

# NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE NETWORK

## 2018 PROGRAM REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

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NJJN has had a tremendous year of growth and transformation. This year we accelerated and deepened our anti-racist work both externally and in relationship with our members. To take it to the next level, we have engaged with a consulting firm so that we can more fully involve the entire membership body on the creation of a vision and goals for NJJN as an anti-racist network.

We continue to provide support to our field of state-based advocates through our technical assistance, member-connection activities, publications, and webinars. Our Youth Justice Leadership Institute, now in its seventh year, provides a unique and critically-needed space that is dedicated to the support and elevation of youth justice advocates of color.

Our core state justice policy work and anti-racist change process are all couched in a national context that continues place the most vulnerable members of our society in grave danger. This year we focused on how we can protect immigrant youth who may get caught in the crosshairs of our justice system. Our policy platform, tip sheet, webinars and national coalition work are only the beginning of this effort.

We also know that liberation doesn't come when our sole focus is on mitigating harm. We must also carry a positive vision for the world we want to create. Consequently, we are growing our work on restorative justice as a transformational model. We published an in-depth look at New Zealand's efforts in this area, a tip sheet for the larger public, and a toolkit for members and we're beginning the process of building out a cohort of DA ambassadors who can serve as a speakers' bureau with other DA's.

As youth justice change agents, we have always had a heavy lift, which is now married to the urgency of the national moment. There is more work ahead, but as we look to 2019, we are strengthened by our programmatic accomplishments in 2018.

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES

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NJJN's core strategic approach is to strengthen, knit and elevate our members so that they are effective, powerful, and diverse enough to achieve their policy, practice, and political aims, and so they can wield their collective voice on a national level. To implement this strategic approach, NJJN coalesces a national voice for youth well-being; develops the tools and information needed to help members mobilize in support of this voice; builds the capacity, diversity, and authenticity of members; and supports members to win campaigns for youth well-being. We do all this work in light of the larger movement for racial justice, which informs our programs, policies, membership, and partnerships.

### Supporting, Knitting and Elevating our Members

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We further the efforts to transform our justice systems in part through our membership body comprising 54 organizational members and 47 graduates of our Youth Justice Leadership Institute across 42 states and the District of Columbia. We provide direct support through technical assistance in the areas of communications, policy analysis, coalition development, and campaign strategy.

#### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

During 2018, we provided in-depth technical assistance (TA) to Tennessee, mid-level TA to 38 states, completing more than 170 TA requests. We also provided support to non-member, Montana Disability Rights.

#### *IN-DEPTH TA*

Just City, Memphis, TN: We provided in-depth technical assistance to our member, JustCity, when we were alerted to the plight of a 16 year-old-girl, who was held in solitary confinement in a Tennessee adult prison, pre-conviction, under the state's 19th century "safekeeping" law. NJJN continued to support work in Tennessee. While the fight to move TW to a juvenile facility was successful, the incident was used to spark debate on the need for a new facility for girls charged as adults. NJJN supported Just City, in coordination with the Campaign for Youth Justice, to think through strategies to push back against the building of a new facility as well as work to get advocates placed on a committee to oversee facility planning discussions. In addition, we worked with Just City to think through strategies to elevate youth justice in local sheriff, mayoral, and county commission candidate debates. We also continued to work with Just City to plan a convening with local groups to think through long term coalition development. NJJN continues to work with Just City

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*NJJN is our partner in protecting the rights of vulnerable youth in our state. I could not do it without you. You connected me with the right member organizations to address youthful offender housing, provided a framework for coalition building and stellar, up-to-date written materials for issues that arise in our state.*

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in response to the DOJ's recent termination of their consent decree and a concerning effort in Memphis to build a new detention facility.

### ***EXAMPLES OF MID-LEVEL TA***

#### Nevada

ACLU of Nevada reached out to NJJN to alert us to the fact that Clark County School District had issued an announcement regarding a new student search policy, which allowed for randomized weapons searches. ACLU of NV was hoping to act quickly to combat the media narrative that this made schools safer and needed support on talking points. NJJN provided research on school safety that combatted the narrative that hardening schools makes them more safe, provided template talking points, and connected with additional expert contacts.

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*When I reached out for more resources around various issues, NJJN's staff was always quick to respond to put me in touch with experts or share research with me.*

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#### Nebraska

We helped Nebraska Voices counter an exceedingly large fiscal note that threatened to tank their solitary confinement bill. We unpacked some of the notes' assumptions and provided alternate fiscal note examples such as the one attached to Colorado's solitary confinement bill. We also helped push back against a bill that would make it a new felony offense for youth with guns. We provided research on effective programs, talked through advocacy strategies, and connected our member with advocates in LA and MA who had models for alternative approaches.

