2022 Annual Report



CENTER FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE WORKS

Uniting Children, Families and Communities Separated by Crime and the Criminal Justice System

















Dear CRJW Friends,

This year our Annual Report shares a message of hope. Reading about the work of the Center For Restorative Justice Works (CRJW) in 2022, you will see that we have turned a corner. Children and families with a parent in prison have encountered many hardships during the pandemic: delayed visits, continuous shutdowns, and the anguish of not knowing about the health and well-being of incarcerated loved ones. The situation looked brighter at the end of the year -- we successfully launched our first-ever Get On The Bus (GOTB) virtual event in Los Angeles which provides a support center for video visits, and GOTB hosted in-person events at Salinas Valley State Prison and California Men's Colony in San Luis Obispo, reuniting approximately 300 children and caregivers with incarcerated parents. Casting an eye toward the year ahead, we anticipate a full year of programming for GOTB. We look forward to those moments of joy and tenderness that come from bringing children and their parents together after a long separation.

CRJW has always been, and remains, a grassroots organization whose programs are powered by volunteers from all over California. Support comes from our partners who share safe spaces for events and make breakfasts and treats for traveling families, and from our staff who work tirelessly to bring our programs to life. And of course, GOTB child-parent visits are not possible without the support of donors like you whose generosity is the bedrock of our financial sustainability. The fact that CRJW's community of supporters has nurtured its mission for over twenty years is testament to the universal importance of what we do: reunite families.

We invite you to read the stories and reflections in this year's Annual Report, authored by the children, families, volunteers and staff who participated in CRJW programs last year. We thank each of you for your continued support. Your compassion and concern for children and families separated by incarceration remain our greatest hope.

Liz Rios Executive Director, CRJW

Hun E Kalin

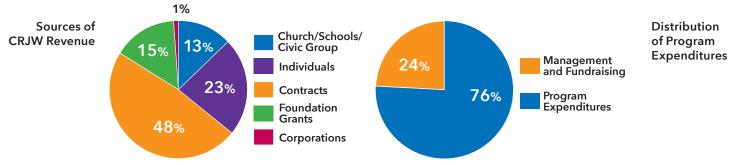
John E. Kalin Chair, Board of Directors, CRJW

Financial Stewardship (🔠



The Center for Restorative Justice Works supports its programs by raising funds from a grassroots network of generous donors, foundations and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. All contributions add a compassionate voice to our movement to keep families together when a parent is in prison. We are grateful to each contributor and to CDCR for joining us in this mission. We are also proud that CRJW's commitment to transparency and responsible financial stewardship has been recognized with a Guidestar Platinum Seal of Transparency.

During the 2021/2022 Fiscal Year, CRJW raised \$498,550. The sources and use of funds are detailed below.



*The figures above are unaudited as of the printing of this report. CRJW is independently reviewed by Banks Accountancy and the review is available by February of each year.

Service Statistics

Get On The Bus	Children	Incarcerated	Adults	Volunteers	# of Buses
Virtual Events	109	60	72	43	-
GOTB TOTALS	109	60	72	43	—
Other Programs	Children	Incarcerated	Adults	Volunteers	# of Buses
Family Express	17	35	49	6	3
CrossOver	—	32	—	9	—
PROGRAM TOTALS	17	67	49	15	3
Other Projects & Activities	Children	Incarcerated	Adults	Volunteers	# of Buses
Mother's Day T-shirt Project	108	50	—	—	—
Personalized Postcards for Incarcerated	10	30	34	2	-
Family Videos for Incarcerated	158	157	227	—	-
Adopt-A-Family	31	-	11	-	-
Holiday Gift Giveaway	79	—	28	2	—
Photos for Families from Incarcerated Men	—	743	743	12	—
CRJW TOTALS	512	1107	1164	74	3

Adults include caregivers and adult children.

INSTITUTIONS SERVED (Events & Stay Connected Projects)

This year, CRJW is proud to have served 26 institutions through the following programs: Get On The Bus, Family Express, GOTB Virtual Events, Stay Connected Projects, and our family video series.

Avenal State Prison California Correctional Center California Correctional Institution California Institution for Women California Men's Colony California Substance Abuse Training Facility California Training Facility

Calipatria State Prison Centinela State Prison Central California Women's Facility **CSP-Corcoran Folsom State Prison** Folsom Women's Facility High Desert State Prison

Ironwood State Prison Jamestown Sierra Conservation Center Kern Valley State Prison Mule Creek State Prison Pelican Bay State Prison **Pleasant Valley State Prison**

Volunteers & Interns

We are deeply grateful to this year's volunteers and interns, who donate their time, energy, and compassion to CRJW's mission.

Meet the volunteers and interns who make our work possible

Tt is rewarding to know I was Lable to help out families in the community. Through volunteering with Get On The Bus, I learned that everything we do can have a great impact on others. Although it felt like a small gesture to put together Stay-Connected Kits or assemble travel bags, these items are very important to the families Get On The Bus serves. I want others to know that Get On The Bus is a great organization to volunteer with and they have a profound impact on the community of families they serve.

