

# 99 Years *of Changing Lives*



*2018 Annual Report*

# Dear DCJ Friends & Supporters

As President of the Board of the Delaware Center for Justice, it is an honor to serve this organization and work with committed passionate advocates to improve the justice system and build a better future for us all.

In 2018, DCJ's programs helped a wide range of people touched by the criminal justice system including those returning to the community, children of incarcerated parents, teens held in youth detention facilities, and victims of crime. As you read through this report, you will learn of the life-strengthening and life-changing work that happens at DCJ.

DCJ has also long been a strong voice for legislative and policy reforms intended to make our justice system fairer and more equitable for all. Over the past year, we have worked on such issues as reducing prison population, bail reform, restoring access to TANF, juvenile expungements, restoring voting rights and a host of other issues. Our efforts are driven by the belief that providing opportunities, supporting civic participation and helping individuals and families rebuild their lives, are critical to a strong and just society where all people can grow, change and contribute in meaningful ways.



The Delaware Center for Justice will be celebrating its 100th birthday in 2020. In the coming months, we will be planning celebrations to honor our past and to mark this amazing milestone, but we will also take this opportunity to envision our future. The DCJ board and staff have begun a strategic planning process that will help guide us into the next 100 years as we build upon our legacy as an agent of change and progress. It is an exciting time to be part of DCJ and to be involved in this work. Stay tuned!

*Sincerely,*

**Carol Post ~ Board President**

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Kailyn Richards, Office Coordinator  
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Laura Mood, Bookkeeper

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Gloria Smith, Case Manager  
Tracie Purnell, Mental Health Counselor  
Elise Schubert, Mental Health Counselor

## Community Reentry Services Program

Jessica Alicea, Program Coordinator  
Suzanne Kirk, Case Manager  
Osha Hudson, Case Manager

## Court Of Common Pleas Mediation Program

Barbie Fischer, Program Coordinator

## Healthy Thinking/Moving On

Judy Hutt, Program Coordinator  
Brandi Honore-Parker, Educational Instructor

## Juvenile Restitution Program

Barbie Fischer, Program Coordinator

## Read In, Read Out

Kailyn Richards, Program Liaison

## Safe Spaces

Shaniqua Johnson-Pierce, Group Therapist  
Angie Vidro, Community Coordinator

## School Offense Diversion Program

Cindy McDaniel, Program Coordinator

## Student Warriors Against Guns And Gangs

Corry Wright, Program Coordinator

## T.H.R.I.V.E.

Gabrielle Mensah, Program Coordinator  
Everett Dickerson, Educational Instructor

## Truancy Reduction Program

Cassandra Freeman, Program Coordinator

## Victim Sensitivity Program

Erin Goldner, Program Coordinator



# Public Education & Advocacy

DCJ continues to engage the community and system stakeholders in efforts to transform the quality of justice for all Delawareans. In 2018, we focused on policy initiatives and education campaigns designed to reduce recidivism, restore victims, and promote age appropriate responses to youth crime.

Our Visions of Justice conference this year focused on Transformative Justice – **Victim Centered Models to Address Violent Crime**. Here we looked at what restorative justice models offer in serving victims and reducing reliance on incarceration as a tool of public safety.

DCJ was invited to the judiciary to **provide training on the fundamentals** of bail, constitutional considerations, and best practices in making pretrial decisions.

DCJ, in conjunction with the Pretrial Justice Institute and the Director of Pretrial Services in Virginia, **provided training to the Department of Correction** on best practices in pretrial supervision.

In partnership with the Office of Defense Services, DCJ participated in expungement clinics throughout the state resulting in over 200 people receiving information about expungement and approximately **175 filed expungements for offenses committed as children**.

In September of 2018, DCJ embarked on a new and exciting partnership with a local charter school to engage students in a social justice project. We worked with the school to develop a learning project centered around the cycle of court debt many Delawareans face and partnered with the students and our friends at Creative Vision Factory to **create an art installation in support of legislative reform!** The exhibit is now on display in Legislative Hall until April of 2019.

*In the 1960s, DJC established the 3-S Campaign, “Salvage People, Save Dollars, Shrink the Crime Rate,” under the leadership of Russel Peterson, then vice president of the organization. Our language has changed over the last 60 years, but the mission remains the same.*

**Key Legislative advances for 2018 included the following:**

**House Bills 306, 307, 308, 339, and 442:** This package of bills advanced research-driven policies that provide greater judicial discretion to retain jurisdiction and sentence children to individualized sanctions in Family Court, and expand the civil citation program.

