



San Quentin News

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GRIP GRADS LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Flagship program equips prisoners with tools for life outside of prison

By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Staff Writer

Four graduating Tribes of the GRIP program (Guiding Rage into Power) were honored during a two-day event in San Quentin's Chapel B in August.

Present to celebrate the event with the 64 graduates were state officials including a senator, San Quentin Warden Ron Broomfield and other prison staff, GRIP officials and facilitators, and family and friends.

The graduates entered the chapel wearing black caps and gowns and took their seats on the stage as the ceremony was about to begin.

Patrick Baylis, a San Quentin resident and GRIP facilitator, opened the ceremony

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SQ residents observe annual Day of Peace

After 15 years, the event's original legacy is in danger of being forgotten

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

In 2006, Blacks and Mexicans rioted on San Quentin's Lower Yard.

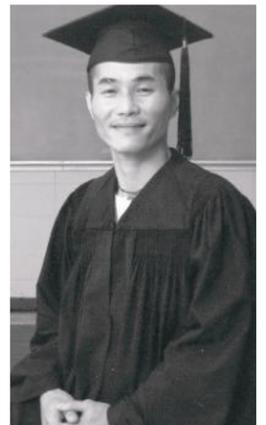
As the chaos unfolded, Tung Nguyen and other members of a self-help group, TRUST, were leading a group of about 50 civilian volunteers to a Black History event on the Yard. When he noticed the danger, he redirected them to safety. Gerardo Menchaca was one of the other TRUST members who helped lead the volunteers to safety.

Inspired by these events, a multiracial committee in Quentin's community formed the following year. The group aimed to show the outside world that people inside a prison could bring peace.

The committee went to San Quentin's warden and asked if the administration would support holding a day of peace on the Lower Yard. The administration said yes. The first Day of Peace took place in 2007. During the event, incarcerated participants wore white T-shirts and walked a lap with self-help volunteers on the Lower Yard in silence to honor victims of violence.

The 2022 Day of Peace took place on August 27. It looked a little different from the early days when the event was organized by the Day Of Peace Committee; participants did not wear white shirts and walk around the yard. Instead, the administration made sure that every resident of San Quentin received a Walkenhorst's gift bag — an idea stemming from a request by former SQNews Editor-in-Chief Arnulfo T. Garcia who tragically passed away in a car crash in 2017.

The administration brought in different musicians to perform on the yard. Rap, rock, and Irish music played throughout the day, and long lines formed at tables set up on the Lower Yard staffed by incarcerated folks and



Tung Nguyen in 2011



Gerardo Menchaca

Mandela Act could restrict solitary confinement in California prisons

By San Quentin News Staff

California Gov. Gavin Newsom has an opportunity to sign a bill into law that would end solitary confinement in all of the state's lockups for pregnant women, for persons with recognized disabilities, and for those younger than 25 or older than 59.

AB 2632, also known as The California Mandela Act, is authored by Assemblyman Chris Holden (D-Pasadena). The bill would prohibit keeping people in near-all-day isolations or solitary confinement for more than 15 consecutive days.

"Solitary confinement is cruel and a racial justice issue that does nothing for the rehabilitation of a person ... Not only is it deemed as cruel and unusual punishment by the United Nations, but it deeply damages the psyche of a person," Holden told *The Sacramento Bee* on July 31.

Several other states have already limited the use of solitary confinement. In 2017, Colorado ended the use of long-term isolation in its prisons. Since then, 13 other states have limited or banned the practice.

If AB 2632 becomes law, its restrictions on

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October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Abuse survivor becomes rehabilitation activist, transforms lives through HEART program

By Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism Guild Chairman

Cherie McNaulty, a crime survivor, turned a horrible ordeal into educating San Quentin residents on the impact of domestic violence. The Healing, Empowerment, Accountability, Restoration and Transformation (HEART) program helps incarcerated participants to recognize the patterns of domestic violence and address the issues surrounding abuse.

"I am a survivor of horrific acts of violence in my childhood, as well as part of my adult life," said McNaulty, founder and organizer of HEART, in an interview. "The thing that motivated me to start this program was that I needed to reach others by sharing my story and to help them understand that there are alternatives to the cycle of violence."

McNaulty's story and experience prompt many of the participants to reflect on their offenses. Many from the group approach her with apologies and tears for their victims. Responses like these give McNaulty hope that she can turn everything she suffered into purposeful work.

"For me it is a dream to be able to share

my experiences and have a positive effect on others. I know and want to believe that if my abusers had this information, then maybe they would have made different choices," said McNaulty. "And now others that have abused may make a different choice with this information in the future because [the] bottom line for me [is] I believe that people can change."

The HEART class currently consists of 60 participants who gather in circles of ten, called "home groups." Incarcerated facilitators join with participants to form six such circles, and then the workshops begin. The groups comply with COVID-19 social-distancing protocols.

The two-hour class is held once a week with focus on the members' written reflections, known as prompts, followed by group discussion. There are three modalities: the Duluth educational model, CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy), and Family Values (predisposed to family violence). All are trauma-informed.

"This domestic violence program is a blessing for me. It allows me to further my insight into my distorted belief system that contributed to my violence against women," said Tare Beltranchuc, a San Quentin resident and HEART

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PROFILE

FIRESIDE CHAT: San Quentin's warden sits down for Q&A with the SQNews

Ronald J. Broomfield, warden of San Quentin, sees himself as a "hands on" administrator.

He likes to interact with the population. The warden recently walked across San Quentin's Lower Yard to the prison's Media Center to be interviewed by Humans of San Quentin and San Quentin News.

San Quentin News (SQN): You chose to talk about George Washington Carver at the June 24 Mount Tamalpais College Graduation. Why?

Ronald J. Broomfield (RJB): The thing I love about George Washington Carver is he overcame incredible adversity, and we all know that everyone in here is dealing with adversity ... You all face tremendous amounts of adversity that you're trying to overcome. He was a perfect example of a man who has faced incredible adversity. So, I thought he was an inspiring historical figure.

What I personally like about George Washington Carver is here's a man whose family was destroyed by the system — racism everywhere he turned — to get accepted to college and then get kicked out because they didn't know the color of [his] skin until the day [he] showed up. Wow, to persevere through that is absolutely amazing. He never became bitter.

I don't think I shared this too much in the speech, but this is a man who had every reason to be bitter, to resent the system, to hate people for what they've done to him, and he never did that. He was a quiet advocate for his people, for the Black Southern farmers that he was trying to educate and lift up. And, he did it with grace and he was effective. He really, really changed many, many lives through his quiet determination. And he was a genius — this man was an absolute genius and he'd dig deep. He had a good heart for people, so he was able to have the respect of all different social groups — politicians, inventors, the scientists, the students, Black, White. He was able to cross over all kinds of lines because of the grace in which he pursued his life.

SQN: What were the parallels from your own life that drew you to this?

RJB: I like the way he dealt with people. I like the way he interacted with people, all different kinds of people, and that's what I try to do. I talk to the population the same way I talk to my boss, the same way I talk to my team. And as long as I'm not in a confrontational situation, I try and treat everybody the same. Like they're human beings who have goals and dreams and struggles, just like myself. Yeah, so the connection to Carver is the grace in which he carried himself — it was absolutely amazing.

SQN: San Quentin's demographics are changing, with non-designated status for the incarcerated population, gender identity, EOP, etc. What kind of training is your staff getting on how to interact with these individuals?

RJB: There is a lot of training during the annual PREA [Prison Rape Elimination Act] training that includes the LGBTQ community needs and challenges and risks that they experience. So, there is training; I think our department is becoming more and more focused on what I would call the humanities. We know how to incarcerate. We know how to run prisons. But we



Warden Ron Broomfield at his confirmation as Warden of San Quentin State Prison. Broomfield says he finds inspiration in the life and struggles of George Washington Carver, who persevered in the face of racism and prejudice without becoming bitter.

can always do better in the treatment of people, and I think the department is really starting to emphasize that. So, I think the department on a whole is in a really good place as a leader in that area. I mean it's a stressful environment, right? Prison is stressful, by nature. So, there's always work to be done in the treatment of people, how we interact with people. But, I think we're headed in the right direction.

SQN: How important is it for the staff to communicate effectively with the incarcerated population?

RJB: I honestly believe that if you spend 20 minutes in getting to know somebody, you won't be able to treat them the same, because you'll know more about them and you'll gain some insight into what makes them tick. So, I do think communication is the key — it's not a cliché. It's critical to success — to running a successful prison, successful community, successful family — communication is always in the middle, the heart of it.

SQN: Do you think San Quentin will be able to go back to the way it was prior to COVID-19 — having events with district attorneys, senators, and teachers? Do you think we could get back to that environment?

RJB: I'm not going to predict the future, but I can definitely say this — the desire to be there, to be that way, has never gone away, has never left San Quentin. I think that everyone that works in San Quentin knows that San Quentin is a special place. So, it's absolutely my desire to bring back all the rehabilitative programs, the volunteer programs, the things where there's hope in the incarcerated population.

The unfortunate result of the pandemic is that we had roughly two and a half years where none of these volunteer programs were functioning. So when we opened back up, the infrastructure is not there for all these volunteer programs. So, to the extent that they could get organized and come back in, they're welcomed to come back in. When? How robust? I can't call it.

We've opened and closed several times; we get some momentum. The first time we were opened up, I was excited about the food sale. We finally got out there and

we did some cool stuff and I think we closed two days later. And then we opened back up and we were able to pull off the graduation. But, I was nervous the day before the graduation that we were going to have to close back down because there's public health guidance that dictates when we can stay open and when we have close down. So, we're still very much dealing with COVID-19, even though thankfully no one's dying of COVID-19 at San Quentin [anymore]. So, to predict that future, I can't really predict it. But, I can tell you that everyone that works for me advocates for programs — in my leadership team.

SQN: What would you tell a person who knows nothing about incarcerated people or how prisons operate? Please connect that to your thoughts on redemption from your professional experience as a warden.

RJB: There's a certain percentage of that population that are going to come to prison and walk out the same person that they came in. Then, there is another percentage that's going to come in, and whether they say this is my rock bottom or they say I can't keep living like this, and they're going to start taking advantage to some of the opportunities at San Quentin. They're going to enroll in education and drug treatment and take some of the LTAGs [self-help programs] that help [them] to re-imagine [their] way of thinking, and they're going to walk out changed.

Everybody has potential. It's just a matter of them taking advantage of that potential. So, I try and treat everybody in the incarcerated population as if they have tremendous potential. And then when you hang out, like in the graduation, you see it. You see men and women realizing their potential and it's exciting — it's exciting and that's what gets me up in the morning. That's the thing that makes working in an institution a positive experience.

SQN: How do you discern between the groups that you described as taking advantage of programs and those that do not?

RJB: I think that [discernment] comes with some experience. A wise friend of mine once said, "believe the best in people and I try to live that every day." If I don't believe in the best, my attitude and

actions are going to reflect that ... It's not my business to judge people, but discernment comes with experience.

I've worked in a level four. So, I've seen the worse behavior and then I come to San Quentin and I see this incredible behavior. I try not to put people in camps — like they're in this camp and this camp. I hope everybody moves over to this side [and] wants to make the most of this opportunity [to] change [their] life. That's the best answer that I can give you.

SQN: Environment and opportunity plays an important role in a person's life. What are your thoughts on that?

RJB: We all come from different socio-economic backgrounds; we come from different traumas in our personal lives as children. Some of us had healthy parents. Some of us had very unhealthy parents. Some of us got a good education. Some of us didn't get a good education. Some of us went to the streets to find community, and some of us found community in our families and our schools. So, I try not to judge how a person got here. That's not my job. It's my job to make sure the opportunities are here. If there's no opportunity — no hope — we'll just wither on the vine.

Broomfield says he sees "San Quentin as an entire community."

He considers himself "the warden for the custody staff, the healthcare staff, the non-sworn [civilian] support staff and the incarcerated population. San Quentin [is] my people."

Therefore, he says he gives his best to all staff. He emphasized the institution's "under-staffed food service," noting that, "There is tremendous stress on those people. I try to give my best to them."

Broomfield says he wants to "provide a little inspiration and little bit of hope and little bit of humanity. I think that if every single person tried to provide a little bit of hope, this environment would change pretty rapidly. We've just taken very different paths and we've arrived here together in different ways."

Editor's Note: This interview was conducted via video by Edwin E. Chavez and Miguel Sifuentes on June 27. It was transcribed by Senior Editor Juan Haines. Its content has been edited for clarity and ease of reading.

PROGRAMS

Q&A: Ms. Arnold leaves The Q



By Aaron K. Roy
Contributing Writer

Teaching Assistant Ms. Arnold has moved on from her position at San Quentin. She began working at the prison in 2020, just before the first COVID-19 lockdown that spanned 14-months. Her last day was August 12, 2022. In a candid interview, she described her experience:

SQN: Can you tell us about the journey that led you to San Quentin?

MA: Honestly, it just kind of happened. I was working as a project manager; I was the liaison between two companies and our 42 employees. Essentially, I ran these two companies' databases across three states, processed all their initial paperwork, and ensured my contractors pulled through on their end. It was grueling most days, and I got yelled at a lot. I worked 50-hour weeks and had 180 hours of vacation banked at one point because I couldn't take time off. Then, I was watching a TV show and they were working in a prison. It looked interesting, so I just

started looking for positions I qualified for — TA fell into my lap!

SQN: What was a typical day like working at San Quentin?

MA: I arrived at 6:30, pulled my keys, signed in, checked my emails, and then got ready for class. My schedule repeated itself each week but differed during the week. So that meant I didn't really ever know what my day was going to bring. I usually helped multiple students throughout a class period. Some days it went great and some days, the institutional flow melted it all down. That's kind of what it was like; there was never a typical day.

SQN: What was your favorite part of working here and why?

MA: My days were never the same. The people were different, the conversations were different, the challenges were different. It was interesting every day. I liked that. Before working here, I felt like I was living the same day every day. I also loved getting to be a part of the PLMP [Peer Literacy Mentor Program].

There is a genuine sense of community and care for each other in that space. It was eye opening to how the prison system could be run and how a cultural shift is important and possible.

SQN: What was the most important thing you learned while working here?

MA: That people are people and when you supply them with a little bit of worth, it does wonders, it motivates them. Everyone here has been told that they are society's trash, and I've realized that sort of ideology perpetuates their criminal thinking. When you show people they have some worth, they start to realize they do and start making different decisions. Well, not always, but for the most part.

You learn to tell the difference between people who are genuine and people who don't want to change their behavior. I also learned things like how to exert strong boundaries in a constructive way, how to deal with even the most difficult personalities, and how to read people who aren't exactly in a genuine space.

San Quentin News

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Twenty years ago, few lifers in California prisons had any hope of seeing freedom again. Today, however, most of the Golden State's prisoners will be afforded a second chance and will rejoin their communities. We hope to encourage everyone, everywhere, to pursue education and rehabilitative programming. Make yourself a better person, develop the tools you need and address the root causes of your incarceration. And above all else, do not give up. Your day may yet come — so be ready, and equip yourself for a bright and beautiful future.



Highly esteemed Dr. Marez quietly retires

By Steve Brooks
Journalism Guild Chair

This year marks the end of a decades-long journey for San Quentin (SQ) educator Dr. L. Marez.

Marez slipped out the door as quietly as she came in, not wanting any accolades for her enduring service as she retires.

"She is an underrated legend and she deserves a soldier's goodbye," said Alex Ross, who was one of her teacher's aides (TA).

As a champion of education, Marez always encouraged young people, especially young students of color, to pursue careers in math and engineering.

Marez retired from the U.S. Air Force as a captain. She was once in charge of the engineering department for the National Consolidated Space Operations Center in Colorado. Marez has a bachelor's and a master's degree in Mathematics and holds a doctorate in Organization and Leadership from the University of San Francisco.

While working as an educator at Thornton Junior High school in Fremont, California, she received the "Most Promising New Mathematics Teacher of the Year" award from New United Motor Manufacturing, Inc. (NUMMI). She went on to teach high school.

After teaching high school, she went on to teach at Santa Clara University, Cal State East Bay, the UC Santa Cruz and National University. At the university level she taught courses in secondary math methods, social foundations of education, classroom administration and management and educational psychology.



Dr. Marez was inspired to teach in prison after reading a book about a woman struggling to teach 12 prisoners with just one copy of a book. The woman's dedication, and the students' desire to learn, was so impressive that Marez thought she could find a deeper meaning — by teaching in prison.

Marez was inspired to teach in prison when she read a book about a woman who struggled to teach a class of 12 prisoners with one copy of a book. The woman's dedication to her 12 students, and the students' desire to learn, was so impressive to Marez that she thought she could find a deeper meaning by teaching in prison.

"I do this because it has to be done," said Marez, in response to those that would question her educating prisoners. "I rather they learn 25 ways to solve a problem than 25 ways to make a shank."

Marez shared the responsibility of teaching a split class for Adult Basic Education (ABE)/General Education Diploma (GED) with J. Kaufman. They had a team of four TAs — Darryl Farris, Jason Lile, Bill Hammond and



Alex Ross, who helped with a daily influx of 108 students.

"I was honored to work for her as a teacher's aide," said Ross. "I remember when I first started working for her. I watched her study each student's weaknesses and strengths and then devise a plan to help them become better learners."

"She chose a curriculum that met each student's individual needs," Ross added.

Other TAs who worked for Marez agreed. "Dr. Marez taught me many techniques of how to assist the students by meeting them where they are," said Darryl Farris. "She made me a better TA."

"I have appreciated her support, her input, her suggestions and her knowledge," said Bill Hammond, who worked for Dr. Marez for three years.

"I noticed other students being inspired by her genuineness and up-front attitude as well as her positivity toward the learning process," Hammond added.

According to Ross, Marez has a masterful approach in cutting through all the bravado of young people to get to a point where the students could learn.

"We'd often get a kick out of how the young, tough kids always straighten up and stop cursing and saying, 'Yes Ma'am,' around Ms. Marez," Ross said.

"I just want to take this opportunity to say thank you, Dr. Marez, for your service," he added.

He believes she should go down in history as a great woman of color and a spectacular educator.

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HEART

Program's powerful curriculum built on founder's real-life experience

Continued from page 1

facilitator. "It is my hope that one day I can bring this information to the men in my community in Mexico, where it is much needed."

In order to address and fix patterns of domestic violence, participants have to recognize the issues surrounding abuse. Until that happens, one will fall short of healthy relationships, says McNaulty.

She asks class members to examine their idea of family values and the role of a man.

"They don't take this course and are then just cured," she said. "To understand beliefs and values, that's the hardest thing to challenge. To develop pro-social skills, to learn what positive and negative relationship looks like ... first, it's about defining domestic violence, because if you don't know, you don't know. The main thing many don't know is domestic violence does not have to be physical.

"Men being open and showing compassion for each other and self is key, and they are really good at sharing with a lot of transparency," she added.

Module 1:6 asks participants to define sexual assault. Why does it happen? Who are the victims? What types of emotions do you think are involved? What are some of the myths surrounding sexual violence? And, finally, can men be sexually assaulted?

McNaulty asked her participants, what is "dharma"? After listening to a few of their responses, she explained that dharma is like a chair where you feel safe and no one can take the space from you.

"I believe most perpetrators of harm were victims themselves, and I hope that I could turn the curse into a blessing," said McNaulty. "I have to consistently work on healing the inner child because that person wants to be recognized and healed and loved because that person wasn't heard as a child."

McNaulty's domestic violence curriculum is both



Photos by Vince O'Bannon / SQNews

a response and a challenge to the way other programs sometimes use shame tactics that stop the destructive behavior temporarily but do not change the participant's belief system with regard to domestic violence.

"The Cycle of Shame" incorporated into her curriculum consists of four prompts that are written about, followed with open discussion. The prompts were to discuss a time you made a mistake or engaged in destructive behavior; a time you felt shame, guilt and regret to justify thinking or doing abusive things to yourself; if you ever dwelled on a mistake or felt too depressed to have a plan to make amends or correct your mistake; and finally, a time you decided to cheer yourself up by engaging in risky or destructive behaviors such as bad bad habits or addictions.

McNaulty reminded the class that they cannot make

anyone else do anything; they can only control themselves. She shared how triggers can lead to violence, but how they now have the tools to walk away from conflicts.

"Not everybody is where you are at, not everyone has done the program," she stressed. "At some point in time you need to believe in yourself. People can be addicted to the drama and the cycle of it ... You will attract the same type of people, the same person with a different name. It's about mindfulness of what [you are] bringing to the situation."

McNaulty has been volunteering at San Quentin for over seven years. She started with restorative justice circles for the No More Tears program before founding the HEART program. She's grateful for the support the prison's administration has extended to keep the program going in the face of a succession of lockdowns caused by COVID-19 variants.

Program participants are also appreciative. "I am really grateful that they have a domestic violence program here at San Quentin," said participant O. Reitz. "This program will help to build healthy relationships."

Participant Robert Kulkah added, "I am interested in obtaining positive input that I can apply to future relationships. I grew up in a dysfunctional home; not as much physical but mental and verbal abuse."

Because of her own experience with domestic violence, a lot of people ask her, "How can you even be around men?"

"I get challenged a lot out there, 'Why do you do this? Aren't you afraid of them in there?' I am not afraid when I am here [in San Quentin]," she said. "I see genuine hearts seeking answers to the challenges they have faced as humans, and we can discuss these issues on common ground and that's when healing happens," she said.

"It's cliché, but the program really is my heart. I was really excited to come up with the acronym that fit," said McNaulty. "It's a process and everyone is learning and I am, too. If we all really work on having healthy relationships, the world would be a better place. Healing starts in the heart."

The HEART Program in action in San Quentin's Garden Chapel. Founder Cherie McNaulty shares her wisdom with participants so they can help heal and prevent domestic abuse.

"I believe most perpetrators of harm were victims themselves, and I hope that I could turn the curse into a blessing."

— Cherie McNaulty



California may curtail solitary confinement

SOLITARY

Continued from page 1

solitary confinement would extend not only to California's prisons and jails but, for the first time, to private immigration detention facilities.

Research has shown that solitary confinement is correlated with declining mental health and increases in prison violence, recidivism, and rates of death following release from incarceration.

Kevin McCarthy spent more than a decade in isolation. "Solitary confinement is torture," McCarthy wrote in an editorial published July 31 in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

"My first experience in solitary confinement took place in the California Youth Authority when I was 16 years old," said McCarthy. "I was sent there because I had been caught with drugs. I needed treatment for addiction and counseling rather than solitary confinement," said McCarthy.

Prison officials say that

solitary confinement is necessary for the safety and security of institutions.

Cory Salzillo, legislative director for the California State Sheriffs' Association, told *The Bee* that the bill's mandates are "concerning" and said its definition of special populations is "broad."

"It's got potential implications for the safety of incarcerated persons as well as staff within the facilities," Salzillo said in the article.

But McCarthy calls being in isolation "crushing and unbearable."

He described deprivation of "any sensory experience" and "the lack of human contact" as debilitating.

"I would often become so desperate to break that silence that I would ask myself questions and answer them out loud as if I was interviewing myself," McCarthy said.

He added, "I would have preferred a physical beating to being held in isolation. Bruises and cuts heal, but the wounds in my mind and soul are so deep that I do not believe I will ever fully recover."

EVENTS

SQ residents graduate from SQN Journalism Guild

By Anthony Manuel
Carvalho
Staff Writer

On Aug. 18, to the strains of “Pomp and Circumstance,” cap and gown-decked graduates marched to cheers and applause marking their graduation from the *San Quentin News*’ Journalism Guild.

“This is the first time I ever wore a cap and gown,” said graduate Raymond Torres. “I dropped out of Seward Park High School in Lower East Side Manhattan in 1970, and now I have completed something on time. I am grateful to participate as a journalist for *SQNews*.”

Torres completed both the Spanish and the English language Journalism Guilds as the ceremony honored a class of 26 graduates in the Education B building.

“It took a long-time to get here and the ceremony was almost lost, again,” said Journalism Guild Chair Steve Brooks, referring to COVID-19-related quarantines that caused frequent delays and interruptions for the most recent guild classes. The last graduation was in 2020.

On the morning of the graduation, parts of the prison were medically quarantined for “viral infections.” Some *SQNews* staffers, including Editor-in-Chief Marcus Henderson, and several guild students, were unable to attend.

“We cherish recognizing our future journalists and giving them opportunities to find their own voice,” said Brooks, who addressed the graduates on behalf of Henderson.

The guild teaches students how to write news articles, including interviewing techniques, fact checking, and other fundamental elements of journalism.

“I am appreciative to have been a small part in the growth of the concept,” said Lt. Sam Robinson, San Quentin’s public information officer. Referring to the wide latitude that prison officials give to the incarcerated journalists, he added, “We must remem-



San Quentin News Journalism Guild graduates display their certificates. Dr. Kaia Stern of Harvard was the keynote speaker.

“San Quentin is a global leader, a shining example of programming in prison and SQNews is a shining star.”

— Dr. Kaia Stern

ber — and remain humble.”

Jesse Vasquez, past editor-in-chief of the newspaper and currently head of the affiliated non-profit Friends of San Quentin News, also spoke at the ceremony.

“The Journalism Guild is where I started,” he said. “I didn’t know I would be editor-in-chief, or go home for that matter. I had three life sentences when I was in the Guild and then I was home in [three] years. I represent all of you guys.”

“We need to accept three responsibilities as journalists — we must change the narrative, change people’s impression, and change recidivism rates. The Guild and you guys make a difference in California,” Vasquez added.

Robinson said he enjoyed watching “People grow, like Jesse Vasquez,” and then give back

to the San Quentin community.