### ***Examples of Triage TA***

A good deal of our work during legislative session is fast-paced response to immediate needs emerging out of the legislative process. Three examples of this triage TA include:

- SPLC Alabama: Provided a letter of support and strategy discussion regarding the inclusion of direct file amendments into Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act.
- Louisiana Center for Children's Rights: Shared research on juvenile prolific offender legislative provisions to inform reforms of LA's Vitter law.
- Utah Juvenile Defenders: Engaged in a strategy discussion to defeat a bill to expand transfer.

## KNITTING OUR MEMBERS

A core strategy for NJJN is to facilitate cross-member connections so that they can take advantage of the wisdom within the NJJN community. We enable these connections through individual peer to peer connection, our substantive working groups, state strategy calls, and annual Forum.

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*Sometimes, due to funding, I work alone on many difficult issues. Having the network was so helpful and reassuring because the stress of this work leads to high turnover, especially amongst people of color.*

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### State Peer Learning Groups

During 2018, we convened 29 separate group calls with our members across a variety of issues. These calls were divided between state networking calls on standing issues and state strategy calls on emerging or pressing issues and/or with expert speakers.

#### Networking Calls

1. School to Prison Pipeline (6 meetings– January, March, May, June, August, October)
2. Emerging Adults Networking Group (2 meetings-September, November)
3. Restorative Justice/Victims Networking Group (3 meetings –January, July, and October)
4. Adulthood (1 meeting - October)
5. Racial Justice Working Group (2 meetings: January and April)
6. Anti-Racist Peer Learning Cohorts (7 meetings – February, March, April, May, September, October, November)
7. Federal JJ Advocacy (4 meetings: February, June, September and November)

#### State Strategy Calls

1. Criminalization of Gangs, with Alyson Clements, NJJN, February 9<sup>th</sup>. (3 states and 3 national partner organizations).
2. Raise the Age Implementation, NJJN with CFYJ, June 21, 2018 (6 States)
3. End Solitary for Youth Call, with Jennifer Lutz, Dr. Bobby Cohen, Juliet Summers, and Elise Longemann, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (6 states)
4. Marsy’s Law, Monica Reid of NACDL, Holly Wellborn of ACLU of NV, and Kathy Griesmeyer of ACLU of ID, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (7 states and 3 national partners)

## Individual Connections

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As part of our efforts to knit our members to support their work, we also facilitate individual member to member connections.

Examples of member-to-member connections that we facilitated include the following:

1. Connected Micheal Atty (UCM) with Laqueanda Renau (Communities United) and Garien Gatewood (JJI) to strategize around implementation of SB 100 in Illinois.
2. Connected Kathy Wright (NJPC) and Dietra Wise (MCU) regarding strategies for parent engagement.
3. Connected Terrence Sullivan (KYA) with Juliet Summers (NE Voices for Children) regarding strategies for implementing lower age of jurisdictions.

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*I always reach out to other members when I need help, expertise I don't have, or to tap into someone's local and/or national networks.*

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## FOCUS ON ANTI-RACISM: Network Transformation & Youth Justice Leadership Institute

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### NETWORK TRANSFORMATION

During this grant period we accelerated and deepened our anti-racist work, which takes place across the following domains: 1) membership; 2) policy; 3) national office; and 4) youth leadership. The work that is taking place across all of these fronts will be greatly enhanced by our engagement with Higher Ground Change Strategies, a racial justice consulting firm. Higher Ground has been charged with helping NJJN develop a vision, framework, goals and benchmarks for ourselves as an anti-racist community. This work will be profound for NJJN and will ultimately require us to adjust NJJN's mission, vision and strategic plan. Higher Ground has also been charged with helping us provide support to our members who are undertaking their own anti-racist change process.

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*The focus on anti-racism work by NJJN has been the most useful and unique benefit of being an NJJN member this past year. I think the conversations at Forum have been invaluable.*

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### Membership

In collaboration with our Membership Advisory Council, we pushed out new membership requirements. It is now mandatory that all members affirm that they work from an anti-racist lens and that organizational members engage in an anti-racist organizational self-assessment. We have been building out peer support groups and other resources to enable the work.

## Policy

This year we have been very intentional about pushing out publications that support our movement's efforts to create a just society. For instance, this year we issued an anti-racist organizational self-assessment tip sheet and a racial justice toolkit and were increasingly focused on how our publications addressed societal power inequalities.

