Lower Yard, you would find an array of all shades and diversities of people. Sports allow people to interact regardless of any racial differences.

Sports give people that excuse to traverse the boundaries of indifference. Sports have their own way of playing the middle ground or being the bridge for someone to cross, whether it is one person or an entire race.

So when this COVID era thought that it was going to defeat the athletes at The Q, it had another think coming. It wasn’t expecting the athletes to be as resilient as they are. COVID wasn’t expecting the idea of the incarcerated to have the pickup game.

The general manager of the San Jose Sharks, Mike Grier, 47, made the history books by becoming the hockey team’s first Black general manager after spending almost two decades in the league.

Grier is not the first Black player to ever have graced the league, which is made up of mostly of White people. The few people of color in the league have stood on the back of the first Black player to break the ceiling of the ice hockey rink.

Willie O’Ree was the first ace player to enter the league, according to the *Oakland Post*.

Here it is 2022, and with the hope of many new inclusive ideologies, we might be moving past those old hatreds from the days when racism and discrimination predominated, especially in sports. We remember when guys like Jackie Robinson, a Black man, had to press their way through the hate just to play the baseball game they loved.

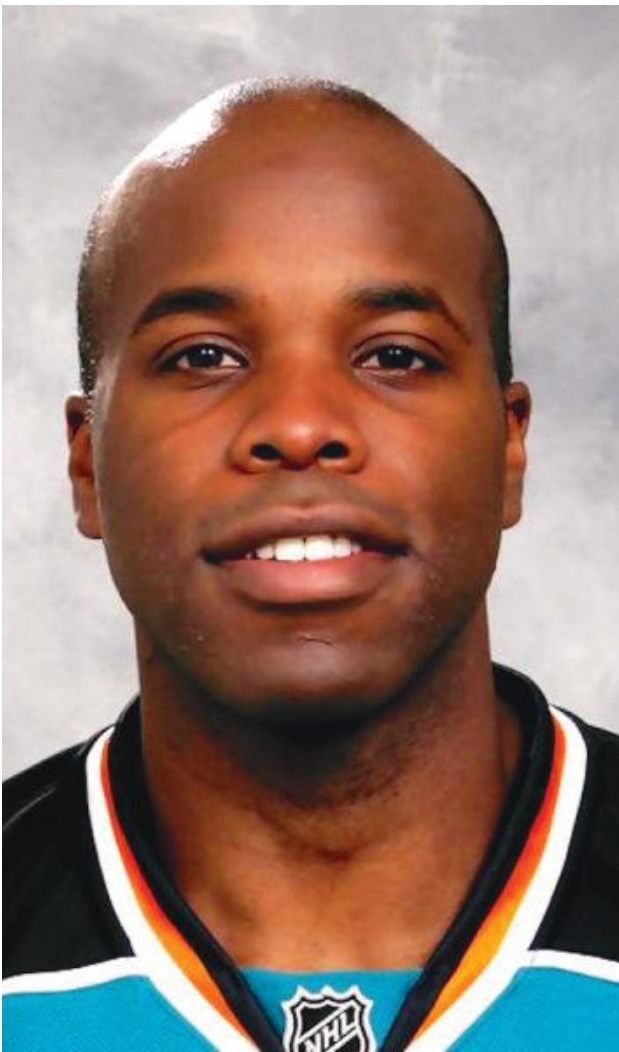
In a league where Blacks and people of color are under-represented and inclusivity is nearly obsolete, a Black man has persevered and made it to a prominent position in the NHL. Historically, professional hockey has held its place with its traditional lack of representation of people of color, said the June 22-28 *Oakland Post*.

Born on Oct.15, 1935, it took Willie O’Ree over 20-plus years to become the first Black NHL player, for the Boston Bruins. He played two games for the Bruins before dropping out in the 1957-58 season. He returned in 1960-61 season when he scored four goals and 10 assist for 14 points in 43 games, said the article.

In 1961 O’Ree also became the first Black player to score

## BREAKING BARRIERS

### Mike Grier makes history as the NHL’s first Black GM



Stock image

a goal in the NHL, resulting in a 3-2 win over the Canadians. O’Ree was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in

2018 and President Joe Biden recently signed the Willie O’Ree Congressional Gold Medal Act, which is the high-

est honor for his contribution to hockey. Nevertheless, the century-plus old exclusive sport of ice hockey still has a ways to go.