To demonstrate the impact of *SQNews* on the incarcerated population in California, Brooks read several powerful letters from incarcerated people addressed to the newspaper’s editor.

Harvard Professor Dr. Kaia Stern was the ceremony’s commencement speaker.

“We need all of your wisdom for our collective works regarding justice,” said Stern, who is also an interfaith minister.

“San Quentin is a global leader, a shining example of programming in prison and *SQNews* is a shining star,” she said.

Stern stressed the power of intergenerational dialogues, and the need to discover and address traumas. To help accomplish this, she asked the graduates to walk with integrity and with “... all of our wounded parts. Each of us keeps secrets, which leads



Photos by Tony Singh/ SQNews

to violence. The world has too much brokenness; we need to find human sunrises.”

She closed with, “What *SQNews* does is truth-telling and we all celebrate the Journalism Guild shepherding stories by speaking truth to power and sitting in the pain.”

Vasquez, Brooks and *SQNews* staff writer Carlos Drouaillet presented certificates to the graduates.

“Without the guild, we couldn’t do what we do,” said Vasquez in recognition of the fact that the guild produces 35-40 percent of the newspaper’s content.

Drouaillet spoke of the Spanish Journalism Guild, saying, “Special mention goes to Spanish Guild Chair Edwin Chavez. He led the Spanish Guild class and crossed over to the English section as a feature writer who

designed *SQNews*’ art section.”

Drouaillet added, “To see Edwin become an award-winning writer, leading the guild and directing the Spanish [edition of Wall City] magazine is rewarding. Through his trust, I proudly assist him in representing the Spanish community.”

Graduate Joshua Strange spoke as the Guild’s first Valedictorian. Strange accepted a full-time job assignment at *SQNews* 10 months earlier.

“It felt like 260 weeks to get to graduation,” said Strange, regarding the protracted 26-week guild class. “At the Guild, finally, I felt I was serving my sentence and doing something to make amends rather than just suffering through my sentence. Becoming a staff writer is a privilege. We’re one of the few prison newspapers in the world that allows us to speak our own narratives.”

Musicambia songwriting workshop returns to San Quentin chapel

By Joshua Strange
Staff Writer

The Musicambia song-writing workshop capped off its return to San Quentin (SQ) this August with an inspired performance on the Garden Chapel stage. The uplifting event marked another milestone towards a more normal program as the pandemic slowly subsides.

The eight songs performed were written and composed by the program’s 25 incarcerated participants with assistance from the three workshop teachers, all of whom are professional musicians.

Musicambia is a non-profit organization inspired by an initial collaboration between Carnegie Hall and New York’s Sing Sing prison. The Pacific Harmony Foundation, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and the William James Association support its efforts, while SQ’s Arts in Corrections pitched in to help. Its name derives from the Spanish word for change — *cambia* — and refers to the power of music to spark positive transformation.

“Our goal is to showcase the talent behind bars,” said Musicambia’s Brad Balliet. “To re-humanize those who are incarcerated and to provide temporary relief from the dehumanization of America’s prisons. It’s an honor for

us to be able to come in here and work with everybody.”

The songs performed on the chapel stage were developed from scratch over the course of three long days earlier in the week. This gave the participants time to bond over music, hone their skills, and escape the daily grind of prison life.

“It’s been an amazing experience,” said participant Brandon Genest, a guitarist and vocalist. “Music was an important part of my life for a long time, and being able to spend all day making music — for the first time since high school — was just unbelievable. I was able to forget I was in prison — whether I was playing, writing, or performing.”

The performance started with an upbeat song, “I Want It All,” written by SQ’s Dante D. Jones with Musicambia’s Judith Hill on vocals. The Grammy-award winning Hill was a finalist in a season four of *The Voice*, which was easy to see why when her first note rang out, mesmerizing everyone in room. The packed house rose to its feet with applause, including Warden Broomfield who attended.

Next up was “Power Chords,” with beautiful vocals by SQ’s Jocelyn Diggs — who might have a shot at *The Voice* someday — and rap lyrics rained down by

SQ’s Nicholas “IBTruth” McDaniels, who was backed up by the deep tones of Balliet’s bassoon.

“I look at this like my opening break,” said McDaniels afterwards. “I was star struck at first, meeting Ms. Hill after seeing her on TV. Our group has a lot of diversity; we can learn something from everybody, from our strengths and our weaknesses, which inspired my lyrics.”

McDaniels said he looks forward to taking this experience to the streets and pursuing his dreams of rapping and making music. “If we can come together, as men and as women and find unity, then it shows the power of music,” he said.

An instrumental number called “A Piece of Heaven” featured a hauntingly beautiful duet between the SQ’s Gregory Barnes on acoustic guitar and the trio of violins played by SQ’s Daniel Le, Henok Rufael, and Musicambia-founder Nathan Schram, while Hill turned her voice into an instrument like a soulful songbird.

Speaking about his journey as an incarcerated musician, Rufael said, “I play this violin because an incarcerated person taught me six years ago, so let’s remember not to underestimate our abilities.” He said he had to overcome self-doubt to learn to play the vi-



Vince O'Bannon / SQNews

Judith Hill performs with Musicambia.

olin, and that performing on stage requires the courage to be vulnerable.

Freedom and personal power were prominent themes that emerged from the workshop and the songs produced by participants.

In Genest’s song “Freedom,” he sang, “I find that my soul longs for freedom to express the way I feel.” SQ’s Jay Kim spun some rap lyrics about having, “Freedom to leave behind the mistakes that brought me here.”

During an interlude, participant Ronnell “Rough” Draper mused, “Freedom showed up in a lot of different ways tonight. Not just the freedom of getting out of prison, but the freedom to be ourselves, the freedom to love and be

loved, the freedom to express how we feel.”

The songs featured the standard vocals, guitar, bass, and drums, but also keyboard, the trio of violins, harmonica, and the wooden bassoon played by Balliet. Participants were welcomed even if they had no prior musical experience.

A companion workshop and performance was concurrently underway at Sing Sing, and those incarcerated musicians wrote notes of encouragement that were shared with residents of SQ.

“The power of music brings us all together like family,” one Sing Sing musician named “Hollywood” wrote. “The power of lyrical and melodic creativity transforms and

Brooks introduced guild instructor and *SQNews* adviser John Eagan, who had a long career as a reporter and editor, including for *The Associated Press*. Eagan formed the Guild more than a dozen years ago.

“The guild signifies you guys have a lot to say,” said Eagan. “You’re doing a great job. And when was the last time anyone said they were proud of you? Trust me, your family and all of us are proud of what you do for the newspaper.”

Brooks, referring to Eagan’s instruction of the Guild class since San Quentin reopened from its 14-month long COVID-19 lockdown in 2021, added, “John is our saving grace.”

Brooks also presented two awards on behalf of *SQNews*. Tare Beltranchuc, who was not present at the ceremony due to West Block being on quarantine, was awarded for his dedication and assistance to the newspaper.

Juan Haines, the newspaper’s senior editor, was given the second-ever Arnulfo T. Garcia Award, which recognizes one individual who lives up to the beloved late editor-in-chief’s motto of “moving forward,” regardless of obstacles faced.

“I didn’t see this one coming,” said Haines, who was assigned to the newspaper following his graduation from the guild in 2009. He said the newspaper, “Expanded my voice. It helped me change my life.”

He thanked his mentors such as Lt. Robinson, Vasquez, advisers Jan Perry and Eagan, and staff. “I am humbled. The success of the newspaper, it’s not me, it’s all of us together,” he said.

Brooks showered praise on adviser Perry, who received a standing ovation for her hard work and dedication to the newspaper.

“We are the voice of the incarcerated. We must continue to develop new writers to share our vision of social justice,” said Brooks.

Dr. Stern’s last instruction to the graduating journalists was, “Keep being the human sunrise.”

connects us in our dreams, our suffering and our hopes.”

Another Sing Sing participant, Joseph, wrote, “A whole note may be broken up in many different ways. In the end, we all equal a whole note, no matter the distance of our sounds.”

During the performance, the song “How You Feel” included a funky-up electric guitar solo by Hill and catchy lyrics with memorable lines like, “I told you how I feel, now tell me how you feel,” and “I hope one day I’ll be saying goodnight instead of goodbye.”

Hill cut loose with the full power of her voice on the final song, “Power,” singing “Elevate, elevate, elevate my soul!” She got the crowd back to its feet with a call and response of “Who’s got the power?” It was a fitting end to a memorable performance.

“Everyone has been so incredible, the last three days a sense of community and unity has grown so much in this room,” Hill said. “Music has such a powerful ability to bring people together... in love and unity. When somebody shares what they’re going through in song form, it connects us all.”

Musicambia is scheduled to return to SQ in January for a longer workshop, and will be accepting applications later in the year.

RE-ENTRY

PREP celebrates 20 years of rehabilitative service

By Richard Fernandez
Staff Writer

This year, the Partnership for Re-Entry Program (PREP) celebrated 20 years of service.

From its inception, PREP's vision has been to help incarcerated people become productive returning citizens, increasing successful reintegration into society and reducing recidivism.

The program promotes successful reintegration by providing inmates with pre-release, modular, self-help correspondence courses. According to PREP, this reduces rehabilitative costs and makes communities receiving returning citizens safer and stronger.

Since PREP is correspondence-based, participants can study at their own pace while they manage other responsibilities.

Current lessons available

through PREP include: Turning Point, Parenting, Anger Management, Domestic Violence, Wellness and Recovery, Gang Awareness, Centering Yourself, Survivors, Victim Impact, Insight, Confronting Criminal Thinking, and Denial Management.

Several of the modular lessons are also available in Spanish, including: Anger Management, Confronting Criminal Thinking, Domestic Violence, Wellness and Recovery, Parenting, Victim Awareness, Insight, and Denial Management.

The correspondence-based program was a lifeline to programming for many during the long lockdowns and quarantines caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participants were grateful to be able to dig in and use their time during lockdowns wisely by working on PREP lessons.

Drake Walker has been a participant in PREP since 2020. "It [was] a blessing to be able to continue my learning during the COVID-19 outbreak through PREP," Walker said.

PREP staff encouraged program participants in their monthly Oasis Newsletter with the following message: "You do each lesson with the intent to look at your life and see what must change. We ask you to do only one lesson at a time and that you do it with purpose and completeness. This time with the virus gives us a moment to look at what we do and why we do it. Let's use this time well."

As the pandemic-induced lockdowns continued, PREP got better at coordinating its program under the difficult circumstances that prevailed. An important adaptation was designating incarcerated facilitators in each hous-

ing-unit, allowing quicker distribution and collection of lessons. An added benefit was that participants had a chance to ask questions of facilitators and receive answers promptly.

PREP participants endorse the program enthusiastically. San Quentin resident Derrick Gibson said, "I believe PREP to be a great source of information for those who truly look for change. What really stands out for me is [instruction on] insight, remorse, empathy, forgiveness, compassion and honesty."

Kurt von Staden, now working on his sixth PREP module, said, "The program has been very beneficial. I enjoy taking these classes in my cell at my own pace. I'm dyslexic, so it takes me a little longer to get it. For sure the program is more important, but I'm also glad to have the chronos to show the Board that I'm still bettering myself." Commis-

sioners recently found von Staden suitable for parole.

Ronnie Joffrion began taking PREP courses in December, 2020 and has completed his fourth — Confronting Criminal Thinking. "PREP has helped me prepare for the Board because there are so many things that I didn't understand until I did some lessons in the program," said Joffrion.

Dennis Jefferson, a resident of San Quentin for eight years, first completed the Domestic Violence module. He then went on to Anger Management, which he completed during the 14-month long, initial COVID-19 lockdown.

These were just some of the words of encouragement from past participants given to those new to PREP or considering signing up.

Participants routinely expressed their gratitude to all of the staff of PREP.

"I was able to have a successful [parole] hearing through a number of groups that I have attended. Of particular importance in my transformation to be an accountable person today was PREP's Turning Point course that taught me how to be transparent," said Saul Martinez, a PREP participant from 2018.

PREP began under the leadership of several Catholic sisters, including co-founder Sister Mary Sean of the Order of the Preacher.

Sister Mary wrote to participants in PREP's Oasis Newsletter, "I want to say to each of you: It is not the Recognition of Completion or any piece of paper in your file that gets you a date. It is the change you have made from who you were to who you are now. Speak and LIVE THE CHANGE YOU HAVE BECOME."

By Bisma Rashid
Contributing Writer

COVID-19 still curbs programming at Folsom Women's Facility

COVID-19 conditions continue to aggravate the prison environment and add hurdles to rehabilitation and credit earning opportunities, including for California's incarcerated women.

Folsom Women's Facility (FWF) is a state prison northeast of Sacramento, Calif., with a capacity of 403 women. Currently only 277 women are incarcerated there, ranging in age from 18 to 55 and up.

Not everyone at FWF has access to credit-earning programs because there are not enough opportunities for programming due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Being formerly incarcerated and recently released from FWF in mid-June during a COVID-19 outbreak, I've heard a lot of discussions between prisoners about California's Proposition 57.

Prop 57 put an increased focus on rehabilitation by allowing incarcerated people to earn credits for time-off their sentences or an earlier initial parole board hearing by completing rehabilitative, educational, and career technical programs. It also increased Good Conduct Credits earned for good behavior.

A lot of women I spoke

to were expecting to receive some kind of release date adjustment, such as with the increase in Good Conduct Credit earning rates. Some women who remain incarcerated are still waiting for such a recalculation from their prison. Unfortunately, FWF has not consistently provided the incarcerated with adjusted dates unless they are within three to six months of their earliest possible release date.

The difficulties in accessing programs to gain rehabilitative skills and earn Prop 57 credits are magnified for those like myself with shorter sentences.

I was able to attend an assigned "Reentry Transitions" class, which I attended every weekday morning from 7:15 to 9:15. The class taught me basic skills needed to help me reenter society, like how to obtain a birth certificate, Social Security card, and California ID, as well as how to write a resumé.

For FWF's Greystone Adult School, I had to complete 75 hours of in-cell assignments and earn 70% or higher on tests to get a Certificate of Completion, which would allow me to get 14 days taken off my release date.

Due to recent COVID-19



Courtesy of Bisma Rashid

Bisma Rashid was formerly incarcerated at Folsom Women's Facility near Sacramento, California. FWF's rehabilitative programs and credit-earning opportunities continue to be hampered by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.



outbreaks in the prison, however, the administration stopped such in-person programs and classes. I needed opportunities to earn more programming credits — Milestones, Rehabilitation Achievements, and Educational Merits — to change my release date.

Contrary to popular belief, time off due to Prop 57 is not granted automatically; it must be earned by staying disciplinary free and completing extensive rehabilitative programming. This can include things like earning a high school diploma/GED or college degree, taking self-help classes, attending Narcotics or Alcoholics Anonymous or other sobriety programs, participating with military veteran groups, earning a peer counselor certificate, or completing cognitive behavioral therapy.

The latest COMPSTAT shows that because the FWF is under restrictive COVID-19 protocols and lacks correspondence reentry programs, incarcerated people are unable to access sources to earn any programming credits. CDCR should use better contingency plans and a progressive approach to ensure those in their custody can access rehabilitative

programs consistent with Prop 57. Such plans and opportunities can be communicated to the incarcerated through their correctional counselors.

Making more programs available, such as career technical, reentry, activity groups, health and wellness, addiction treatment, and college, for all eligible incarcerated people would also help to reduce recidivism rates.

Recidivism is defined as a person repeating negative behaviors that leads to a new criminal offense after serving their sentence and being released from prison or jail. In my view, there are three fundamental factors that help stop recidivism: 1) Obtaining a high school diploma/GED or college degree; 2) vocational training; and 3) securing employment after their release.

Over the last ten years, California's recidivism rate has averaged 50% or higher. These fundamental factors can prevent a person from falling into relapse upon release and help reduce recidivism rates, but only if they have access to such programs during their incarceration, regardless of the length of their sentence and even with the challenges posed by COVID-19.

California multi-agency collaboration offers firefighter training to former offenders

By Joshua Grant
Journalism Guild Writer

Since the fall of 2018, a unique joint venture between Cal Fire, the California Conservation Corps (CCC), and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has been exclusively training formerly incarcerated people to become firefighters.

These returned citizens receive training for 18 months at the Ventura Training Center, similar to what they would receive from any other formal firefighting academy, according to an article in the *Ventura County Star*.

"This is one of the only programs in the world like this," said Jerry Brant, Cal Fire Battalion Chief and facility supervisor.

The cadets are trained in hazardous material spills, structural fire and rescue, and

wildland brushfire fighting as well as first aid. They are also offered a chance to earn their high school diplomas and receive assistance in setting personal life goals.

Brant said over one hundred men have completed the course and are now gainfully employed as professional firefighters. Most of these formerly incarcerated new firefighters have been hired by Cal Fire itself.

The facility trains up to 80 participants at a time. Each trainee receives room and board as well as a monthly stipend. The program is only open to people formerly incarcerated in California's prisons who were not convicted of arson, sex crimes, or prison escapes.

Since the first cohort's graduation in May of 2020, up to 31 cadets have completed training every few months. In the

Graduates of the Ventura Training Center's 18-month program have gone on to become professional firefighters.

process, they gained more than just job training.

"By me actually having people there that believed in me when I didn't even believe in myself... it supported me, it woke something up in me," said Javon Wright to the *Ventura County Star*. Wright is a trainee who spent almost nine years in prison.

Such success stories are still overshadowed by a competitive job market for firefighters, where the formerly incarcerated have faced discrimination over their criminal records when applying for the coveted jobs.

New hope for equal consid-

eration was given through the passage of Assembly Bill 2147 in 2020. The new law allows such firefighters to petition to have their criminal records expunged.

So far, nearly 20 graduates from the Ventura Training Center have successfully completed this process, says Liz Fay, the program coordinator for the Anti-Recidivism Coalition at the facility.

Given the program's success, a second training facility was proposed in 2021, but Governor Gavin Newsom vetoed the bill allocating funds for it in January of this year.

A new law on the horizon, Senate Bill 1062, may also help the job prospects for trainees by providing funds to Cal Fire to hire 1,000 additional firefighters. SB 1062 has passed the California senate and is waiting on approval from the state assembly.

Biden makes reentry pledge

By Randy Hansen
Journalism Guild Writer

The Biden Administration is planning to set aside \$145 million to aid formerly incarcerated people succeed when they return to their communities.

The monies will be used to help connect prisoners to resources such as jobs and housing upon their release, *National Public Radio* reported.

"Helping those who served their time return to their families and become contributing members of their communities is one of the most effective ways to reduce recidivism and decrease crime," President Joe Biden said in a statement in April.

In his 2020 presidential campaign, Biden promised to work on reforming the criminal legal system.

Reform advocates say Biden has made positive changes, such as rescinding a memo from his predecessor, Donald Trump, who pushed for stiffer penalties for serious crimes. Some other reform

activists have pointed out that during Biden's term, the federal prison population has grown.

This proposed new plan will be funded by grants, according to the story.

According to the White House, reentry plans should begin upon incarceration and no later than 18 months before a person's sentence is complete.

The plan calls for correctional facilities to increase job training, literacy, digital skills, and education. It also calls for collaboration between corrections departments and local, state and federal agencies to help arrange housing and transportation for newly released people. The plan would also help connect the formerly incarcerated with Medicare and veterans benefits.

"Formerly incarcerated persons are an underutilized talent pool despite employers attesting that formerly incarcerated persons are often some of their best and most dedicated employees," said the statement from the White House.

LAW & CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Newsom nominee could be state's first Latina chief justice

By Clark Gerhartsreiter
Contributing Writer

On August 10, California Gov. Gavin Newsom, in a historic move, nominated Patricia Guerrero to be the first Latina chief justice of the California Supreme Court.

Guerrero, 50, would replace Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye for a term of 12 years once Cantil-Sakauye steps down in January, according to *The Associated Press*.

A Wikipedia entry about Guerrero said that she enjoyed a fast-track career. From 2002 to 2003, she worked as a federal prosecutor in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California. She then joined the Los Angeles law firm Latham & Watkins, rising from associate to partner in 2006.

In May 2013, Guerrero served as a judge on the San Diego County Superior Court, nominated by then-governor Jerry Brown, and she served as supervising judge for the court's family law division in 2017. Later that same year, she served as Associate Justice of the California Courts of Appeal for the Fourth District, also nominated by then-governor Brown. Guerrero also performed pro-bono work as a member of the Immigration Justice Project advisory board.

In March 2022, Gov. Newsom nominated Guerrero to replace Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of California, the Wikipedia page said. The commission approved her unanimously. Then Newsom nominated her for Chief Justice.

In a news release, Gov. Newsom said, "Justice Guerrero has established herself as a widely respected jurist with a formidable intellect and command of the law and deep commitment to equal justice and public service."



Stock image

Hon. Patricia Guerrero was nominated by California Gov. Gavin Newsom to lead the state Supreme Court. If confirmed by the Commission on Judicial Appointments, she will become the state's first Latina chief justice.

The AP article said that California judges do not need confirmation by the legislature but require a vote by the Commission on Judicial Appointments; after that, her appointment will be a matter for voters to decide in the November election.

Raised in California, Guerrero's parents both came from Mexico. She grew up in the Imperial Valley and worked in a grocery store at age 16. She graduated co-valedictorian from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1994, and received her Juris Doctor degree from Stanford Law School in 1997, Wikipedia said.

According to the AP article, as chief justice, Guerrero would lead the nation's largest judicial system of 2,175 judges across 58 trial courts and 105 justices of the Courts of Appeals. David Ettinger, an appellate lawyer who blogs about the California Supreme Court, called Guerrero "qualified as the judicial branch's chief executive," the AP article said.

Marshall Project examines jurisdictional overlap in criminalization of abortion

By George Franco
Journalism Guild Writer

The Supreme Court's recent controversial decision on abortion has opened the way for a confusing future in American jurisprudence, predicted a report by The Marshall Project, a leading criminal justice reporting organization.

There is not a single "criminal justice system" in the United States, but instead there is an amalgamation of municipal, county, state and federal legal systems that often overlap and conflict with one another, according to Jamiles Lartey, a New Orleans-based staff writer for The Marshall Project.

Ohio attorney general candidate Jeff Crossman told Lartey, "The Dobbs decision did not settle anything. It opened a Pandora's Box of other legal problems that are going to take years to resolve."

The writer said few cases in recent history illustrate the conflicting jurisdictions issue as clearly as the *Dobbs v. Jackson* women's health case. This ruling repealed *Roe v. Wade*, the 49-year-old Supreme Court case that gave women a constitutionally protected right to abortion care.

The battle over reproductive rights will impact not just the

Democratic Party's control of Congress in the upcoming 2022 midterms, but will influence policies at both the federal and state levels as well, the July report said.

The report noted that Texas has three anti-abortion laws. One of these was an outdated law from 1925 that was activated in June.

A second law, a "bounty" or "vigilante" law, provides criminal penalties for performing an abortion after detection of a fetal heartbeat. The "bounty" law also allows private citizens to sue those who assist in providing abortions for damages of at least \$10,000.

The third Texas anti-abortion law, a so-called trigger law that was passed in 2021, criminalizes abortion even in cases of rape or incest.

Texas abortion clinics were relocating to New Mexico, Southern Illinois, and New York, the report said.

The report also explained that doctors were postponing medical procedures for dangerous pregnancies in hope that the procedures could continue once a fetal heartbeat was no longer detected. One doctor in Ohio described these actions as "the horrible downstream effects of criminalizing abortion care," according to the report.

By Bostyon Johnson
Staff Writer

Reynaldo Munoz became the 3,000th known person to be exonerated in the United States when his conviction was overturned in March 2022 after he served 30 years in prison. The National Registry of Exonerations told *USA Today*.

At the age of 16, Munoz was convicted of killing Ivan Mena, 21, and attempting to kill Bouvier "Bobby" Garcia, 19. He has denied his guilt every day since his arrest in 1985, according to a *USA Today* article.

"The lead detective in this case, Ernest Halvorsen, was part of a corrupt group of Area 5 detectives in Chicago who routinely framed young Hispanic men," according to the exoneration petition written by attorney Jennifer Bonjean, who represented Munoz.

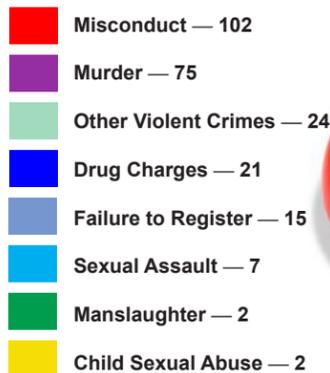
The National Registry of Exonerations, which has tracked every known overturned conviction since 1989, reported that 102 of the 3,000 known exonerations happened due to official misconduct. They also reported that six other exonerates have made similar claims of abuse against Detective Halvorsen.

In the petition for Munoz's exoneration, Bonjean noted that suppressed evidence and a favorable witness statement were withheld from the defense because it would have raised too much reasonable doubt. The information withheld by the detectives was critical to allowing Munoz's conviction.

In the years since Munoz

Nation's 3,000th exoneration clears man who spent 30 years in prison

EXONERATIONS BY CATEGORY



SOURCE: National Registry of Exonerations 2021 Annual Report

was arrested, it has been revealed that Detective Halvorsen and Gang Crime Specialist Reynaldo Guevara frequently resorted to fabrication of evidence, beatings and coercion to close homicide cases. These were some of the tactics they used in Munoz's arrest, according to his attorney.

When Munoz—a low-level gang member at the time who used the nickname "Scooby"—was arrested, the corrupt detectives were looking for a different kid, whose nickname was "Shorty." Munoz claims he pleaded with Guevara, saying that "Guevara was trying to pin a murder" on him, *USA Today* reported. In 2018, at Munoz's wrongful conviction trial, Guevara invoked his Fifth Amendment right more than 200 times, according to the *Chicago Tribune*.

