

# SHAPING THE FUTURE OF **CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM**



**January 7th & 8th, 2025**

**Monmouth University**

*Dedicated to the Legacy of Lydia Thornton*



# THE 2025 WORKING SUMMIT PLANNING TEAM

Cuqui Rivera, Planning Committee Chair

Latino Action Network Foundation

Rebecca Mohr, BSW, LAN Foundation Intern

Salvation & Social Justice

New Jersey Department of Corrections

New Jersey Office of the Corrections Ombudsperson

American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey

Latino Action Network

Returning Citizens Support Group

New Jersey State Parole Board

New Jersey Office of the Attorney General

New Jersey Office of the Public Defender

Juvenile Justice Commission

American Friends Service Committee (Prison Justice Watch)

United Black Agenda

UU Faith Action NJ

Puerto Rican Action Board

Samuel Quiles, LAN Foundation Fellow & Returning Citizen

Dr. Johanna Foster, Monmouth University Sociology Program

Richard Rivera, Police Reform Consultant



# WELCOME

**Dear New Jersey,**

Thank you for joining us for the 2025 Working Summit! It is an incredible honor and blessing to again lead this historic criminal justice reform event in New Jersey. Our goal these next two days is to develop an updated action agenda of reforms that New Jersey can and should bring to life over the next 20 years.

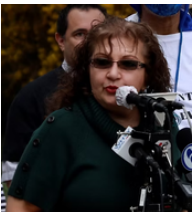
Twenty years ago in 2003, the first NJ Community & Corrections Working Summit brought together Black and Latino advocate leaders (specifically, the Hispanic Directors Association of NJ & the NJ Black Issues Convention) to set the stage for this very movement to directly address and reduce the mass incarceration of people of color in New Jersey (see the back of this booklet for the Executive Summary). Since, New Jersey has achieved many major criminal justice reforms, including Police Licensing, Mental Health Community Street Teams, Use of Force Directives, no-cost Public Defender services, Sentencing Reforms, Cannabis legalization, Bail Reform, Isolated Confinement laws, Voting Rights, and so much more (see **“We Did It Again”** on page 17 & 19). Current data proves that this movement has been extremely successful in its mission. Some reforms and successes of mention are reduced crime rates, significant reduction in prison and jail populations, and the closure of several correctional facilities. It has also seeded, developed and increased reentry resources for returning citizens throughout New Jersey.

Today and tomorrow, we reconvene old partners of the original Summit partners, new leaders and returning citizens that together will lead this living, breathing movement forward. Our goal is to unite advocates with state and community leaders, decision-makers, returning citizens, incarcerated voices and justice-impacted families. Its purpose is to envision forward solutions that are legislatively and structurally possible, financially sound, practical and possible. Through this mutual journey, we will create a statewide public-facing report detailing our recommendations for these reforms over the next 20 years.

All breakout rooms are fully facilitated by the Returning Citizens themselves. We acknowledge this event and these conversations will be difficult, and triggering for all of us. Please take advantage of the safe breathing space/area we have made available for you, (if needed).

Throughout the Summer of 2024, the New Jersey Department of Corrections and the Juvenile Justice Commission afforded us access to also include, again, incarcerated voices for this effort. We convened three focus groups out of East Jersey State Prison, Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women, and the Juvenile Justice Commission. All three focus groups have already completed and submitted their reform recommendations for this public-facing report.

Should you wish to keep current, please visit [lanfoundation.org](http://lanfoundation.org) or join the Integrated Justice Alliance Facebook Group.



**Cuqui Rivera**  
**Planning Chair**  
**Working Summit 2025**

# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS!