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*I really appreciate NJJN's efforts to center race equity and naming the need to shift power in its materials and communications.*

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## National Office

In the national office, we developed a racial justice curriculum for ourselves that structures and inform our bi-weekly racial justice discussions. We reevaluate our own anti-racist organizational self-assessment annually and continue to set goals and check in on progress. We have also been deliberate about building out a diverse Board of Directors that is fully committed to our anti-racist work.

## Youth Leadership

NJJN has focused increasing attention on centering those who are most negatively impacted by our justice system's policies. We have been bringing young people to our annual gatherings for the past three years and have engaged them in the Forum planning process either directly on our planning committee or on a youth sub-committee. This year at our annual Forum, the membership voted to expand the Membership Advisory Council to include two dedicated spots for youth leaders, and fully eight young people volunteered to fill those slots. In 2018 we brought on a social work intern from Howard University to build out our youth leadership work and have additionally engaged with YJLI alum, Tea Ingram, a youth leadership consultant, to provide further guidance. We are proud that our 2019 Forum Planning Committee is composed of a majority of young people and look forward to the changes that this will bring.

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*Engaging with youth leaders was the most helpful because learning from youth allows you to feel a stronger sense of urgency in advocating for them. I personally enjoyed spending time with them and getting to know them, and they are all incredibly talented and intelligent about this field.*

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## Youth Justice Leadership Institute

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Our Youth Justice Leadership Institute continues to support and hold space for leaders of color in the youth justice advocacy space. Our annual evaluation of the program through our alumni survey indicates that it is meeting a key need in the field. The survey results indicate that the Institute met its goals by successfully nurturing leaders of color, providing them with the support they needed to achieve greater levels of self-confidence and career advancement, and keeping

them engaged in social justice, NJJN and each other. This engagement with NJJN is partially demonstrated by the fact that 70% of the Membership Advisory Council and 30% of the Board of Directors is composed of YJLI alumni.

- 100% of YJLI alumni members are still advocating for youth/or social justice
- At least 65% advanced to a leadership position and/or received a promotion in the past year.
  - These advancements included changes such as moving up to director positions, assuming state committee leadership roles, and taking on leadership roles in national organizations.
- More than 90% felt self-confident as a leader.
  - Some alumni clarified that their self-confidence varied depending on the role. One alumnus indicated they s/he felt self-confident as a leader but didn't feel respected as one.
- 68% stayed involved in NJJN activities.
  - These activities included attending the NJJN annual Forum, participating in NJJN working groups and/or business committees, and/or requesting technical assistance.
- 84% engaged in YJLI-specific activities.
  - These activities included the YJLI alumni council, YJLI alumni retreat, co-presenting with other alumni or engaging in joint activities with other alumni.

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*My experience as an NJJN YJLI alum specifically has been instrumental in my progression to leadership within my organization.*

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### **2018-2019 Class**

In February of 2018, we advertised for a new class of fellows. We received 22 completed (and six partial) applications from 15 different states. Ten of the applicants indicated that they either had personal or familial experiences with the justice system. The racial and ethnic breakdown of our applicants was as follows: black (15), Latinx (3), multi-racial (1), Asian (1), and indigenous (2). We had twenty-two volunteers reading and scoring the application packages, plus two additional volunteers to conduct interviews with the finalists. Our final roster of fellows for the 2018-2019 fellowship year comprise ten amazing individuals:

Travis Andrews | Redmond, WA  
 Latashia Crenshaw | Pearland, TX  
 LaTasha DeLoach | Iowa City, IA  
 Kenya Lee | New York, NY

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*YJLI was a transformative experience for me. I now can't imagine doing this work without the YJLI network. It's incredibly powerful to be connected with such incredible advocates of color across the country.*

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Maria León | Bryan, TX  
Shelton McElroy | Louisville, KY  
Arturo Quiros | Los Angeles, CA  
Courtney Warren | Fort Washington, MD  
Sheba Williams | Richmond, VA  
Lenore Wyant | Chambersburg, PA

### 2017-2018 YJLI Class

In July, we successfully graduated all ten of our fellows. Their completed advocacy projects are listed below:

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*It was the first time in a while that I had space to think about addressing youth justice both internally and externally through a race equity lens and since then I have continued to work on these issues from this perspective in a more thoughtful and productive way.*

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Cheyenne Blackburn – Community Outreach Paralegal, Southern Poverty Law Center, New Orleans, LA

Advocacy Project: In carrying out the project she created a network of community-based and education stakeholders who are committed to further analysis of arrest data and crafting of policy changes

Rickell Howard – Policy and Litigation Director, Children’s Law Center, Cincinnati, OH

Advocacy Project: Rickell’s work on her project led to increased understanding among community organizers and advocates on the sources of relevant crime and arrest data and how to use it for policy changes

Esché Jackson – Public Policy Advocate, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, Los Angeles, CA

Advocacy Project: Through her project, Esché created and implemented a curriculum that positions girls touched by the justice system to advocate and push for systemic changes with intention to be a model for other girl serving groups.