Guevara often teamed up

with Halvorsen to target Hispanic or Latino people to "clear" homicides, according to court records and various media reports. Up to 50 additional murder convictions could be overturned in the coming months due Guevara's misconduct and manipulation of evidence.

The new report by the National Registry of Exonerations sheds light on similar corruption across the U.S. For example, the registry also reported that Sgt. Ronald Watts of the Chicago Police Department planted drugs on individuals who refused bribe payments. Additionally, 15 more exonerations in Illinois happened due to wrongful convictions for weapons possession, the annual report said.

Official misconduct accounted for 42% of exoneration cases in 2012. A decade

later, official misconduct jumped in 2021 to 56%, according to The National Registry of Exonerations.

The increase in official misconduct cases is due partly to increased drug-possession arrests, mainly in Chicago. Most of the drug arrests also included perjury and false accusations, mostly by law enforcement officials framing innocent people.

The increase also comes from courts' increasing awareness of other kinds of official misconduct like fraud, and the failures of prosecutors and law enforcement to divulge exculpatory evidence, The National Registry of Exonerations said.

Munoz is pushing forward to the day when his record and his name can be cleared. He is asking for justice for the years of freedom that he missed.

Jenkins to reverse Boudin-era reforms

By Andrew Hardy
Staff Writer

The shakeup of the San Francisco District Attorney's Office earlier this summer has opened rifts in the local criminal justice community and made the future of justice reform less certain, as the City's new prosecutor announced plans to undo numerous policies of former DA Chesa Boudin.

Following June's special election recall of Boudin, Mayor London Breed announced the appointment of Brooke Jenkins as interim district attorney until the November midterm election, the *Associated Press* reported.

Jenkins was an experienced prosecutor on Boudin's staff who quit in 2021 and took an active and vocal role in the recall effort, accusing her former boss of mismanagement and being soft on criminals.

She and other Boudin critics have blamed the former DA's policies for the city's rising drug and crime rates, saying San Francisco had devolved into lawlessness and become a sanctuary city for crime during his short tenure.

Capitalizing on the ever-growing concerns over

crime and public safety in San Francisco, Jenkins signaled that she intends to reverse a number of her predecessor's key reform policies, *Mother Jones* reported.

"As your next district attorney, I will restore accountability and consequences to our criminal justice system here in San Francisco," Jenkins said during a news conference at San Francisco City Hall the day before her swearing-in. "Violence and repeat offenders will no longer be allowed to victimize our city without consequences."

During Boudin's time in office, he refused to charge children as adults, irrespective of the severity of their offense. He also eliminated the use of cash bail and gang-related sentencing enhancements—so-called "tough-on-crime" policies that were disproportionately tough on racial minorities and the poor, said *Mother Jones*.

Jenkins, herself Black and Latina, wants to return these tools to the belts of prosecutors to use at their discretion, worrying some Bay Area progressives and reform supporters.

One reform measure that is not on the chopping block, however, is the District Attorney's Innocence Commis-

sion, established by Boudin in 2020 to investigate and exonerate wrongful convictions, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*. The panel announced its first exoneration in April after an 18-month investigation cleared a man of murder after he had served 32 years in prison.

"I am committed to continuing and supporting the work of the Innocence Commission to ensure that we help free any innocent individuals who may have been wrongfully convicted and provide justice that has been delayed," Jenkins said in a written statement to the *Chronicle*.

Nonetheless, some San Francisco politicians want more than just assurances from the new DA.

SF Supervisor Dean Preston is pushing a resolution urging Jenkins to keep the Innocence Commission intact and independent from the District Attorney's Office. The resolution also calls for the new DA to keep alive the office's Post-Conviction Unit, which works toward resentencing those who previously received overly harsh or disparate prison sentences.

Geoffrea Morris, whose brother was killed by San Pab-

lo police, runs a domestic violence program and is a leader in the Black community. Morris says Black citizens won't support a return to the old mass incarceration mentality, according to the *Chronicle*.

"San Francisco's Black community will not be silent nor endorse any Black candidate that is seeking to go back to the 80s and 90s policies of locking everyone up and throwing away the key," Morris said.

But Jenkins, a self-described "progressive prosecutor," says she doesn't believe accountability and justice reform are mutually exclusive.

"Holding offenders accountable does not preclude us from moving forward with vital and important reforms to our criminal justice system," she said. "We are a city of second chances. But the truth is we have to draw a line with people who choose hate, violence and a life of crime."

Public defender Iona Solomon, who worked opposite Jenkins just before she resigned last year, dismissed the new DA's rhetoric.

"Anyone can say they are a 'progressive prosecutor,'" Solomon told the *Chronicle*. "It's now a meaningless term."

Oakland Police: Era of federal oversight coming to end

After nearly two decades, federal oversight of the Oakland Police Department (OPD) may come to an end, according to Robert Warsaw, the court appointed independent monitor.

Warsaw reported to federal judge William H. Orrick that the OPD was compliant in all but one of the 52 required tasks negotiated in the 2003 settlement agreement.

The settlement stemmed

from a 2000 civil case, filed by more than 100 Black men against a group of OPD officers known as the "the Riders." The suit alleged a pattern of beating, kidnapping, and planting evidence against Black men in the neighborhood by the officers, who did not face any disciplinary action, according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

Warsaw said that the OPD "has reached a significant milestone." Attorneys

on both sides filed a joint statement to enter a one-year "sustainability period" conditional on compliance with the remaining task, the *LA Times* said.

John Burris, one of the plaintiff's attorneys, told the *LA Times* that he felt "cautiously optimistic about entering into the sustainability period because it took so long to get to this point...With good checks and balances, we hope to

maintain the changes, not just for the next year, but for the next generation."

James Chanin, another attorney for the plaintiffs and a critic of the OPD, also felt "hopeful that the OPD will relieve themselves of this oversight."

However, Chanin added, "If they don't, we'll be here to continue to review their conduct as we have done for the last 18 years."

— Clark Gerhartsreiter

Ruling: Prosecutorial misconduct can be made public

By George Franco
Journalist Guild Writer

A federal court sided with a group of New York law professors who had sued for their First Amendment right to create a public record of complaints filed against district attorneys, *The New York Times* reported July 22. While some parts of the ruling are under appeal, the professors continue to post complaints publicly.

At least 17 New York City prosecutors drew the attention of the professors, such as for sending innocent people to prison in cases where the judge or district attorney knew about the wrongdoing.

In one complaint, a Brooklyn prosecutor withheld key evidence at trial. As a result, an innocent man went to prison for 24 years. Another prosecutor didn't tell the jury about a favorable plea deal given to the prosecutor's key witness, which resulted in the two defendants being sent to prison for 17 years. A third prosecutor let a witness lie. The defendant in that case spent six years in prison.

No public record of dis-

cipline against the offending district attorneys exists, and several still work in the city's justice system, according to *The Times* article.

Making public such misconduct by district attorneys comes at a time when conservatives are pushing "tough on crime" rhetoric amidst the mass media's coverage of the nation-wide spike in certain gun and property crimes.

The professors told *The Times* they hope public pressure forces grievance committees to consider the problems their work exposes. They say they are concerned because current laws protect prosecutors from civil penalties.

Last year, the state's chief judge appointed three people to a new Commission on Prosecutorial Conduct.

"We are trying to make systemic change, to make the grievance committee, or more broadly the government, do their job," one of the professors told *The Times*. "We want to shed a spotlight: What are they actually doing? People have a right to know."

Settlement reached in prisoner's death

Bostyon Johnson
Staff Writer

\$10m settlement reached in lawsuit against private prison operator CoreCivic over death of prisoner who was assaulted by his cellmate.

A \$10 million settlement has been reached in a federal lawsuit against CoreCivic, a private prison operator, for the recent death of a man who was assaulted by his cellmate, according to *The Associated Press*.

The lawsuit was filed by attorney Daniel Horwitz who represents the mother of the man killed in February 2021 at CoreCivic's Trousdale Turner Correctional Center in Nashville, Tenn.

The suit claimed understaffing at the facility contributed to the death of Terry Childress because correctional officers were not making timely welfare checks.

Horwitz said in social media posts that CoreCivic is a "death factory" that "juices its profit margins by deliberately understaffing facilities and skimping on health-care" and who facilities have easier access to illicit drugs by the incarcerated "than almost anywhere else in America."

U.S. Judge Jeffery Frenesley later granted a request by CoreCivic for those posts to be deleted, said the *AP* article. The judge's order received national media attention.

CoreCivic spokesperson Matthew Davio said the settlement terms are confidential and the company is "pleased to have reached a mutually agreeable resolution in this case."

In addition to seeking monetary damages, the lawsuit requested the judge to declare that levels of inmate safety at the facility did not meet constitutional requirements. The suit also called for an independent monitor to conduct unannounced inspections.

Although CoreCivic has denied the allegations in this case, two previous state audits in 2017 and 2020 resulted in \$2 million in fines against CoreCivic. The audits found understaffing issues and inaccurate data on prisoner deaths, facility lockdowns, and corrections officers' use of force, the article noted.

Trousdale Turner houses about 2,500 incarcerated people, more than any other prison in Tennessee.

Cash bail ruling settled

By Bostyon Johnson
Staff Writer

Detroit has reformed its cash bail policy allowing many low-income individuals to be released from pre-trial detention if they are not a danger to the community, according to a *CNN* report.

The change came due to the settlement of a lawsuit filed by ACLU of Michigan, The Bail Project, NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, and the Covington & Burling LLP law firm with Michigan's 36th District Court in April 2019.

"It is an endemic problem throughout the United States... incarcerating people not because they have [been convicted of] anything wrong, but because they are too poor to purchase their freedom," said Phil Mayor, an ACLU attorney.

Mayor also noted that the 36th District Court is the first in the nation to work collaboratively with civil rights advocates in an effort to settle a lawsuit on cash bail reform, according to the July 25 report.

Chief Judge William McConico, said the "agreement preserves judicial discretion, while ensuring that judges are

exercising that discretion lawfully and wisely."

The group sued the magistrates and the chief judge of the 36th District Court and the sheriff's department of Wayne County on behalf of seven citizens who were arrested and unable to afford cash bail.

One of the plaintiffs was Starmaine Jackson, who was arrested after a traffic stop revealed a three-year-old warrant.

Jackson was unable to afford her \$700 bail, and after a week in jail, she lost her nursing job, her apartment and was separated from her two

young children. "I felt like the system failed me as a person. I felt alone and by myself in this situation," Jackson said.

Bail reform, like the settlement, aims to curb or eliminate cash bail for individuals with misdemeanors or nonviolent offenses.

"Using money as that deciding factor just doesn't make a lot of sense, given the construction of who finds themselves in the system," said Cook County Public Defender Sharon R. Mitchell Jr.

"If you have enough money you can be as dangerous as you want; you're going to get out of jail pre-trial... It has turned into ransom for freedom."
— The Bail Project

1. Texas —

(*Associated Press*) A federal judge has issued a temporary ruling ordering Texas prison officials to carry out executions of death row inmates only if they grant religious accommodations. The ruling is on the case of Ramiro Gonzales, 39, who asked that his spiritual adviser be present in the death chamber so she can pray aloud, hold his hand, and place her other hand on his chest when he receives the lethal injection. Legal battles over spiritual advisers touching condemned people and praying aloud during executions caused delays in several executions last year. But earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled states must accommodate such requests. Gonzales' attorneys also made a separate request to Republican Gov. Greg Abbott for a 30-day reprieve so Gonzales could donate a kidney.

2. Pennsylvania —

(*AP*) Gov. Tom Wolf and Lt. Gov. John Fetterman have planned a "one-time, large-scale pardon effort" for minor, nonviolent, marijuana criminal convictions. The pardons would apply to convictions for possession or personal use. The cutoff date to apply for pardon under the program is Sept. 30, coinciding with the governor's remaining tenure in office. Chris Goldstein, NORML's Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware regional organizer, lauded the move. "This one-month window, I hope this works, but there could be hundreds of thousands of people that apply," he said. Jason Gottesman, Pennsylvania's House Republican Caucus spokesperson opposed the pardons. "This literal get-out-of-jail-free card is outside the normal scope of the pardons process, lacks serious oversight, and does even more to pick winners and losers in the criminal justice reform process," said Gottesman.

3. New York —

(*New York Times*) Applicants to become lawyers in New York state must disclose their criminal records completely, including juvenile records and sealed cases. The

purpose of the disclosure is to protect the profession from individuals who might seek to damage its reputation. But critics argue that the requirement is most likely illegal and discourages racial diversity. Job applications for other professions in New York, including nurses, teachers, social workers and even bus drivers, ask about open criminal cases, felony, and misdemeanor convictions. Arrests, juvenile cases, and sealed convictions are not included in applications for such jobs. Researchers say the inquiry's purpose of guarding against bad moral character is not effective. "It's very unlikely that the information that is produced is going to predict who will later engage in misconduct," said Leslie Levin, a law professor who conducted a study on the requirement.

4. South Carolina —

(*AP*) Addiction therapy is going digital at the primary women's prison in South Carolina. An FDA-authorized smart device will track substance use, cravings and related triggers for eligible prisoners. The 90-day treatment at the Camille Griffin Graham Correctional Institution aims to "... increase abstinence and boost participation in cognitive behavioral therapy programs," reported the *AP*. The plan is for the treatment to complement medications and in-person therapy. "We are excited to begin this cutting-edge treatment for our female inmates who suffer from addictions," said South Carolina Department of Corrections Director Bryan Stirling in a press release.

5. Nebraska —

(*AP*) Scott Frakes, director of the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services announced Sept. 1 that he will resign his position effective Oct. 7. Gov. Pete Ricketts appointed Frakes in 2015 to deal with the state's troubled prison system. The system has been plagued with short staffing and overcrowding throughout Frakes' tenure. Two prisoners died and two staff members were hurt in a prisoner revolt at the Tecumseh maximum security facility less than three



NEWS BRIEFS

months after Frakes' appointment. Critics condemned Frakes' \$54,000 purchase of foreign-made lethal injection drugs. The state never received the drugs because the federal government declared them illegal and forbade their import.

6. Alabama —

(*AP*) An anti-death penalty group alleges that corrections officials botched the execution of Joe Nathan James Jr., on July 28. John Hamm, the Alabama Corrections Commissioner, originally told reporters that "nothing out of the ordinary happened." Later, the state said that problems occurred in establishing an intravenous line, causing a delay in the execution. More than three hours passed between a U.S. Supreme Court denial of a request for a stay and the inmate's death. A private autopsy indicated incisions in an arm and punctures in both arms that may have been part of a search for a vein. Death Penalty Information Center Executive Di-

rector Robert Dunham said the three-hour delay and results of the autopsy indicate a "botched execution, and is among the worst botches in the modern history of the U.S. death penalty."

7. Oregon —

(*AP*) The personal and medical information of more than 350 incarcerated people was shared by Multnomah County jail staff with the county's health department and patients' attorneys, according to a report by *Oregon Public Broadcasting*. The information included names, birthdates, and photos, as well as medical diagnosis and treatments. The purpose of the sharing was to facilitate evaluation of whether those awaiting trial were sufficiently mentally competent to take part in their own criminal defense. Officials are not able to verify that orders were in place to release information in every case. The Multnomah County Health Department notified affected patients via

letter.

8. Connecticut —

(*AP*) Connecticut's pardons will once again be treated as legally valid by federal officials under an agreement reached in August. The Trump administration had taken a hard line against the state, sweeping up and deporting people pardoned by the state's pardons board, arguing that only pardons from governors are valid. "This agreement confirms, with full force of law, what we have known to be true for well over a century — Connecticut's pardons are legitimate and lawful," said State Attorney General William Tong. Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, South Carolina and Utah also employ boards to issue pardons, but the Trump administration did not challenge the validity of pardons in those states. "There was no reason for the federal government ever to single out Connecticut and deny our residents the second chance we chose to grant to them," said Tong. The article noted that Connecticut is more liberal

than the other five states.

9. California —

(*The Modesto Bee*) The state will invest \$4.7 billion in support of mental health and substance abuse programs for Californians 25 or younger, reported the *Bee*. Gov. Gavin Newsom's office said that the investment is "the most significant, multi-year overhaul of our mental health system in state history." The plan includes training and support for 40,000 new mental health professionals among other initiatives. More than 284,000 Californian youth are fighting depression, with two-thirds not receiving treatment, according to data from the governor's office. Suicide rates for youth between the ages of 10 and 18 were up 20% from 2019 to 2020. "[Over] the last two years, there has been a stacking of stress, the likes of which none of us could have conceived of," said Newsom. "And that stacking of stress, comes from years and years where we've neglected our mental health..."

OREGON

PRISON BLUES: Made on the inside, worn on the outside

By Randy Hansen
Journalism Guild Writer

Work-style blue jeans and jackets manufactured by incarcerated persons at an Oregon state prison generated sales of over \$2 million last year and attracted buyers from as far away as Britain and Japan, reported the *Wall Street Journal* on April 13.

The denim attire is called Prison Blues and goes by the slogan "Made on the INSIDE to be worn on the OUTSIDE." The brand is manufactured at the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, a medium-security prison with a population of about 1,600 in Pendleton, Ore.

The rugged and value-price clothing with the catchy slogan has caught the attention of hip youngsters, particularly in Japan.

"The Japanese market is creating some new fashion trend with Prison Blues," said Jered McMichael, whose company, Correction Connection, generated over \$600,000 in revenue from Prison Blues products in 2021.

Tokyo resident Imachi Hayami, 25, a clothing store employee, praised the "tough fab-



Prison Blues employs incarcerated workers at prevailing wages at the Eastern Oregon Correctional Facility.

ric, rivets and button design" of its double-kneed garment. Hayami wears Prison Blues pants along with Red Wing shoes and Camber sweatshirts. He added that the Prison Blues brand has fans among Japanese who "deeply like jeans."

The *Journal* said that besides Prison Blues, Oregon Corrections Enterprises (OCE) produces various wood furniture, office seating, and upholstery inside Oregon's 14 prisons. While it is prevented by law from producing goods that could take away sales

from domestic private businesses in competitive markets, OCE has permission to enter any non-competitive market. Most American clothing manufacturers had outsourced production abroad, making American-made clothing an acceptable product for OCE.

For incarcerated persons who make the garments, employment at Prison Blues has advantages. Prison Blues worker Benjamin Breazille called it "probably one of the best jobs you can get" in the state's prison system. After de-

ductions, he nets about \$330 a month, which is five times as much as the maximum pay for typical incarcerated workers in Oregon, reported the *Journal*.

OCE program manager Jennifer Starbuck said her program paid incarcerated manufacturing workers prevailing wages but deducted about 80% for taxes, victim restitution, partial costs of incarceration, and, if applicable, child support.

Breazille's job has enabled him to pay over \$13,000 in back child support and will likely parole with \$2,000 in savings, said the article.

Prison Blues general manager Scott Bartholomew said Prison Blues employees "leave with an awful lot more than what they came in with," indicating that the experience gained at Prison Blues helps parolees find manufacturing jobs. The *Journal* interviewed two incarcerated Prison Blues workers who both expect to use the skills gained at Prison Blues upon release.

The Prison Blues' products include straight-legged jeans that sell for \$38.25 and a four-pocket "yard" coat priced at \$54.75.

The *Journal* reported that a website run by McMichael's company markets the jeans to "people who work harder than they play!!!" The site touted the Prison Blues' jacket as, "Great for all kinds of chores!"

MISSISSIPPI

EMMETT TILL: Woman won't face charges in 1955 race murder

By Clark Gerhartsreiter
Contributing Writer

Carolyn Bryant Donham was 21 years old when Emmett Till, 14, was murdered in Leflore County, Mississippi.

The woman claimed that Till whistled at her and touched her. Her allegations were linked to the murder of Till on August 28, 1955.

Now, 67 years later, questions have arisen anew as to whether justice was ever served. A Leflore grand jury declined to indict the woman, now 87, on charges of kidnapping and manslaughter, according to an article by Michael Goldberg and Allen G. Breed of the *Associated Press*.

"The prosecutor tried his best, and we appreciate his efforts, but he alone cannot undo hundreds of years of anti-Black systems that guarantee those who killed Emmett Till would go unpunished, to this day," said the Rev. Wheeler Parker, Jr., Till's cousin and the last living witness in the case.

Deborah Watts of the Emmett Till Foundation, a third cousin of Till, said, "[Donham] has escaped any accountability in this case... So the grand jury's decision is disappointing, but we're still going to be calling for justice for Emmett Till.

"It's not over," she added.

At the time, Donham's then-husband Roy Bryant and another man, J. W. Milam, stood trial for Till's murder, but an all-white jury acquitted them. A search of the courthouse archives last June revealed a 67-year-old unserved arrest warrant for Donham. Police never took her into custody, said the article.

In an unpublished memoir obtained by the *AP*, Donham wrote that she had tried to help Till. She said she denied to Milam and Bryant that Till was the person who had whistled at her and touched

An autopsy revealed Till had died of a gunshot wound to the head, and that he had suffered fractures to his wrist bones, skull, and femur... Till's battered and disfigured body appeared in a river, weighted down with a heavy metal fan.

her.

She claimed that Till then voluntarily identified himself as the person for whom they had searched, the article said.

Bryant and Milam later admitted to the abduction and killing in an interview with *Look* magazine. Despite the alleged post-acquittal confession, the pair faced no further charges and have long since died, the *AP* reported.

At Till's funeral in Chicago, Till's mother, Mamie Till Mobley, decided to open Till's coffin, which revealed the gruesome injuries he suffered. An autopsy revealed Till had died of a gunshot wound to the head, and that he had suffered fractures to his wrist bones, skull, and femur. According to the article, Till's battered and disfigured body was found in a river, weighted down by a heavy metal fan.

Several law enforcement efforts to pursue the case went nowhere. The *AP* said that in 2004, the U.S. Dept. of Justice looked into Till's killing but the statute of limitations had run out on any federal crime, and last year, federal officials closed all investigations because of "insufficient evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that [Donham] lied to the FBI."

State charges also went nowhere. In February 2007, a Mississippi grand jury declined to indict anyone.

MASSACHUSETTS

Reformed prisoner awaits clemency hearing after 50 years in prison

By Jad Salem
Journalism Guild Writer

After serving more than a half of century in a Massachusetts prison for first-degree murder, Ramadan Shabazz, aka James Hall, could soon be granted clemency. A parole board could soon reduce his charges to second-degree murder, which would make him eligible for parole, wrote Adrian Walker in the *Boston Globe*.

"I really believe that clemency is so important and plays such an important role in our system," Shabazz's attorney Mia Teitelbaum said. "If we believe in clemency and the possibility for people to change, that's him."

Among those who support Shabazz's application is Harvard University professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., who has written one of many letters supporting Shabazz's release. Gates describes Shabazz as a "...truly exceptional individual who has consistently worked hard over many years to rehabilitate himself."

In 1971, Shabazz and an accomplice shot and killed two security guards at a supermarket in Dorchester, Mass., a Boston suburb. During the botched robbery, Shabazz was high on LSD. His aim was to steal money to pay his drug debt to his dealer, according to the article.

While incarcerated, Shabazz earned a reputation as a soft spoken role model who participates in institutional rehabilitation programs. He was part of a program that works with the mentally ill patients, says the article.

During his long prison stint, Shabazz had changed his name and religion. He had educated himself and earned two college degrees. He has been a role model citizen and mentor to other prisoners, the *Globe* reported.

Shabazz and his family relocated from North Carolina to Boston when he was nine. After graduating from Jamaica Plain High School, he enlisted in the army and was sent to fight in the Vietnam War. Shabazz came home from the war as a heroin addict with post-traumatic stress disorder, like many

"He's a full human being who I think will cherish freedom and the opportunity to look up at the blue sky and experience the world as most people experience it..."

— Dr. Richard Parker

other veterans.

"I was young, returning from Vietnam and strung out on drugs," said Shabazz regarding his crime. "Two men lost their lives that day, and I can't tell you how sorry I am. If I could do anything to bring that day back, I would. But I can't."

Another one of Shabazz supporters is Dr. Richard Parker, a physician with whom Shabazz impressed during his undergraduate studies. The Parker family stayed in week-

ly contact with Shabazz and advocated for his release for years. The Parkers pledged to support Shabazz with housing and employment if he is granted parole.

"He's a full human being who I think will cherish freedom and the opportunity to look up at the blue sky and experience the world as most people experience it," Parker told the *Globe*. "I will feel a tremendous sense of gratitude if he is successful and the Parole Board finds it within themselves to release him. I will feel that we have done something right for one human being."

If Shabazz gets his life sentence commuted by the Parole Board, several hurdles would still have to be cleared prior to his release, including Governor Charlie Baker approving the commutation. Shabazz has hope on his side with the governor since Baker recently commuted the sentences of two long-serving prisoners. If Shabazz's sentence is commuted, the door to freedom could be just around the corner.

LOUISIANA

Giving back: Ex-prisoners create Freedom Libraries

Literature empowerment takes the form of mobile libraries

By Bostyon Johnson
Staff Writer

Former prisoners are bringing literary empowerment to state prisons through a book accessibility project called "Freedom Libraries."

The Freedom Libraries consist of 500 carefully selected books curated by "thousands of poets, novelists, philosophers, teachers, friends and various readers" that are available to incarcerated read-

ers. So far, two of the portable shelving units have been installed, one in Louisiana and one in Massachusetts, according to *The Associate Press*.

The project is the brainchild of Reginald Dwayne Betts and his Freedom Reads nonprofit, as part of an effort to bring hundreds of books to prisons across America. The Freedom Reads organization addresses the challenges of time and accessibility in prison libraries.

