



INSIDE & OUT: THE HUMANITIES AND MASS INCARCERATION

*A convening for state humanities councils
and community partners*

CHICAGO, IL // 2024

Schedule *at-a-glance*

Thursday, March 14th

- 12 - 4 pm:** Arrival and Hotel Check-In | The Study
- 4 - 6 pm:** Happy Hour Mixer | Floor 2 lobby, Rubenstein Forum
- 6 - 7 pm:** Dinner & Welcome | University Room, Rubenstein Forum
- 7 – 8:30 pm:** Humanities Showcase | University Room, Rubenstein Forum
- 8:30 - 10 pm:** Jam Session | University Room, Rubenstein Forum



Friday, March 15th

- 8 – 9:30 am:** Ambient Breakfast | University Room, Rubenstein Forum
- 9:30 - 10:15 am:** Home Rooms (plenary groups) | University Room, Rubenstein Forum
- 10:30 - 11:45 am:** Breakout Sessions A | throughout Rubenstein Forum
- 11:45 am - 1 pm:** Lunch | University Room, Rubenstein Forum
- 1 - 2:15 pm:** Breakout Sessions B | throughout Rubenstein Forum
- 2:30 - 3:45 pm:** Sessions C | throughout Rubenstein Forum
- 4 - 5:15 pm:** Experiential Activations | The Study lobby & throughout Rubenstein Forum
- 5:30 - 6:30 pm:** Dinner | University Room, Rubenstein Forum
- 6:30 - 7 pm:** Travel to Logan Center for the Arts
- 7 - 8:30 pm:** *Felon: An American Washi Tale* | Performance Hall, Logan Center for the Arts
- 8:30 - 10 pm:** Reception & Book Signing | Gidwitz Lobby, Logan Center for the Arts

Saturday, March 16th

- 8 - 9 am:** Ambient Breakfast | Rubenstein Forum
- 9 - 10 am:** Home Rooms (plenary groups) | University Room, Rubenstein Forum
- 10:15 - 11:30 am:** Reflection & Future-Building Sessions | throughout Rubenstein Forum
- 11:45 am - 1:30 pm:** Lunch & Closing Performance | University Room, Rubenstein Forum

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Welcome to Inside & Out: Humanities and Mass Incarceration, the first-ever gathering of state humanities councils and their community partners to focus on the intersections between the humanities and mass incarceration. Illinois Humanities is honored to serve as the convener for this community of deeply thoughtful doers and makers.

Fifty years ago, when the earliest state humanities councils were founded, [218,466 people were incarcerated](#) in the United States. Today, over [2 million people are incarcerated in the U.S.](#) and nearly [half a million more are on electronic monitoring](#). As we gather in Chicago in March of 2024, we have a unique opportunity to hearken back to councils' founding mandate of ensuring the humanities are accessible to all individuals, regardless of their background or where they live, because our democracy demands the "wisdom and vision" the humanities uniquely provide.

We've been intentional about calling Inside & Out a "working convening" rather than a "conference." Our time together has been designed to support curiosity, sharing, and to deepen our understanding of what councils can do (and already do) when it comes to calling into being a future that is healing, restorative, and just in the wake of injustices of mass incarceration. This convening was planned with a commitment to center the voices and experiences of people who have been directly impacted by mass incarceration. Our planning committee — comprising staff from humanities councils from 13 states and their community partners — has been working for nearly two years to bring these next few days into being. Throughout our time together we'll be gleaning ideas, images, and words through facilitated homeroom conversations, a zine station, and sessions to help us distill promising practices and paint a picture of this watershed moment.

This is why Inside & Out is as much about *who is gathering* and *how we are gathering* as *why*. Each person attending this convening has something powerful and unique to contribute to the conversation, be it lived experience with the impacts of incarceration, an understanding of grantmaking or college-in-prison programming, a creative practice, a deep knowledge of the criminal legal system, or an abiding passion for the role of humanities in society.

Together, we can leverage our unique ways of knowing and our collective imagination so we may have a deeper, richer, more grounded conversation about not only what is, but also what is possible.

