

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

**DELAWARE
CENTER FOR
JUSTICE** 

Table of Contents



1. Letter from Executive Director

2. Leadership Team

3. Letter from Board President

4. Board Members

5. Program Updates

6. Policy Update & Amazon Event

7. Financials

8. Donation Request

Letter from Executive Director

Dear Friends,

When I arrived at DCJ in 2019, I often heard that we believe in second chances. I assumed that applied to our clients exclusively, but if the pandemic has proven anything, these last few years have been a second chance for DCJ, too.

COVID exposed the inequities of a system that largely ignored the needs of poor communities and communities of color, leaving them hardest hit by and slowest to recover from the greatest crisis of our lifetime. The last few years have also laid bare more structural violence toward those same over-policed communities—not because it increased, but because more body camera footage and brave citizens with cell phones captured it.

These realities led DCJ to create an aspirational new mission that allows room for process but demands results—we listen, we amplify, and we act to seek justice for all Delawareans through advocacy and services. To that end, we've strategically grown our program and policy advocacy efforts.

The Community Reintegration Services Program, our flagship re-entry service for adults, now operates statewide and has doubled its capacity, including the addition of transitional re-entry assistance starting at the prison gate and specialized housing and employment services. And we've expanded that re-entry expertise to our work with youth, launching Restorative Re-entry for Youth earlier this year.

In addition to our policy work to expand criminal record expungement for countless Delawareans, we've also added full-time staff support to help them navigate the complex systems to access it. We thank the Longwood Foundation, the Delaware Bar Foundation, Amazon, and our Clean Slate Partners for making that work possible.

Space doesn't permit me to capture the full scope of the work DCJ's extraordinary staff does each day. That would require me to share all the life stories of our clients, people who rebuild and reinvent their lives daily despite facing insurmountable barriers and having access to the most meager of resources.

On their behalf, I'll simply say thank you for supporting that work.

With gratitude,

David Bever, M.S.W.
Executive Director

Leadership Team

Executive Director

David Bever

Director Of Policy, Read-In Read-Out Coordinator

Kailyn Richards

Director Of Reentry Services

Jessica Alicea

Director of Youth and Diversion Services

Corry Wright

Director of Victim Services

Gloria Smith

Clinical Director

Suzanne Kirk, LCSW

Director of Communications & Engagement

Mercedes Watson

Letter from Board President

Dear Friends,

In 2020, as we approached the 100-year anniversary of the Delaware Center for Justice, we adopted a new mission:

We listen, we amplify and we act to seek justice for all Delawareans through advocacy and services.

Central to this mission is the "we," and our focus on our shared humanity. How do we participate in our current systems? How well do we actively listen to our fellow human beings? How do we effectively and efficiently utilize our talents and resources?

At DCJ, we value individual and collective accountability. We choose to learn and grow in partnership with others. We understand that together, we are stronger. We believe in co-creating a community anchored in equity, justice and the opportunity for all to thrive.

We are first and foremost our justice-impacted community. With over 290,000 individuals in Delaware with criminal records and many more suffering the impact of loved ones and neighbors who are justice-involved, we are at the heart of our larger Delaware community. We are also those who are beginning to understand the complexities of systemic oppression and trauma, who seek to listen to those who are justice-impacted and act accordingly. Our aim is to address the root causes of injustice while supporting those of us who are justice-involved.

Through our advocacy efforts on expungement, LE080R, and fines and fees, DCJ focuses on policy reform that impacts our whole community. Through our adult and juvenile direct services programming in reentry, victims services, and mediation, DCJ supports approximately 1,500 additional justice-involved individuals every year. Our clients inform where and how we work. As always, we listen, we amplify and we act. We learn and we do better. We co-create systems of change and support that foster accountability, justice and wellbeing. Again, we know that we are better together than we are alone. And finally, we are grateful for you and all that you do to support our vision of Delaware. Thank you so much!

Warm regards,

**Natalie Reese
Board President**

Board Members

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Interim President

Kerri Evelyn Harris
Vice President

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Program Updates

Adult Victim Services

126 clients served

Adult Victim Services assists clients 50 years and older who reside in New Castle County at no cost. AVS receives referrals from New Castle County Police Department, Wilmington Police Department, Adult Protective Services, Hospitals, and survivors seeking assistance. AVS offers intensive case management services including: home visits, accompaniments to doctor's appointments, court advocacy, and office visits to services related to their Victimization. Case managers also help clients file police reports while providing protection from abuse and much more. Clients who participate in the AVS program have access to free therapy; they may participate in therapy by phone, zoom or in person. AVS offers hands-on case management that connects clients with resources in the community such as Community Legal Aid Society, Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, Social Services, Adult Protective Services, Police Departments, and others. Some of our clients stay with us for up to 3 years. During this time we work with them through all the ways trauma impacts their lives. We provide tools and information that will allow them to be successful and strive to help clients regain their freedom and independence after facing traumatic crimes. Trauma affects each client differently and our case management services are tailored to each individual.