## Diamond

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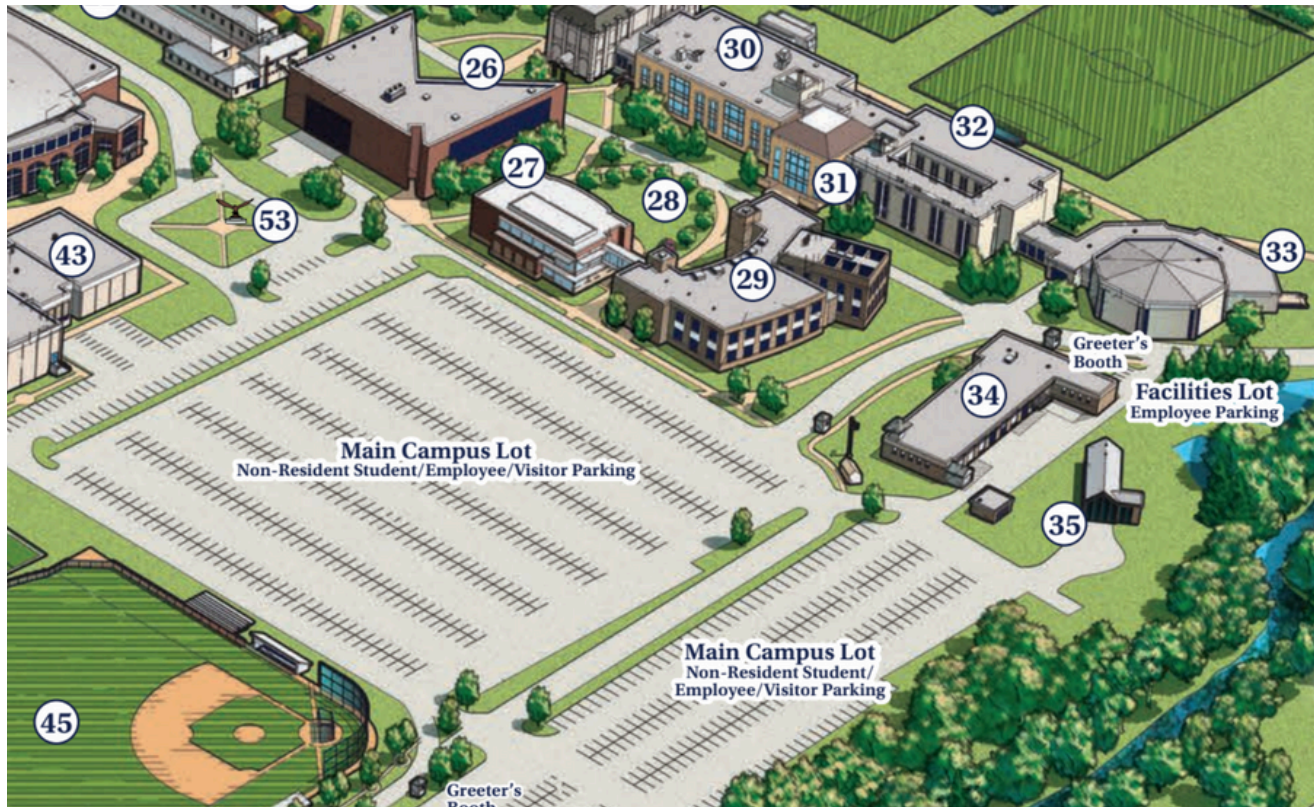


**ACLU**  
New Jersey



**FAIR SHARE**  
HOUSING CENTER

# CONFERENCE MAP



## **Building 33 on map - Pollak Theatre and Art Gallery**

\*Main events building

## **Building 26 on map- Rebecca Stafford Student Center (Anacon Hall, Food Court)**

\*Lunch, second floor

## **Building 27 - Pozycki Hall Auditorium (Steven J. and Elaine Pozycki Hall)**

## **Building 29 - Leon Hess / Samuel E. and Mollie Bey Hall (Young Auditorium)**

\*Leon Hess/Bey Hall & Pozycki Hall are connected by an indoor tunnel on the second floor, within these two buildings are all break-out rooms.



# AGENDA

**\*WiFi Network= MU Secure.**

**Username = wifiweekly**

**Password = Wi00fd8**

**Day 1: Tuesday, January 7th, 2025**

**8:30 - 9 A.M.**

**Registration & Continental Breakfast (Pollak Theatre)**

**9 - 9:15 A.M.**

**Welcome/Overview Monmouth U Welcome Cuqui (Pollak Theatre)**

**9:15-9:50 A.M.**

**Keynote Speech by Mr. Jerome Harris (Pollak Theatre)**

**10 - 12:15 P.M.**

**Morning Break-Outs (see “Tracks & Break-Out Sessions” for locations)**

**Track 1 - Criminal Justice Front End Systems:**

- Law Enforcement Transparency & Accountability
- Diversionary Programs for Adults
- Juvenile Justice Commission & Diversionary Programs for Juveniles
- Community Street Teams / Credible Messengers

**Track 2 - Systems of Custody:**

- Entry Assessments
- Education / Volunteer / Training Programs
- Gender-Based Incarceration

**12:15-1:30 P.M.**

**Lunch and Visual Artistry by Mr. Suliman Onque, “The Art Way”  
Located in the Student Center, Anacon Hall (second floor)**

**1:35-3:15 P.M.**

**Afternoon Break-Outs (see “Tracks & Break-Out Sessions” for locations)**

**Track Session 2 (continued) - Systems of Custody:**

- Voting Rights
- Mental / Medical Health Services
- Challenges of Immigration Detention & Resources & Multi-Lingual Landscape
- Prison & Jail Operations