**House Bill 97:** This bill limits the impact of a person’s criminal history on their eligibility for cosmetology licensure and authorizes the Department of Correction to develop an appropriate training program.

**Senate Bill 85 (SS 1):** This bill requires schools to report rates of out of school suspension as a disciplinary tool and compels those schools with high rates of out of school suspension or high rates of disparate rates of suspension to develop and implement a plan to reduce suspensions and cut the flow of children in the school to prison pipeline.

# Youth Programming

DCJ supports policies and practices that are fair, equitable, and developmentally appropriate for youth involved in justice system. If a young person makes a bad decision, it is important that age appropriate sentencing and services are provided. We know that the condition of childhood, the very structure of their brains, makes young people more susceptible to the pressure of others, less able to extricate themselves from environments that induce criminality, and less in control of their surroundings.

DCJ served more than **132** youth in 2018; **91%** of the population served were students of color. Nationally, black youth are 5 times more likely to be incarcerated than their white counterparts—and shamefully Delaware is one of six states where black youth are at least 10 times more likely to be held in placement as white youth. Rates of juvenile incarceration are decreasing as developmental science and diversionary programs expand, but we still have much to be do, especially when addressing racial disparity within the system.

## Juvenile Restitution Determination Program

Program staff assists victims of crimes committed by individuals under 18 by assessing and filing court orders of restitution on behalf of the victims. Court orders of restitution ensure that juvenile offenders are legally obligated to make amends and to compensate their victims for their financial losses. **\$321,813** in restitution was ordered in 2018.

## Read In, Read Out Program (RIRO)

The Read In, Read Out Program is a collaborative project of the Department of Correction, the Delaware Center for Justice, and Read Aloud Delaware. Incarcerated parents select age appropriate books to read aloud to their children. Recordings of the readings, along with a copy of the book, are then provided to the kids. The program strengthens bonds among family members during periods of incarceration, which research suggests can reduce the likelihood of recidivism. Additionally, the program promotes literacy skills for both child and adult participants. **184** incarcerated parents in two facilities participated in 2018, and **217** children received packages including the book and the recording. Additionally, RIRO hosted its second reading workshop day in partnership with the University of Delaware during the fall of 2018. Children of participating parents were invited to listen to a reading and then participate in a hands-on activity led by early-learning specialists. All attendees left with several new books to keep as their own.

*DCJ's early founders knew children needed age appropriate responses to criminal behavior. DCJ assisted in preparing a bill to create a family court, which was established in 1945.*

### School Offense Diversion Program (SoDP)

DCJ's School Offense Diversion Program (SoDP) staff work with students referred by the Courts as a result of an arrest for an in-school incident. It is our goal to make each student's first encounter with the criminal justice system their last. By successfully completing SoDP, the student's charge is dismissed with the expectation that they stay out of trouble, stay in school, and graduate. By utilizing principles of restorative justice, youth work to understand the harm caused and in turn identify ways to provide healing for all of those involved. SoDP parent/guardian survey responses indicate that their child's program experience was positive, that their child realized their potential, that **their child is thinking more about the future**, that their child now thinks before they act and even listens, and that they gained tremendous insight into coping strategies.

### Student Warriors Against Guns and Gangs (SWAGG)

The Student Warriors Against Guns and Gangs (SWAGG) Program is an evidence-based gun violence intervention program and operates in partnership with the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services. SWAGG works to reverse the trend of increased gun and gang violence among youth by helping them to understand the impact of gun and gang violence on individuals and communities. The program follows a ten week curriculum to help students develop strategies for avoiding negative behaviors and making positive choices. It covers a range of critical risk factors for delinquency, violence, criminal behavior, and gang involvement. In 2018, **95%** of the 16-18 years old incarcerated students identified as black, and **88%** demonstrated an improvement in attitudes toward gun and gang violence.