Reentry Services

- **Moving On**
 - **Clients served: 21 participants in 2021**
 - **19 successful completions**
- **Transitional Reentry**
 - **475 participants in 2021**
 - **427 successful completions**
- **Community Reintegration Services**
 - **222 participants in 2021**
 - **97% saw an increase in self-sufficiency in the following domains: housing, employment, income, food, childcare, healthcare, life skills, safety, family/social relations, substance use/mental health.**
 - **Developments: New position : the Employment Specialist conducts weekly, one-on-one Employment Labs at each probation office and monthly Job Readiness Groups.**
 - **The services provided at the Employment Labs are tailored to the individual client's situation and may include assistance with job applications, resume development, skills/interest assessment, employment leads, interview skills, acquisition of resources such as interview clothing and transportation, referrals to education and vocational programs, and digital literacy. Adding Job Readiness Groups and individualized Employment Labs to CRSP enables reentrants to not only demonstrate their readiness to enter the workplace, but also the skills to retain and advance in their positions. This approach is designed to increase the number of people we can serve through targeted individual and group interventions aimed at reducing criminogenic needs and increasing stability and structure for reentry success.**

Client Quotes

- **“DCJ has helped me so much. I don't know if I would be able to accomplish some of my goals without them. Even when I feel like giving up, they were there to encourage me, and always have my back. With DCJ's financial assistance and support, I got my driver's license and never thought I would!”**
- **“Working with DCJ has allowed me to complete probation, find a job, and work on my GED. They are truly a Godsend. I am so grateful for them and all their assistance.”**
- **“Being released from prison after a long sentence is stressful enough, but luckily, I learned about DCJ and was able to land a job, have a constant listening ear, and get help with moving in money for my first apartment. This is the first time in my life where I feel like going back to prison is not an option. Working with a Case Manager at DCJ changed my life. “**

Read-In Read-Out

The Read In, Read Out Program is a collaborative project of the Department of Correction, the Delaware Center for Justice, and Read Aloud Delaware. Selected parents are able to record themselves reading age-appropriate books to their children. The resulting recordings are then sent to each child, along with the books and an inexpensive cd player. In this manner, incarcerated parents are better able to preserve a bond with their children, improve their communication and parenting skills, and ease their transition back to their families and to the community.

Read In Read Out was on hiatus since March 2020 due to the pandemic. Programming is scheduled to resume at Baylor Women's Correctional Institution and Howard R. Young Correctional Institution in September 2022. Please contact Kailyn Richards at KRichards@dcjustice.org if you are interested in becoming a Read In Read Out volunteer.

Programs for the Youth

Risk and Decision (program formerly know as Student Warriors Against Gangs and Guns)

This program is a comprehensive and collaborative gun intervention and prevention program that works in partnership with the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families - Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services. The program consists of educational classes at the New Castle County Detention Center for individuals sentenced through gun court. Classes use the Phoenix New Freedom 100 Curriculum which teaches skills and strategies for coping with chaotic environments and reducing violent behavior. The program also provides after-care support groups in the community focusing on community service projects for program participants.

Program served 84 clients in 2021

Victim Sensitivity

Victim Sensitivity aims to give youth residing at the cottages of the New Castle County Detention Center a better understanding of how crime affects not only the victim but also every facet of the victim's life. Participants are provided an opportunity to explore victimization through discussion of the adverse effects of crime on both the victim and perpetrator. The program incorporates the use of positive norms, problem-solving techniques, and coping skills. Programming is offered weekly for a duration of two hours. Each cycle lasts **8 weeks**.

During FY21, the Victim Sensitivity Program served **52** students.