"We have a chance to contribute to another chapter in the history of incarceration... one that is about mercy, hope, and creating opportunity for self-reinvention inside. I know firsthand how literature empowers us to confront what prison does to the spirit,"

said Betts.

Betts knows firsthand because he received a nine-year sentence in Virginia as part of a plea deal for a carjacking charge at the age of 16, and spent part of his time in solitary confinement. He went on to graduate from Yale Law School after his release, and was awarded a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship in 2021.

The goal is to install 200 "Freedom Libraries" by the end of 2023, and 200 more every two years thereafter to serve 1,000 prisons with access to hundreds of books, according reporting by the *Washington Post*.

The design of the mobile library units required specific constraints. For example, the cart is 44 inches tall so line of sight is not

obstructed and curved to allow the carts to fit into different spaces. These designs were approved by corrections officials, said the *Washington Post*.

"This donation means so much to prisoners as it will help broaden their horizons through reading," said Jimmy LeBlanc, Louisiana's corrections secretary.

Troy Barnes built the hand-carved library shelves after learning carpentry in a Louisiana state penitentiary, reported the *AP*.

"In prison, you really don't have beautiful things to see," Barnes said. "To be able to wake up and see a natural, beautiful thing that was built by someone who left and returned to bring it there — it would give the guys hope."

ARIZONA

Prison workers paid pennies

By Bostyon Johnson
Staff Writer

Arizona inmates work in a variety of jobs inside and outside prisons for wages ranging from 10 cents an hour to a minimum wage of \$12.80.

Prisoner job assignments have a hierarchy and can be split into a four-tiered system based on skill and pay, according to a report resulting from a 15-month-long investigation by *The Arizona Republic* and *KJZZ News*.

The bottom tier represents 92% of the population. This includes cooks, janitors, store workers, yard workers, and even tutors with a pay scale of 10 to 45 cents an hour.

It takes prisoners about 20 hours of work to afford a bottle of shampoo, according to the July report.

The next tier up are the intergovernmental workers. They travel around the state performing maintenance work such as cutting grass in city parks and golf courses as well as maintenance for road departments,

county governments, school districts, and universities. They are paid 50 cents to \$1.50 an hour and there are around 1,000 of these workers. They represent 3% of the prison population in Arizona, according to the report.

The third tier is comprised of around 2,000 prisoners who work for Arizona Correctional Industries. This includes 700 who work in prison workshops that make products sold to the Department of Corrections and other government entities. They are paid 40 cents to \$2 an hour.

The top-tier group is comprised of incarcerated workers who are leased out to private companies for their labor. They do a range of jobs, from salvaging aircraft parts to canning green chilies. They are paid \$3.25 per hour up to the state minimum wage of \$12.80.

Prisoners who make over \$2 an hour are charged for room and board, which takes away 30% of their income, the report said. Prisoners may also encounter other expenses, including utilities, court-ordered restitution and child support.

LEGAL/POLICY

AB 990: Restoring the Right to Visit

By Ivana Gonzales, LSPC
Contributing Writer

Incarcerated people and their family members understand that visits are vital to sustaining mental health during incarceration and success after release. Visits help maintain family structures during incarceration and support family members on the outside as well as those inside. Visits provide children with loving parents to guide them through childhood and nurture them into becoming emotionally secure and productive adults, and give spouses and single parents the human connection and co-parenting support they deserve.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has severely curtailed visiting opportunities since the statutory right to visiting was repealed in the mid-1990s. Not only did CDCR reduce the number of regular visiting days to two-per-week, which led to rampant overcrowding and early termination of many visits, but it also adopted numerous policies that interfere with the right to visit, including denying visits for rule violations that have nothing to do with visiting. The situation has only gotten worse during the COVID-19 pandemic, with visiting entirely suspended for months and only minimal supplemental phone and video contact.

As a result, a mere 10% of incarcerated people at many institutions receive any visits at all, much less regular visits, according to family members interviewed by Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC). Nationwide, anywhere from 39% to 74% of prisoners do not



SQNews archive photo

Prior to the Coronavirus pandemic, San Quentin's visiting room was regularly packed to capacity. CDCR's policy of allowing just two visiting days per week often led to overcrowding in the visiting areas of many prisons, as well as early termination of many visits.

receive a single visit in prison, according to a 2016 report in Criminal Justice and Behavior. **Restoring the Right to Visit (AB 990)**

The Coalition for Family Unity, a project of Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, is fighting to restore visits as a right, not privilege. We are also fighting to increase the availability of visiting as well as other means of maintaining contact with incarcerated loved ones — such as video, phone and email — and to lift CDCR's restrictions on the right to visit for non-visiting rule violations and denials of visitor applications for innocent errors on the application.

In 2021, the Coalition for Family Unity sponsored a bill that would have achieved these goals (Calif. Assembly Bill 990, Santiago). The bill passed both houses of the Legislature by wide margins, but was strenuously opposed by CDCR and ultimately vetoed

by the Governor. Coalition for Family Unity is planning on re-introducing a bill to Restore the Right to Visit at the next legislative year. The fight is not over until we win!

Implementing the Third Day of In-Person Visiting

Meanwhile, the Coalition for Family Unity is working to require CDCR to fully implement the third day of in-person visiting that was added to CDCR's budget — on an ongoing basis in 2021 — along with transportation support for every prison in the state. Although \$20.3 million in funding became available in July 2021 for its implementation, only Pelican Bay State Prison currently provides three days of in-person visiting, notably without any increase in transportation assistance.

Unfortunately, CDCR is trying to cause divisions within the community of incarcerated people and their family members by suggesting that an

increase of in-person visiting will cause a reduction in video calling due to "space limitation and other factors." We need to demand at least three full days of in-person visiting in addition to video calling.

At the beginning of 2022, the Coalition for Family Unity reached out to Senator Maria Durazo for support through the Budget Sub-5 Committee in hopes that CDCR would be held accountable for the budget allocated for fill three days of in-person visiting.

On May 28, 2022 the Budget Sub-5 Committee held a hearing and with the first agenda item being visiting issues occurring in California prisons. Three family members involved with the Coalition for Family Unity testified on the need to follow the directives by legislators on visitation contained in the May 2021 Revised Budget.

"I call us 'prison families' because every decision CDCR

makes directly impacts our children as we fight with every bone in our bodies to keep our families connected," testified Laila Aziz from Pillars of the Community.

Senator Cortese also gave testimony from his wife Pattie Cortese, who works mentoring incarcerated people. Senator Cortese read from his wife's email: "The current process to sign up for video visits is: log in at 6:29 am, not 6:28 or 6:30. 6:29 on Saturday morning for visits the following weekend. Visits cannot be scheduled earlier than 6:30 am. Even when you go through this procedure, there is a very small chance you will be able to secure a visit."

The Senator then added in his own words, "When people's rights are at stake and this kind of access problems are an issue...we need to go right to the cure."

Senator Newman, another member of the Sub-5 Committee, who listened to Laila's and Pattie Cortese's testimony, responded by saying, "To Laila's testimony — inhumane is the only word I can think of. It is not ok to dilly dally; people are living their lives now."

"It is just a shocking situation that you have a 5-second interval to determine where your son can connect with their father. We should not allow that, and I would like to hear an answer on how to fix it?" he said.

CDCR representatives Daniel Cueva and Kristine Montgomery, unfortunately, did not have any answers for the Senators and the families testifying. Mr. Cueva admitted that only one prison, Pelican Bay State Prison, is offering three full days of in-person visit along with three video call days.

In a written report to the Sub-5 Committee, CDCR stated that they surveyed Inmate Advisory Councils and

the Statewide Inmate Family Council, and it was in fact, those groups that decided they wanted a day allocated for video calls only.

"To better understand the desires of the incarcerated and visiting populations, CDCR surveyed the institutions' Inmate Advisory Councils (IAC), which are made up of incarcerated elected representatives on yards at every prison, and the Statewide Inmate Family Council (SIFC), which are made up of family members and loved ones of incarcerated people who represent their interests, about the pilot video visiting program implemented in December 2020.

"The response was overwhelmingly in favor of continuing to dedicate one of the three visiting days for video visiting moving forward. Video visiting occurs in the same location as in-person visiting. Due to space limitation and other factors, video visiting and in-person visiting typically occur on separate days," said the CDCR report. This statement from CDCR has yet to be confirmed by the groups involved.

For any Inmate Advisory Council members that are willing to confirm or dispute CDCR's statements and share any CDCR surveys with us, please write to Ivana Gonzales, Family Unity Coordinator, LSPC, 4400 Market Street, Oakland, CA 94608.

Coalition for Family Unity believes that incarcerated people and their family members need to demand three full days of in-person visiting in addition to video calling, which can take place simultaneously in other locations or in the same place at other times such as weekdays or evenings.

CA Sentencing Reform Act aims to rewrite 'special circumstances' rules

Dao Ong
Staff Writer

Jamil Wilson was barely 20 years old when he found himself entangled in a murder conspiracy that changed his life forever.

Wilson met with friends to celebrate his birthday on that fateful night in 1994. But what he didn't know was that some of his friends had plans to kill one of their mothers, he said according to a July 29 *Los Angeles Times* article.

Since he was at the scene of the crime, Wilson was a liable accomplice to the murder and faced an additional underlying penalty for "special circumstances" under the law at the time.

In 1990, 57% of California voters approved that law through a ballot initiative called Proposition 115, also known as the Crime Victims Justice Reform Act. Anyone found guilty of murder along with another felony crime, triggered a "special circumstances" clause, and faced maximum punishment in the form of the death penalty or a sentence of life without the possibility of parole.

The 1996 trials of Wilson and his friends resulted in convictions for felony murder in the first degree and sentences to life in prison without the possibility of parole due to the "special circumstances" rule, said the *Times*.

Aiding and abetting a conspiracy was the other felony crime that triggered the sentencing rule.

"During my sentencing, the judge literally cried in the courtroom saying that he wished he could give me a lesser sentence," Wilson said. "After hearing the case, he knew deep down in his heart that I did not deserve the life without parole sentence."

Critics of Proposition 115 argue that the "special circumstances" provision, along with other changes in state law, results in "de-facto racism." This provision, they say, has disproportionately impacted youth of color in particular, most of whom did not kill or intend to kill anyone, by sentencing them excessive penalties in the form of life without the possibility of parole.

One such critic, California State Sen. Dave Cortese (D-San Jose), is looking to remedy this situation.

He authored Senate Bill 300, also known as the Sentencing Reform Act, which seeks to modify part of Proposition 115, including the "special circumstances" rule. The revision would give judges more sentencing discretion in cases where accomplices did not act with intent to kill or otherwise inadvertently got themselves caught in the middle of a terrible crime.

"I don't blame the voters. I don't blame anyone necessarily for the outcomes that

we're getting today, but we're getting them, nonetheless," Cortese told *The Times* in reference to Proposition 115.

Supporters of SB 300 assert that youths sentenced under the so-called "special circumstances" rule are also victims, the article said.

In 2018 — a similar bill SB 1437 authored by Sen. Nancy Skinner — became law. SB 1437 limited murder charges to those who actually committed or intended to commit a killing, but it did not account for the "special circumstances" cases under Proposition 115 that involved an underlying felony at the scene of a murder.

To date, SB 300 has passed the Senate and still needs to pass the Assembly before it can advance. The Assembly tends to lean more conservative and the proposal will need at least 54 of the 80 votes to pass that chamber, says Cortese.

Gov. Jerry Brown commuted Wilson's sentence in 2019 due to his positive programming, and he was granted parole after serving 25 years.

Now three years out of prison, Wilson married his high school sweetheart and works at a nonprofit organization in the Bay Area that helps other formerly incarcerated people.

NC judges overturn outdated law prohibiting parolees from voting

By Randy Hansen
Journalism Guild Writer

Thousands of North Carolina parolees and probationers may regain their right to vote because of a decision by a split panel of trial judges.

If upheld, the decision would restore voting rights to as many as 56,000 people, reported *The Associated Press*. The panel cited unconstitutional discrimination against Black voters among the reasons for the majority decision.

North Carolina Superior Court judges Lisa Bell and Keith Gregory signed the panel's decision that would expand an August 2021 preliminary injunction that challenged a 1973 state law. The 49-year-old law aimed to ease restrictions of the restoration of voting rights that had prevented Black North Carolinians from voting. The judges said it did not go far enough and still delayed restoration of these rights for felons not actively serving time in jail or prison, according to the *AP*.

"The legislature cannot purge through the mere passage of time an impermissible racially discriminatory intent," wrote Bell and Gregory, adding, "The legislature's decision in the 1970s to preserve (the law's) denial of the franchise to people living in the community was itself

independently motivated by racism."

The ruling strengthens the August 2021 preliminary injunction that the state Supreme Court had blocked in September of that year, the article said. Offenders who registered during the 10-day period affected by the injunction would remain on the voting rolls.

Panelist Judge John Dunlow dissented. He argued that the state had "valid and legitimate governmental interest" in a process that allowed felons to regain their voting rights only after completion of post-release probation or supervision. Dunlow added that the law "does not bear more heavily on one race or another" and "does not have the intent nor the effect of discriminating against African-Americans."

The article said the North Carolina Constitution prohibits a felon from voting "unless that person shall be first restored to the rights of citizenship in the manner prescribed by law," with rules that require the "unconditional discharge of an inmate, or a probationer, or of a parolee."

According to the *AP*, Bell and Gregory said that the law violated equal protection and free election clauses of the state constitution. The judges cited evidence that Black residents suffer disproportionately from denial to vote because of

People who work, live and pay taxes in our communities should not have their voices & votes silenced due to a previous felony conviction.

— Lisa Bell
and Keith Gregory,
NC Superior Court judges

felony probation supervision limits.

"Elections do not ascertain the will of the people when the denial of the franchise to such a large number of people has the clear potential to affect the outcome of numerous close elections," the judges wrote.

An advocacy group called Forward Justice that represented the suit's plaintiffs, commented on Twitter, "People who work, live and pay taxes in our communities should not have their voices & votes silenced due to a previous felony conviction."

Spokespersons for the North Carolina Senate leader and House speaker, both listed among the lawsuit's defendants, did not comment to the *AP*.

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

PERSONS WITH A CRIMINAL HISTORY WHO CANNOT REGISTER AND VOTE:

Currently serving a state or federal prison term for the conviction of a felony imprisoned in:

- State prison
- Federal prison
- County jail or other correctional facility*

NOTE: Once you have finished serving your term, your right to vote is restored; however, you must register online at RegisterToVote.ca.gov or by filling out a paper voter registration card.

CALIFORNIA COUNTY ELECTIONS OFFICES

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

“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

San Quentin's 15th Annual Day of Peace brings incarcerated together

PEACE

Continued from page 1

local Bay Area volunteers who support self-help programs at the Q. Those groups were: Insight Prison Program, No More Tears, Free to Succeed, Fellas against Distracted and Drunk Driving, Face It, Project Reach, Prescription for Change, California Reentry Institute, HEART, Alight Justice, Teaching Responsibility Utilizing Sociological Training (TRUST), Project LA/Bay Area, The Beat Within, California Reentry, KAIROS, and Angel Tree. Each of these programs had the chance to talk with potentially interested residents, and share success stories.

No More Tears was formed by Lonnie Morris and Mick Gardner as a response to violence. Morris, who was incarcerated at the time, turned to Gardner and said, "One way we can overcome and address this violence is have some workshops and talk to the people that's committing the violence, 'cause they're right in here — they're all in here."

The group has since worked with over 3,000 men at San Quentin, only two of whom have returned to the prison.

Free to Succeed was founded to support incarcerated students. "During the pandemic, they all tutored me and helped me with my college writing," said Alex Ross, one of the program's participants. "If it weren't for Free to Succeed, I'd most likely have quit college."

Photo Captions: 1-5. Performance by Lucie and the Long Haul. 6. CRI Advisers. 7. The Beat Within Advisors and Volunteers. 8. Sax soloist KJ Focus. 9. Ms. Natalie Tovar, Walkenhorst's VP of Sales. 10. Irish-rock band Sean Daly and the Shams. 11. Ms. Diane Kahn, co-founder of Humans of San Quentin. 12. Hip-hop performer T. Carrier. 13. Taiko Drum performance by team Heiwa Taiko. 14-16. Imam Muhammad Fasih, SQ Islamic Chaplain and his sons K. Omar and K. Abdussauad. 17. Hip-hop performer Rob Woods. 18-24. Crowd pleasing performance by Irish-rock band Sean Daly and the Shams. 25-29 SQ residents entertain the crowd with a musical interlude. 30. Poem recital by SQ resident Nicholas "Nico" Herrera. 31. Day of Peace committee members and Peacekeepers.

"The history of Day of Peace reminds us that the event is greater than symbolic gestures... It originated to remind us of what people are willing to do in times of crisis, and the recognition given for these heroic acts has the power to inspire many — within and outside of prison walls"

Alight Justice is a group dedicated to healing. "[The program] is based on victim awareness as well as victim impact — how different groups see and heal with each other," said Billie Mizell, a volunteer who helps to sponsor the group.

"Be prepared to challenge yourself on how you view things and people," added Chris Marshall, an incarcerated facilitator. "[Alight Justice] challenges stereotypes while living together in harmony."

As the Day of Peace continues to evolve, the lives of Nguyen and Menchaca took different paths. Nguyen has become renowned in the California prison system as a symbol of peace, while Menchaca's role has been mostly lost to history.

In 2011, Nguyen appeared before the parole board. He'd served 20 years for aiding and abetting a first-degree murder as a juvenile at the age of 16. The board found him suitable for parole, but set his release date to August 12, 2023.

In an unprecedented turn of events, then-Governor Jerry Brown reversed the board's decision saying, "While I do not downplay the seriousness of Mr. Nguyen's crime, I note that it was Mr. Nguyen's crime partners who initiated the confrontation that resulted in the murder. Mr. Nguyen did not participate in the assault and was not aware that it would take place. At the time, Mr. Nguyen was just 16 years old and was influenced to participate in the crime by his adult crime partners."

The Governor concluded, "In this unique case, I believe Mr. Nguyen's exceptional rehabilitation dictates that he should receive an immediate release on parole." He was 36 when he was released from prison in 2011.

Two years before Nguyen's was released, Menchaca was commended by Lt. Sam Robinson.

Robinson wrote in a memorandum, "Menchaca's decision that day both demonstrates an authentic change in the type of decision making that resulted in his incarceration and exemplifies the effectiveness of his success in working to change himself from a liability to an asset." Robinson continued, "Inmate Menchaca and the other TRUST members should receive due credit and commendation for his selfless actions on that day."

Menchaca never showed anyone this letter — he says he protected those volunteers because it was simply the right thing to do; it was never about the accolades.

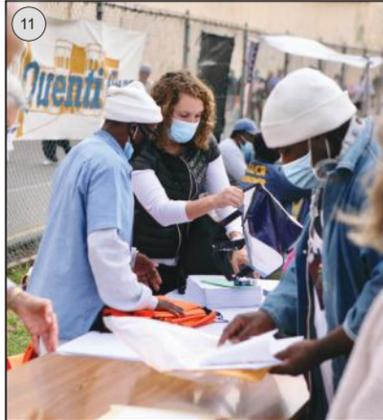
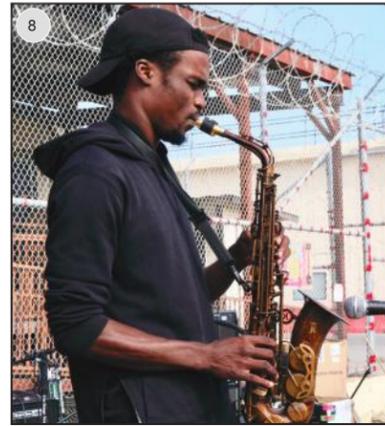
"No one's ever read this letter until I showed it to *San Quentin News*," he said on September 9. Menchaca is scheduled to appear before the parole board sometime in 2023.

This history of the Day of Peace reminds us that the event is greater than symbolic gestures and the availability of rehabilitative services. It was originated to remind us of what people are willing to do in times of crisis, and the recognition given for these heroic acts has the power to inspire many — within and outside of prison walls.

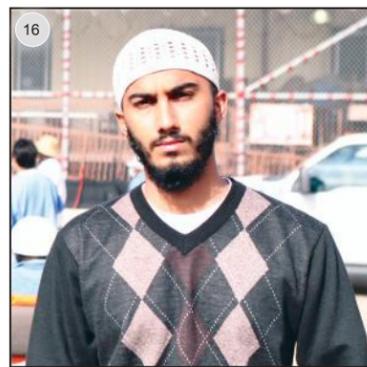


Photos by Tony Singh

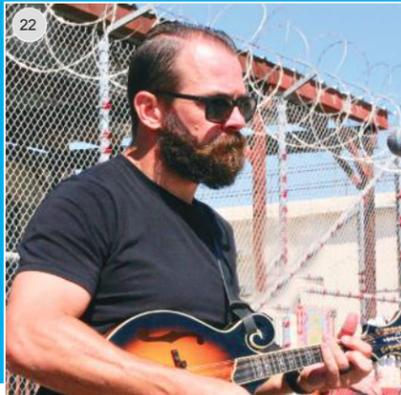
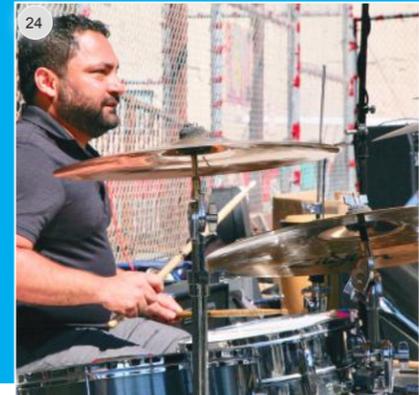
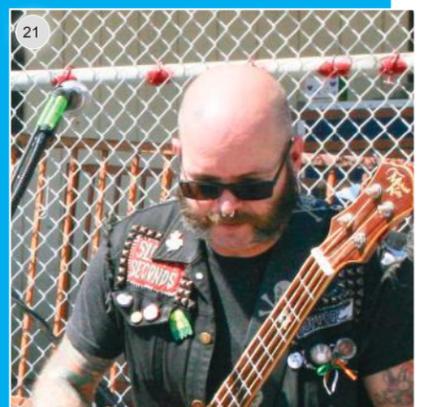




Photos by Tony Singh/ SQNews



Photos by Tony Singh/ SQNews



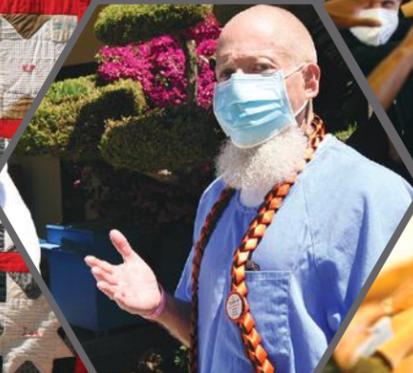
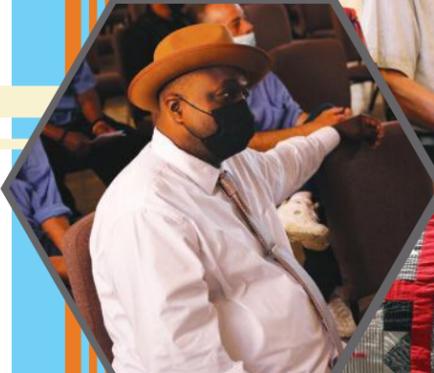
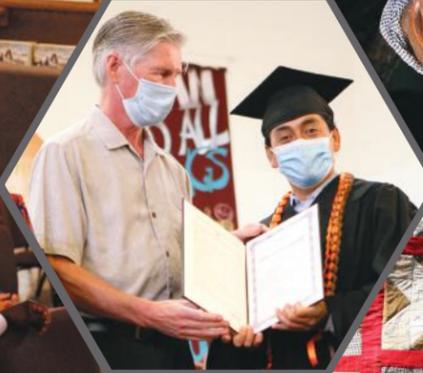
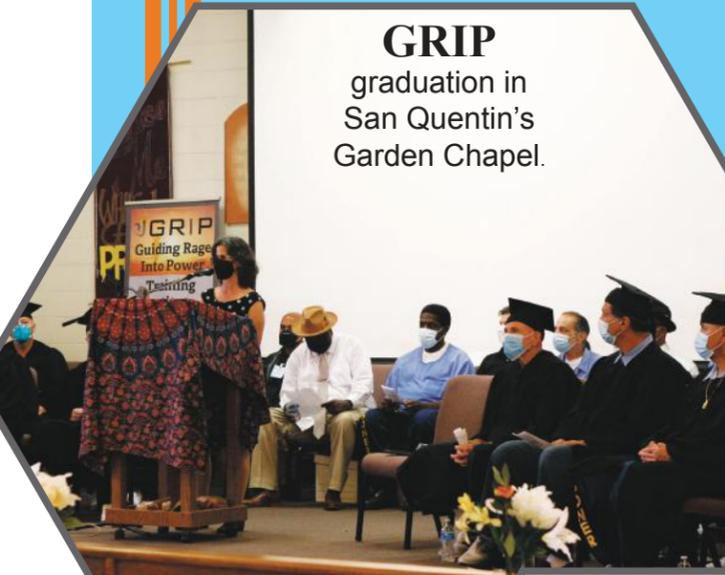
Photos by Tony Singh/ SQNews

GRIP
graduation in
San Quentin's
Garden Chapel.



◀ State Sen. Josh Becker (D-13th District) was one of the VIPs in attendance.

Rite of Passage Ceremony, representing readiness to reenter the community.