O’Ree endured years of ridicule from players and fans. However, what makes Grier’s situation so profound is that there were no people of color to ever make it to the upper management levels — not until Grier.

Grier played hockey from 1996-2009, including three years with the Sharks as a forward where he finished with 35 goals in a 221-game span with 43 assists. He served as an operations adviser for the New York Rangers and a coach for the New Jersey Devils.

The Sharks GM Doug Wilson stepped down and Head Coach Bob Boughner was fired after a losing season, creating the opportunity for the positions to be filled. Hence the Sharks conquered two milestones in one hire. They made history and filled their top leadership position with the first Black general manager, and also giving Grier the power to be the one to find and hire the next head coach.

HOCKEY UPDATE: The 2022 Stanley Cup winners were the Colorado Avalanche who beat the previous three-time champion Tampa Bay Lightning team in a battle that ended in a 4 to 2 series victory for the Avalanche.

—Timothy Hicks



BOOK REVIEW

The Mars Room By Rachel Kushner

Juan Haines  
Senior Editor

Romy Hall is serving two life sentences for killing the man stalking her. Her only concern—her son, who’s been swallowed by child protective services, adoption and time. The story becomes a hero’s journey of Romy dealing with the angst of incarceration while struggling to find a way to her son.

During my 26 years of incarceration, I’ve always read novels to break up the time. And for the last decade (or so) I’ve written book reviews for *San Quentin News*.

Recently, I came across *The Mars Room* by Rachel Kushner (2018). It’s a story about a women’s prison with a narrative that’s supported by extensive research. But, Kushner’s literary beauty and polished words stood in contrast with my experiences because of the unsavory nature of her plot. It made me think that I was reading an urban novel written by a cultured author.

Still, I was seeking insight into women’s experiences and comparing them to mine.

I’ve spent nearly 15 years in higher-security prisons where frequent lockdowns hamstringing the chance for rehabilitative programs. In 2007, however, I was transferred to San Quentin State Prison where lower security concerns let a variety of self-help programs thrive.

*The Mars Room* is centered on everything bad that happens to a person while locked up—things beyond even being stripped away from friends and family. It addressed accepting responsibility, being accountable for the harm you’ve committed against innocent folks, and sitting in the fire of regret and remorse. Being in the latter myself—the regretful and remorseful kind—I wasn’t very excited to pick up a novel about the worst and least bearable parts of prison life. Nevertheless, I kept turning the pages.

Kushner’s plot in the fictional Stanville prison simply misses what brings people together as human beings. Even in high-security prisons, with lockdowns and violence, people still look for the tenderness found in community. Such moments and situations are the ones rarely seen in literature or popular culture exploring life in prison.

The uniqueness of *The Q* is that there’s a caring community of prison staff, volunteers and incarcerated mentors, all looking to serve folks seeking to change their lives. Thus, people doing time in other state prisons are working their way to *The Q* with hopes for betterment. These ef-

forts are supported by California’s policymakers as access to introspective programs, built on the principles of restorative justice, is one of the cornerstones of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

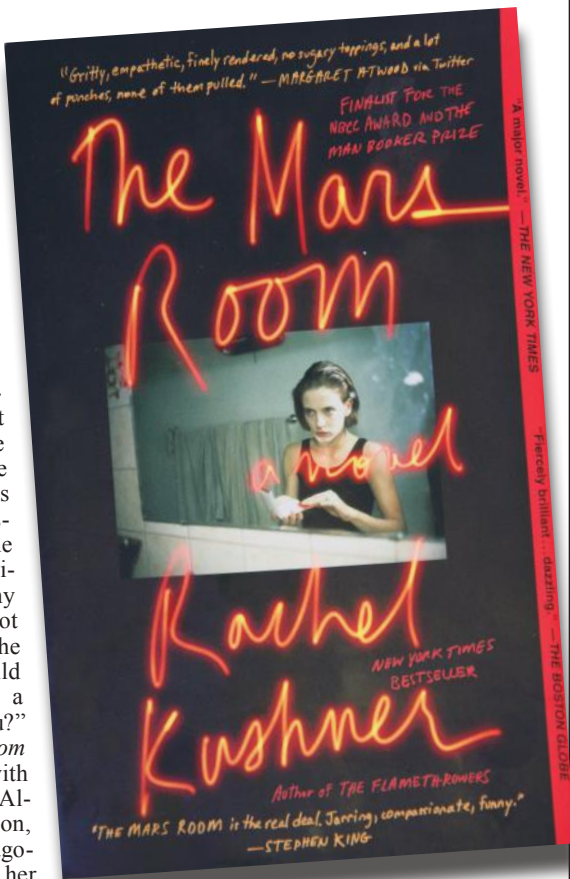
Nevertheless, to Kushner’s credit, she does capture the remorse and regret that incarcerated people struggle with: “The quiet of the cell is where the real question lingers...The one true question, impossible to answer. The why did you? The how. Not the practical how, the other one. How could you have done such a thing? How could you?”