Erin Keith - Juvenile Defense and Policy Fellow, Georgetown Law School Juvenile Justice Clinic, Washington, DC

Advocacy Project: created curriculum and structure to train and position girls with system experience to advocate for system change in DC and the surrounding suburbs

Treshika Melvin – Community Advocate, Southern Poverty Law Center, Jackson, MS

Advocacy Project: Treshika’s project led to a network of community stakeholders who have a stated interest in completing the work of establishing a formal coalition to halt school push out

Nanayamka Shakura – Senior Community Advocate, Southern Poverty Law Center, Montgomery, AL

Advocacy Project: the project was able to connect a diverse set of community stakeholders in a select school district in an ongoing effort to elevate youth leadership in making system change



Valerie Slater – RISE for Youth Coalition Coordinator, Legal Aid Justice Center, Richmond, VA  
Advocacy Project: through the work of her project the coalition successfully campaigned to influence the state legislature around the school to prison pipeline and a continuum of care for youth in secure care

Mar Velez – Organizing and Policy Campaign Manager, Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice, Oakland, CA

Advocacy Project: the work of her project helped her organization to assess its long-term goals and efficacy in establishing a comprehensive legislative plan.

Terrence Wilson – Staff Attorney, Georgia Appleseed, Atlanta, GA

Advocacy Project: drafting of the school justice protocol is complete and the network needs to complete forming of a partnership with the most active school jurisdiction

Sarah Yousuf – Policy Associate, United Congress, Chicago, IL

Advocacy Project: conducted a public education campaign in the city to educate the public on the meaning of and implementation of new law on legal representation and presence of attorneys for youth

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*YJLI made solid connections between policy and organizing which has been beneficial for the work I do. I have done movement work for some time, but YJLI exposed me to people of color working within systems and how policy and organizing go hand in hand.*

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### **YJLI Alumni Program**

We continued to move forward the alumni program in 2018. The Alumni Advisory Committee met monthly and addressed issues such as expanding applicant recruitment for greater Latinx and indigenous engagement, planning of the 2018 alumni retreat, encouraging all alumni to become NJJN members, beginning planning of an alumni and youth mentoring program, coordinating the annual alumni survey, and providing alumni perspectives on NJJN’s anti-racist efforts. The full committee also created a fundraising and development subcommittee to consider alumni efforts to bring resources to the Institute.

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*It is always great to be among the YJLI fellows. They are like a family and a support network.*

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### **Annual YJLI Alumni Pre-Forum Retreat**

As in the past four years, graduates of the Youth Justice Leadership Institute gathered over the weekend for a self-organized retreat. On Saturday they visited the Greensboro Civil Rights Museum followed by a group dinner. On Sunday they engaged in a self-care and resilience training that was led by YJLI alumni, Sadric Bonner. This day-long training included interactive exercises to help participants recognize adverse stress and examine steps to acquire or maintain health and well-being



YJLI Alumni continue to be seen as the leaders they are in the justice reform space. A few of their accomplishments include:

- Valerie Slater, as Executive Director successfully transitioned RISE for Youth of Richmond VA from a project of another organization into a free-standing organization and state-wide coalition.
- Christy Sampson-Kelly became Coordinating Principal of facilities-based schools in New Orleans, including the Travis Hill School.
- Katherine Wright's organization, New Jersey Parents Caucus, released a policy brief, The Solitary Confinement of Youth with Mental Health Disabilities in New Jersey's Adult Prison System, addressing the effect of this discredited practice on youth.
- Maheen Kaleem and Natalie Collier were featured speakers at the Second National Funders Convening of Grantmakers for Girls of Color on the panel Re-imagining Safety At Home and In Community.
- Chaz Arnett published Virtual Shackles: Electronic Surveillance and the Adultification of Juvenile Courts in the journal of the Social Science Research Network.
- Jody Owens appeared on the August 30 episode of Democracy Now addressing the abuse and deaths of Mississippi prisoners.
- Theo Shaw graduated as valedictorian from University of Washington School of Law.
- Ashley Sawyer appeared on the Breakfast Club Power 105.1 FM discussing mass incarceration and human rights <https://youtu.be/H9wYpEyIqPg>.
- Erin Keith became Staff Attorney for Youth Services at the Detroit Justice Center.