GRIP

Continued from page 1

Guiding Rage Into Power: Graduates of flagship anti-violence program cultivate empathy and insight on multiple levels

with an invocation of prayer. The event was co-hosted by Kim Moore, executive director of The Grip Training Institute, and GRIP staff facilitator Jessie Estrin. Director Moore thanked everyone for their attendance, especially the families. “If your family is not here today, we are your surrogate family,” she said. GRIP is a year-long self-help group guided by four principles: Stopping My Violence, Emotional Intelligence, Cultivating Mindfulness, and Victims Impact. GRIP arranges for survivors and family members of deceased victims to come into the class and tell their stories. “GRIP is an intense program, the participants are asked a lot, to dig into their original pain and original trauma,” said Estrin. During the graduation, Estrin described the challenges the program has faced due to program modifications wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic. “The GRIP participants continued to work for one-and-a-half years through correspondence, despite the pandemic. This is a celebration of transformation, ac-

countability, to be a peacemaker and never cause pain again,” said Estrin. Running the program via correspondence required sending more than 8,000 pieces of mail to participants. “We did not want to abandon our students,” said Moore. The Training Institute’s mission is to serve incarcerated Californians by creating personal and systemic change to turn violence and suffering into opportunities for learning and healing, according to *Peacemaker* magazine. A video of a GRIP session at San Quentin was shown on the jumbo screen in the chapel. In the clip, the group sat in a circle listening as a woman named Jenny explained how she lost her parents. She said her parents got into an altercation with a knife, and after a violent argument her father killed her mother. Jenny’s father is in a Texas prison, where he has been for 20 years. Speakers included Warden Broomfield. “I spent my career at maximum security prisons where all hearts were closed. Talking to residents at San Quentin

you can tell that they have changed,” said Broomfield. “This program is the real deal. This program is legit.” State Sen. Josh Becker (D) attended the graduation. “Now you have done your job. Now it is time for me to do my job. To keep the recidivism rate less than one percent you need help. This

“This Program is the real deal. This program is legit.”
— Warden Ronald J. Broomfield

ence with GRIP taught him how to decompress,” said Dominica Goodall, wife of Harry Goodall Jr., a graduate of GRIP Tribe 728. She also said, “You have to deal with anger to have peace around you.” Jon Goldberg graduated with Tribe 864. His mother and brother praised him for his achievement. “I’m here today to celebrate my son’s achievement. There are some things he went through that now he owns up to... In the past Jon was not a communicator,” said Goldberg’s mother. Graduates talked about how the program has helped them cope with adversity. “GRIP taught me how to deal with grief. Losing somebody growing up and having that bottled up inside for so long can affect you. GRIP allowed me to feel comfortable,” said Carlos Robinson, Tribe 864 graduate. “Hurt people hurt people, and healed people heal people; thank you for the transformation,” said Bryan Monge of Tribe 847. “I feel good that I got to use the tools. I got a higher power that brings me back as a peacemaker,” said Wil-

liam Hearn of Tribe 847. Former residents of San Quentin who had been through the program, as well as current GRIP facilitators, shared stories about how the program changed their lives. “I’m a peacemaker, and I want to show fellow GRIP participants that change is possible,” said Fanon “Red” Figgers. Figgers is now a facilitator at Soledad State Prison. Another former resident who paroled earlier this year explained how a denial from the Board motivated him to get involved with self-help. “I went to Board in 2016, I was denied seven years. The Commissioner told me, ‘Mr. Ross we can’t let you out of prison with a high risk of recidivism, the public will not allow it.’ I used that to motivate me to do the work,” said Tommy Shakur Ross. Tranquillano Figueroa, a graduate of Spanish-speaking Tribe 315, played guitar and sang in Spanish about the four principles of GRIP. Spanish staff facilitator Lucia de la Fuente was unable to attend the ceremony. But she sent a message that

was read by San Quentin resident and Spanish-language facilitator Tare Beltranchuc. She wrote, “Today, your life as peacemakers begins. I want you to know that my mind and prayers are with you all. I carry you all in my heart. It is your responsibility to pass the work to the next generation ... We are the ones to bring healing to our communities when we get out. We will be waiting for you all with open arms and a happy soul.” The ceremony ended with the Rite of Passage, where attendees stood side-by-side along the Chapel’s isle, forming a makeshift tunnel by raising their hands. This tradition represents readiness to reenter the community. All the graduates then passed through the tunnel and returned to their seats to sign a peace pledge — a promise not to commit violent acts. Afterward, everyone enjoyed sandwiches, cupcakes, and bottled water, courtesy of the GRIP Institute, and graduates mingled with their families in celebration of their accomplishments.

EDUCATION

SVSP's Rio Salinas Adult School earns six-year reaccreditation

Submitted by CDCR

Rio Salinas Adult School accredited through June 2028

The adult school at Salinas Valley State Prison (SVSP) is committed to collaboration and quality education. Rio Salinas Adult School (RSAS) has earned Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) reaccreditation through June 2028.

WASC reviews schools to ensure their commitment to student learning and ongoing improvement. Following their review in November 2021, WASC found SVSP has a trustworthy education department that supports student learning and achievement. Their findings show the school is deeply committed to school-wide improvement.

The SVSP accreditation process

The educational professionals on WASC's four-member Visiting Committee held a three-day virtual visit. The school submitted a comprehensive self-study report to



Courtesy of CDCR

Rio Salinas Adult School, located at Salinas Valley State Prison, recently earned a six-year reaccreditation through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and will remain accredited through June 2028.

the committee that was several years in the making. The report included input from all faculty, custody leadership, and com-

munity partners. Every RSAS faculty member participated in virtual interviews with the committee. Also, more than

50 videos show every area and function of the school's services.

The committee read input

and support from students, SVSP warden, chief deputy warden, associate wardens, captains, education officers,

and other custody staff. This strong custody-education partnership has resulted in an increase of classroom hours and library visits by students and others over the past two years.

With the help of faculty peer leaders and trainings, the school culture has grown to one of strong collaboration. An example of this is the development of Professional Learning Communities (PLC). PLCs are an ongoing collaboration of educators to share best practices and achieve better results for the students they serve.

SVSP adult school lauded for collaboration

The WASC Commission granted RSAS a six-year accreditation through June 30, 2028. Because the last and only time RSAS earned a six-year accreditation was in 2001, this is an exceptional achievement.

SVSP is very proud of the RSAS team and the commitment of all stakeholders. Their hard work ensures that education continues to be a top priority at SVSP.

Mt. Tam College faculty going through 'bittersweet' transition

By Bonaru Richardson
Contributing Writer

On a traditional college campus, when a faculty member leaves, it may or may not be a big deal. But in a tight-knit community like San Quentin's Mount Tamalpais College (MTC), when someone is absent, it's obvious.

Former MTC staff member Priya Kandaswamy has moved on to help build her community as an associate professor of Women's Studies at a state university.

"I feel really grateful to have gotten to meet so many amazing students at MTC and that the things I learned from students about the California prison system and about prison higher education are things that I am sure will shape my future research and teaching," Kandaswamy said. Kandaswamy hopes to con-



Vincent O'Bannon, SQNews

Former MTC staff member
Priya Kandaswamy.

tinue to work with incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students in California.

A profound, heart-felt loss is rippling through our thriving community, which she helped create. This sentiment is especially true for those students who came back to school periodically during the

COVID-19 lockdowns only to find some of their teachers, tutors, or classmates had moved on.

For MTC staff members, losing a good co-worker can be just as heartbreaking. Corey McNeil is a former student and now an Alumni Affairs Associate at MTC.

"Seeing my colleagues leave Mount Tamalpais College was bittersweet," said McNeil. "Sad to see them go because they were fantastic to work with and excellent to learn from."

McNeil had to say goodbye to several staff members who left within a brief period. Kandaswamy, Kevin Milyavskiy, Anila Yadavalli and Hannah Evans are all noticeably absent now.

"I'm excited for them and the lives they will positively impact, as they have done with Mount Tamalpais stu-

dents," said McNeil. "I'm also glad to know that they will still be working in academia, which leaves hope that we may be able to collaborate again in some way."

Yadavalli is now a Lecturer with the Centre for Education in Mathematics and Computing at the University of Waterloo. In her faculty role she will spend half of her time teaching undergraduate math classes and half of her time running outreach programs for youth.

Prior to joining MTC, Yadavalli was involved in programs aimed at getting youth interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). She is excited to be working with kids again.

Yadavalli said she deeply misses the San Quentin community, whether waving to students in the yard or hearing students get excited about



Vincent O'Bannon, SQNews

Former MTC staff member
Anila Yadavalli.

classes, such as astronomy and math circles, or even hearing students complain about their math classes.

Most MTC students, alumni, faculty and staff would argue that the college has single-handedly transformed the prison culture at San Quentin and built a community within

the walls.

It's noticeable that topics like abandonment are openly discussed amongst students as a way to deepen their understanding about how community ties, or lack thereof, impact them personally.

Nevertheless, MTC students also find comfort in knowing these amazing people are moving on to help others build better communities as well. When special people decide to move forward in their life journey, greatness is destined to follow their lead.

These amazing teachers are the definition of greatness. Whether they choose to be or not, they become models that many are inspired to follow.

Kandaswamy said she hopes to continue, in her new role, to connect her work to higher education in prisons.

By Charlotte West
Open Campus Reporter
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College Inside Newsletter

I first read about Johnny Pippins last fall when I was Googling graduate programs in prison. It turns out, there's not much out there other than a program in Texas, a handful of faith-based programs, and some correspondence programs. Then I came across a post, "A Prisoner and a Ph.D." on Brown University Professor Glenn Loury's blog. Loury was the first Black economist to gain tenure at Harvard and he's written extensively about race and mass incarceration.

He published a letter from Johnny detailing his educational accomplishments behind bars — he's earned a bachelor's and master's, including a remote internship, paid for with the inheritance left by his mother. Not only that, he's been accepted and offered full funding for the doctoral program in sociology at University of Iowa.

The catch? Unlike his master's in statistics, which was an asynchronous online program, Johnny has to be there in person. And he's still got four years left of the 30 he's expected to serve.

He's waiting to hear on a clemency petition that has been sitting on Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker's desk since last fall. He's hoping the governor

How much should education matter in clemency?

will commute his sentence in time to start his Ph.D. in August.

Part of the 'lost generation'

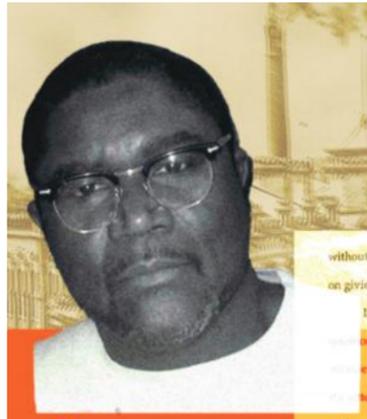
The more I learned about Johnny, the more I saw how his story highlights many of the big issues facing the U.S. criminal-legal system.

In 1996, he went to prison for murder at the age of 26 — one of thousands upon thousands of young Black and Brown men that belong to what prison journalist John J. Lennon calls the "lost generation." That was two years after Congress eliminated Pell Grants for prisoners with the 1994 crime bill, heralding an era of mandatory minimums, three strikes laws, and extreme sentences.

Johnny was the lone defendant in his case to go to trial. While he faced a longer sentence than the rest of his crew because he pulled the trigger in the drug-related shooting, he also paid what researchers call "the trial penalty."

While the right to a trial by jury is enshrined in the Sixth Amendment, less than three percent of all state and federal cases are heard by a jury. And those who do choose to exercise those rights "face exponentially

higher sentences" if they lose, the National Association of

Illustration by Emily Forschen for Open Campus.
Photos courtesy of Johnny Pippins and Fortepan Iowa.

Criminal Defense Lawyers has found. In Johnny's case, that meant consecutive sentences that added up to nearly 30 years behind bars.

Should education be the bar?

Johnny's education — both the degrees he has already completed and the Ph.D. that he wants to do — are the basis of his application for commutation. So how much does education matter in clemency decisions? And how much should it matter?

Factors the review board

and the governor consider include remorse, disciplinary history, housing and job prospects, upbringing, as well as education and other programming while incarcerated, said Jennifer Soble of the Illinois Prison Project. Education as a measure of personal growth and transformation can be problematic if it becomes the main metric by which all clemency applications are judged.

Many prisoners with long sentences are excluded from most or all educational opportunities, or do not have the financial resources to self-finance higher education. Many people might engage in informal learning, something that is significantly more difficult to quantify in a clemency application than formal credentials gained through a graduate program.

"There are hundreds of thousands of people who are currently incarcerated, who are just as deserving of meaningful review, and who have poured their hearts and souls into their own personal growth and development," Soble told me.

Johnny agrees. "I want to get out, no doubt," he said, "but I am worried that if this sets the bar, a lot of worthy people will

be left behind."

Johnny's story has parallels with that of Brandon Brown, who was able to start his Ph.D. at George Mason University in 2020 while he was incarcerated in Maine only because his program pivoted to online learning during the pandemic.

Both Brandon and Johnny have had to push prison administrators to gain permission to participate in online learning for their master's program, and both had an unusual combination of persistence and opportunity that opened doors. In Brandon's case, he got permission only because administrators didn't think he'd get admitted to graduate school.

"I don't believe I'm exceptional, only that I had exceptional opportunities," Brandon says. "It gets under my skin when all people want to talk about is how I did this; it doesn't matter how I did it unless we can make it possible for other people."

A case for academic advising

The other thing that struck me in talking with Johnny was the fact that he still has a gap in his knowledge about higher education despite all of his accomplishments. At the age of 52, he's dealing with many



Open Campus

of the same challenges that all first-generation students face, with the added complexities of studying from prison.

During our first conversation, I asked him if he had any questions for me. He had received his financial aid package from Iowa and wondered if he might still be eligible for Pell Grants. Unfortunately, I had to tell him that Pell Grants are only for students seeking first-time undergraduate degrees.

He also shared how it took him a while to even figure out what an asynchronous online program was — until he finally got the IT department to tell him it simply means that you download a pre-recorded lecture to your device and watch it at your convenience.

Johnny's story speaks to the need to build strong systems for academic advising as more colleges consider launching prison education programs with Pell Grant restoration next summer. Not only will incarcerated students need help navigating their undergraduate education, they also need information about what options are available should they want to continue their education after that.

Prisoners often struggle to obtain adequate dental care

By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Staff Writer

Adequate dental care is frequently lacking in prisons and contributes to problems in rehabilitation and failures upon release, according to reporting by Justin Stably in the *PBS NewsHour*.

The state of dental care for the incarcerated is similar across the country and usually means extended periods of waiting that end up causing long-term damage. Prisons will often wait until an incarcerated person's problem tooth has turned into an emergency before beginning treatment, even if patients have abscesses and swollen faces, said the report.

Nanete Sorich, the public affairs manager for Pioneer Human Services, a reentry services provider for people leaving prison said, "Basically the answer is, 'You have a toothache? Yank it.'"

Prison dentists may provide annual cleanings, but it can take months before a more extensive procedure receives authorization.

The story cited the case of Eugene Youngblood, whose two front teeth suffered damage in a car crash at age 16. Two years later, he ended up in prison with a life sentence, the article reported.

During a routine prison dental checkup, he received a root canal with a promise that he would get implants or dentures in the future. Over the years, changing prison dental policies prevented him from receiving implants or dentures, which the new policies considered "cosmetic" procedures. His two front teeth eventually gave out.

"It was horrible; it became a problem to eat," said Youngblood.

Dental procedures approved are often a quick or temporary fix. Some prisons do not even perform annual checkups due to staff shortages.

Addressing the issue through the courts has had moderate success. Alison Hardy of the Prison Law Office, which does nonprofit advocacy for incarcerated persons, sued California for better dental care in its prisons, according to *PBS*.

"One of the biggest barriers that we found to the delivery of health care was that they were not paying their dentists enough," said Hardy in reference to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).

Hardy said CDCR eventually increased pay for dentists and made other changes that improved dental care, which led to a withdrawal of the lawsuit. Hardy pointed out that some dental problems, such as orthodontic care, still persist.

People with substance use disorders whose dental issues go untreated sometimes relapse in their addiction because drugs are a way to cope with pain, said the article. Serious dental problems often plague drug users, especially methamphetamine users, who tend to drink sugary, acidic sodas. Poor oral care also damages self-confidence and self-esteem.

"There are a lot of things that happen [to incarcerated people] that, in our minds, makes us feel like we're worthless," said Youngblood, who now has employment with a dental plan after regaining his freedom. The co-pay for the dental procedure for the restoration of his two front teeth took him nearly a year to repay.

Dental damage from poor care in prison can make it harder for the formerly incarcerated to find jobs.

Youngblood pointed out that many people associate missing teeth with a history of violence or fighting. "It's like having a tattoo on your face," he said.

CDCR creates new diabetes support program

By Steve Brooks
Journalism Guild chair

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has authorized a new group to help incarcerated people manage their diabetes.

The group is called the Diabetes Self-Management and Education Support (DSMES) group.

"It's a six week group with the goal to improve the health outcomes of those with diabetes through high-quality, patient-centered diabetes education," said San Quentin Dietician R. Reithman.

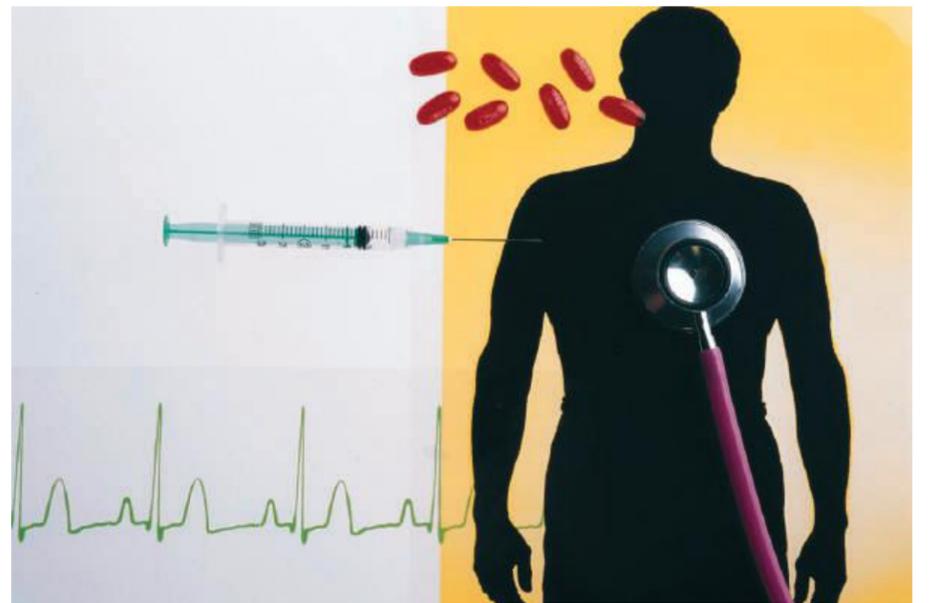
Participants who complete this six week program may receive a certificate and Rehabilitation Achievement Credits for taking the initiative to improve their health, according to Reithman.

"You're going to learn what is diabetes, what are coping skills — healthy coping skills can help with stress with being in prison," she said.

Diabetes is a chronic, metabolic disease characterized by elevated levels of blood glucose (blood sugar), which over time leads to serious damage to the heart, blood vessels, eyes, kidneys and nerves, according to the World Health Organization.

The most common form of diabetes is Type-2, which occurs if the body becomes resistant to insulin.

The 2022 National Diabetes Statistics by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports an estimated 130 million adults in the United States have



pre-diabetes.

"Roughly 11% of Americans are living with diabetes and 38% of US adults are living with pre-diabetes," said Reithman. "The good news is diabetes is preventable and treatable."

People develop diabetes from eating a poor diet full of carbs, sugar, and empty of nutrients as well as a lack of exercise and by having a family history of diabetes.

Reithman encourages incarcerated people to eat a healthy, balanced diet full of fruits and vegetables (limit carbs like bread, rice, cereal) and to exercise and take medication as prescribed by the doctor, such as for high blood pressure, cholesterol and heart disease.

She also recommends routine doctor's visits and blood

work to prevent or diagnosis the disease early, which is beneficial to health outcomes.

"Individuals that live with uncontrolled diabetes for a longer period of time are at a higher risk for developing complications from diabetes," said Reithman. "Don't throw away fruits and vegetables."

The peer-oriented group aims to improve self-management, motivation and problem-solving skills for those with diabetes; create sustainable behavior changes and measurable improvements in A1c levels, fasting blood glucose and blood pressure; and provide ongoing diabetes support.

"There is evidence of a link between peer group participation in DSMES groups

and positive behavior changes and improved outcomes," according to Ms. R.

"Group sizes are limited and priority goes to those with an elevated A1c, but anyone can submit a request to participate to be in this group," she said.

Over the next few weeks Reithman also plans to put up pictures of the foods incarcerated people eat and the nutrition labels so they can actively protect their own health. The labels will help them get a sense of the calories they eat, how to count them and how to avoid dangerous, empty calories.

Anyone who would like to participate in the new diabetes group should turn in a medical request slip to speak with a primary care physician about the program.

Medication assisted treatment for substance use disorders

Transitions Clinic Network is a network of community health clinics that serve returning community members. TCN clinic programs are led by Community Health Workers (CHWs) who have lived the experience of incarceration and reentry and support people with their healthcare-related reentry needs.

What is Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)?

Transitions Clinic Network (TCN) hosts a monthly Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) column. We answer questions about health care and empower individuals to prepare for healthy reentry. This month we are writing about Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) for substance use disorders.

What is MAT?

MAT is the use of medications approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and prescribed by a medical provider for the treatment of substance use disorders (SUD). For people struggling with addiction, these medications can help reduce cravings and substance use, and prevent overdose. While many can do well using only medications to treat SUD, research shows that many may need counseling and behavioral health services to achieve full, sustained recovery. Any treatment plan or services should be responsive to the goals, priorities, and preferences of the individual.

What conditions can I take MAT for?

Not everyone who uses sub-

stances has a disorder or needs medication. For those who do, safe and effective FDA-approved medications are available for the treatment of alcohol use disorder, opioid use disorder, and tobacco/nicotine use disorder. In this column, we are focusing on MAT for opioid use disorder (OUD). MAT for OUD is safe and considered the best practice in the treatment of most patients with OUD, including pregnant women. The three FDA-approved medications for OUD are buprenorphine (Suboxone), methadone, and naltrexone.

Why is MAT being offered in prisons?

Studies have shown that MAT significantly reduces the risk of relapse and overdose from opioids. Up to 80 percent of incarcerated people have a SUD, and opioid users are at high risk of death or harm from overdose during incarceration and upon release. According to data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, from 2001 to 2018, the number of deaths from drug or alcohol intoxication in state prisons increased more than 600%. In 2019, 64 people incarcerated in CDCR died from over-

dose, making it the second leading cause of death.

Overdose is the *number one* cause of death upon release from prison. If individuals with OUD are stable on MAT when they are released, they are less likely to experience a fatal overdose after their release, even if they use opioids.

Isn't MAT just "swapping one addiction for another"?

This is a common misconception. People with long-term opioid use may have permanent brain chemistry changes — for some, this might mean they need MAT in order to feel normal and avoid withdrawals. MAT works by normalizing your brain chemistry to reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms. This allows people to function normally in their everyday lives.

I'm currently on MAT in prison. How do I continue treatment in the community after my release?

If you are on MAT already, you will receive 30-days of medication upon release. Nevertheless, it's best to get connected to care as soon as possible. First, you need to activate your Medi-Cal health insurance through your county. It will take some time to go through this process: find a health care provider in the community who can prescribe MAT, make an appointment, meet the provider, and get your medications from the pharmacy. You may also have difficulties picking up medications if your insurance is not yet active. Instead of waiting until you are almost out of medications, it's

best to start this process *right away* to avoid disruptions in your treatment.

If you are currently being prescribed MAT in the prison, you should receive a treatment plan with information about where and how to continue MAT in your community. This will be given to you by the ISUDT nursing staff. If you do not receive this information or would like to speak with

our staff about how to connect to care in the community, call our *TCN Reentry Health Hotline at 510-640-6000*.

Why am I being released with Naloxone?

Naloxone or "narcan" is an FDA-approved medication that can stop and reverse opioid overdose. CDCR is providing Naloxone and overdose prevention training to everyone releasing from prison. The risk of death from opioid overdose for people recently released is 129 times higher than the general population. This is due to factors including fentanyl in the drug supply and having decreased drug tolerance. Having naloxone ready to use is an important tool in preventing fatal overdose for you or others. You can also reduce your risk of overdose by testing — using a little bit of a drug first — having others around who can administer naloxone if needed, and calling emergency medical services in the event of overdose.

Where can I find MAT treatment in the community?

MAT is covered by health insurance and can be found in many places, such as opioid treatment

programs, needle exchange programs, emergency rooms, or primary care clinics. Some primary care clinics have on-site MAT services while others do not. When you call a clinic to make an appointment, ask if they have a healthcare provider who will be able to prescribe the specific medication you are taking and if they take your insurance.

How will I pay for MAT in the community?

MAT services are an "essential health service." These medications and related doctor's visits are paid for through insurance, including Medi-Cal. Most people leaving prison are eligible for Medi-Cal.

Is there someone who can help me find a MAT provider in the community?

If you did not receive information from ISUDT or that information is not accurate, call the TCN Reentry Health Hotline to speak with a formerly incarcerated community health worker. We will answer some of your questions about healthcare in reentry and help you find a MAT provider in your community of return.