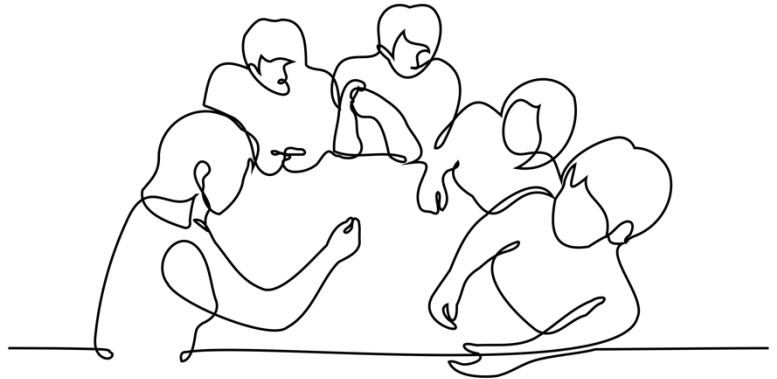
In Community,
Illinois Humanities



Planning Committee

Inside & Out: The Humanities and Mass Incarceration would not be possible without the extraordinary individuals on our Planning Committee, which includes humanities council staff and community partners spanning 13 states. Illinois Humanities is profoundly grateful for the time, expertise, and care that the Planning Committee contributed to help make Inside & Out an impactful, authentic, and connective experience for all attendees. Thank you!

- ◇ Laura Adams, [Minnesota Humanities Center](#)
- ◇ Carol Andersen, [Mississippi Humanities Council](#)
- ◇ Alex Anderson, [Re-entry Theater of Harlem](#)
- ◇ Jane Beachy, [Illinois Humanities](#)
- ◇ Johanna Bringham, [Idaho Humanities Council](#)
- ◇ Zeke Caligiuri, [Minnesota Justice Research Center](#)
- ◇ Rob Chang, [Hawai'i Council for the Humanities](#)
- ◇ Corey China, [Minnesota Humanities Center](#)
- ◇ Flor Esquivel, [Illinois Coalition for Higher Education in Prison](#)
- ◇ Steph C. Isello, [Georgia Humanities](#)
- ◇ Martin Matsuyuki Krause, [Illinois Humanities](#)
- ◇ Gabreille Lyon, [Illinois Humanities](#)
- ◇ Nashid Madyun, [Florida Humanities](#)
- ◇ Yahusef Medina, [Virginia Humanities](#)
- ◇ Joe Murphy, [Humanities New York](#)
- ◇ Sam Opsahl, [Indiana Humanities](#)
- ◇ Willy Palomo, [Illinois Humanities](#)
- ◇ Roseanne Propato, [Hawai'i Department of Public Safety](#)
- ◇ Meghan Reedy, [Maine Humanities Council](#)
- ◇ Patrick Rodriguez, [Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prison, Georgia State Universities Prison Education Project](#)
- ◇ Sarah Ross, [Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project](#)
- ◇ Shannon Ross, [The Community](#)
- ◇ Jen Rubin, [Wisconsin Humanities](#)
- ◇ Alesha Seroczynski, [Moreau College Initiative](#)
- ◇ Linda Small, Reentry Sisters, [Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition](#)
- ◇ Robert Taliaferro, [UW Odyssey Beyond Bars](#), RbTal Consulting, LLC
- ◇ Megan Telligman, [Indiana Humanities](#)
- ◇ Brandon Wyatt, [Illinois Humanities](#) community partner, [Northwestern Prison Education Project](#)
- ◇ Laurie Zierer, [PA Humanities](#)



Thank you to our generous convening sponsors:



MacArthur
Foundation

GOOD CHAOS

POLK BROS
FOUNDATION

A horizontal bar composed of several small, colored rectangular segments in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple.

Thank you to our generous Convening partners:

AirGo & Respair Media

Black Luxe Candle Co.

Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture, UChicago

GlitterGuts Photography

Haymarket Books

Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts, UChicago

The Study Chicago

Vosges Haut-Chocolat

Community Agreements

What are Community Agreements and why use them?

We hope that the sessions and experiences at Inside & Out will spark dialogue among participants. But we know that critical conversations do not always happen spontaneously or in contexts that promote mutual consideration. Community Agreements allow us to investigate ideas together as partners in the pursuit of greater understanding, both of the text itself and one another. Our aim is not to arrive at a particular conclusion, convince anyone, or position the facilitator, presenter, or performer as the keeper of knowledge. Instead, we strive to create supportive and inclusive spaces that can create the possibility of connection among participants.

The staff at Illinois Humanities have worked together to devise the following community agreements as reminders of how we want our own conversations to develop.