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*NJJN is the only organization that I am a part of that provides a safe space for advocates of color to learn and grow from each other.*

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## Annual Forum

From July 16-18, we held our annual Forum in Durham, North Carolina in partnership with our member, the NC Youth Justice Project. The Forum was planned by a dedicated committee of members from across the country. This year the work of the Forum Planning Committee was informed by a youth planning group that provided ideas and feedback on all aspects of the Committee's work.

## Special Activities for Young Leaders

On Monday, we welcomed 16 system involved youth leaders from CA, CT, IL, KS, NC, NJ, OH and VA. The young people had a day to get to know each other and build connections on Monday, when they spent the day exploring the International Civil Rights Center and Museum as well as the Beloved Community Center, both in Greensboro, NC. On



Tuesday, they joined the larger membership body for the regular Forum schedule. This marks our third year of integrating young people into our annual gathering.

### **Leveraging National Presence for Local Gain**

On Monday evening, in coordination with our member organization, Youth Justice Project, we held a vigil outside of the local jail in Durham to protest the suicide of a teenage girl inside the facility who had been placed there in the prior year while she awaited trial. The vigil included speeches and calls to action by young people from around the country, local advocates, North Carolina Representative Marcia Morey, and national partners. The action garnered press attention in print and tv media, including LatinX outlets.



### **Art as a Catalyst for Transformation**

This year we incorporated multiple forms of art exhibits and art-making as part of our gathering. We began our time together with the Pauli Murray Racial Justice Walking Tour, led by a local performance artist. We also interspersed our work with group poetry making, a collective human orchestra, and a word quilt. We closed out our gathering with an inspiring open mic led by our young people.



### **National Awards**

NJJN honored national and local leaders in youth justice transformation at our Tuesday evening reception as a way to elevate some of the many individuals who pursue justice transformation.



#### **North Carolina Awards**

1. Leadership in Juvenile Justice Reform: State Representative Marcia Morey
2. Leadership in Juvenile Justice Reform: Brandy Bynum Dawson
3. Story of Justice Media Award: Melissa Boughton
4. Story of Justice Media Award: Kari Travis

#### **National Awards**

1. Emerging Leader: Valerie Slater, YJLI Alum, RISE for Youth
2. Gutsy Advocate for Youth: LaShunda Hill, YJLI Alum
3. NJJN Service Award: Erika Stallworth, YJLI Alum

### **Racial Justice at the Forum**

We began our formal convening on Tuesday, which we devoted fully to our anti-racist work, including workshops on youth organizing, fundraising as a black and brown person, and what to do when white supremacy shows up in your organization. Tema Okun, an anti-racist thought leader shared her perspectives with us over lunch. Our annual community conversation focused on small group discussions of members' progress with their anti-racist self-assessments.

### **Public Day**

We opened our second day to the larger public and had sessions as varied as restorative justice, immigration, school to prison pipeline, responding to youth with serious offenses and intersectional justice in practice. We also incorporated simultaneous translations for the immigration break out session. Over lunch, we gathered at tables to strategize on pressing state issues including: adultification; diversion; emerging adults; continuum of care; and juvenile bail.

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*The conference in North Carolina helped expand my network and really opened my eyes to the work revolving around the juvenile justice system nationally.*

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## **Growing our Membership**

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NJJN seeks to create a big tent for youth justice advocacy and, thus, we are always looking to expand our membership with individuals and groups who are aligned with our core values. In 2018 we brought on six new organizational members and four graduates of our Leadership Institute.

### Organizational Members:

1. Communities United – Illinois
2. Legal Rights Center – MN
3. New Jersey Parents Caucus
4. New Mexico Children's Advocacy Network
5. RISE for Youth - Virginia
6. United Congregations of the Metro East – Illinois

### YJLI Members:

1. Cheyenne Blackburn
2. Nanyamka Shukura
3. Valerie Slater
4. Terrence Wilson

### Ally Program

In January of 2018, we re-launched NJJN's Ally program to build out a more robust and vibrant network of individuals who are aligned with and want to support our work. I Allies agree to our anti-racist framework and our principles of reform and pay a small dues donation of \$25. In 2018, we brought on 28 new Allies, and now have a total of 36 Allies. In 2019, we anticipate

growing this base of individuals and organizations, who are not otherwise eligible for membership, as strong allies in our local and national efforts.