*The Mars Room* has no characters with strong family ties. Although there’s tension, centered on the protagonist’s separation from her son, the action she takes is too farfetched and adds to the plot’s superficiality.

My incarceration experience has witnessed stable, loving and successful families, formed through letter writing, phone calls and visits. I know a formerly incarcerated father whose daughter and son were conceived on prison grounds. His son is now a doctor and his daughter is a counselor for children with parents in prison.

The truth is that prisons (with all their goodness, badness and ugliness) are a reflection of our society. So I humbly submit that stories about prison aren’t full unless all aspects of humanity are covered.

While I appreciate that Kushner wants her audience to viscerally feel the despair, injustice and cruelty of prison, it felt that she did so in a way that leaves you feeling dirty rather than refreshed by an unexpected encounter with a human being. In spite of my criticism, I found the novel full of thought-provoking lines, giving readers an idea of how repressed people live. As an example, I found it moving when Romy Hall realized “What I eventually began to understand, about San Francisco, was that I was immersed in beauty and barred from seeing it.”



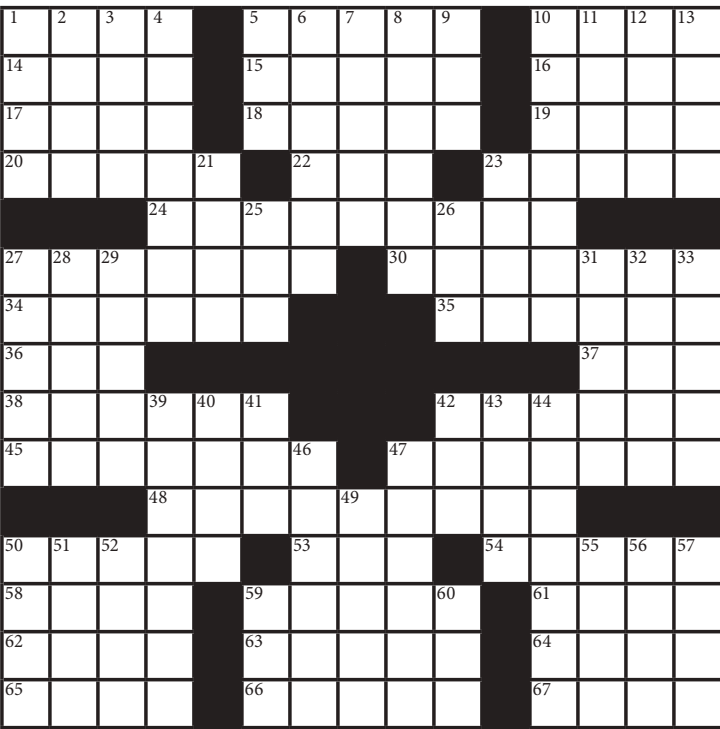
In addition, Kushner’s social commentary about who ends up in prison is poignant: “People from your family were in prison, whole swaths of your community, and it was part of life to eventually go there. So, you were born fucked. But, like the rich kids, you too wanted to have fun on Saturday night. All children are looking for a positive self-image. All children want that. It is obtained in different ways.”

*The Mars Room*, as a whole, gives the uninformed a glimpse of what it’s like to live the same day the same way year after year. Kushner also gives an important detail: “People say holidays are depressing in prison. It’s true. It’s because you cannot help but think of the life you once had, or *did not have* (emphasis added). Holidays are an idea of how life should be.”