**Track Sessions 3 - Re-entry and Sustainable Community Integration:**

- Discharge Planning
- Re-entry & Community Programs
- Parole Programs
- Max Out Programs & Challenges

**3:20-3:45 P.M.**

**Closing Remarks & Brief Plenary (Pollak Theatre)**

# AGENDA

**\*WiFi Network= MU Secure.**

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**Day 2: Wednesday, January 8th, 2025**

**8:30 - 9 A.M.**

**Continental Breakfast (Pollak Theatre)**

**9 - 9:15 A.M.**

**Housekeeping by Cuqui Rivera (Pollak Theatre)**

**9:10-9:50 A.M.**

**Keynote Speech by Dr. Joël Núñez (Pollak Theatre)**

**9:50 - 10 A.M.**

**Break**

**10 - 12:10 P.M.**

**Dignitaries Panel (Pollak Theatre)**

Moderated by Damon “Sharuka” Venable (Returning Citizen, NJOPD)

Hon. Governor Phillip Murphy (Invited)

Hon. Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman

Dr. Jesselly De La Cruz (Latino Action Network Foundation, Executive Director)

Dr. Charles Boyer (Salvation & Social Justice, Founder)

Myrna Diaz (Returning Citizen)

Dameon Stackhouse (Returning Citizen)

**12:30 - 2 P.M.**

**Lunch and Visual Artistry by Mr. Suliman Onque, “The Art Way”**  
**Located in the Student Center, Anacon Hall (second floor)**

**2:10-3:30 P.M.**

**Full Plenary Dialogue (Pollak Theatre)**

- Partner Commentary
- Plenary Reports and Feedback
- Next Steps
- Closing Remarks

# TRACKS & BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**We have defined 3 “Tracks of Focus” for reforms. Overall, each track has intentions to:**

1. Increase statewide public safety and reduce taxpayer financial burdens.
2. Decrease negative BIPOC interactions with law enforcement & correctional police officers.
3. Develop recommendations to decrease the number of people of color entering prison and further reduce recidivism.
4. Assess existing policies, regulations, laws, directives, and practices that are not functioning to their best intention.
5. Develop recommendations to further progress implementation, accountability, and transparency.

## AM Breakout Sessions:

### **Track 1 - Criminal Justice Front End Systems:**

- **Law Enforcement Transparency & Accountability - *Pozycki Hall Auditorium***
  - Facilitated by Damon Venable & Dameon Stackhouse
- **Diversions Programs for Adults - *Room 204***
  - Facilitated by Robert Salaam Ziegler & Al-Tariq Witcher
- **Diversions Programs for Juveniles / Juvenile Justice Commission - *Room 205***
  - Facilitated by Edwin “Chino” Ortiz & Sammy Quiles
- **Community Street Teams / Credible Messengers - *Room 206***
  - Facilitated by Dontae Thomas & Rev. Dr. Russel Owen

### **Track 2 - Systems of Custody:**

- **Entry Assessments - *Room 230***
  - Facilitated by Nafeesah Ali Goldsmith & Nicole Guyette
- **Education / Volunteer / Training Programs - *Young Auditorium (Bey/Hess Building)***
  - Facilitated by Tiece Riddick & Christopher Etienne
- **Gender-Based Incarceration - *Room 231***
  - Facilitated by Miseka Diggs & Jennifer Love Williams



# TRACKS & BREAKOUT SESSIONS

## PM Breakout Sessions:

### Track 1 - Criminal Justice Front End Systems:

- **Voting Rights - *Room 204***
  - Facilitated by Dameon Stackhouse & Jim Sullivan
- **Mental / Medical Health Services - *Young Auditorium (Bey/Hess Building)***
  - Facilitated by Robert Salaam Ziegler & Nicole Guyette
- **Challenges of Immigration Detention & Resources & Multi-Lingual Landscape - *Room 205***
  - Facilitated by Rev. Dr. Russel Owen & Christopher Etienne
- **Prison & Jail Operations - *Room 206***
  - Facilitated by Nafeesah Ali Goldsmith & Ronald Pierce

### Track Sessions 3 - Re-entry and Sustainable Community Integration:

- **Discharge Planning - *Room 222***
  - Facilitated by Sammy Quiles & Ray Jackson
- **Re-entry & Community Programs - *Pozycki Hall Auditorium***
  - Facilitated by Al-Tariq Witcher & Damon Venable
- **Parole Programs - *Room 223***
  - Facilitated by Jennifer Love Williams & Hassan Shakur
- **Max Out Programs & Challenges - *Room 223***
  - Facilitated by Edwin “Chino” Ortiz & Tiece Riddick

## MEET THE FACILITATORS



**Miseka Diggs** was sentenced to 14 years with a mandatory minimum of 7 years for a nonviolent drug offense. While in prison, Miseka earned her associate degree in sociology and received a scholarship for the Honors Learning Living Community at Rutgers Newark. She now continues her education at Rutgers, majoring in Social Work and minoring in Social Justice. Miseka continues her passion for advocating for carceral-impacted people, inside and out.