## INFORMING THE FIELD: PUBLICATIONS, WEBINARS, PRESENTATIONS, SOCIAL MEDIA, and PRESS

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In 2018, we worked diligently to inform the larger public and our advocacy community about the need for change and avenues to enable it. We achieved the following:

- wrote 12 publications;
- held 7 national webinars; and
- made 11 presentations across the country.

### Publications

1. [2017 NJJN Member Policy Advances](#), NJJN, Jan. 2018. (179 page views).
2. [“NJJN’s Anti-Racist Organizational Self-Assessment: Tip Sheet,” January 2018](#)
3. [Gangs – Research and Talking Points](#). March 2018. (For members only – 32 page views).
4. [Racial Justice Advocacy Toolkit and Resources](#), April 2018. (215 page views).
5. [Public Health Roadmap to Prevent Car Thefts](#), April 2018. (137 page views).
6. New Zealand's Youth Justice Transformation: Lessons for the United States: - [Executive Summary](#) and [Full Report](#), April 2018. (363 page views).
7. 2018 Policy Platform: [“Supporting Immigrant Youth Caught in the Crosshairs of the Justice System,”](#) August 2018.
8. [“Empowering Justice Involved Youth Leaders: A Practitioners Guide,”](#) August 2018.
9. Update of [“Influencing Candidates for Office Tip Sheet,”](#) September 2018.
10. [Sex Offense Registration and Related Laws: Treating Youth Fairly](#), National Juvenile Justice Network policy platform, November 2018 (updated)
11. [Seven Ways to Protect Immigrant Youth](#), December 2018, with ILRC.
12. [Restorative Justice Tip Sheet](#), December 2018.

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*NJJN helped advance our juvenile justice work. I participated in webinars on policy issues and relied on NJJN’s resources and publications to help shape our work.*

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## Webinars

1. [“Pushing Back on Gang Databases and Gang Injunctions”](#) webinar – April 10, 2018. Presenter Kim McGill, NJJN Member – Youth Justice Coalition (CA). 73 registered. 35 attended.
2. [“Engaging Faith Communities on Youth Justice”](#) webinar – April 18, 2018. NJJN member Dr. Rev. Dietra Wise, Metropolitan Congregations United, and Kate Trammell, Prison Fellowship. 90 registered, 40 attended.
3. [“Restorative Justice webinar,”](#) May 3, 2018. NJJN staff member Melissa Goemann, Senior Policy Counsel, NJJN member Betsy Clarke of JJI (IL) and Alex Lambert III of the Office of the Attorney General (DC). 194 registered. 87 attended.
4. “Ending the Placement of Youth on Registries for Sex Offenses: What You Need to Know,” Sept. 18, 2018. Presenters: Nicole Pittman – Director, Center on Youth Registration Reform (CYRR); Hanna Miller – Program Associate, CYRR; and Lisa Swaminathan, Juvenile Law Center. 105 registered, 55 attended.
5. “Protecting Immigrant Youth,” Sept. 27, 2018. Presenters: NJJN staff member, Melissa Goemann; Sejal Zota – National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild; and Sari Bilick of Human Impact Partners. 61 registered, 24 attended.
6. “Youth Justice Leadership Institute Toolkit: Empowering Justice-Involved Youth Leaders,” October 22, 2018. Our YJLI alum, Jeree Thomas, Policy Director at the Campaign for Youth Justice, will lead the webinar, joined by Hernán Carvente Martinez, Krystal Seruya, Chelsea Ward, Kim McGill as well as some youth leaders. 39 registered.
7. “Restorative Justice and VOCA,” Dec. 10, 2018. Presenters: Jessica Barfield, Assistant Director at the Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) and Anne Seymour, national advocate for crime victims and survivors, specializing in criminal and juvenile justice and restorative justice, crime victims' rights and services, and community safety. 129 registered and 60 attended.

## Presentations

1. NJJN staff presented to 13 commissioners of police, public security, recreation, and gender & diversity as well as a mayor from across South and Central America to discuss our youth justice system. January 19, 2018.
2. CreateJustice Conference, Facilitator for Policy Breakout Session, Sarah Bryer with Michael Howard, March 13-14, 2018, New York City
3. "Juvenile Justice and the School to Prison Pipeline", Presenters: Ashana Bigard (FFLIC), Alyson Clements (NJJN), and Josh Rovner (The Sentencing Project), March 24th, 2018



at Young Elected Officials Network's 2018 Justice Reform and Community Reinvestment Policy Summit.