I breezed through this novel, mainly because it’s so well researched and written, but it missed too much of the fullness of my experiences throughout California’s prison system—the human part. Still, I credit Kushner for revealing a basic truth—prisons are isolating, bleak and destructive to human wellbeing, because it’s hard to see the light at the end of the tunnel when you’re serving a life sentence.

CROSSWORD CLASSIC

Created by Jonathan Chiu  
Edited by Jan Perry



SEPTEMBER’S CLUES:

Across

- A fine spray
- Composite or amalgam (informal)
- Summertime must-have in an unventilated cell (plural)
- Above
- McDonald’s essential equipment
- Rescue, informal: “Med \_\_\_\_”
- World’s “biggest little city”
- Past-tense of “split up” (obsolete)
- Singer \_\_\_\_ Wilson; wife of Tom Hanks
- “Machete” actor Danny \_\_\_\_
- Hebrew alphabet’s 8th letter
- Direct instruction
- Sugar substitute
- “Family Guy” character Joe \_\_\_\_
- Post-Christmas time
- California’s First Family
- A shepherd bringing a herd of animals to market
- Prepared in a certain style or manner (2 wds)
- Broad thoroughfare (abbrv)
- US inventor Anthony \_\_\_\_, invented lighting for film sets
- Skilled jobs with special training
- Baltic country N of Latvia
- Containers filled with bird seed
- Shoulder belt with pockets or bullet-loops
- Group of singers in church
- A type of business degree
- Type of order to a dog
- 90’s hit by Mariah Carey
- Actors Hemsworth and Neeson (plural)
- Director \_\_\_\_ Ephron
- Not closed
- Abalone in the Channel Islands
- Door-to-door beauty brand
- \_\_\_\_ Disney
- Workout term “\_\_\_\_ Mode” (slang)
- Sexually inappropriate

Down

- “Family Guy” pharmacy owner
- Pop group Bon \_\_\_\_
- Monetary unit in Samoa
- USC football players
- Debilitating medical condition (acronym)
- Motherless child
- Horse trained to run one-mile races
- Actor/director Warren \_\_\_\_
- A scrap of food left from a meal
- Chocolatier \_\_\_\_ Rocher
- Having a keen interest
- G-Funk rapper \_\_\_\_ Dogg
- Permanent remnant of an injury; also, brother of Mufasa
- Italian veal dish \_\_\_\_ buco
- Michael K. Williams’ character on “The Wire”
- Pomegranate drink “\_\_\_\_ Wonderful”
- Portable medical paddles
- Simpsons’ criminal
- War of the Worlds author
- To anticipate or expect
- To escape or get away
- Not ever
- Women’s clothing
- Evolution: Hypothetical precursor of living organisms
- Snarl or growl
- Furious 6 director Justin \_\_\_\_
- Golf ball’s mate
- Oceanic coral structure
- Glands located above kidneys
- To regard highly
- Going down in \_\_\_\_
- Trump predecessor
- Prison or military food
- A type of air filter
- Industrial city of SW Russia
- Pop singer \_\_\_\_ Lo
- Delightful cackle; or, a raven
- “On the other \_\_\_\_”
- Underhanded toss
- Dodge performance vehicle badging

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

August Solutions

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6	8	1	7	3	5	4	2	9

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R	O	A	R		A	P	P	L	E		O	L	I	O
M	E	I	N		G	E	E	S	E		A	D	D	S



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AU CONTRAIRE: TRANSFERRED DEATH ROW PRISONER SETS THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Dear San Quentin News:

I just read “The End of the Line for Death Row” article on the front page your April edition and I have comments regarding CDCR’s claim of how successful the condemned inmate transfer pilot program (CITPP) has been in “putting condemned inmates to work to make restitution for family victim, collecting nearly \$50,000 by the end of 2021.” I am one of the 116 Death Row Inmates who volunteered for the CITPP. The first transferees left San Quentin in October, 2020. My bus arrived at Centinela State Prison [in July, 2021]. There are 12 condemned inmates on this mainline yard, and 4 on the Sensitive Needs Yard (SNY). Out of these 12 incarcerated persons only one has a paying job, but it is not a pay position. The Director of CDCR stated, “The CITPP is designed to provide enhanced job placement opportunities for condemned inmates to augment CDCR’s compliance with the mandates of PC 2700.1.” CDCR and the CITPP have not complied with the penal code. There were no waiting paid positions. CITPP prisons were not prepared for the induction of condemned inmates, at least not here at Centinela.