We're thrilled to be able to communicate with the incarcerated community. We will be talking about many different topics, such as health insurance, MAT, prevention and treatment for Hepatitis C, HIV, defining and finding gender-affirming care, managing chronic conditions, and much more. But most importantly, we want to answer YOUR questions. If you have healthcare-related questions about reentry, feel free to write us at:

JPAY Email: TCNinfo@ucsf.edu

Mailing Address: Transitions Clinic Network, 2401 Keith Street, San Francisco, CA 94124



SPANISH

Atractivas oportunidades de empleo para ex prisioneros

Por Carlos Drouaillet
Staff Writer

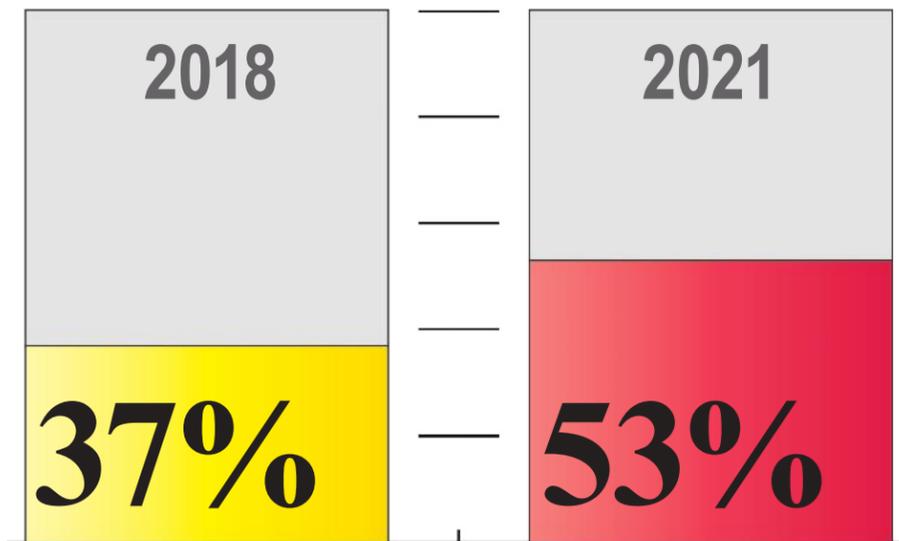
Los programas de reintegro solucionan el problema de la reincorporación a la fuerza laboral después de salir de la prisión, según La Prensa Asociada.

El caso de Antonio McGowan es un ejemplo que muestra las dificultades que experimentan los recién liberados. Al ser liberado en el 2014 había escasez de programas de apoyo para ex reos, y esa situación limitó las oportunidades de empleo para el recién liberado en Jackson, Mississippi, escribe Michael Goldberg para La Prensa Asociada.

Como todo hombre libre, McGowan soñaba con rehacer su vida y desempeñar un trabajo permanente con buen sueldo para hacer realidad sus sueños de progresar en la vida. Lamentablemente en el 2014 solo pudo conseguir empleo temporal en esa región de Mississippi, según el artículo.

“Las cosas no estaban en su lugar”, dijo McGowan. “No estaban donde yo quería que estuvieran en cuanto a ser un individuo de regreso a la sociedad. Fue una lucha”.

McGowan realizó trabajos pequeños. Algunos días él cortaba el césped de algunas residencias y otros días realizaba el trabajo que saliera, una vez pinto una casa. Sin embargo, él no encontró nada permanente por varios años, reporta el artículo.



Fuente: Administración de la Sociedad de Recursos Humanos (SHRM)

En el 2018, 37% de los empresarios en Mississippi estaban dispuestos a contratar ex-prisioneros. En solo tres años, ese número aumentó al 53%.

McGowan enfrentó tiempos difíciles como la notificación de la posible desconexión de utilidades y notificación de cuentas atrasadas, pero no se dio por vencido, según el reporte.

McGowan vio pasar los años sin desanimarse y sin perder su enfoque. Finalmente las cosas empezaron a cambiar con la ayuda del nuevo Programa de reintegro del condado de Hinds, creado en octubre. Este programa fue diseñado para impulsar la capacitación técnica de ex prisioneros, anuncia La Prensa

Asociada.

A través de dichos programas los empleadores tienen como meta llenar la mayoría de los 11.3 millones de posiciones vacantes a nivel nacional para remediar la escasez de fuerza laboral en EE.UU., explica el reportero Goldberg.

Aun en años de buena economía, los ex reos enfrentan innumerables obstáculos pues los empleadores contratan mayormente a los ciudadanos de buena reputación. Afortunadamente, la pandemia de COVID-19

ha ocasionado la escasez de empleados, siendo una buena oportunidad para aquellos que les urge un empleo permanente, comentó Eric Beamon, un reclutador de la empresa MagCor. Dicha empresa proporciona preparación laboral a individuos en los centros de detención en el estado de Mississippi, reitera el reporte.

“Creemos que la pandemia, en cierto sentido, fue de gran ayuda”, dijo Beamon. “Si ya nadie quiere trabajar o si todos quieren trabajar desde casa, los empresarios están

rogando por empleados”.

Stephanie Ferguson, gerente ejecutiva de política laboral en la Cámara Nacional de Comercio de EE.UU., escribió en su reporte de mayo, que la falta de empleos para aquellos con antecedentes criminales, obstruye que participen como fuerza laboral útil y aporten a la economía. Ella mencionó también que el ofrecer un empleo permanente a ex prisioneros es un factor importante para disminuir la reincidencia.

En el 2021, la Administración de la Sociedad de Recursos Humanos (SHRM por sus siglas en inglés), y el instituto Charles Koch llevó a cabo un estudio sobre la disponibilidad de contratar ex reos. El 53% de oficiales de recursos humanos expresaron que estaban dispuestos a contratar individuos con record penal, porcentaje más alto comparado con el 37% del año 2018.

Actualmente, la situación de los ex convictos en busca de trabajo ha tomado una postura positiva debido a que Hinds County y MagCor los están preparando para reintegrarse al mercado laboral, desempeñando trabajos apropiados a sus habilidades y aspiraciones. McGowan se interesó en la reparación de aire acondicionado y calefacción y el programa lo recomendó con la compañía Upchurch Services, empresa ubicada en Mississippi que permite a los aprendices tomar clases técnicas mientras adquieren experiencia en el trabajo.

McGowan quien fue contratado tiempo completo en Mayo, tiene un sueldo inicial de \$15 dólares por hora con seguro médico incluido. Él está feliz con su trabajo, según el artículo.

“Ya sea verano, invierno, primavera u otoño, se necesitara calefacción o aire acondicionado”, dijo McGowan. “Así que encontré algo con lo que puedo ayudar a la gente. Al mismo tiempo, puede mantenerme en la clase trabajadora, para que no vuelva a caer en las cosas que solía hacer”.

La lista de compañías dispuestas a contratar ex convictos ha incrementado. En Columbus Mississippi se encuentran las empresas Waffle House, Amazon y Lyle Machinery. Beamon, fue una de las compañías reclutadoras en Jackson, durante una feria de empleo, que mencionó a los prospectos, que el número de empleos disponibles ha aumentado y que se han visto sueldos de hasta \$20 por hora, de acuerdo al artículo en La Prensa Asociada.

McGowan, quien fue condenado por crímenes violentos, dijo, “Mi trabajo es más que solo un trabajo”.

“Es la mirada en la cara de alguien”, exclamó McGowan. “Cuando arreglas algo de ellos que se ha descompuesto, simplemente sonríen. Pasé tantos años lastimando a la gente. Así que conozco la mirada que tiene la gente cuando se siente herida. Mirar el reverso de eso, es suficiente para hacerme feliz”.

La perseverancia de un recluso



Por Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism
Guild Chairman

La perseverancia de un Recluso

“A los 42 años de edad me condenaron a cadena perpetua bajo la Ley de Tres Delitos Graves (mejor conocida en inglés como The Three Strike Law)”, dijo Ricardo Ortiz Montalvo.

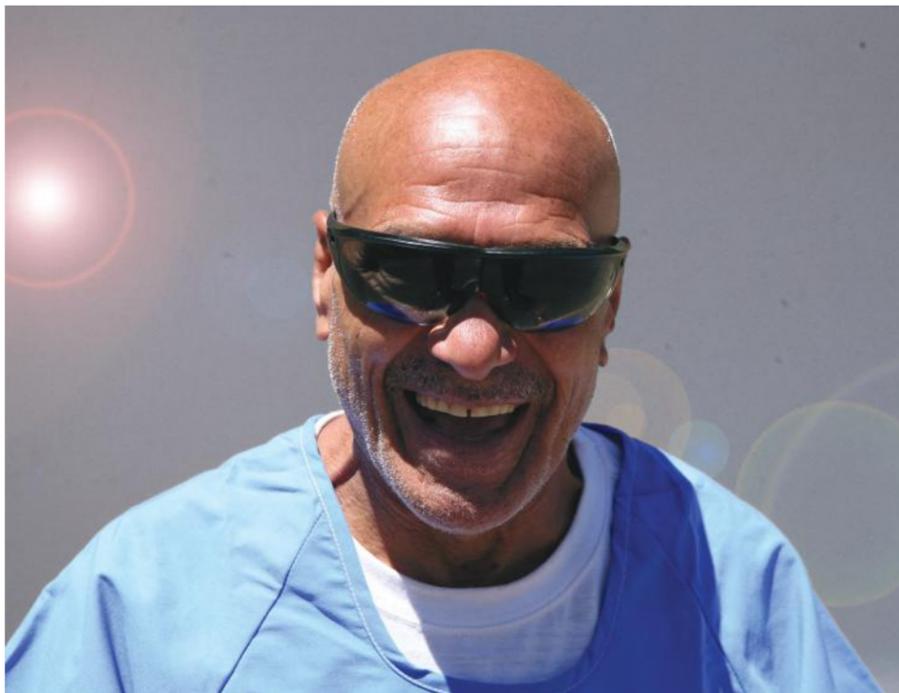
En los años 90's miles de personas fueron condenadas a cadena perpetua bajo esta ley. Este mandato causó que muchos reclusos perdieran la esperanza y el deseo de vivir. Montalvo es una de las personas que enfrentó la incertidumbre de algún día regresar con su familia.

Cuando un juez lo sentenció a cumplir una condena de 35 años a vida, Montalvo sintió que el estómago se le revolvía. Él levantó su mano para pedir permiso para dirigirse al juez y le preguntó “¿Por qué me está mandando a morir a la prisión cuando no soy ningún molestador de bebés, o un asesino?”

Los cargos del señor Ortiz consisten por recibir propiedad robada y por robar.

El juez le respondió, “Señor Ortiz Montalvo nosotros hicimos esta ley para usted”. Estas fueron las últimas palabras que él escuchó antes de ser retirado de la corte y colocado en un cuarto para ser supervisado en caso de querer suicidarse.

Debido a su edad, Montalvo automáticamente pensó que nunca vería a su esposa



Vincent O'Bannon, SQNews

e hijos. “Después que fui sentenciado, las autoridades me trataron como un asesino, o criminal pesado”, dijo Montalvo.

Cuando él fue arrestado, su hijo Ricardo solo tenía tres años de edad y no lo ha visto desde entonces. Montalvo dijo, “Si llegara a ver a mi hijo, no lo reconocería porque no lo he visto en 28 años”. Él comentó que si su hijo lo viera no lo reconocería, y tal vez pensaría que era un anciano de la tercera edad.

Él perdió toda la esperanza de salir de la prisión por lo que le pidió a su esposa que continuara con su vida. Montalvo no leía las cartas que le enviaban, no quería saber de nadie. La depresión y el no tener deseo de vivir lo llevaron a consumir drogas para escapar de su realidad e incluso estuvo a punto de quitarse la vida.

Por dos años su familia

trató de localizarlo en las páginas del internet y en las prisiones donde había estado. Los consejeros se comunicaban con Montalvo, pero él decía que no tenía familia. Él tenía miedo de recibir malas noticias sobre algún ser querido.

A los 52 años de edad, él comenzó a luchar para dejar las drogas y empezó a pensar en sus hijos y la familia. Según Montalvo, el evento que lo motivó a cambiar su vida fue la visita inesperada de su hermano menor.

Cuando él estaba en la prisión de Centinela, los oficiales de su unidad le ordenaron que se reportara a la sala de visitas. Montalvo dijo, “Yo me negué porque no le había mandado a nadie una forma para solicitar una visita, incluso llegué a pensar que alguien me quería matar”. Él continuó negándose a ir a la sala de visita hasta que un

sargento lo convenció.

“Fui al área de la visita y como un gato salvaje busqué a mi visitante”, Montalvo añadió. “A la distancia observé a un señor quien me reconoció porque la sangre llama a la sangre”. La persona que lo visitaba resultó ser su hermano José, el menor de la familia. Ellos se dieron un abrazo y lloraron de felicidad. Esa fue su primera y última visita que tuvo en 28 años.

Montalvo se presentó en junio, por segunda vez, ante la Audiencia de Libertad Condicional y los comisionarios le otorgaron su libertad por su honestidad, el tiempo que llevaba en la prisión por el crimen de robo y por su edad. Él expresó su anhelo de vivir veinte años más.

“Mientras haya vida no pierdan la esperanza de salir, sigan luchando”, concluyó Montalvo.

Demócratas e inmigración

Por Manuel Dorado
Journalist Guild writer

Después de años evitando preguntas sobre problemas de inmigración en nuestras fronteras, los demócratas comprendieron que no pueden seguir ignorando las restricciones impuestas por el expresidente Trump, reporta Ali Noorani.

Bajo el pretexto de la salud pública, el expresidente Trump impulsó la provisión Título 42, para cerrar fronteras con México, obstruyendo la entrada a los que buscaban asilo. A 1.7 millones de emigrantes se le han negado entrada al país deportándoles a México u otros países, reporta *Border Blues Daily Beast*.

Desde enero del 2021, han sucedido cerca de 10,000 secuestros, violaciones, y asaltos violentos contra los emigrantes deportados a sus países de origen, aplicando el Título 42. Ese mismo año la administración del Presidente Biden, creo un plan para manejar mejor la migración en la frontera. Acelerando el proceso de asilo a los que en realidad huyen de la persecución y para que los que no califiquen sean deportados rápidamente, de acuerdo al reporte

Además Biden incrementó los recursos financieros y el personal administrativo en la frontera — reclutando a FEMA para el manejo logístico e infraestructural en la zona. Simultáneamente, su administración mantiene dialogo abierto con México y otros países para llegar a ‘la raíz’ del problema migratorio y truncar la administración de Biden suspenderá las restricciones de Título 42, regresando a Título 8, para procesar a los que verdaderamente califican

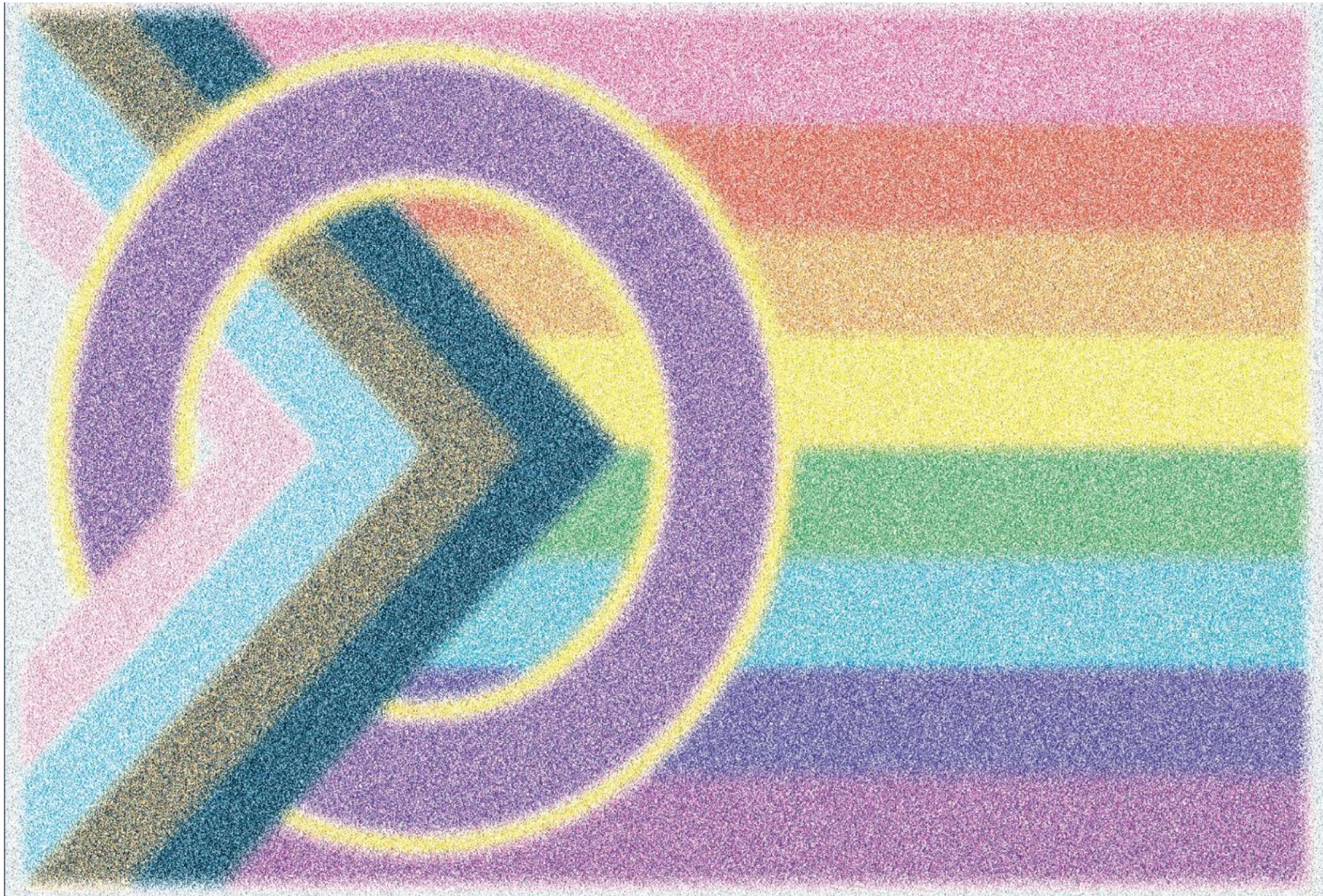
para el asilo y que no vayan a sufrir las consecuencias, pues al sacarlos de Estados Unidos surgirían impedimentos migratorios en el futuro, escribe Ali Noorani para el *Border Blues Daily Beast*.

Los Republicanos y demócratas que desean una reforma migratoria, prefieren las pólizas que Trump implementó durante su mandato, y procuran mantener el Título 42 permanentemente, de acuerdo con *Border Blues Daily Beast*.

Esta última primavera, el Senador Republicano John Cornyn y la Senadora Kyrsten Sinema, presentaron una Ley Bi-partidista para Soluciones en las Fronteras (BBSA). Esta ley es un proyecto político para que republicanos y demócratas lleguen a un acuerdo para discutir soluciones efectivas en la zona fronteriza, reporta Ali Noorani.

También desean ayudar, La Alianza de Consentimiento de La Nueva Inmigración, que se compone de asociaciones como La Cámara de Comercio de Estados Unidos, la Mesa Redonda de Negocios, Americanos para la Prosperidad de Negocios, junto con la Iglesia Metodista y la Asociación Nacional de Evangélicos. Esta alianza representa una completa gama política que busca una solución moderna para asegurar la frontera y proteger permanente y legalmente a jóvenes de DACA, trabajadores agrícolas, y a los que están en un estado de protección temporal (TPS), escribe Ali Noorani.

El Presidente Biden, necesita cesar de esperar que la inmigración vaya a desaparecer por sí sola y ver la urgencia de que Republicanos y Demócratas en Washington puedan llevar esta causa a los votantes de esta nación, de acuerdo al artículo en *Border Blues Daily Beast*.



La comunidad LGBTQ+ habla Hispana compartio con SQNews la lucha, perseverancias de ser transgénero

Por Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism
Guild Chairman

La comunidad LGBTQ+ de habla hispana compartió los retos que han enfrentado a consecuencia de su identificación, y el impacto que les ha causado en sus vidas.

SQNews realizó unas series de Preguntas y Respuestas.

Con los (las) siguiente participantes que se identificaron por sus pronombres.

Tony Tafoya (TT): (De 33 años de edad, se identificó por los pronombres de él o ellos.)

SQNews: ¿Cómo te identificas?

TT: Del género no identificado, hay veces me siento masculino y otras veces femenina. Hay veces me quiero rasurar mis piernas, otras veces no, depende del momento y como me sienta.

SQNews: ¿De qué manera tu orientación ha sido aceptada por tu familia?

TT: Nunca fui juzgado por la persona que soy.

SQNews: ¿Cómo se siente ser Latino y mariquita?

Adriel Ramírez (AR): (De 45 años de edad, se identificó por el pronombre de ella.) En la familia de mi padre todos son muy machistas. En mi familia, si tú demostrabas alguna señal de ser mariquita, ellos te lo quitaban a golpes.

SQNews: ¿Alguna vez tus padres te enseñaron lo que era ser mariquita?

AR: Mi mamá me vestía con ropa de mujer y tacones, ella pensaba que era algo chistoso. Ella no veía la verdad.

SQNews: ¿Alguien de tu familia sabía que eras mariquita?

AR: Mis hermanas sabían que había algo diferente conmigo, por mi forma de jugar con mis muñecos de G.I Joes, como si fueran muñecas.

SQNews: ¿Has declarado

tu homosexualidad a tu familia?

AR: Cuando tenía 12 años le dije a mi mamá que estaba interesado en jovencitos y ella me cacheteó. Sin embargo, un año antes que mi mamá falleciera. Yo le dije a ella que era homosexual — no le dije que era transgénero ya que pensé que no lo soportaría. Pero nunca le dije a mi padre ya que en ese momento él estaba enfermo de cáncer del hígado. Yo no quería mandarlo a la tumba con esa confesión.

SQNews: ¿Cómo era tu niñez?

AR: Mi niñez fue loca, ya que existía abuso físico y sexual, dejándome con muchos traumas.

SQNews: ¿Por qué es importante educar a la población encarcelada sobre tu homosexualidad?

Kara Díaz (KD): (Se identifica por el pronombre de ella.) Creo que es importante no solo para la comunidad LGBTQ+, sino también para uno mismo. Es necesario aprender a quererte y estar a gusto con su propio cuerpo o piel. Si tu no estas conforme haz de cuenta que estas en medio del océano sin un salvavidas.

SQNews: ¿Qué tan difícil es ser transgénero en la prisión?

KD: Es más difícil. Es una sociedad con diferentes reglas y políticas. Muchas gentes no aceptan a la comunidad LGBTQ+.

SQNews: ¿Desarrollaste tu identidad de transgénero en la prisión?

KD: No, siempre me sentí femenina. Pero ahora estoy más cómoda con mi lado femenino en comparación con mi lado masculino.

SQNews: ¿Tienen conocimiento tús padres de tu identidad sexual?

KD: Cuando era un niño

HABLANDO DIRECTAMENTE

“Yo conocí a otro prisionero transgénero quien me ayudó a “salir del clóset” y a descubrirme a mí misma. Me hizo ver que es mi vida y no la vida de mi familia. Así que tomé la decisión de escribirle una carta a mi madre y le dije que soy transgénero, si tú ya no quieres sabe nada de mi está bien, pero yo voy a vivir mi vida y a ser feliz.”

— Kara Díaz

mi mamá siempre decía, “Si algunos de mis hijos son maricas los rechazaré”. Para cubrir mi feminismo, seguí haz de cuenta que estas en medio del océano sin un salvavidas. De esta manera evité que me interrogaran sobre mi sexualidad. Pero me impedía que fuera lo que soy ahora. Yo sentí que decepcionaría a mi familia y que ellos no me iban a querer igual que antes.

SQNews: ¿Cómo te sentiste cuando llegaste a la prisión?

KD: Me sentí que tenía que asegurarme que nadie me iba hacer preguntas sobre mi homosexualidad o como dicen en la prisión “tener azúcar en mi tanque”. Pretendí odiar a los homosexuales y no los dejaba entrar en mi celda y tampoco hacia negocios con ellos.

SQNews: ¿Cómo superaste todo eso?

KD: Yo conocí a otro prisionero transgénero quien me ayudó a “salir del clóset” y a descubrirme a mí misma. Me hizo ver que es mi vida y no la vida de mi familia. Así que tomé la decisión de escribirle una carta a mi madre y le dije que soy marica, si tú ya no quieres sabe nada de mi está bien, pero yo voy a vivir mi vida y a ser feliz.

SQNews: ¿Estás pensando en tener un cambio de sexo?

KD: Si voy a tener una cirugía de confirmación.

SQNews: ¿Qué clase de terapia o asesoramiento estas recibiendo para este procedimiento?

KD: El programa de salud mental me esta ayudando. Mentalmente estoy preparada y es lo que yo quiero hacer. Hay gente que se burla mí, pero a mí no me importa porque puedo dormir feliz y

con la cabeza en alto.

SQNews: Cuál es el impacto de esta entrevistada como mujer transgénero?

KD: Me motiva. Uno de mis propósitos es que cuando salga de la prisión pueda ser parte de la comunidad LGBTQ+, y ser una activista, especialmente para las mujeres transgénero.

SQNews: ¿Qué clase de conflictos te has encontrado?

Elena López (EL): (De 48 años de edad quien se identifica por el pronombre de ella.) Me han odiado constantemente.

SQNews: ¿Cómo te identificas, siendo hijo y padre a la misma vez?

EL: En el 2019, le deje saber a mi mamá, mi esposa, mis hijos y hasta a mi nieto que soy transgénero. Mi nieto me llama abuela o abuelo depende como se sintiera. En

el 2021, le dije a mi padre que soy una mujer no un transgénero, pero una mujer. Él me dijo, “Es tu vida, tu puedes hacer lo que quieras con ella, solo ten cuidado”.