4. "Police and Youth Relations: The Need for Change and the Role of Divestment in Direct Action Organizing." Presentation put together by NJJN for Howard University conference: "Global Perspectives on Police, Law, and Society: Common Ties Across Communities of Color." Presenters were Melissa C. Goemann and Brooke A. Butler, BYP 100. March 24, 2018 at Howard University.
5. "Does Your Policy Promote Racial and Ethnic Equity?" presentation with Liane Rozzell at AECF at the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Conference, June 2018.
6. "Rethinking our Roots: Public Health as a Foundation for Youth Justice," Coalition for Juvenile Justice Conference, June 2018.
7. "Does Your Policy Promote Racial and Ethnic Equity?" presentation with Liane Rozzell from AECF at the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Conference, June 2018. Washington, DC.
8. "Implicit Bias Training" National Disability Rights Network annual conference, June 18, 2018 in Baltimore.
9. "Juvenile Justice Reform: Looking Back and Moving Forward," National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC) annual conference in San Antonio, Aug. 23, 2018. Presentation with members Texas Appleseed and Texans Care for Children.
10. "Closing Youth Prisons" plenary presentation at Education Anew: Shifting Justice. October 13, 2018, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
11. "Immigrant Youth Caught in the Crosshairs of the Justice System," with Gloria Gonzalez, at California Youth Justice Project at Education Anew: Shifting Justice. October 13, 2018, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

### **Press Attention and Social Media Reach**

In 2018, in more than 30 instances, NJJN and/or our staff were mentioned, quoted, or had a letter to the editor or op-ed published. This includes LTE's in the Washington Post on police shootings, in the Baltimore Sun on restorative justice, and in the Chicago Tribune on gang databases. We had an op-ed published in The Hill on DOJ's rescission of guidance on DMC and three op-eds in Juvenile Justice Information Exchange on holding press accountable for racist press coverage, how to empower youth leaders, and on New Zealand's experiment in shrinking their justice system. Finally, we published an op-ed in Charisma News, a conservative news outlet about how youth justice reform is a Christian act. Media reached out to NJJN staff for comments on issues as varied as OJJDP's reorganization and new priorities structural shifts and Brazil's new tough on crime approach to youth offending.



We also regularly trumpeted the need for reform and elevated the work of our members through our newsletter and social media presence. We published 15 newsletters and numerous e-blasts over the year that reached the more than 3,600 subscribers on our newsletter list. Our open rate for our newsletter is well above industry standards for non-profits. Our Facebook channel has 9,953 followers and our Twitter account, @NJJNetwork, has 4573 followers. At the end of the fourth quarter of 2018, our website averages more than 20,000 page views per quarter.

## Federal Advocacy and National Efforts

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We support national efforts for the fair treatment of youth through our participation in Federal-level advocacy and numerous national working groups.

This year we were able to celebrate our work in the Act4JJ Coalition that pushed for the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) that was signed into law in December 2018. This Act provides core protections for youth across the country who are in contact with the justice system and was ten years past due for reauthorization. The reauthorized Act includes strengthened language on many fronts including the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities, the use of solitary confinement and the treatment of pregnant girls.

### Federal Oversight

In addition to our work on the JJDP, appropriations and other federal justice-related legislation, we joined with others nationally to monitor the actions of the Administration, particularly OJJDP, as it engaged in a series of very concerning actions that put vulnerable youth at risk. We have summarized only a small number of these instances below. The OJJDP Administrator made statements in June of 2018 in which she posited that the efforts to eliminate racial disparities were at odds with public safety. In July, Attorney General Jeff Sessions rescinded [24 guidance documents](#), a list which includes seven Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) related documents. Most alarming were the removal of the [OJJDP Guidance Manual: Audit of Compliance Monitoring Systems](#) and the [OJJDP Disproportionate Minority Contact Technical Assistance Manual](#). OJJDP also limited the amount and type of data that states have to report on related to their efforts to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities, removed their own research arm and changed their mission statement to focus more squarely on public safety, rather than protecting and supporting youth. Equally alarming was the move by the Administration to tie federal grant dollars to state data sharing with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the shift of money from gang prevention to gang suppression, and the removal of language in grant solicitations around LGBTQ youth.

We keep our members apprised of these actions and inform them of opportunities to weigh in with their concerns. Additionally, we issued the following joint statements of concern.