I am the only condemned inmate at Centinela with a paying job, who has earned a grand total of \$4.13 in the 11 months I have been here. At 70%, CDCR would have only gained \$2.89 in restitution from me. That is not a glowing endorsement for CITPP jobs and restitution collection. I am very glad I transferred because life is so much better than before. But be skeptical of CDCR patting themselves on the back.

—**Ramon Rogers**  
*CSP Centinela  
Imperial, California*



Vincent E. O'Bannon, SQNews

GRATITUDE FROM NEW CORCORAN

Dear San Quentin News:

Just yesterday, I was at our Law Library, filing a writ for a sentence reduction under SB 483, and I asked for a San Quentin Newspaper.

In the January 2022 issue, on page 8, I came across the “Resentencing barriers eased by new legislation” piece. The article greatly increased my chance of being granted relief and it is because of the advice given at the end on what to include with my writ. Who knew a “Statement of Remorse” could make a difference?

I simply wish to let the entire San Quentin News staff know that your selfless acts of service with the San Quentin News has always found me when in need of true info and provides it always... Far too few inmates have their voice heard and y’all speak through bull horns so all can hear. You provide a key and vital source of accurate information and news articles directly effecting the prison population.

—**Chris Buell**  
*Substance Abuse Treatment Facility  
Corcoran, California*

CLOSE CALL COMPELS LETTER OF THANKS

Dear San Quentin News:

I want to begin by giving praise where it is due.

I just digested your May 2022 edition and was impressed. For the most part though, we must admit prison is prison right? And then sometimes are those good heartfelt stories.

This brings me to May 21, 2022, which was the day I had a mild stroke that nonetheless almost did me in, if it

was not for the heroic acts of a few that work at CSP-Lancaster, Facility “D.” I had to be carried out on a stretcher, “man down,” we all know what that means.

I want to personally thank the three officers whose heroic actions saved my life. Thank you for your quick actions and your service. Many who know me will say I’m off my rockers in my old age. I assure you all that after 30 years of this I can finally say that there is some good in people, and some “good people” in our world of pain.

We should recognize that in each other more often and just maybe we all will see the light, guidance and direction to freedom.

—**Francisco Gonzalez**  
*R. J. Donovan  
San Diego, CA*

COLORADO PRISONER NEEDS RENEWED SUBSCRIPTION

Dear San Quentin News:

The reason I am writing you all is because I would to start getting your newspaper again. It is uplifting to me and other inmates in Colorado’s prison system.

—**Robert Wing**  
*Colorado Dept of Corrections  
Pueblo, Colorado*

THE DANGER OF NON-DESIGNATED YARDS

Dear San Quentin News:

In 2016, CDCR created and enforced the Non Designated Programming Facilities (NDPF) policy. This policy directed CDCR Staff to house together General Population (GP) inmates with Sensitive Needs (SNY) inmates on the same facilities, contrary to law and in disregard for inmate safety and security.

GP and SNY inmates are known by CDCR to be non-compatible and possess a real threat to each other. Any physical contact between these two groups of inmates will result in violent assaults, producing serious injuries to the inmates.

Since the creation and enforcement of the NDPF policy, there has been and will continue to be many related injuries and even deaths.

Inmates who fear transferring to NDPFs have committed suicide, and inmates who did transfer to a NDPF, or were housed there already, became victims of violence, which resulted in the above mentioned outcomes.

These facts are available to be searched and accessed online on Google.

—**Ismael Villarreal**  
*CSP Solano  
Vacaville, California*

SALINAS VALLEY LWOP FINDS SQN EDUCATIONAL

Dear San Quentin News:

Thanks to all the members working at the San Quentin News. For the past 5 years, the SQN has been a big part of my life, and for those like myself serving LWOP and other life sentences, even y’all that have dates, the SQN is a huge educator for us.

—**Robert Welton**  
*Salinas Valley State Prison  
Soledad, California*

‘LOVE’ LETTER FROM NEVADA

Dear San Quentin News:

I love your newspaper! In addition to providing prison news in California and around the country, it reflects a system that should be the model of every state. Keep up the good work.