– Karen Nguyen, APS Community Liaison (CSUF Alpha Phi Sigma)

I became interested in volunteering with Get On The Bus because I saw this as an opportunity to give back to and be a bigger part of my community. The best part of the experience was working with others as a team and knowing that we were helping kids who were already dealing with tremendous difficulties. I am also looking forward to any future volunteer opportunities with this organization.

– Aaminah Islam, APS Member (CSUF Alpha Phi Sigma)



I love CRJW's cause, because children of incarcerated parents especially need to be taken care of. I loved meeting new people and getting closer to the members of my honor society. It made me feel really excited for kids to open up bags we made for them!

– Sami Walker, APS Secretary (CSUF Alpha Phi Sigma)

Interns

Being part of this team has improved me in so many ways. My first time volunteering was in the Family Express program, which was my first trip to Pelican Bay State Prison. It was a great experience. The best part about interning with this program is the help you get to achieve your professional and personal



goals. The staff from GOTB helped me be more open and have better communication working with a team.

– Azucena Lopez

Thank you to all our volunteers, interns, and partners. Our mission to reunite families would not be possible without you!

Schools & Partners Providing Interns/Volunteers

California State University, Fullerton Division of Politics, Administration & Justice Alpha Phi Sigma
California State University, Long Beach College of Liberal Arts, Department of Sociology School of Art School of Criminology, Criminal Justice, and Emergency Management
California State University, Los Angeles School of Criminal Justice and Criminalistics
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo Social Sciences Department

Partnerships

California Dream Act Service Incentive Grant Program (DSIG)

America's Job Center of California

East Los Angeles/West San Gabriel Valley Archdiocesan Youth Employment of Los Angeles

Stella Academy

St. Bernadette Catholic Church

Family Express

Family Express is a CRJW program that has been supported through CDCR grants from 2018-2022. Family Express provided free transportation and family reunification services to California families on a weekly basis. CRJW is honored to have been selected for this program, and we look forward to serving Family Express families through our other programs.





Family Express impacted our family in a very thankful way. I say this because if it wasn't for the program, I would never have taken my son to see his dad. The Family Express team gave me the courage to say *I can do this*.

Family Express treated us with respect. The people involved have a lot of integrity and enjoy helping families who otherwise wouldn't have the means to go see our loved ones. They were very well organized from planning our pick-up times to hotel accommodations. I really loved that and appreciate it greatly!



The trip meant a lot for us. My son and I were very overwhelmed with happy tears and very joyful hearts. My son had not seen his dad in almost five years. So that was an amazing experience for us. The way Family Express set everything up for us for Father's Day visits was perfect.

My son was so happy to be on this road trip, and by being silly on the bus he won over the hearts of other people on the bus. After the visit, my son and his dad can't wait to see each other again.

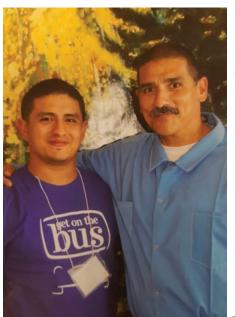
I hope and pray the program comes back. It is very beneficial for families! – *Cynthia and Emanuel (8 years old)*



Get On The Bus



Get On The Bus (GOTB) is a transformational program that provides free transportation during Mother's Day and Father's Day for children to visit a parent at California state prisons. Since 2001, GOTB has served over 15,000 children. GOTB is committed to building stronger families and stronger communities. In 2022, GOTB began hosting in-person visits again for the first time since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Victor shares his experience with GOTB

My father has been incarcerated since I was one-year old. Since I made poor decisions in life as a teenager and young adult, I followed in my father's footsteps and was convicted of a felony even before I knew the consequences.

As an adult, learning to forgive my dad for his absence in my life, I wanted to meet him and introduce him to my wife and daughters. But because I had been convicted of a felony, I lost the privilege of being able to visit him. Then I heard about CRJW and their work to reunite children with their incarcerated parents. I did not hesitate to seize the opportunity.

Because of CJRW's efforts, not only was I approved to visit my dad and finally meet him, but my wife and kids were also approved. We were able to have a full-contact visit, which means we had the privilege and honor of sitting down with him at a table and eating with him. We shared laughs and hugs. He held my baby daughter, the first time since holding me as a baby twenty years ago.

When I felt I was up against all odds, CRJW supported me and reminded me to never give up. I was reunited with my father after 20+ years. Huge shout out to this organization for changing lives and paving the road for the impossible to be possible. Thank you!

– Victor Manuel Acuña, GOTB participant

Cecilia is a participant and volunteer with Get On The Bus

The Get On The Bus Program has been a blessing for connecting my loved one and me. I am truly grateful, and I appreciate the volunteers and staff who put this program together. The hugs, the hand-holding, the laughs, the face-to-face conversations, and even handshakes can make a positive difference in relationships, especially for the men and women who are incarcerated. I want my loved one to come out of prison better than when he first went in.