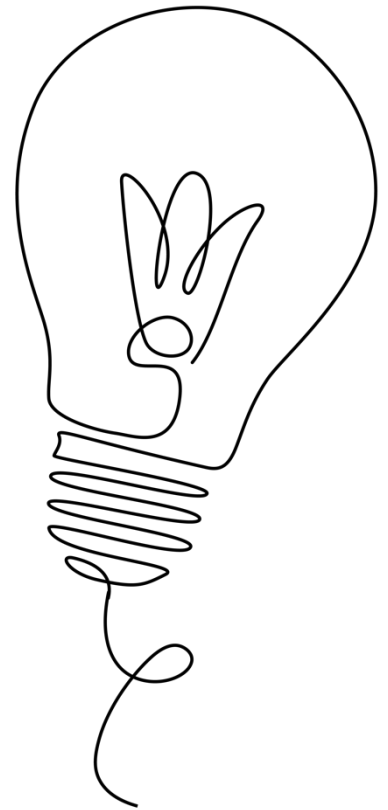
Inside & Out Community Agreements

- 1. Never ask why a person was incarcerated.**
- 2. Create space for and respect multiple truths. Each person is arriving at the conversation with unique lived experience and embodied expertise. No single one of us knows everything, but together we hold immense knowledge, creativity, and potential.**
- 3. Commit to speaking in the first person. When not speaking, listen actively.**
- 4. Acknowledge the difference between intention and impact. Things we say may have a negative impact on others regardless of our intent.**
- 5. Embrace the opportunity to learn and change your assumptions.**
- 6. Maintain confidentiality when requested. Use discretion if sharing others' reflections outside of this space, and recognize others' need for privacy within the space.**

Mass Incarceration Terminology

As we embark on Inside & Out: The Humanities and Mass Incarceration, we are acutely aware of the ethics, powers, and sensitivities of language when engaging in this work. Attendees embody a diverse array of lived experiences, and we strive to cultivate an inclusive environment that is conducive to connection and building together.

For those a bit newer to the conversation, or who would like a refresher, here are [resources on mass incarceration](#).



We encourage all attendees to strive to use the most humanizing and respectful language possible throughout the Convening. We hope that you will carefully review and consider these Community Agreements and terminology. We deeply appreciate your care.

Wifi

WIFI ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS

CNet ID Users login into: **eduroam**

If you do not have a CNet ID, see below.

Connect to the guest network: **uchicago-guest**

Open your browser to any webpage.

When prompted, use the following credentials:

Username: DRForum | Password: Forum1201



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

DAVID RUBENSTEIN FORUM

Concierge

Need some help? Speak with our event planning partners from Hoopla Communications. You can find their table on the second floor of Rubenstein Forum in the University Room lobby.

You can also relay inquiries to anyone who has an “Ask Me” button.

Parking

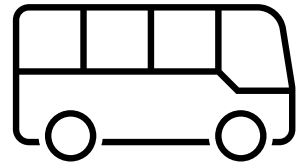
There is free street parking on 60th Street and the Midway Plaisance and a parking garage next to The Study, which offers overnight parking for \$28. Overnight valet is \$49, including in and out privileges.

Public Transit

The Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) operates the main public transportation system within the city, including buses and trains (commonly referred to as the “L” for “elevated”). Metra Rail also oversees a commuter rail system. While most local transportation routes are serviced by the CTA, Metra offers an alternative and sometimes faster route to access the Museum Campus, Downtown, and other areas in and beyond the city. For further details regarding fares, schedules, and routes for both CTA and Metra, please refer to the information below.

CTA

The CTA is the nation’s second largest public transportation system. Here are some helpful tips to navigate the CTA system during your stay in Chicago.



CTA Tracking

Refer to the [CTA bus tracker](#) and [CTA train tracker](#) for up-to-date route and arrival information.

CTA Fares

CASH: You can pay with cash on buses but not trains at \$2.25 per ride. Buses do not provide change.

VENTRA: Purchase a [Ventra](#) card at vending machines in train stations or by downloading the app on your phone. You can load your card in the app, purchase multi-trip and day passes, and integrate your card into your mobile wallet to use tap-to-pay for buses and trains.

PAPER TICKETS: Purchase single ride or day pass paper tickets at Ventra vending machines in train stations.

BANK-ISSUED CARD: Use physical bank-issued cards or ones digitally stored in your mobile wallet to tap-to-pay for buses and trains at \$5 per ride.

CTA Service in Hyde Park

[#171 U. of Chicago/Hyde Park:](#) Services Lake Shore Drive/54th Street and the 55th-56th-57th Street Metra station. This bus travels to the UChicago campus via 55th Street, then circles the campus, operating from 8 am to 6:30 pm.