—**Wayne Viera**  
*Indian Springs, Nevada*

EDITORIAL

Justice reform, public safety muddled by ‘dog-whistle’ politics

By Marcus Henderson  
Editor in Chief

San Francisco’s progressive District Attorney Chesa Boudin has suffered a political defeat and been recalled from his position. I was not shocked, because I watched the former DA be Willie Horton-ed by his opponents and the media in real time. For those who don’t know, in 1987 Horton, while serving a life-without-parole sentence for murder in Massachusetts, was given a weekend furlough.

While on release, Horton committed assault, armed robbery and rape before being recaptured. Horton’s case became the rallying cry in opposition to criminal justice reform. In the 1988 election, then Republican presidential hopeful George H.W. Bush used Horton’s release in his campaign against Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis, his Democratic opponent.

A pro-Bush political action committee funded broadcast ads that held Dukakis responsible for Horton’s behavior. This practice has become known as a textbook example of dog-whistle politics, according to *Dog Whistle Politics: how coded racial appeals have reinvented racism and wrecked the middle class*, by Ian Haney-Lopez (2013), Wikipedia reports.

Dukakis was not Governor of Massachusetts at the time of Horton’s release, but he vetoed a bill put forth by the state’s legislature that would have prohibited furloughs of prisoners convicted of murder. The state’s Supreme Judicial Court ruled that the right to furloughs also extended to prisoners convicted of murder because the law did not exclude them.

But oddly enough, Bush wasn’t the first to pin the Horton incident on Dukakis. It was then Democratic Senator Al Gore, who later became a U.S. vice president, at a New York primary debate. Bush simply seized the talking point for his campaign, noted Wikipedia.

Republican consultants began to hold focus groups with “Reagan Democrats,” those who voted for Ronald Reagan in 1984. The information the Republican consultants received was to “go negative” against Dukakis. Later the focus groups turn completely against Dukakis.

The National Security political action committee began running campaign ads titled “Weekend Passes,” which were produced by a media consultant. After clearing the ad with television stations, Horton’s mug shot was added to the ads. The Bush campaign ran its own ads, titled “Revolving Door,” that featured a variety of men walking in and out of prison through a revolving door. Most of the campaigns focused on the criminal justice issue, while neither the candidates nor the national media mentioned the racial component, said the site.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson accused the ads’ creators of playing on the fears of some of the voters, especially those who harbored stereotyped fears of Blacks as criminals.

Now, back to Boudin. I watched a flood of attack ads on TV where a Black man was busting car widows and taking property—over and over again—along with teenagers stealing goods and running out of high-end retail stores. Adding to the drama were ads featuring a mother whose daughter was killed in a hit in

run by a Black person recently released from the county jail.

The call to action was Vote Yes on H, the recall proposition for Boudin. Being incarcerated, I think we are always conscious of the narratives that are being propagated about people who commit crime. Any time the talk of criminal justice reform comes up, the fear-mongering begins. Boudin found himself in a whirlwind battle with other prosecutors, the city’s police union and Mayor London Breed. Whatever political drama happened behind the scenes soon became public.

But, once again, the truth around public safety started to get murky in a cloud of tough-on-crime rhetoric. Is the cup half full or is it half empty? That depends on who has the loudest bullhorn. I rarely saw Boudin portrayed in a good light in the media. The man was shadow boxing with himself. He was running against himself; there was no other candidate who had to defend their record—imagine that—the people were not given a choice of candidates.

The bombardment of attack ads and the screams alleging a rise in crime drowned out the truth: according to the FBI and San Francisco police statistics, overall crime—and violent crime—decreased between 2019 and 2022.

Property and violent crime both dropped by double-digit percentages between 2019 and 2021, city data shows. Some types of crime have risen in the same timeframe. Burglaries are up 47%. Motor vehicle theft increased by 36%. Homicides have also increased since 2019—a national trend—but the city experienced its lowest number of killings in more than a half-century that year, reported *Los Angeles Times*.



Wikipedia

Willie Horton

While I watched the attack ads on repeat, I searched for who was funding the recall campaign. It was the corporate Democrats (today’s “Reagan Democrats”): the California Association of Realtors, including Ron Conway, an early Door Dash investo, and William Oberndorf, a billionaire and Republican mega-donor. The group created a whopping \$7.2 million war chest compared to Boudin’s \$3.3 million.

The rallying cry is now “Progressives are taking criminal justice reform too far.” Bail reform, diversion programs and cuts in sentence enhancements have been cited. But what about the tough-on-crime era of Three Strikes, mandatory sentencing and life sentencing of non-violent crimes that have devastated poor communities?