Guest speakers during 2021

- **Liz Lucey - Ms. Lucey, a recovery expert, spoke on the effects of incarceration and domestic violence.**
- **Daryl Chambers - Mr. Chambers, a Re-Entry and Community Prevention Expert, spoke about losing his son to violence and the community-wide effect.**
- **Corry Wright - Corry, a member of DCJ's leadership team, spoke about using the skills the boys have and applying them to seeking employment and finding healthy role models in the community. Corry also shares some of his own personal experience with the boys.**
- **Erin Goldner- Substance Abuse, Recovery, and Domestic Violence - Justice and Recovery Education - Cycle of Violence.**

School Offense Diversion Program (SoDP)

For young people charged with a crime at school, the School Offense Diversion Program offers students a chance at expungement once they complete an intensive, family-based case management regimen that employs proven restorative justice practices.

Restorative Justice Conferencing

Offers those who have been harmed (victims) the opportunity to address those who have caused them harm (offenders) in a safe, structured setting, with the goal of directly holding an offender accountable for their actions while providing important assistance to the victim.

All youth referred who were successfully conferenced/mediated completed their terms successfully!

- **Number of clients served in 2021**
 - **Restorative Conferencing New Referrals**
 - **Court of Common Pleas Referrals: 766**
 - **Family Court Referrals: 27**
 - **SoDP New Referrals: 7 referrals**
 - **Restorative Conferencing Mediation Completed**
 - **Court of Common Pleas: 198**
 - **Family Court: 11**
 - **Over 381 people participated in the total 209 mediations in 2021**
 - **SoDP meetings conducted with the youth and guardians: 232**
- **Restorative Conferencing Successfully completed mediation agreements**
 - **Court of Common Pleas: 180**
 - **Family Court: 11**
 - **SoDP: 4**

Advocacy Update

Success

SB 111, also known as the Clean Slate Act, makes Delaware's current petition-based, mandatory expungement process automatic and free beginning in August 2024. The Delaware Justice Information System (DELJIS) estimates that around 290,000 would be impacted by this legislation.

SB 112 makes small changes to mandatory expungement eligibility. New expungeable offenses include underage possession or consumption of alcohol under § 904(e) or (f) of Title 4, possession of marijuana under § 4764 of Title 16, or possession of drug paraphernalia under § 4771.

HB 447 makes several changes to Delaware's expungement law: 1. Makes cases that are 7 yrs or older, contain charges missing a disposition, and/or other charges eligible for a mandatory expungement, 2. Allows an individual with multiple violations or misdemeanors in different cases that would be eligible for a mandatory expungement if they had occurred in a single case, and the individual has no other convictions on their record, to apply directly for a discretionary expungement after 5 years have passed from the most recent conviction.

Why our advocacy work must continue...

In 2020, legislators introduced SS1 for SB 149, a bill to amend the Law Enforcement Officer's Bill of Rights. The Delaware Center for Justice strongly opposed this bill due to its major limitations. For example, SB 149 would only be providing the public access to serious and substantiated police records created after the bill's passage. We plan to continue to advocate strongly for public access to all police disciplinary records and civilian-led review boards with investigative power.

Second Chances Fair

Sponsored by Amazon

This April, also known as **Second Chances Month, the Delaware Center for Justice collaborated with the Department of Justice, Clean Slate Delaware, Office of Defense Services, APEX, Pardon Me Project, Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, and many others to host a free Record Clearance and Job Fair at the Rt. 9 Library and Innovation Center.**

Over **300 attendees were given the next steps to expunge and/or pardon their records along with the financial assistance needed to complete the process. The job fair featured second-chance employers like Amazon, ShopRite, The Buccini/Pollin Group, and other businesses that are committed to hiring people with records.**

Financials

- **REVENUE**

- Program Contracts **\$957,335**
- Grants **\$398,892**
- Fundraising, Investment & Miscellaneous **\$119,541**
- United Way of Delaware **\$40,169**

- **TOTAL REVENUE \$1,515,937**

- **EXPENSES**

- Employee Salaries, Benefits & Payroll Taxes **\$1,181,536**
- Insurance - Business **\$20,347**
- Occupancy **\$51,275**
- Program Expenses **\$63,655**
- Outside Contractors **\$52,769**
- Other Expenses **\$116,060**

- **TOTAL EXPENSES \$1,485,642**

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WITH YOUR DONATION, DCJ TOUCHES THE LIVES OF DELAWAREANS ACROSS THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SPECTRUM, PROVIDING VITAL DIRECT SERVICES TO OVER 1,500 JUSTICE-IMPACTED PEOPLE ANNUALLY WHILE WORKING FOR BETTER PUBLIC POLICY FOR ALL OF US. MAKE A GIFT TODAY AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR JUSTICE-IMPACTED COMMUNITIES.



**Scan for more information about donations or visit
www.dcjustice.org.**