**Christopher Etienne** is a documentary filmmaker and an Africana studies historian who seeks to use his accolades to spotlight injustice and raise awareness about social issues. Currently, Mr. Etienne works as the Student Engagement Coordinator for the Prison Teaching Initiative at Princeton University where he creates curriculum and educates incarcerated college students seeking post-secondary opportunities. As Mr. Etienne looks towards the future, he hopes to continue to use education to enlighten the uninformed, extend educational opportunities to the justice impacted, and liberate minoritized communities from the chains of oppression.



**Nafeesah Ali Goldsmith** is a transformative leader and passionate advocate for justice reform. As the first Community Outreach Specialist for the New Jersey Department of Corrections, and former co-chair of NJ Prison Justice Watch, she leverages her personal journey and professional expertise to create meaningful change.



**Nicole Guyette** is an NJSTEP Alum with a bachelor's degree in affordable criminal justice from Rutgers University-Newark. Currently serving as a ICMS Case Manager, her role involves bridging gaps in healthcare, housing, mental health services, and crisis intervention to enhance clients' overall well-being. Beyond professional roles, Ms. Guyette has a robust history in criminal justice, including advocating for voting rights for justice-impacted individuals and influencing criminal justice reform as part of New Jersey policy initiatives. Nicole has been an advocate for change in New Jersey's Criminal Justice system, passionately believing that the humanization of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people is possible.

# MEET THE FACILITATORS



**Dontae Thomas** is a Trenton, New Jersey native, and a High-Risk Interventionist supervisor with the Salvation and Social Justice's Trenton Restoration Street Team. He is also the CEO of Team Chizel, a fitness company dedicated to promoting health and wellness in the Mercer County communities. Through his efforts, he has helped over 250 individuals transform their lives through fitness.



**Ray Jackson** is a Justice Studies graduate with a minor in Psychology from Rutgers-Newark, is currently pursuing a Master's in Public Administration. Jackson also serves as a Peer Educator for the Mayor's Leadership Academy and head facilitator for the TRHT (Truth, Racial, Healing, and Transformation) program.



**Edwin "Chino" Ortiz** is a Co-Director and Co-Founder of the Returning Citizens Support Group in Newark, New Jersey. This group is premised on the principles of self-determination, agency & self-reliance. Survivors of the American mass incarceration project are best suited, best prepared, and best accomplished to determine their own paths of entry into society. After serving 30 years of his life in carceral space and experiencing all of the challenges one would face upon his release, he created this support group because, too often, returning citizens specifically, long term offenders, don't have the support needed to properly adjust to mainstream society.



**Rev. Dr. Russel Owen** is an Organizer with Faith in New Jersey, which focuses on ending gun violence, mass incarceration, criminalization, and police brutality at the local, state, and national levels. Faith in New Jersey is a multi-faith, multi-racial civic engagement vehicle for faith communities and everyday people who strive to fight for social justice. As the CEO of Transformative Leadership Consultation Services, he has created and lives into a Justice Impacted Trauma Support Therapist, who works in communities of color to address mental health needs and various degrees of trauma.



# MEET THE FACILITATORS



**Ronald Pierce**, Deputy Ombudsperson in the Office of the NJ Corrections Ombudsperson, is an NJ-STEP alum who earned his associate's degree at Mercer Community College while at East Jersey State Prison. After his release, he completed a bachelor's in Justice Studies (2018) and a master's in Criminal Justice (2023) at Rutgers University, Newark, with scholarships from the Vera Institute and NJ-STEP/Mountainview Program. A graduate of Just Leadership USA's Leading with Conviction program, Ron has also contributed two chapters to *American Prisons and Jails: An Encyclopedia of Controversies and Trends*.



**Sammy Quiles**, a LAN Foundation Fellow, holds a BA in Criminal Justice from Rutgers University and works as a case manager with Newark Community Solutions' Alternative to Incarceration Program. A system-impacted scholar and advocate for the NJ STEP program, Sammy's passion for global and racial justice stems from his lived experience as a Puerto Rican, formerly incarcerated individual from an underserved community. His journey fuels his commitment to activism and supporting marginalized groups.