True frustration is in the air, but this cycle of scapegoating politics will only produce more of the same. On the evening news, I watched newly appointed D.A. Brooke Jenkins, a supporter of the recall, walk through the drug-infested Tenderloin neighborhood. The call rang out to lock up the drug dealers.

It’s strange how it’s never a war on suppliers. I guess drugs and guns just magically appear in the ghettos and the only help that the common citizen gets is prison. As the nation and the state prepare to vote in the mid-terms, the incarcerated and the public better get ready to hear more “dog whistles.”

I guess it’s true, you can’t teach an old dog new tricks.

THINK ‘BOUT IT

By Jessie Milo

This comic was submitted by artist

Jessie Milo of CSP-Corcoran.

★ Shut up Inmate. Less Talk-More WORK!

If you Dont show up tomorrow, I'll write you up and you'll be locked in your cell, you'll lose yard access and you wont be allowed to use the phone to call family!

I HATE THIS! I DONT GET PAID, I get TALKED DOWN to & threatened...

WORK SUCKS!

20 YEARS LATER PAROLE

Welcome Home!

So when you going to work?

I HATE WORK! 20 years of forced Labor Flashes Through His Mind.

Teach Positive Values

- PAY fair wage to incarcerated workers.
- Pay teaches work has a reward. Work is Good!
- Pay will help fund reentry housing, food, transportation clothing.
- Successful reentry equals Less recidivism - equals Less crime.



# Salvadorian artist’s patriotism flows in shades of *blue*

By Edwin E. Chavez  
Spanish Journalism  
Guild Chairman

Juan C. Sanchez, 28, uses blue ink to sketch portraits, classic cars and roses, on handkerchiefs.

“I really don’t remember when I started drawing. I know that I started doodling when I was in sixth grade—my thing was cartoons,” Sanchez said.

He said he became an artist in order to express what he was thinking.

While in high school, Sanchez loved drawing houses and buildings and believed he could make a career in architectural design. He found himself pretending to be an architect. He gained confidence after winning art contests—first place seven times and second place five times. The prizes included metals, money and art supplies.

After high school, he enrolled in the University of El

comfort zone to discover new ways to express himself and express creativity.

The proud Salvadoreño created a piece with the El Salvadorian national emblem. “It’s a complex design,” he says.

While at San Quentin he’s also explored the prison’s 1854 facade.

One sketch shows the prison’s entrance. Above it, the Virgin Mary is flanked by revolutionary-looking women who are wearing Mexican hats called *charras*; the woman on the left has a Mona Lisa-style smile and \$100 bills wrapped around the *charra*. Both *charras* are wrapped with bullet straps, giving an impression of a warrior during the Mexican civil war of the 1920s.

Due to the pandemic, Sanchez wasn’t able to get regular ink pens, so he improvised with used blue ink pens. However, viewers still appreciate his unique mixtures of ink.

Juan Carpio Sanchez’s ink-on-cloth artwork creates a living link between the nation of his birth and his childhood passion. ►

**BELOW:** One expression of his patriotism is the face of a lovely lady above a classic Chevrolet pickup, with the national symbol of El Salvador dominant in the upper right. El Salvador’s independence was gained on September 15, 1821; the country’s core values shine out: God, Unity, Freedom (*Dios Union Libertad*).

**BOTTOM RIGHT:** His depiction of San Quentin shows the Virgin Mary praying over the notorious prison while flanked by *Charras* revolutionaries.



From his pen flows a  
*love for his country...*  
and a celebration  
of his nation’s *independence*

Salvador to study architectural design, but didn’t graduate, eventually ending up in the U.S. and incarcerated at San Quentin.

Sanchez says that creating art at San Quentin reminds him of how far his talents could have taken him if he had not made bad decisions.

“For me, art has become like an extraordinary therapy,” he said.

As an artist, Sanchez says he’s willing to get out of his

Sanchez says he enjoys drawing incarcerated people. “The faces of incarcerated people reflect on the most positive memories for our loved ones—meaning not every experience of incarceration has to be negative or based on our lifestyles or poor choices.”

He added, “We are all humans and have people who love us, too. Even though we may be incarcerated, we can always do good things.”



Photos by Dao Ong / SQNews