[#172 U. of Chicago/Kenwood:](#) Services Lake Shore Drive/50th Street and the 53rd Street Metra station. This bus travels to campus via Hyde Park Boulevard and Ellis Avenue, then circles campus, operating from 7 am to 6:30 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 6:30 pm on weekends.

Other CTA Routes through Hyde Park

[#6 Jackson Park Express](#): Great for transportation to go north to Downtown and south into southernmost neighborhoods.

[#55 Garfield](#): Great for transportation to Washington Park and the Red Line stop at Garfield, which will take you through Downtown to the northernmost neighborhoods.

[#2 Hyde Park Express](#): Operates during rush hours on weekdays.]

[#10 Museum of Science and Industry](#): operates on weekends and holidays.

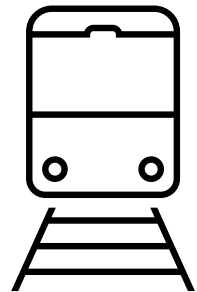
[#28 Stony Island](#): good alternative to the #6 for transportation to and from Downtown, with one end of the route at Union Station. The primary line servicing Hyde Park is the Metra Electric, which connects the southern suburbs with Millennium Station in Downtown.

Metra

Metra is a commuter rail agency that services Cook, DuPage, Will, Lake, and McHenry counties. Common Metra destinations include Museum Campus/11th Street (Field Museum, Adler Planetarium, Shedd Aquarium), Van Buren Street (easy access to the Art Institute and South Loop), and Millennium Station (also easy access to the Art Institute, but also Streeterville). For more information on transportation from Midway (MDW) and O'Hare Airports, see this [page](#).

Metra Tracking

Refer to the [Metra tracker](#) for up-to-date route and arrival information.



Metra Fares

Metra uses a distance-based fare structure. You can calculate the cost of your trip [here](#). A trip from Hyde Park to and from Downtown is often \$3.50.

CASH: You can purchase a ticket with cash at a Ventra vending machine in train stations or from a Metra employee on the train.

VENTRA: You can purchase single rides and multi-trip passes on the Ventra app.

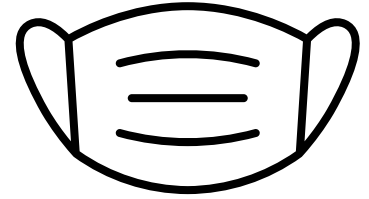
Metra Service in Hyde Park

Three Metra stations are located in Hyde Park along Lake Park. You can enter each station via staircases under the tracks (check out the mural there, as well!).

59th Street, University of Chicago
55th-56th-57th Street
51st/53rd Street

Masking & COVID Policy

Inside & Out is mask-optional. Attendees are encouraged to do what makes them feel most comfortable and wear a mask if they wish. Masks are available at concierge.



We also have a limited supply of rapid COVID tests available by request.

If you feel ill or test positive for COVID-19, please isolate and do not attend Inside & Out activities.

Accessibility Statement

Ensuring accessibility is integral to Illinois Humanities' values. We are committed to fostering an environment where diversity is celebrated and barriers are minimized so that each attendee can participate fully in Inside & Out.

We have asked each participant about their accessibility needs and have responded with well-lit rooms, dietary accommodations, translation services, audio amplification, and captions for our plenary sessions.

Please reach out to one of our staff members with an “Ask Me” button for further accommodations. Your accessibility needs are important to us and we welcome feedback on how we can improve.

Thank you for your support in making Inside & Out accessible.

Harassment Policy

Illinois Humanities is committed to providing a welcoming and safe environment for all attendees, free from harassment based on age, race, sex, ethnicity, national origin, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, disability, health conditions, socioeconomic status, marital status, domestic status, parental status, citizenship status, or experience of incarceration.

Attendees are expected to be respectful of each other and support the conditions for curiosity, free exchange of ideas and information.

Attendees are encouraged to immediately report instances of harassment, or any situation in which someone might be in imminent danger, to any event organizer wearing an “Ask Me” button. Violations of this policy may lead to removal from the conference.

Notice of Filming & Photography

Please be informed that a photographer and videographer will be present at Inside & Out to help us document our time together.