*In 1947, DCJ opposed a bill allowing youth between 16 and 18 to be prosecuted as adults.*



## T.H.R.I.V.E

In early 2018, DCJ launched an expansion to its SWAGG program called THRIVE. THRIVE is a therapeutic violence prevention program facilitated at Bayard Middle School in the Christina School District. The curriculum is structured to help students learn how to identify and express their feelings

and use coping skills to address conflict. Case Management is also provided to families to address outside stressors that may affect in school success. The program's main goals are to improve attendance, improve grades, and reduce suspensions. **94%** of the students enrolled come from families living at 150%-200% of the Federal Poverty Line (approximately \$17,600-\$23,5000).

## Truancy Reduction Program

The Truancy Reduction Program works with high-risk students whose school attendance has ceased or dropped dramatically. Enrolled students are between the ages of **11-18**, and are more than **25** days truant. The program seeks to increase truant students' engagement in school to decrease dropout rates and to prevent future criminality. Through intensive case management, students and their families receive support in addressing the underlying causes of truancy, which may include factors such as bullying, lack of appropriate clothing or transportation, undiagnosed learning disabilities, precarious housing situations, and/or lack of academic support.

2018 highlights included an Annual College tour for enrolled students, rewards for increased attendance including Blue Rocks tickets, lunch outings, and movie tickets, as well as mentoring, homework help, and summer job placements.

WE ARE **NOT**  
SOCIETY'S  
THROW AWAYS



# Adult Programming



DCJ supports policies and programming that hold individuals accountable while also improving their capacity to achieve future success. Over 25,000 individuals are released from Delaware prison facilities annually, and unfortunately the state has a higher than average rate of recidivism. Nearly 76% of those released are rearrested within three years. In order to combat recidivism and strengthen communities, DCJ works to empower individuals to address trauma, identify professional opportunities, access healthcare, and resolve conflict. DCJ served 443 incarcerated or formerly incarcerated adults in 2018.

## Reentry Services

DCJ provides comprehensive and intensive case management services to previously incarcerated individuals through its Community Reintegration Services Program (CRSP). Participants are diverse in their ages, criminal charges, needs, challenges, and goals. The universal task is to assist participants with resolving challenges, building skills, and working towards a better life. **226** clients received case management services in 2018, with **67%** of clients self identifying as an ethnic minority.

We know that our clients succeed at a higher rate when their basic needs are taken care of upon their release, allowing them to focus on longer term educational and career goals. **67%** of clients report making less than the Federal Poverty Line – **\$11,772** annually, with **98%** reporting making less than **\$29,430** annually. Through support from the Delaware Criminal Justice Council, DCJ is able to provide financial assistance for the

urgent needs of eligible clients. Through this financial assistance, **35** clients were able to gain or maintain stable housing, **11** clients were able to avoid a shut off of their utilities, **26** clients were able to obtain their drivers' license and/or birth certificate, **9** clients were able to pay for job training programs, and **405** bus passes were distributed so that clients could attend interviews, work, job training, etc.

## Women in Transition

Women in Transition delivers educational instruction using the Moving On curriculum, designed specifically for women who are involved in the criminal justice system, at Hazel D. Plant Women's Treatment Facility. The overarching goal of the program is to assist women in mobilizing and developing personal and social resources that mitigate risk for future criminal behavior. The program targets criminogenic factors in order to reduce recidivism and promote healthy living, thus improving one's capacity for life's various stressors. Women build human, social, and emotional capital necessary for successful reentry into the community and greater ecosystem. Two cohorts of women participated in 2018, with **24** women successfully completing the program.

Please  
Don't  
Fine Me...

My Children  
Need Me...



*DCJ formed a statewide Center for Dispute Resolution more than 25 years ago, and has been providing mediation services ever since.*

## Victim's Programming

DCJ supports policies and practices that strengthen victims and rebuild communities. DCJ believes in the power of restorative justice and that the victims' voices must be a key part of the criminal justice process. While victimization affects every demographic group, research has shown that violence is concentrated and its impact unequal. The communities most harmed by crime are often the least supported by the criminal justice system.

Programs that incorporate restorative justice listen to what the victim needs to heal and provide support to all parties to address feelings of anger and fear, in addition to any other harms caused. **7 in 10** victims think rehabilitation, drug treatment, and mental health treatment are better ways to prevent future crimes than punishment through incarceration.