SQNews: ¿Cómo te sientes al regresar a casa como un transgénero?

EL: Es más fácil, lo difícil fue cambiar mi vida, pero descubrí mi verdadera identidad.

SQNews: ¿Has recibido la educación para cómo comportarte como una señorita?

EL: El departamento de Salud Mental me ha dado suficiente apoyo y el estado proporciona ayuda a través de los trabajadores sociales al regresar a la comunidad.

SQNews: ¿Qué clase de consejos le darías a alguien quien esta pasado por lo que tú has experimentado?

EL: No escuches lo negativo de la gente. Se una persona positiva contigo mismo y con otros. Respétate, vístete como una señorita. Si no te viste como un señorita, no te estas respetando ti misma.

SQNews: ¿Qué es lo siguiente para ti en el futuro?

EL: Veo mi futuro de una manera positiva. Lo primero es mantenerme positiva, reportarme con mi oficial de libertad condicional, asegurarme de asistir a todas las citas, alejarme del alcohol y las drogas y buscar el apoyo de mi familia.

SQNews: ¿Qué le dirías a tu comunidad que se encuentra en la prisión antes de regresar a casa?

EL: No se metan en problemas para que puedan regresar a casa. Se la persona que eres, no cambies, busca un futuro positivo fuera de estas paredes, estudia con ganas, involucrate en grupos de auto-ayuda, gánate los créditos meritorios para. que puedas regresar a casa.

SPORTS

Volunteers flood The Q for day of fun and games

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Contributing Writer

After two-and-a-half years of on-and-off COVID-19 lockdowns, volunteers flooded the San Quentin (SQ) Lower Yard in late August to play sports with the incarcerated in a day filled with emotion, competition, and fun.

Warden Ronald Broomfield threw out the first pitch for the SQ A's, who beat the visiting San Francisco Mission team by a score of 15-3. On another part of the yard, the SQ Warriors faced the Prison Sports Ministry's "Green Team" for the first time since their absence starting in 2019 with the COVID-19 pandemic. The Warriors won, 81-79.

The official sports season actually restarted the previous Saturday, Aug. 13, but only a fraction of the usual volunteers showed up. An early end to a COVID-19 lockdown — expected to continue for another week — caught many volunteers off guard. No one was scheduled to play baseball and relatively few tennis players came in from the community.

On that Saturday, the Prison Sports Ministry's "Bittermen" basketball team, a group of older guys who usually play the 40-and-over SQ Kings team, put together a last minute roster to play the SQ Warriors, but not surprisingly lost by nearly 20 points to the younger team.

San Quentin Warriors Basketball

On Saturday, Aug. 20, the Ministry's Green Team returned to play the SQ Warriors. The Ministry's Green Team featured two former pro-players — NBA D-League Evan "The Plumber" Fjelds and former overseas

pro-baller Ted Hahs.

Meanwhile, the SQ Warriors were not at full strength given everyone in West Block, Head Coach Jeremiah "JB" Brown, missed the game due to another viral quarantine.

Nonetheless, the game was a spirited battle that everyone enjoyed.

"I think it's good to get back; there is so much fellowship here," said Bill Epling, a sponsor of the Green Team, who is known for recruiting former pro and college players to battle the SQ Warriors. "I like the competition too."

Many of the veteran SQ Warriors players who the Green Team was used to playing had paroled during the pandemic. With talented new recruits to fill those shoes, the Green Team played against what, some may contend, could be the best SQ Warriors team in a decade.

"I don't think this is the best team. I think they are the most disciplined," said SQ Warriors Assistant Coach Jason Eurich, who coached the game. "The new guys dialed in to make the team."

In the first quarter, the Green Team was led by the 6-foot-9 Hahs. They went beast mode in the paint and were up 19-9.

But the SQ Warriors' Ricky Hale, 39, who played junior college ball at Merritt College in Oakland, arrived just in time for a family visit to give his team a strong presence in the paint against the Hahs. Hale helped his team to rally back to within three points at the half, 28-25.

"I knew it would be a challenge playing against guys 6'7", 6'9" when I'm 6'3", but it was a challenge we overcame," Hale said. "Speed was a weapon for us."



Tony Singh / SQNews

On the Day of Peace 2022, the Prison Sports Ministry's Green Team returns to do battle on The Q's basketball court for the first time since the pandemic started.

At halftime, the SQ Warriors formed a circle mid-court around Epling and expressed their condolences for loss of his 90-year old mother on the previous weekend.

"Bill has been there for us over the years, with support letters, bringing teams in, and helping us process our grief during half court circles," said Brian Asey, GM of the SQ Basketball Program. "We wanted to lift him up like he has done for us over the years."

The SQ Warriors dominated the third quarter, scoring 38 points to the Green Team's 26, opening up a 63-54 lead over the visitors.

New arrival Keyshawn "Steez" Strickland of the SQ Warriors led all scorers with 21 points and had the highlight of the game with a steal punctuated by a one-handed dunk.

"This was great," Strickland said. "It all came together when we started shutting them down." The 24-year-old said he played for Matomas High School.

Fjeld, the former D-League, only scored nine points. "I haven't played since 2019," Fjeld said. "Their defensive was impressive."

The game came down to the wire in the fourth quarter. Don Smith, one of the Green Team's sponsors, hit a short-range shot that ignited the crowd and his team. Smith is an OG over sixty and only 5-foot-6 at best, but he still has plenty of energy for the game and love for the SQ ballers he's been visiting over the decades.

The SQ Warriors lead was cut to five when Fjeld nailed a three. Another attempt with

32 seconds left on the clock missed, leaving the score at 79-74. From there, the home team was able to close out the game from the free-throw line.

Dontaye "Twin" Harris and Delvon Adams scored 13 points each with Hale and new recruit Derrell "Sadiq" Davis adding 11 each.

"It's a new culture," Harris said. "All we gonna do is win."

Hahs led the Green Team with 18 points followed by first-time visitor Jai Hundal with 17.

"It's humbling to see the community here," Hundal said. "Everyone is so friendly and welcoming. It was a good surprise and it gives me perspective about my day-to-day life."

Epling, who hates losing, was already scheming how to

recruit more firepower for his team.

"Barbosa can play now that he's a coach for Golden State, and maybe we can get Zaza Pachulia in here," Epling said, referring to the former NBA player. "It will be interesting to see when we have a full roster."

San Quentin A's Baseball

Back at the baseball diamond, it was a sentimental game for SQ A's short-stop Branden Riddle-Terrell, who was scheduled to parole Sept. 9. He threw the second pitch to start the game, after Warden Broomfield's honorary first, and Riddle-Terrell went on to pitch the next five innings.

"Baseball has been a key element in my growth," Riddle-Terrell said. "It was special having the Warden come down and root for us. He was a part of the team. He naturally meshed with us."

Riddle-Terrell has been instrumental to the baseball program, including making sure the outfield was watered and the infield maintained.

The baseball game was close until the 5th inning when the Mission's 3-2 lead began to evaporate. SQ A's Carrington "Cee" Russelle iced the game with a grand slam in the 8th inning.

"This game meant a lot," Russelle said. "I felt nervous from the excitement of seeing a team finally come down the hill. After a historic 38-2 season in 2019, we were looking forward to this day and I got my first grand slam — one of the things that I wanted to accomplish."

CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Five-time NBA Most Valuable Player
- 12-time NBA All-Star
- NBA All-Star Game MVP
- Three-time All-NBA First Team
- Eight-time All-NBA Second Team
- NBA All-Defensive First Team
- Four-time NBA rebounding champion
- NBA 25th/35th/50th Anniversary Teams
- No. 6 retired by Boston Celtics
- Two-time NCAA champion
- NCAA Tournament Most Outstanding Player
- UPI College Player of the Year
- Two-time Helms Player of the Year
- Two-time Consensus First-Team All-American
- WCC Player of the Year
- No. 6 retired by the University of San Francisco

AS COACH:

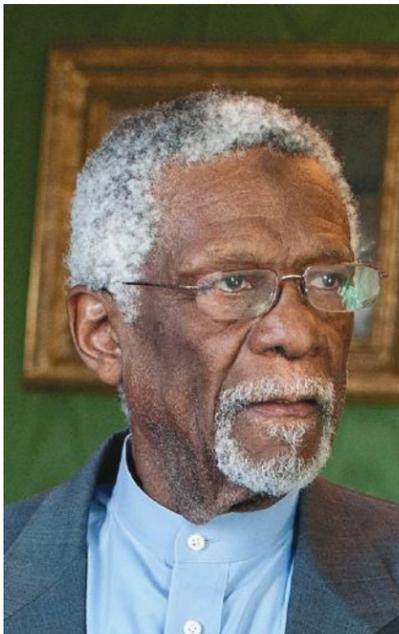
- Two-time NBA champion

CAREER NBA STATISTICS:

- **Points** 14,522 (15.1 ppg average)
- **Rebounds** 21,620 (22.5 rpg average)
- **Assists** 4,100 (4.3 apg average)

Basketball world loses another legend

Legendary Boston Celtics Center Bill Russell passes at age 88



Stock image

By **Timothy Hicks**
Sports Editor

The professional sports world has lost the legendary Bill Russell, considered one of the greatest basketball players of all time. He died July 31 at the age of 88 after reports of cardiac problems.

The 6-foot-10 center left an impressive legacy for hoop players who want to strive for greatness. William Felton Russell was born in Monroe, Louisiana, but his basketball persona was honed in the Bay Area at McClymonds High School in Oakland.

The team gave Russell his start in his basketball career after a few cuts of not making the team there and elsewhere, according to Wikipedia. Coach George Powles saw the raw talent in the future superstar, said the entry. Russell took the team to back-to-back state champion-

ships.

Although he wasn't considered one the highest offensive scorers, it was his notable defense and shot blocks that stood out to coaches.

"To play good defense... it was told back then that you had to stay flatfooted at all times to react quickly. When I started to jump to make defensive plays and to block shots, I was initially corrected, but I stuck with it, and it paid off," Russell said while on a California High School All-Stars Tour.

That defense took Russell to the University of San Francisco, the only university that gave him a chance during the racial climate back then. He led the team to its only two NCAA championships that still stand to this day.

Russell began his professional career when he was selected second over-all in the NBA draft by the St. Louis Hawks in 1956. He

later went to the Boston Celtics and that's where he gained his notoriety as the big, shot-blocking center. He led the team to 11 championships out of the 13 seasons he played with the team.

During this time, Russell battled regularly against his then rival Wilt Chamberlain. Russell's Celtics hosted Chamberlain's then Philadelphia Warriors, and commentators called the matchup between the best offensive and defensive centers "The Big Collision" and the "Battle of the Titans," according to Wikipedia.

No one has yet been able to match Russell's dominating record of championship rings in the NBA. Russell went on to coach and was a pioneer on and off the court.

He also stood up against racism and oppression during the civil rights era of Martin Luther King Jr. "I never permitted myself to be a victim," Russell said.

TIER TALK

Rodney "Pitt" Baylis reflects on pre-COVID-19 sports



Tony Singh / SQNews

I got the opportunity to sit down with Rodney "Pitt" Baylis, 62, and talk about sports here at the prison and some of his favorite teams and players. He was sitting in his chair on the side of the Education B Building where he can usually be found.

He expressed his love for education along with his passion for giving back and helping other incarcerated people with their studies. Baylis graduated with an AA degree from the college program here. He also is one of the founders of an education program here called APEP, an academic program for those who are deficient in their studies.

When Baylis is not spending his time educating others, he is watching the San Quentin sports programs — that is until COVID-19. He also spends time with his 15-inch television in his cell.

Tim Hicks (TH): What do you think of sports since COVID-19 hit?

Rodney Baylis (RB): They made sports boring during COVID-19, with the bubble and quarantines. It used to be good here [at The Q] when we could see guys like ATL, Austin, T-Tone and Brandon. Sports is always something to look forward to and pass time. Most of all, it gives the youngsters around here something to

do other than getting into trouble. You take sports away from us; it's pretty much nothing else.

TH: Yeah, I agree. Those guys made the games interesting to watch. There are other guys here now that are promising. Your spot has the best view to watch baseball. Do you like any basketball teams and did you watch sports on TV when there were none happening here at The Q?

RB: Well, yeah I used to watch the games on TV, but I don't have a favorite team at the moment. Sports on TV are not like they used to be either. All the rules have changed. Football is too soft and basket-

ball is too. It's not like when Michael Jordan, Carl Malone, Patrick Ewing, Charles Barkley, Reggie Miller and Dominique Wilkins played. Or Jack Tatum, Walter Payton, Earl Campbell or Marcus Allen did their thing on the football field. It's not the same.

TH: Those dudes you mentioned were some of my favorite ones too.

RB: Yeah, I don't have a favorite team. I just have favorite players.

TH: Who are your favorite players these days?

RB: I like LeBron James, but he do cry too much sometimes. I like Curry, Durant and Jah Morant. I like that the Warriors

won the championship again and got to represent the Bay for me. I would of love to be at the parade. Nowadays, I gravitate towards the women competitions. They're more exciting to me.

TH: What do you think about the Raiders?

RB: I think they are going to crash if they keep Carr as the quarterback.

TH: Ouch! Have you ever played any sports?

RB: I played football, baseball and ran track in my younger years. And I say this: Although sports are back at The Q and on the outside, they are not the same, but I'm still a sports fan.

—**Timothy Hicks**

U.S. Tennis Association returns to The Q



Tony Singh / SQNews

Volunteers from the United States Tennis Association enjoy a day at The Q competing with incarcerated tennis players.

By Timothy Hicks
Sports Editor

Members of the San Quentin Tennis Club slapped rackets against tennis balls in a series of matches against outside volunteers in August for the first time since the pandemic let up.

Pat Leog, Janie McCauley, Margie Moran and her 19-year-old son, Stefan Schneider, came into the prison to compete with the incarcerated tennis players. Some visitors said it was the best experience of their lives.

"To me it's about meeting new people and being able to train and get better," said Schneider.

This was his first time inside of a prison and it was nothing like what he imagined it would be. He envisioned it being a bunch of hardened

criminals, a lot of fights and riots. In fact, it was just the opposite.

"This was my favorite volunteer experience I've ever had. These guys are competitive and I'm glad that they are enjoying it," he commented.

Schneider, his mother and the rest of the tennis volunteers are part of the United States Tennis Association. They play regularly in different locations in the recreational tennis league in Northern California. All ages and all skill levels are able to compete. According to Schneider, he and his mom and guests have a skill-set rating of around 3.5 to 4.5, which is the middle or average.

That Saturday was hot and the sun radiated down through the fenced-in tennis court. Eight San Quentin's residents, young and old, got

the opportunity to play and enjoy the company of the outside guests.

"I don't even feel like I'm in prison [when volunteers are here]," said Braydon Tennyson, a newcomer to the prison and to the club. "I forget about everything else and just play tennis. It's a privilege."

That was his first time meeting a volunteer, and Tennyson was very appreciative of the visitors coming into the prison to play with the incarcerated men.

The volunteers teamed up, each with a SQ resident, for double matches. Margie Moran partnered with SQ's James Duff while AP sports writer and avid tennis player Janie McCauley partnered with SQ tennis club member Tim. It was evident that the volunteer skill-set was up to par, but the residents were not

slacking. However, in the set match point, Moran's team scored the victory point, 4-3.

"This was a great experience," said Moran. "With all of the pre-conceived notions about prison, I thought it would be intimidating and aggressive, but no, it's just tennis. This is a once in a lifetime chance to see this world."

The matches between the players and volunteers were all competitive, but they were more than just tennis to McCauley. She had been waiting to come into the prison and play against the club members since early June. She was so determined not to miss this opportunity that she did not allow an injury she had sustained on the outside playing tennis to deter her from doing so inside.

"This is the best experience I can ever imagine," said McCauley. She surveyed the yard, appreciative of the view, and said, "I just love the activity going on around here. Everybody is doing something with themselves."

To long-time volunteer Pat Leog, who has been playing tennis for 49 years, the experience of women coming into the men's prison to compete against them brought him a sense of balance and variety. That was the highlight of the day for him.

"To bring the women in to play the men is the highlight for me," said Leog.

The matches were off-set because each team playing was paired with a woman who had won her match.

LV Raiders made history with first Black female president

The Las Vegas Raiders has made history by hiring the first African American female as its franchise president.

Sandra Douglas Morgan, 44, has only been hired for a short time as president, but she is not new to football and business knowledge.

Morgan credits to her family of passionate football fans and her husband, a former NFL safety, for her familiarity with football.

"I have accepted this role because I believe in the promise of the Raiders, I believe in the future of the Raiders," Morgan said at a news conference.

Morgan is a Las Vegas native with a wealth of experience in Nevada's gaming industry, including in the Raiders' new home city, which made her an obvious candidate for the Raiders' open president position, ABC News reported July 14.

According to Wikipedia, Morgan earned a bachelor degree in political science from the University of Nevada, Reno, and a law degree from UNLV's Boyd Law School. She served in the following capacities prior to taking over as the Raiders' team president:

- Litigation attorney, MGM Resorts International;
- City attorney, North Las Vegas (2013-16);
- Director of external af-

fairs, AT&T Services Inc. (2016-19);

- Chairwoman, Nevada Gaming Control Board (2019-21), where she also broke barriers as being the first Black woman in that position.

Morgan's Wikipedia entry stated she also served on the Nevada State Athletic Commission prior to her role as Raiders' president.

During her time as chairwoman of the gaming control board, Morgan instituted cashless wagering regulations and policies against discrimination and harassment among gaming licensees. She was also in charge of navigating the COVID-19 pandemic — for the closing and reopening of casinos as necessary for safety.

"I'm just really, really lucky to have this opportunity and hopefully open doors for many other women and women of color in leadership roles in sports," Morgan said to ABC News.

Morgan seized the opportunity for the position when former Raiders President Dan Ventrelle was let go after less than a year at the position, said ABC News.

"I can't wait to have this new season and a full stadium at Allegiant Stadium," Morgan said. "We're ready to go and ready to kick it off."

— Timothy Hicks

A New Starting Line

By Steve Brooks
Journalism Guild Chair

Former San Quentin resident and 1000 Mile Club runner, Markelle "the Gazelle" Taylor, recently appeared on the CBS Morning show that features Gayle King.

On a new series called "Pushing the Limits," Taylor sat with journalist David Begnaud and talked about beginning his life again on a segment titled "A New Starting Line."

Taylor was granted parole after 18 years in prison, on a 15-years-to-life sentence, for the death of his unborn son. He said he got into an altercation with his girlfriend and punched her in the stomach. After, the baby stopped moving.

"The instinct came on: What the Hell did I do? Why

did I do this?" Taylor asked himself.

The CBS segment began with Taylor running into a sunrise with at a local high school's track. He wore his black baseball cap turned backwards, a dark gray tank top and black shorts. The scene fades to Taylor running through the beautiful downtown streets of a city in Northern California, then to running inside San Quentin prison.

Taylor told Begnaud he developed a passion for long-distance running on San Quentin's Lower Yard track; a passion that paved the way for him to run the Boston Marathon twice and finish in the top 5% of all runners.

"I got an emotional high," Taylor said.

When he came to prison, Taylor carried a lot of pain

but running helped pull him out of the pain. It gave him purpose.

As a young boy, Taylor said his family never told him he mattered or treated him like he mattered. He experienced much violence in his home. He and his siblings used to get beatings for failing to clean the house. He said he was normalized to believe violence was okay.

"We got whipped out of our sleep," Taylor explained.

Only his teachers told him they were proud of him.

Diana Fitzpatrick, a 1000 Mile Club coach who helped Taylor train for Boston, said it made her happy to see Taylor finally feel like he mattered.

"You showing him that he mattered is why you got the best out of him?" Begnaud asked Fitzpatrick.

"I have always believed in

Markelle 'the Gazelle' Taylor talks about his passion for running on the Morning Show

Markelle and I have always trusted him," she said with teary eyes.

A lot of the guys Taylor used to run with on the club got an opportunity to see him on the CBS Morning show from their cells.

"To see him running free on nationwide TV was an awesome surprise," said Tommy Wickerd, 1000 Mile Club president. "He gives us hope of a better future for ourselves."

Darren Settlemyer remembers buying Taylor his first pair of running shoes when he heard that Taylor ran track in college.

"As soon as we started to run together, he was too fast," said Settlemyer. "I told him to get back here; at least for tonight you're going to run with me. I was like a turtle trying to run with a cheetah."

Mark Jarosik was Taylor's closest competitor on the Lower Yard track. Before Jarosik arrived at San Quentin, he used to read the San Quentin News and cut out the 1000 Mile Club's articles. He trained hard in an attempt to knock Taylor off his throne.

"I underestimated both his speed and endurance," said Jarosik. "What was I thinking?"

Jarosik got to know Taylor and discovered that they were both born in Cook County, Illinois. He said he was proud of Taylor and to see Taylor's marathon record at San Quentin pushed down to 3:10:42.

Jarosik set the third fastest time with 3:16:48. Even now, with Jarosik in his 50s, he is still chasing Taylor's 1000 Mile Club record.

After Taylor discussed his life, Begnaud asked him,

"Who is Taylor now?"

"Someone who stopped running from his fears and anxieties and who is paying his debt to society by having a positive influence on others," Taylor responded.

When asked what his tombstone would say when he passed away, Taylor said: "He fell but he got up, and he changed the lives of a lot of human beings for the better."

Taylor said running helps keep him accountable.

After the segment, Begnaud said, "As human beings I feel like we have an obligation to give people a second chance."

"I'm sure he is haunted by the death of his son," said Gayle King. "We are products of our environment. Not to excuse at all what he has done, but it's good to see that he wants to do something better."

Collaboration: NFL & Hip-hop mogul Ice Cube collaborate for Black-owned business

The NFL has reached out to hip hop mogul and entrepreneur O'Shea Jackson Sr., better known as Ice Cube, to bridge the gap of opportunity and wealth for Black owned businesses, as reported in the Feb. 2022 issue of *The Final Call*.

"Troy Vincent and Roger Goodell really came to us and said, 'Hey, what can we do in our business to help bridge this wealth gap?'" said Ice Cube on the Pat McAfee Show, according to the article. Mr. Goodell is the NFL Commissioner and Mr. Vincent is executive vice president of football operations.

Ice Cube's work with the Contract With Black America Institute attracted the attention of the NFL. The Institute encourages investment in and aide

to Black-owned business. The involvement of the NFL will mean more Black-owned food vendors in football stadiums and more Black manufacturers, production companies, and marketing and advertising agencies in the leagues operations, according to a *Forbes Magazine* report cited in the article.

To date, the NFL has committed \$100 million to causes for the Institute and has allocated \$125 million in support of Black-owned businesses over the past year as a part of its agenda to be more inclusive.

"For more than a year, the CWBA Institute has been working closely with the NFL on identifying resources to build stronger, more substantive economic partnerships with the

Black community," Ice Cube said in a statement. "Our team at the CWBA, including my long-time business partner and entertainment business lawyer Jeff Kwatinetz, and advisors Ja'Ron Smith and Chris Pilkerton, are focused on building corporate partnerships with measurable economic growth outcomes for Black communities across the country. We believe this is a giant step in the right direction."

Aspiring Black comic book business owner and artist, San Quentin resident Orlando Smith, is familiar with the lack of representation of minority businesses in numerous business sectors. After submitting his work to 24 exhibits, it is finally being presented in art displays this year from July to September.

"Ice Cube learned the market and he recognized the disadvantage of being at a disadvantage, and he stepped up and is doing something about it," Smith said. "Although Blacks are just a small piece of the market, our Black dollars mean a lot."

However, the hip hop mogul received backlash from some Blacks when he initially introduced his CWBA Initiative after calling out the Democratic Party to take up more interest in its platform, said the article.

In his interview on the Pat McAfee Show, Ice Cube emphasized the importance of what Black customers, Black workers, and the Black audience mean to businesses and arenas where players are majority Black, but Black owners and businesses

make up only a small percentage.

The NFL also has a lack of Black coaches, and is facing a discrimination and wrongful termination lawsuit filed by Brian Flores, former head coach of the Miami Dolphins.

The league also experienced backlash on how it handled the situation with former San Francisco quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who is still looking for an NFL job after inspiring the take-a-knee movement to protest systemic racism and police brutality.

Regarding Ice Cube's efforts, the developer of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad of the Nation of Islam House, Sajah Wendy Muhammad, expressed her careful optimism. "If it's something that's just to



Wikipedia

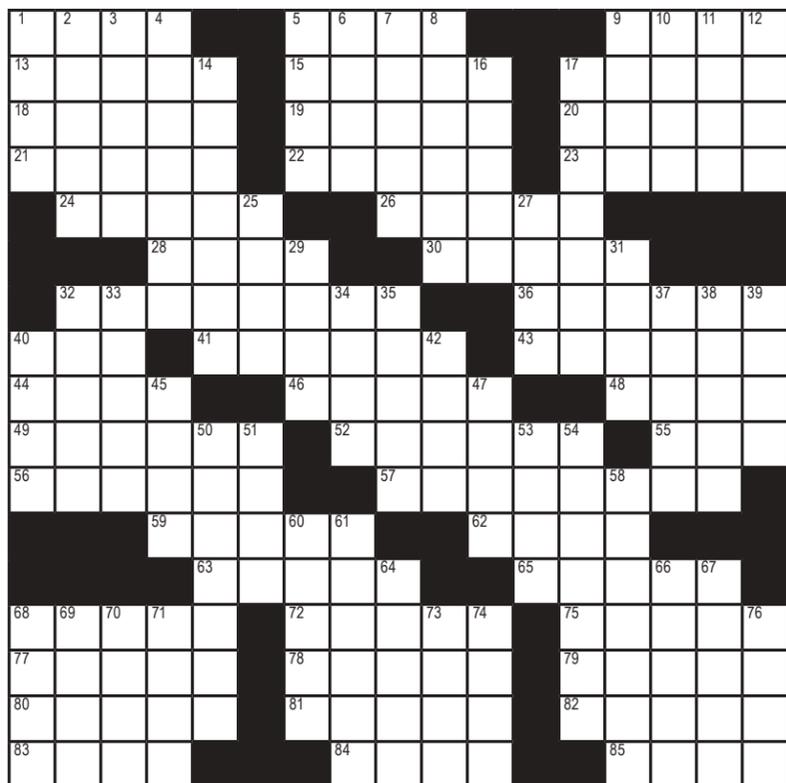
get more Black customers, it can be short lived. So, could it be a good thing? Yes; but I hope that Ice Cube is pushing for ownership and development," said Muhammad.