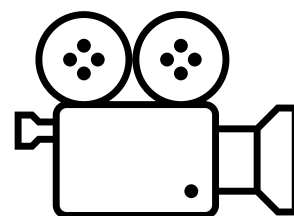
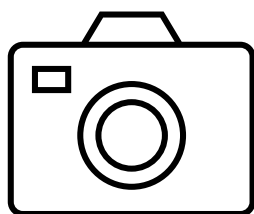
While a photographer will be present in breakout sessions, we will not capture video during sessions in order to preserve an environment conducive to close listening and open sharing.

Photographs and video may be used in future publications and promotion.

After Inside & Out, attendees will receive access to photographs and may use them as they wish.

If you do not want to be photographed or recorded, please let a staff member know and we will accommodate your request.

Thank you.



Schedule

Thursday, March 14th

12 - 4 pm: Arrival and Check-In | The Study

4 - 6 pm: Happy Hour Mixer | Floor 2 Lobby, Rubenstein Forum

Enjoy refreshments and meet (or reconnect with) colleagues from across the country. A portrait station from GlitterGuts Photography will be available for all who want to capture the moment!

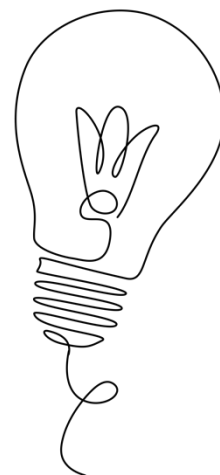
6 - 7 pm: Dinner & Welcome | University Room, Rubenstein Forum

7 – 8:30 pm: Showcase | University Room, Rubenstein Forum

Enjoy a whirlwind journey through the world of work that humanities councils and their community partners are already doing to address mass incarceration in this action-packed showcase featuring 5-minute contributions from our planning committee members. This showcase will be co-hosted by Renaldo Hudson of the Illinois Prison Project and Jane Beachy of Illinois Humanities.

8:30 - 10 pm: Jam Session! | University Room, Rubenstein Forum

The pursuit of justice requires joy, and nothing says joy like a jam! Take a turn at the mic, play an instrument, or just listen in. This jam session will be supported by the incredible DJ L O Kari.



Friday, March 15th

8 - 9:30 am: Ambient Breakfast | Rubenstein Forum

9:30 - 10:15 am: Home Rooms (plenary groups) | University Room, Rubenstein Forum

Get grounded for what's on deck for the day and participate in a facilitated free write/free draw and group discussion with prompts by the Inside & Out Planning Committee's Wordsmithing Working Group.

10:30 - 11:45 am: Breakout Sessions A | throughout Rubenstein Forum

11:45 am - 1 pm: Lunch | University Room, Rubenstein Forum

1 - 2:15 pm: Breakout Sessions B | throughout Rubenstein Forum

2:30 - 3:45 pm: Sessions C | throughout Rubenstein Forum

4 - 5:15 pm: Experiential Activations | The Study lobby & throughout Rubenstein Forum

5:30 - 6:30 pm: Dinner | University Room, Rubenstein Forum

6:30 - 7 pm: Travel to Logan Center

7 - 8:30 pm: *Felon: An American Washi Tale* | Performance Hall, Logan Center for the Arts

We'll relocate to the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts for the Chicago premier of [Reginald Dwayne Betts](#)' "Felon: An American Washi Tale". This public event will be followed by post-show discussion moderated by AirGo Radio which will later be released as a podcast episode, creating a dialogue-based archive of the conversation. A book signing and reception will immediately follow.

Felon: An America Washi Tale is a solo performance that explores the experiences, memories, and consequences of incarceration through poetry, storytelling, and the art of Japanese papermaking. This Washi Tale moves literally and metaphorically beyond the artist's own life, unwrapping the disturbing ways that prison touches us all. In Betts' words, Felon is about reimagining paper. The pages of a book being slid into a cell, stoves made of toilet paper, kites from a father, handwritten affidavits, legal complaints, certificates of pardon: the variety of papers that reveals what is possible and burdened by prison. The world of Felon is shaped by set design by Japanese paper artist Kyoko Ibe, crafted from "prison paper" that artist Ruth Lingen constructed from the clothes of men Betts first met in prison as a teenager, each of whom were still in prison during the earliest stages of this project.

Damon Williams and **Daniel Kisslinger** of [Respair Media](#) will lead a post-show discussion that will be released as an episode of their podcast [AirGo Live](#).

This is a public, ticketed event. All Inside & Out attendees will receive their own ticket at no extra cost.