### Court of Common Pleas Mediation Program

Mediation services at DCJ provide a voluntary, safe, and confidential alternative to adjudication in court for victims and defendants. Participants are able to work out their conflicts without having to go to trial, and both parties have an opportunity to share the impact of the incident, to create an agreement for how the situation can be resolved and for how amends can be made. Mediation programs provide both victims and perpetrators with more satisfaction that justice had been served than traditional criminal justice pathways.

To date, over **4,000** cases have been successfully resolved through DCJ's mediation program. In 2018, **376** individuals received mediation services, and over **\$10,000** in restitution was collected on behalf of the Court of Common Pleas.



**THESE  
FINES  
HOLD ME  
BACK**

**COMMUNITY  
SERVICE  
HELPS ME  
MAKE  
CONNECTIONS**

### **Adult Victim Services Program (AVS)**

AVS provides intensive case management and counseling services to support, heal and empower victims of crime who are over the age of **50**. Clients learn about healthy boundaries, cycles of abuse and power, behaviors of an abuser, and self-care strategies. Clients demonstrate improved attitude, knowledge, and skills needed to manage their lives and are able to gain access to community based support services such as legal services, counseling, health clinics, and doctors' appointments. Clients access intensive case management through a master's level social worker and counseling through a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

**62** victims of crime were served in 2018. **63%** of clients served were female, **85%** identified as an ethnic minority, **94%** reported income levels below 150% of the Federal Poverty Line (\$17,820 for 1 individual), and **29%** reported living with a disability.

### **Victim Sensitivity Program**

The Victim Sensitivity Program provides opportunities for adjudicated youth at juvenile detention facilities to learn about the impact of their behavior. The program develops empathy among its participants as they are confronted by the realities of the impact of their crimes on the victims, as well as the families of those victims, the community, and themselves. With the overall high rate of violence in the City of Wilmington, this program hits home for many youth because it allows them to hear real life stories from individuals that have lived through violent acts or committed violent acts themselves.

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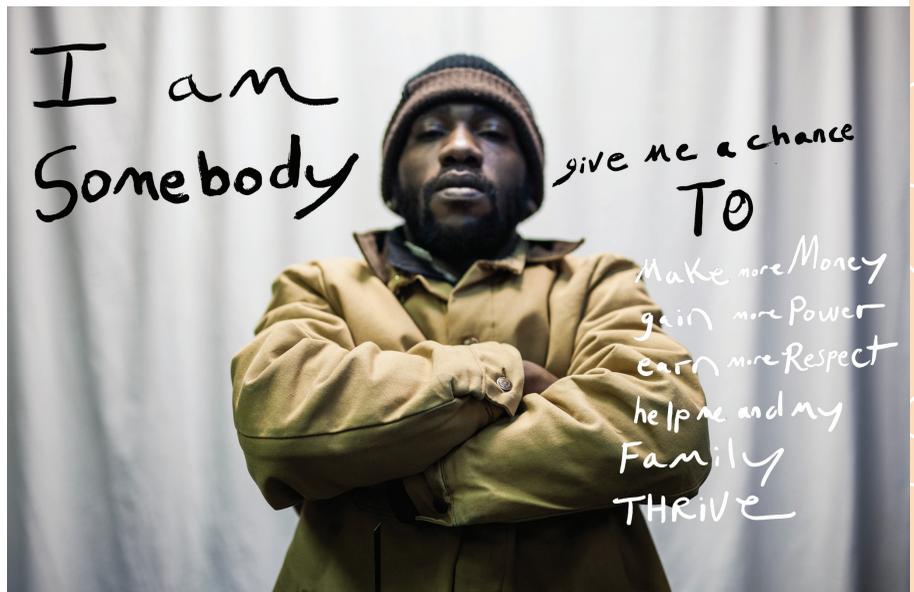
## Revenue

Program Grants	\$904,836
Fundraiser, Contribution & Investment Income	\$434,117
United Way of Delaware	\$47,802
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,386,755</b>

## Expenses

Employee Salaries, Benefits & Payroll taxes	\$993,556
Insurance – Business	\$18,294
Occupancy	\$48,667
Program Expenses	\$82,691
Outside Contractors	\$42,057
Other Expenses	\$108,504
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,293,769</b>

Artwork on pages 9, 11, 13 and 15 were produced in partnership with the Design Thinking Academy and the Creative Vision Factory as part of a multi-month arts advocacy initiative.



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