**Tiece Riddick** is the Assistant Dean of Community Relations, NJ-STEP. She completed her master's and bachelor's degrees in social work from Rutgers University and has a social work career that spans nearly 20 years. Tiece has been part of the NJ-STEP, Rutgers community for the past five years, as a Mountainview Community (MVC) Program Manager. She has worked diligently to support students during their transition from prison to on-campus studies and cultivated student visibility and success.



**Hassan Shakur** is a Returning Citizen who served 32 years of a life sentence. He is the Board Chairperson of Right My Wrongz, a re-entry agency in Cumberland County that supports returning citizens with their reintegration. Hassan is a student in Camden County College as a Criminal Justice major.

# MEET THE FACILITATORS



**Dameon Stackhouse;** MSW, LSW, CPRS, is a Justice Fellow with the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice and a board member of the Alliance for Higher Education in Prison, where he advocates for equitable access to education and opportunities for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals. He also serves as the Community Police Alliance Supervisor for Somerset County, supporting individuals in crisis through collaborative efforts with law enforcement and community partners.



**Jim Sullivan** is the Deputy Policy Director for the ACLU-NJ, where he leads the development of campaigns on criminal legal system reform. Jim is justice-impacted, having experienced incarceration and probation, parole, and collateral consequences, all of which informs his expertise and passion for reforming the criminal legal system. He was previously active in the movement for economic and racial justice in the Philadelphia area and later became the political director for the powerful Culinary Workers Union in Nevada.



**Damon Venable** is the Community Affairs & Policy Specialist with the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender (NJOPD). He was tried as an adult and convicted to a sentence of life imprisonment for a crime he committed when he was 16. Damon was released on parole after serving over three and a half decades in prison. While inside, he graduated from the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University. After his release, he joined the NJOPD as a paralegal and is now serving in a number of roles in that office, including as a liaison for interagency collaborative initiatives.

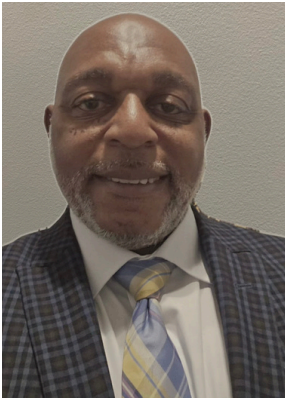


**Jennifer Love Williams** is a formerly incarcerated black transwoman) is an Entertainer and an Activist. Jennifer Love is the Foundress of the Jen Love Project. Miss Love is a lead organizer with Black and Pink NYC chapter. Jennifer Love Williams serves as (Interim) Co-Chair of the board for Black and Pink National. She also does work with The National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls. Miss Love is an organizer with Reclaim Pride Coalition (Queer Liberation March). She is also a board member of Garden State Rainbow Sports.

## MEET THE FACILITATORS



**Al-Tariq Witcher** is a Community Organizer, Advocate, Real Estate Investor, Entrepreneur, and Youth Mentor. His daughter Messiah inspired him to turn his life around after serving more than 20 years in prison. He has become a beacon of light for other Returning Citizens and at-risk youth.



**Robert Salaam Ziegler** is a community activist and Certified Nonprofit Manager. He holds a BA in Criminal Justice and is a current graduate student attending Rutgers School of Public Affairs and Administration. Further, he is a Research Fellow, Case Manager of Pretrial Services (Office of the Public Defender), and a member of the Returning Citizens Support Group.



## MEET THE GUEST SPEAKERS



**Anna “Cuqui” Rivera (Working Summit Planning Chair, LANF Outreach Director)** is a nationally recognized Latina advocate and Criminal Justice Reform leader in NJ for over 35 years. She is the Outreach Director for the Latino Action Network Foundation, a founding member of the Latino Action Network (LAN), the NJ Prison Justice Watch, Core Team, to name a few. She has extensive expertise in non-profits, Youth, Criminal Justice and Police Reforms, Community Building and Race Relations.



**Jerome Harris** is an organizer, strategist and racial justice advocate with over fifty year of service in New Jersey. He is co-founder and Chairman Emeritus of the New Jersey Black Issues Convention, was the founding Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Salvation and Social Justice Inc. and is currently a Trustee and chairs the Strategic Directions Committee of the NJ Institute for Social Justice. His career also includes service as NJ Assistant State Treasurer, Essex County Administrator, City Manager in Plainfield, Business Administrator in Trenton and Director of the Urban and Public Policy Institute at Rowan University.



**Dr. Joël Núñez** is a New Jersey state licensed clinical psychologist. He owns and operates Prov 205, a multi-purpose agency providing: 1) comprehensive professional, student, and parental development services to local and national school districts, colleges, and universities as well as workforce and service delivery solutions to private and public sector agencies; 2) forensic psychological evaluations in immigration, juvenile waiver, adult resentencing and other criminal matters along with expert witness testimony throughout the state and region; and 3) a psychological group practice in Bayonne specializing in the treatment of individuals, couples, and families facing various challenges in living.