- Op-ed by NJJN’s Sarah Bryer, Rachel Marshall of the Campaign for Youth Justice (CFYJ), and Joshua Rovner of The Sentencing Project, “[OJJDP Administrator’s Words on Racial Justice Shock Us](#)” in Juvenile Justice Information Exchange on July 6, 2018.
- The National Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Coalition (NJJDPC) “[Statement Regarding Recent Actions of the Department of Justice Related to Vulnerable Youth](#),” July 9, 2018.
- Op-ed by Sarah Bryer (NJJN) and Marcy Mistrett (Campaign for Youth Justice), November 21, 2018: “[The Children Who Missed Thanksgiving](#),” to urge passage of the JJDPA.
- The National Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Coalition (NJJDPC) statement against the School Safety Commission Report’s recommendation to eliminate the Rethinking School Discipline Guidance, December 19, 2018.

As part of our federal efforts, we participate in the following working groups:

- Act4JJ Working Group;
- The National Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Coalition;
- The Crimmigration Working Group;
- The Justice Roundtable; and
- The State Issues Working Group.

Finally, NJJN signed onto [36 national letters](#) (18 more than last year) on pressing issues, many of which concerned areas of intersection with youth justice and immigration, violence against women, government oversight and data collection, and free speech.

### **Growing the National Movement**

In 2018, NJJN increased its participation in CreateJustice, a joint project of Carnegie Hall and the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network that is looking to promote art making with youth as a catalyst for justice system transformation. NJJN leads their policy working group and is a member of their leadership team.

## **Organizational Development**

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### **Board of Directors**

This year we achieved our goal of building out a robust board of directors. NJJN now has a nine-member Board of Directors that represents leaders in the field of justice reform, racial justice and education as well as representatives of our member organizations and alumni of our Leadership Institute.



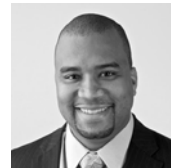
**Ethan Ashley, Secretary**  
District 2 School Board Member,  
Orleans Parish School Board



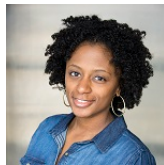
**Susan Misra**  
Co-Director, Management  
Assistance Group



**Sarah Bryer**  
Executive Director, National  
Juvenile Justice Network



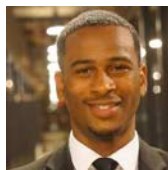
**Jody Owens, Treasurer**  
Managing Attorney,  
Southern Poverty Law  
Center (Mississippi), YJLI  
Alum



**Ebony Howard, Vice-  
President Elect**  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
(Alabama), YJLI Alum



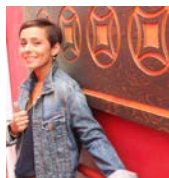
**Tracey Tucker**  
SC Raise the Age  
Coordinator. Campaign for  
Youth Justice, YJLI Alum,  
Representing the  
Membership Advisory  
Council



**Michael Howard**  
Youth and Family Partnership  
Consultant



**John S. Williams,  
President**  
Owner and President,  
JSW Law Office



**Dr. Niaz Kasravi**  
Director and Founder, Avalon  
Institute

### **Member-Driven Governance**

As a member driven organization, we have established several working governance committees to guide our work. Our policy platform and forum planning committees provide crucial support to the development of our annual, in-depth policy position and are essential to crafting our annual forum. The Leadership Institute is fully supported by a large number of alumni who participate in the program as application readers, applicant interviewers, mentors and on the Alumni Advisory Council.

Our Membership Advisory Council, the elected representatives of the membership, remains a backbone institution of our governance. These council members approve new membership applications, set standards for membership, approve policy positions, provide feedback on new NJJN board members, and vet policy papers. This year we opened two dedicated slots for young leaders on our Membership Advisory Council. We closed out 2018 with the following roster of Membership Advisory Council members:

1. Garien Gatewood, Co-Chair: *IL State Advocacy Organization Member and YJLI Alum*
2. Christana Quaranta, Co-Chair: *CT State Advocacy Organization Member*
3. Lee Nave: *MA State Advocacy Organization Member and YJLI Alum*
4. Polly McKinney: *GA State Advocacy Organization Member*
5. Valerie Slater: *VA State Advocacy Organization Member and YJLI Alum,*
6. Kathy Wright: *NJ State Advocacy Organization Member and YJLI Alum*
7. Ricky Watson: *YJLI Alum*
8. Terrance Wilson: *GA YJLI Alum*
9. Tracey Tucker: *SC YJLI Alum*
10. Alani Rouse: *Youth Leader*
11. Jorren Biggs: *Youth Leader*

## Conclusion

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2018 was a year of great accomplishments for NJJN. We accelerated and deepened our anti-racism work, supported our network of advocates in their successful efforts to change policy and programs, elevated the need for transformation of our justice systems, and graduated an incredible class of leaders from our Leadership Institute. We look forward to another successful year of change and progress.