— Timothy Hicks

CROSSWORD CLASSIC

Created by Jonathan Chiu

Edited by Jan Perry



Across

1. The red planet
5. Powerful Greek goddess; wife and sister of Zeus
9. Vascular fluids of a plant (plural)
13. A type of fatty acid used in soaps
15. Escape with cleverness
17. Republican Senator for Florida
Marco _____
18. Nation and river in Central Africa
19. Women's OTC headache drug
20. Umbrella-shaped cluster of flowers
21. Matrix actor _____ Reeves
22. Carpenter's tool for shaving wood
23. A long, thin, flat piece of wood; also, a decision-making body
24. A type of wading marsh bird
26. Addams Family actress
Christina _____
28. People of wealth & status (slang)
30. A thin branch
32. An ornamental tree or shrub with large waxy flowers
36. Watercloset fixture
40. "Sol" in English
41. Bad-tempered
43. To convert for secret use
44. M*A*S*H actor Alan _____
46. Port of Columbus' first departure
48. Kaepernick's favorite bend
49. Wall bracket for candles
52. Contemptible, despicable (2 wds)
55. Medical first responders (abbrv.)
56. To put forth a strenuous effort
57. Veteran SQNews layout designer from 2008-2012, Aly _____
59. Having a tasteful appearance
62. Unwell, ill
63. Textile fabric of regenerated cellulose
65. Words or phrases; also, fixed periods of time
68. Ethiopia's largest ethnic group
72. Relating to the eye or vision
75. Supermodel _____ Campbell
77. Prisoners' favorite noodle
78. Valley in Argolis, Greece
79. Ocean movements
80. "Leans to one side"
81. Behave in a stealthy manner
82. A short line of gut or horsehair
83. Another word for "moose" (plural)
84. These often justify the means
85. Maleficent actress _____ Fanning

Down

1. To tease
2. Succulent with toothed leaves (plural)
3. 19th-century French historian, theologian, and philosopher, Ernest _____
4. Event for authors
5. Fiber of the cannabis plant
6. Opposite of good
7. A system for detecting aircraft
8. Aphrodite's young lover
9. Type of wrestling in Japan
10. Disco pop group; also, "Father"
11. Structure jutting into the ocean
12. Home-seller's favorite word
14. Manufacturer's discount voucher
16. To choose by voting
17. A stream in northeastern Italy; also, the point of no return
25. Dark brown or black
27. To quote
29. Smack
31. To strike with the foot
32. To extract money by fine or taxation
33. His trail is on Walkenhorst's tablet
34. Carter administration's hostage debacle: "The _____ Contra Affair"
35. To divide according to one's share
37. Person who avoids socializing
38. Excess fluid collecting in bodily tissues; also, "dropsy"
39. "Hey There Delilah" band, The Plain White _____
40. Impudence
42. Meditative form of physical exercise
45. Southern California city, Santa _____
47. CDCR's prisoner-tracking software (abbr)
50. Large Asian fruit tree similar to lemon
51. "A Day Without Rain" artist
53. Brief biography of a deceased person (abbrv)
54. A volunteer guide at a museum or gallery
58. Current target of Putin's wrath
60. Industrial river port city in SE France
61. Second epoch of the Tertiary period
64. Presiding spirit or divine power
66. Miniature replica
67. Olfactory sense
68. Narrow inner border of a shield
69. Bar or series of bars
70. South-central Russian city on the Irtys River;
71. Brooklyn basketball team
73. Hevy gray metal
74. Acorn tree (plural)
76. A small island or peninsula

BOOK REVIEW

PERSEPOLIS

A story of a childhood

By Marjane Satrapi

By Jerry Maleek Gearin
Staff Writer

Parenting was critically important for Marjane "Marji" Satrapi as she grew up in Iran during a period of political turmoil, she emphasizes in her autobiography, *Persepolis*.

There was conflict between a sitting government and a revolutionary party. Satrapi points out the country was ruled by The Shah, as if he were a king, and the people of Iran were not too keen about his rule.

For about 2,500 years, Persians, Arabs, Mongolians, and even modern imperialists occupied Iran. In 1979, an Islamic revolution took place, and a new theocratic government was seated.

Satrapi survived growing up in the middle of the revolutionary war. As a child, she was very impressionable, so her parents shielded her from harm.

The new Islamic government required women and girls to wear a veil. Some young girls rebelled against this requirement, in part because they did not understand why they had to wear it. At school, Marji and friends used their scarfs for jump rope and as a pretend-horse's bridle while playing piggyback.

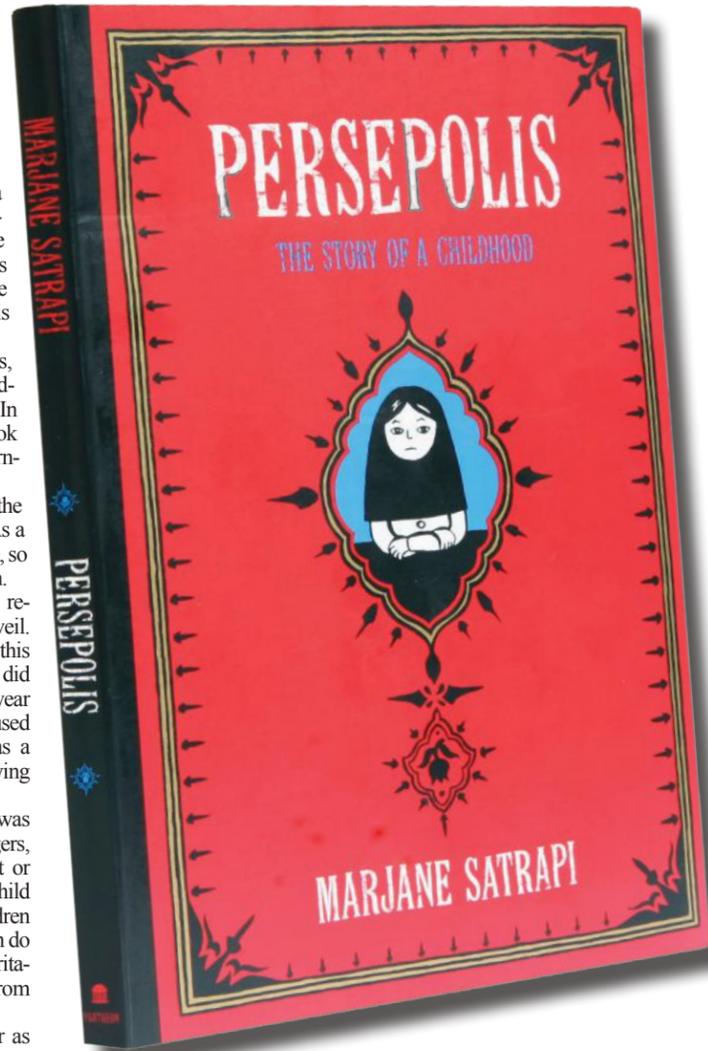
Marji's parents primary focus was to protect their child from all dangers, regardless of whether she liked it or not. The expectation was for a child to obey their parents. Some children obeyed, and some did not. Children do not think about the logic of authoritative rule; they want their freedom from day one, she wrote.

Her parents tried to protect her as best as they could. Marji's parents knew the incoming Islamic government would crack down on disobedience. They strictly enforced rules forbidding allowing Marji to do certain things and go certain places.

Marji lost several family members and friends because of conflicts between the government and revolution supporters, but she found comfort in her family's maid named Mehri — the equivalent of a big sister. Marji became very close to the maid; they talked about the war and young love.

One day, they went to a protest demonstration after being told not to go. The protest was against the old government of the Shah. They protested all night, losing track of time. At the protest, things got out of hand and people were getting hurt, so Marji and Mehri returned home.

Marji's mother was so furious when they finally arrived home that she smacked their faces. The mother was angry because that day so many peo-



ple were being killed. The day later became known as a "Day of Darkness."

Marji and some friends found out about a boy's father who lived in the neighborhood and allegedly killed 2,000 people. Marji and her friends gripped nails between their fingers and went searching for the boy. Her mother just so happened to drive up and began questioning them. Marji told her mother the truth. Her mother said, "How would you like if I nailed your ears to the wall?" Suddenly, Marji's revolutionary ambitions evaporated.

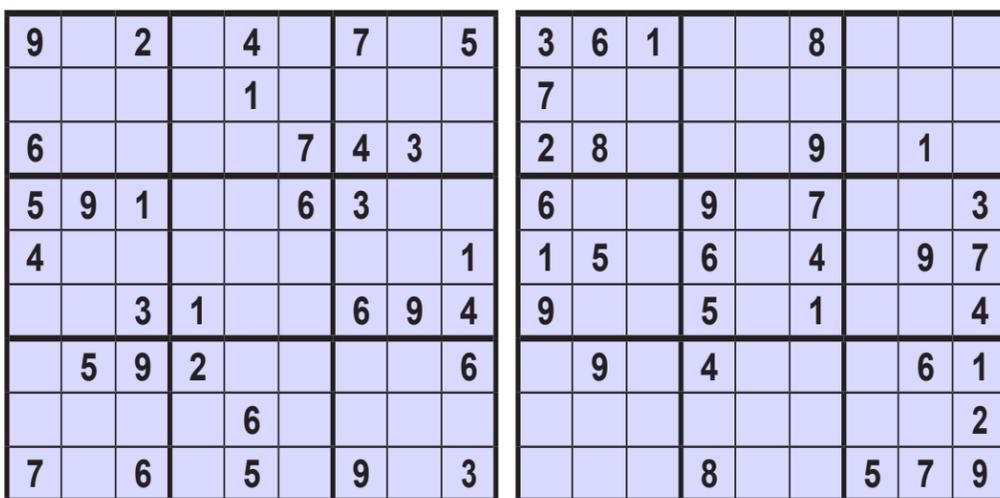
Her mother discouraged her from the idea of violence by sharing with her a vision of empathy. Throughout the book, Marji received support and guidance from her family. Her mother and father tried to instill in her values that would enable her survival. Her parents eventually sent her to Istanbul, Turkey, where

Marji could express the freedom she desired.

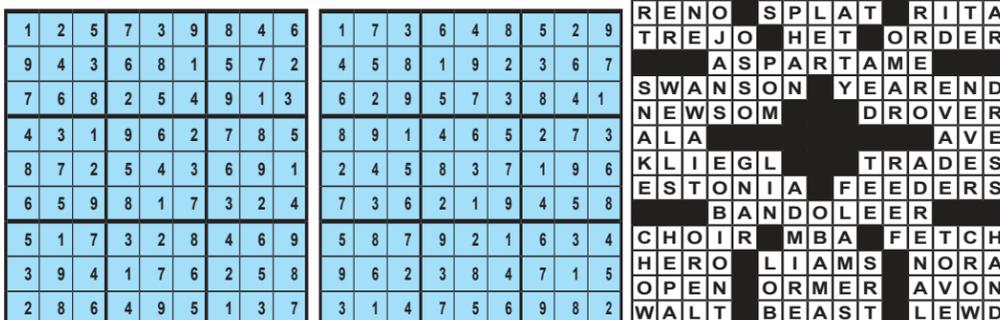
The book inspires me to think about parenting, and its purpose. What can one learn from the examples in this book? The understanding that the guidance instilled upon children by parents was for protection.

My parents protected me from the ugliness of street life. "Get in this house before it gets dark," they would say.

As a young child, I did not know that sometimes bad people came out at night. Some of us disregarded the rules and regulations of our parents and went down a path that led us to prison. An adult's views comes from experiences passed down from previous generations. Just think: Where would we be if we had listened to our parents?



September Solutions



HUMOR

NO SOUP FOR YOU!

By Clark Gerhartsreiter
Contributing Writer

For incarcerated persons, soups carry a significance that extends far beyond mere culinary delight. Psychologically, soups mean comfort; financially, soups represent a medium of exchange; and nutritionally, soups are a necessary staple for a full stomach on days on which the dining hall fare just will not suffice.

What would happen if canteens suddenly stopped selling soups? At San Quentin, that unthinkable possibility came to pass and left many residents in a state of shock: In July, San Quentin's canteen declared soups — that is ramen-style dried noodles soups — as "Out of Stock." No Beef soups. No Chicken soups. No Chili soups. What brought on this catastrophe?

San Quentin's soup shortage is simply a symptom of a global soup shortage, brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Headlines like "Ramen, Cup Noodles Shortage Hits Market" and "Ramen Prices Heat Up as Wheat Supply Goes to Pot" have appeared worldwide ever since the beginning of the pandemic. Additionally, since the war in Ukraine began, headlines describe a supply chain crisis.

On June 16, the *Guardian* reported on high prices of noodles, blaming the increase on "surging wheat, energy and transportation costs." Ramen-style noodles consist mostly of wheat, and the world is currently experiencing a shortage of that critical commodity. The *Guardian* listed the price of wheat as having risen from \$260 per ton in November 2021 to \$475 by mid-May, an increase of \$215 or 83%.

"The price of wheat had already risen sharply due to the coronavirus pandemic and snarl-ups in the global supply chain. But the war in Ukraine has seen the price almost double from November," the *Guardian* said.

This massive increase drove up the price of ramen soups. An August 3 search on Amazon.com listed a 12-pack of chicken-flavor Top Ramen for \$11.95 — almost one dollar per soup. Since few customers felt

like paying such exorbitant prices for soups, some stores stopped selling them.

The news hit the whole planet: "Now, Top Ramen noodles to be withdrawn from market," cried *BrandEquity.com* about India, one of the company's biggest markets. Similar news came from China and Japan, all big soup markets. San Quentin is experiencing the distant, trickle-down impacts of a much greater soup shortage.

The fallout of the soup shortage has had far-reaching consequences in San Quentin: In the cash-less, quasi-barter economy of prisons, soups play a critical role as a prison-currency, valued parallel to the dollar. Incarcerated persons use soups as an informal medium of exchange for

ed, perhaps not realizing that he was contributing to inflation.

Some see an opportunity for package companies to step in. Package companies often use "loss leader pricing" — offering discounts on staple goods — hoping that customers buy other goods that make up the loss.

"I would order all my packages from companies that have 25-cent soups," said Alex Ross from North Block.

Another North Block resident said that soup unavailability would force him to use other goods for transactions. "I would use candy bars or soda," he said. "Everything has got so expensive that one soup alone does not buy much, anyway."

Some soup-faithful in-



Tony Singh, SQNews

Ramen noodle soups, a staple of most prisoners' diets and the institutional economy, have recently seen both a 20% price hike and a one-case limit on the San Quentin canteen.

goods and services.

In April, the canteen at San Quentin raised prices on soups from 25 cents to 30 cents each. Folks on the yard barter their goods all the time — soups that once traded at 25 cents, now have to deal with the markup to 30 cents that makes the economics of a once-simple four-soups-per-dollar trade much more awkward.

A creator of handmade greeting cards, who requested anonymity, said he has had to change the soup-prices of his creations, complaining that the new price of 30 cents made calculations difficult. "I guess I raised my prices," he add-

ed, perhaps not realizing that he was contributing to inflation. Incarcerated persons refuse to believe that soups will forever disappear. "They can't take that away from us," proclaimed education worker Darryl Farris, a resolute soup consumer who eats about five soups a week. "They fill me up and they taste great."

San Quentin's "Great Soup Shortage" has eased since July and the critical commodity has once again appeared in stock — though limited to one case per customer and still at elevated prices — giving San Quentin's gastro-economic barter system a necessary injection of beef- or chicken- or chili-flavored liquidity.

PEEPERS: Those who have mastered the fine art of window shopping

Source: *The Prison Mirror*, Vol. 134, No. 11, June, 2021.
Reprinted by permission.



Tony Singh, SQNews

Catching the side-eye: Nobody knows the contents of your cell better than your extra-friendly neighborhood peeper.

By George Graham
The Prison Mirror

There is an element among the inmates in prison that needs to be changed. It's called disrespecting others through snooping, rubbernecking, invasion of privacy, or to put it in lames — PEEPERERS.

Peepers are those who slyly or not so slyly peep into the cells of others, trying to see what property is lying around, or what kind of photos and art are on the wall, or what channel is tuned in on the TV set.

The number of inmates who have turned into covert peepers seems to be growing with each passing month. The purpose of this article is to describe the behavior and get a better understanding of what motivates an inmate to act in this deviant manner. With luck, maybe one of the guilty party will see the error of his ways.

There are several different types of peepers, some more popular (in their minds) than others.

The Deep Thought Peeper: He's the one that will walk by

a cell with his head hanging down as though he is looking at the floor. Maybe he's pretending to be in deep thought or perhaps deep depression. But wait! Notice that while his head is pointed down, his eyes are slyly looking sideways, peering into your cell. This is probably the most sophisticated style of peeping and takes much practice to achieve perfection.

The I'm-Trying-To-Quit Peeper: This is the one where the peeper almost gets past your cell door and, at the last second, snaps his head to the side to get a brief but well trained look at the cell's interior. This kind of peeper requires several passes throughout the day to memorize a complete inventory of the cell.

The Blatantly Obvious Peeper: These guys couldn't care less if they are observed peering into a cell. They are probably admired by less aggressive peepers because they seemingly have no shame whatsoever. Perhaps that's what the judge meant when they were found guilty due to lack of remorse.

While these are the com-

mon styles of peeping, there may be more. For those that notice the peepers, take precautions to keep property at least an arm's length away from the front of the cell to prevent the grab-and-run theft. This includes leaving things sitting on your bed because the peeper will just tug at the blanket to pull whatever is on it to his pilfering hands.

Be sure that artwork and photos are securely taped to the gray display area on your cell wall.

To prevent the peepers from successfully peering in to see what's in your cell when the switch-in/out (and you're in the cell), stand at the front or sit at your desk and aimlessly stare towards those who walk by. Others like to sit and stare at their TV set which has a sign taped on the front that states, "What RU looking at?" That shakes up the peeper because they got sucked into a trap.

PEEPERS — what you are doing is an invasion of privacy of others, and they don't have much. The DOC hires people to look into the cells, and you're not on the payroll.

Pay no attention to the Twits

L. Smothers
Contributor

Inmate twitter is a form of gossip that is spread throughout the prison by individuals who don't have a clue as to what they are talking about.

I don't listen to "Inmate Twitter." First of all, most individuals in here spend too much time in front of the TV watching the news 'til they are transformed into some type of super-reporting agent, eager to report anything — and everything — they hear without the benefit of fact-finding to see if what they heard, or thought they heard, is true.

These individuals can overhear you speaking to someone else, walk up and

catch a small portion of what you said — although you weren't even speaking to them — then take it and run with it, spreading it around as if it's the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Inmate Twitter really got out of control during this pandemic. With all the uncertainty of the day-to-day program, people began to speculate as to what was going to happen. They began to spread their ideas without having any kind of insight as to what staff was planning at all.

If something happened in West Block, for instance, people in North Block would begin to speculate about what took place without re-

ceiving any proof whatsoever.

It's something like the "telephone" game we used to play in elementary school, where everyone lines up; in the beginning of the line someone would whisper something in the second person's ear and they would pass on what was said by the first person. By the time the last person in line receives what was said, it is not even close to what the very first person whispered in the second person's ear.

People always have to either add or take something out of what was said. Why? I don't know.

Brothas are seriously suffering from a severe form of "Type II Lie-abetes."

Native artist's generational pain poured out on canvas

By Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism
Guild Chairman

"Spiritually and mentally, art helps me escape from prison," said Joseph "Jo-Joe" Salazar. "It is medicine to me. It is beautiful that my creator gifted me with this talent."

Salazar plays the guitar, harmonica, and drums — abilities, he says, that have kept him going during his incarceration. Art is deeper than just passing time, Salazar says.

The 63-year-old says his artistic family tree connects from his ancestors to his grandchild.

"Art is in my genes. It's in my blood, and mainly, in my culture," said Salazar.

He has been sketching all his life. In elementary school, as a third-grader, he competed against sixth-graders.

Salazar talked about how he identifies with one of his creations, a work that shows someone surrounded by a storm, full of electricity, with eagle feathers and a red circle in the center.

"My life has been a storm, it is time for me to get off this storm," Salazar said, referring to his multiple prison terms, noting that he doesn't want to become a third-striker.

He appreciates a south-western-style of art because it's inspirational and brings out his creativity.

In just one night, he created *A Young Brave* with eagle feathers, representing Native regalia.

The subject of the painting wears traditional jewelry with red and white face paint — ready for an ancestral celebration.

For another of his creations, *Hawk*, he noted a hawk was tied up to represent that "we are tied up behind these prison walls."

With the Arts in Corrections room closed during the pandemic, Salazar spent more time sketching and painting at the tables in his unit.

"It was like a movement against the deadly virus," said Salazar.

He wants all American Natives to share the message of love, not only through their way of life, but also in the way that art connects them with their culture.

He notes the historical oppression of Natives, as well as the damage inflicted by climate change, is all "due to poor care from politicians."

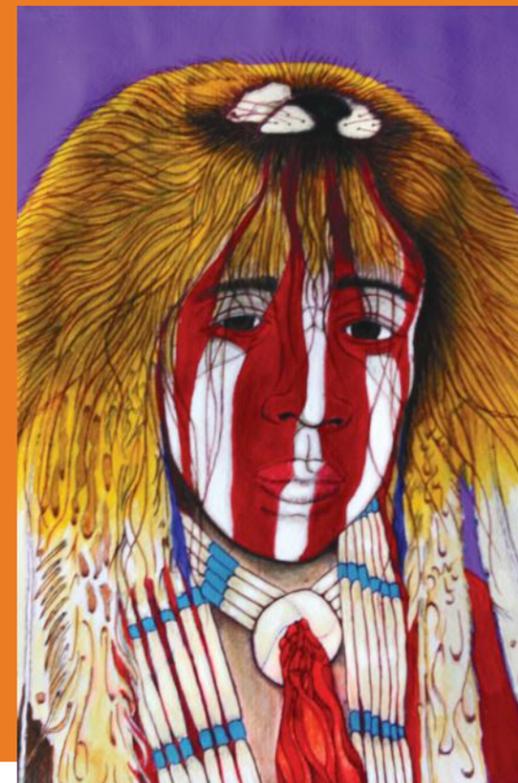
He says he is "heartbroken that humanity is not doing enough to protect our Mother Nature; she is the soul and backbone of our planet. The rain forests are the heart and the lungs of our Mother Nature. Our oil fields are being exploited; there are no more rain forests."

Salazar paroled on May 26. He is embracing his new journey as a freed hawk, soaring into modern civilization, finally free from bondage.



"Art is in my genes. It's in my blood, and mainly, in my culture."

— Joseph "Jo-Joe" Salazar



Paul Stauffer finds purpose, release in his paintbrush

By Edwin E. Chavez
Spanish Journalism
Guild Chairman

"I paint and I write because it gives me purpose," said San Quentin resident Paul Stauffer. "It's a release from tension, and it helps me to release an excess amount of imagination."

He says he's appreciative of the art room at San Quentin, where he has the chance to socialize and collaborate with other artists.

Stauffer, 65, considers himself a very passionate person. He says writing poetry allows him to "find the hidden treasures of love, compassion and friendship." Stauffer says he has one novel nearly completed and five others in the works.

As to his paintings, he says he usually sees them inside his head prior to creating them.

"When I am creating, I am inside my head, and I am no longer in prison," said Stauffer.

Stauffer says Selma Hayek's role in the movie *Dust to Dawn* was inspirational.

He called Hayek the epitome of beauty.

He called his painting inspired by Selma Hayek, Coat-

licue, who transforms into a serpent in the art piece.

Watching the movie unfold, Stauffer says his imagination was ignited by the moral of the story — how evil people can be devoured by monsters.

Phoenix Rising is one of Stauffer's largest paintings. The 4-foot by 5-foot artwork was created with his cousin in mind. It shows a life-sized pheasant taking off out of the tall grass with a hunting dog and a fox looking on. Stauffer says the hunter is out of the view.

In another of Stauffer's works, he painted a profile view of a lone incarcerated person dressed in royal blue, staring into the distance while holding a set of books entitled *Free to Succeed*, the name of a program that teaches basic academic skills at San Quentin.

Behind the figure appears an indistinct edifice that represents an enemy, clearly labeled, "Escape, Illiteracy, Ignorance, Imprisonment." The letters look like they are falling from top to bottom. Slightly askew, the edifice appears to crumble, indicating a triumph of the student over the carceral institution, as if to say that didactic efforts work — effort defeats structure.

Despite the hopeful mes-

sage, the background adds a horizon that looks far, far away — perhaps unreachably so. Does the artist mean to say the student cannot win after all? If the horizon of education eludes the leftward facing figure, what hope could exist against an unyielding system? Stauffer began his artistic career after discharging from the U.S. Army nearly 40 years ago.

"When I am creating, I am inside my head, and I am no longer in prison."

— Paul Stauffer