**Hon. New Jersey Governor Phillip Murphy** took the oath of office as New Jersey’s 56th Governor on January 16, 2018. Since 2018, Governor Murphy has focused on building a stronger, fairer, and more affordable New Jersey for every family. Governor Murphy has worked to establish New Jersey as a model state for social and racial justice by decriminalizing marijuana and cultivating a thriving adult-use cannabis industry, expunging the records of numerous non-violent offenders, and launching a first-of-its-kind clemency program for New Jerseyans in need of second chances.

## MEET THE GUEST SPEAKERS



**Hon. Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman** is serving her fifth term in the United States House of Representatives, the continuation of a career in public service advocating for the needs of New Jersey families and the equitable treatment of all people. The first Black woman to represent New Jersey in Congress, Watson Coleman is a member of the Appropriations Committee and serves as Chair of the Policing, Constitution, and Equality task force in the Congressional Progressive Caucus.



**Dr. Jesselly De La Cruz LCSW and Executive Director of the Latino Action Network Foundation**, holds a BA in Political Science (Rider University), an MSW and DSW (Rutgers University), and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Family Therapy. Driven by her immigrant background, she specializes in mental health crisis work, family therapy, and care for underserved populations, including sexual assault survivors and court-mandated youth. A former President of the Latino Mental Health Association of NJ, she is passionate about empowering Latino communities, BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth, and families in need.



**Rev. Dr. Charles Boyer, founder of Salvation and Social Justice and pastor of Greater Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church in Trenton, NJ**, is a third-generation African Methodist Episcopal preacher and a prominent advocate for racial justice. As the leading faith voice on issues like ending the drug war and the criminalization of Black communities, he has driven transformative policy changes in New Jersey, including racial impact analysis, youth prison closures, voting rights restoration for the formerly incarcerated, cannabis tax reinvestment, independent prosecutors, and restrictions on solitary confinement.



**Myrna Diaz** is a returning citizen and NJ-STEP Summa Cum Laude Graduate. Her focus was on justice-studies, working toward being a voice for incarcerated persons. She was a part of the first group to be granted Clemency on December 18th, 2024 by Governor Phil Murphy, under his new Clemency Project Initiative. She looks forward to being a leader in the returning citizens' community, where she values education and policy change reforms that reduce incarceration for survivors of domestic violence.

## MEET THE ARTIST



### **Suliman Onque, "The Art Way"**

**Muralist, Live Painter, Digital Artist, Comic Book Artist**

A live canvas piece will be created at Working Summit 2025. This canvas will be donated as a fundraising piece to the Salvation & Social Justice Trenton Street Team and Returning Citizen Support Group. You may bid on this canvas during lunch on Day 2 (Jan 8).

**IG: Slimsuliart\_world**

**[www.3theartway.com](http://www.3theartway.com)**



Scan this QR code or go to  
**[linktr.ee/Slimsuliart](https://linktr.ee/Slimsuliart)**



# **WE DID IT!!! Bonnie Watson Coleman**

## **Omnibus Legislative Package, 2010**

**Here are the bills that have made it through both houses and were signed by the Governor on January 18! Congratulations! These Bills are a reflection of our collective voice:**

### **1) [Strengthening Women and Families Act: A4197 and S1347 \(EFFECTIVE: MAY 1, 2010\)](#)**

- ✓ Lifts the felony drug ban on TANF and food stamps.
- ✓ Establishes a commission to strengthen bonds between incarcerated parents and their children.
- ✓ Prohibits confining female inmates to male institutions.
- ✓ Requires incarcerated people to be placed in facilities close as possible to family.
- ✓ Establishes the Division on Women as the semiannual depository for all complaints filed by female incarcerated people.
- ✓ Assigns a DOC Deputy Commissioner to be in charge of issues involving mothers with children.
- ✓ Provides incarcerated people with info about child support modifications.
- ✓ Requires visitation statuses to be placed on the DOC website.

### **2) [Reduction of Recidivism Act: A4201 and S502 \(EFFECTIVE: MAY 1, 2010\)](#)**

- ✓ Allows for a 90-day grace period for outstanding fines.
- ✓ Provides returning citizens with: written notification of fines, outstanding warrants, voting rights, expungement options, an ID Card, birth certificate, a list of prison programs participated in, medical records, assistance with obtaining a social security card, two weeks' medication, a one-day bus or rail pass, and a rap sheet.
- ✓ Eliminates the post-release Medicaid enrollment gap.
- ✓ Establishes a Prisoner Reentry Commission.
- ✓ Establishes a Blue Ribbon Panel for Review of Long-Term Prisoners' Parole Eligibility.
- ✓ Assigns DOC the dissemination of info on available re-entry services to returning citizens.
- ✓ Provides returning citizens with an outside checking account and gives banks the option of issuing a debit card using funds in his/her account.
- ✓ Requires DOC to report to Gov. and Legislature on results of recidivism reducing measures.
- ✓ Requires DOC-issued ID Card to count as two points when obtaining a driver's license.