Blessings,

Cecelia, GOTB participant





Get On The Bus Virtual Events

The Get On The Bus (GOTB) 2022 season experienced some prison shutdowns due to Covid-19 protocols. GOTB worked to keep families connected during shutdowns through video visits, using the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) video visiting system to offer GOTB Virtual Events. Much like our GOTB in-person events, these GOTB Virtual Events were unique and special for the children and their incarcerated parents.

During GOTB Virtual Events, incarcerated parents video-conferenced from prison visiting rooms with their children and families at the GOTB Hub in Los Angeles. We are grateful to our partners at Stella Academy, and St. Bernadette Parish in South Los Angeles, for providing a safe space to host these virtual events. Participating families had access to a private classroom and their visits lasted much longer than regular video visits. Our staff and volunteers were thrilled to hear laughter fill the halls of the GOTB Hub, as families reconnected and even played games like Pictionary and Family Feud.

Families and their incarcerated parents received a hot meal while visiting, creating a special shared meal experience. After video visits, children received handwritten letters and a photo from their parent, as well as backpacks and a teddy bear. We also provided each child with a stay-connected kit, which they were able to use to write and decorate special messages for their parents.















SS OVER CrossOver, also called Women of Wisdom (WOW), provides monthly support services at the California Institution for Women in Chino. This volunteer-driven program invites community members to cross into the world of prisons and to foster transformed understanding between the outside community and those experiencing incarceration. CrossOver restores community relationships and creates awareness about the real impacts of the criminal justice system.

Dorinda CrossOver/WOW Volunteer, shares her experience of the program

In March of 2022, Women of Wisdom found ourselves shaking off the fog of COVID, moving from darkness to light and joining together. We were sisters longing to embrace and share our wisdom once again.

We returned to find the blessing that half our sisters had sojourned on, and to find women who longed to experience kinship and sisterhood once again. We returned to share the wisdom of loss, grief, pride, courage, hope and joy. We returned to music and song. We returned to laughter, games, and celebration. We were in darkness and now we are women bathed in light. We know there will be hiccups and lockdowns, but we know we have each other and we hold each other in our hearts.



WOW volunteers Jan Urban, Dorinda Upham, Gilda Bruce, and Jeffie Trafford.

– Dorinda Upham, Women of Wisdom Member & CRJW Board Secretary

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Space constraints limit us to only listing donations received by September 30, 2022. We are very grateful for every donation that we receive; please forgive any omissions.

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A big thank you to Sister Teresa Lynch for the beautiful photos that appear in this report.

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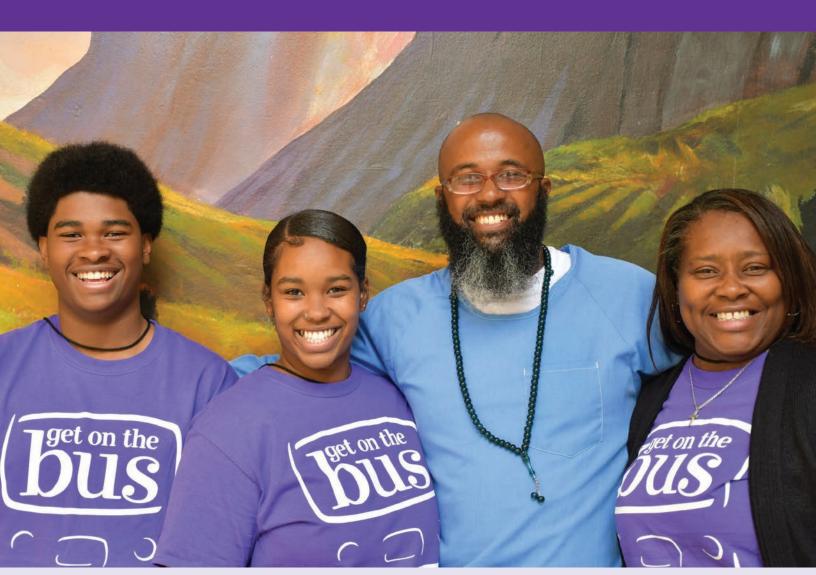
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Thank You!

A special thanks to our in-kind donors. Thank you to Walkenhorst's of Napa, CA for donating Get On The Bus t-shirts for our families and volunteers, and to Scott Thorshov for managing the GOTB database. Other amazing partners include PRISM Restorative Justice and St. Matthew Episcopal Church, St. Bernadette Catholic Church, and Stella Elementary Charter Academy for hosting the Get On The Bus Hub (Get On The Bus Virtual Events); Adopt-A-Family, St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church for hosting a Christmas Party; See The Lord for providing CRJW families free vision screening and glasses; St. Peter Claver Church, Knights of Columbus Simi Valley #580, and Nicolas Donoghue a Life Scout in Troop 509 for providing backpacks, books, and supplies for our children; and AYE- Archdiocese Youth Employment Services for supporting our interns. Thank you to all the parishes, dioceses, schools, and civic groups that come together each year to make these events happen for so many children and families. We could not do this work without you.





C R J W CENTER FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE WORKS

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