# **WE DID IT!!! Bonnie Watson Coleman Omnibus Legislative Package, 2010**

## **3) Education and Rehabilitation Act: A4202 and S11 (MOSTLY EFFECTIVE: AUG., 1, 2010)**

- ✓ Reviews vocational programs to meet demand job skills and standards.
- ✓ Allows formerly incarcerated persons to visit any prison in the State for motivational purposes.
- ✓ Establishes a peer mentoring program in each facility.
- ✓ Establishes the “contract parole” option and annual review for defendants who want to rehabilitate.
- ✓ Provides options for special credits for education/workforce training skills achievements.
- ✓ Requires the DOC’s education dept. to use volunteers, technology and private resources.
- ✓ Requires DOC to report an incarcerated person’s educational and workforce training skills progress to the State Parole Board.
- ✓ Permits DOC’s education depart. to use digital and online technology.
- ✓ Establishes educational and programmatic benchmarks that must be reached within nine years.
- ✓ Assigns the Re-Entry Commission the review of DOC educational programs and policies.
- ✓ Caps parole ‘hits’ at 3 years before being given another hearing.
- ✓ Mandates all community release beds be filled by those eligible before county jail beds.
- ✓ Mandates incarcerated people to participate in education and workforce training programs.
- ✓ Ensures all vocational programs issue state-recognized certification.

# WE DID IT AGAIN!!! 2024

**Codified legislative successes that have been signed into law since 2010.  
All are a direct reflection of our collective voices and work...**

## **The Newark Police Consent Decree, ordered 2016**

- An agreement between the government and police department as a court order, that requires law enforcement to undergo a series of reforms through new policies, training, and data tracking within a specified period of time.
- Identifies a panel of independent experts to serve as the [Independent Monitoring Team](#) of the Newark Police Department (NPD), which will conduct an annual survey to assess Newark community experiences with and perceptions of the NPD
- Requires the NPD to complete training to improve the quality of policing, community engagement, and oversight, and develop new protocols.

## **Cash Bail Reform, 2017, NJ State**

N.J.S.A. 2A:162-15 to -26 - Sections of The Criminal Justice Reform Act

- Eliminates cash bail; judges now decide on a detainee's risk assessment and whether or not they should be awarded pretrial release (bail).
- Enhances the right to a speedy trial; all defendants must be released or incarcerated within 48 hours of arrest, and if formally detained, a trial must occur within 180 days.

**Racial Ethnic Impact Studies, 2018, NJ State** Requires the Office of Legislative Services to prepare any criminal justice-related bill to include a study in its language of the potential impact on racial and ethnic communities and disproportionate or unique concerns.

**The Office of Public Integrity & Accountability (OPIA), 2018, NJ State** Within the Office of the Attorney General, the [OPIA](#) was created with a dual mission: to investigate violations of public trust and to develop policies that would rebuild faith in both government and our criminal justice system. OPIA includes both criminal prosecutors and trained investigators, who work together to prosecute cases involving public corruption, criminal violations of civil rights laws, and illegal use of force by law enforcement/corrections police officers, as well as the Office of Policing Policy to strengthen policing practices.

**Isolated Confinement Restriction Act (for Adults), 2019, NJ State** Prohibits NJ prisons and jails from housing any incarcerated person in solitary confinement for more than 20 consecutive days or longer than 30 days during a 60-day period. Vulnerable populations are defined and protected from any isolation.

- See New Jersey Prison Justice Watch's [full report and press conference here](#).

# WE DID IT AGAIN!!! 2024

**Codified legislative successes that have been signed into law since 2010.**  
**All are a direct reflection of our collective voices and work...**

**Record Expungement, 2019, NJ State** P.L. 2019, c.269, Revises expungement eligibility; creates a petition process, and a new "clean slate" online e-filing application that eliminates expungement filing fees.

**Earn Your Way Out Act, 2019, NJ State** P.L.2019, c.364, Prior to release, all incarcerated people will be assessed for a comprehensive re-entry or discharge plan including medical, psychiatric, psychological, educational, vocational, substance abuse, and social rehabilitative services.

**Public Emergency Release (COVID-19 Pandemic), 2020, NJ State** The first Act of its kind in the nation for the Public Health Emergency Credits; allows people nearing their release date to leave prison up to eight months earlier to prevent the spread of any infectious disease under a statewide public health emergency order by the Governor's office. Approximately 9,000 people have been released to date under this act.

**Prison Gerrymandering, 2020, NJ State** Requires NJ incarcerated individuals to be counted at residential address for municipal, county, and congressional redistricting purposes and provides inmates the support to have a successful reentry into society. [More info here.](#)

**The Dignity for Incarcerated Primary Caretaker Parents Act, 2020, NJ State** P.L.2019, c.288, Protects justice-impacted family and children's rights, and prohibits pregnant and in-labor incarcerated women from being restrained. [More info here.](#)

**Marijuana Decriminalization & Cannabis Legalization, 2021, NJ State** P.L.2021, c16-38, includes [The New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory, Enforcement, Assistance and Marketplace Modernization Act](#); [marijuana decriminalization](#); [other clarifying provisions](#) (marijuana and cannabis use, and possession penalties for individuals younger than 21 years old); and [additional clarifying provisions](#) (parental notification of juvenile possession of alcohol, marijuana, hashish or cannabis, and amends provisions of N.J.S.A. 2C:33-15).

**Body Worn Camera (BWC) Policy, 2021, Federal & NJ State** Mandates the wear and use of BWCs by all uniformed patrol officers and correctional police officers.

# WE DID IT AGAIN!!! 2024

## **Police Licensure Act, 2022, NJ State**

- Requires police officers to hold valid and active licenses issued by the Police Training Commission. Police officers who do not meet the necessary criteria will have their license suspended or revoked, in which case they cannot be legally employed by any NJ law enforcement.
- [This act](#) makes policing a licensed profession, designed to ensure that officers are in good standing with their employers, meet certain professional standards, and receive ongoing training in best practices in the field.

**The ARRIVE Together Act, 2022, NJ State** P.L.2022, c.36, establishes the Alternative Response to Reduce Instances of Violence and Escalation (ARRIVE) Together Pilot Program under the Attorney General's jurisdiction; designed to provide accessible crisis intervention, mental health screening, or other support to individuals experiencing mental health crises who have contacted or are engaging with law enforcement. Appropriates \$2 Million.

## **The Fair Chance in Housing Act, 2022, NJ State**

- Prohibits housing providers (realtors, property sellers, landlords, sublessors) from asking an applicant or a third party about criminal history on housing applications.
- [Know Your FCHA Rights wallet card](#)
- [More information/details](#)

**The Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act, 2022**, Federal Amends the Communications Act of 1934 to require the Federal Communications Commission to ensure just and reasonable charges for telephone and advanced communications services in correctional and detention facilities.

**Public Defender Fines & Fees, 2023, NJ State** “[Eliminates public defender fees](#) going forward but applies retroactively to all unpaid outstanding costs, and any unsatisfied civil judgments, liens on property, and warrants issued based on unpaid balances for services rendered by the Office of the Public Defender.”

**Seabrooks-Washington Community-Led Crisis Response Act, 2024, NJ State** Establishes Community Crisis Response Advisory Council and community crisis response teams pilot program; appropriates \$12 million. [More info here.](#)

## **The Clemency Project, 2024, NJ State**

- On June 19, 2024, Governor Murphy issued [Executive Order No. 362](#), which established the Clemency Advisory Board to review and make recommendations regarding clemency applications. Categories of cases that are eligible for review:
  - Victim of domestic or sexual violence or sex trafficking and was convicted of a crime against the perpetrator of violence or sex trafficking, or of a crime or offense committed under the duress or coercion of such perpetrator.
  - Cases that involve a crime or offense that is no longer unlawful; or the conviction would have resulted in a less severe sentence under current law (excessive penalty).



**Common Recommendations from  
ALL In-Custody Focus Groups**

**East Jersey State Prison  
Juvenile Justice Commission  
Edna Mahan Correctional  
Facility for Women**



Scan this QR code or click on this link:

[Common Recommendations from All In-Custody Focus Group](#)

## MORE RESOURCES

Click on the following hyperlinks to further resources:

[Latino Action Network Foundation](#)

[Integrated Justice Alliance](#) on Facebook

[Salvation & Social Justice](#), Trenton Community Street Team

[Returning Citizens Support Group](#)

[NJ Community & Corrections Working Summit,  
Impacting Communities of Color \(2003\)](#)

[Solitary Confinement Simulator](#)

[The Art Way](#)

## **SUPPORT THE MOVEMENT**

**All future donations will be divided between  
Returning Citizens Support Group and the  
Trenton Community Street Team**

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