Transportation from the Rubenstein Forum to the Logan Center (approximately half a mile away away) will be provided.

8:30 - 10 pm: Reception & Book Signing | Gidwitz Lobby, Logan Center for the Arts

Join Illinois Humanities, the Logan Center for the Arts, Haymarket Books, and Reginald Dwayne Betts for a book signing and sale with refreshments.

Saturday, March 16th

8 - 9 am: Ambient Breakfast | Rubenstein Forum

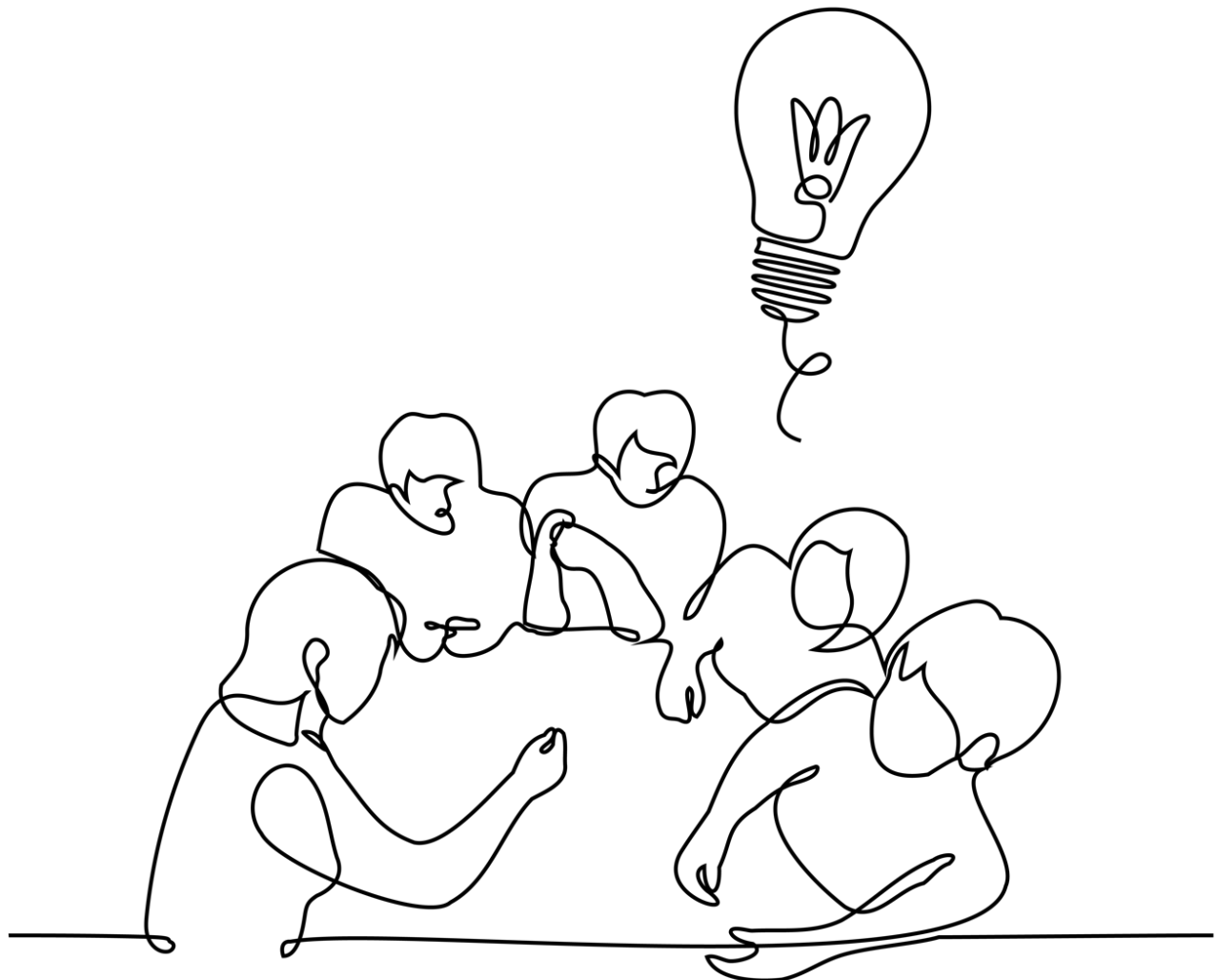
9 - 10 am: Home Rooms (plenary groups) | University Room, Rubenstein Forum

Take time to check in and reflect on what's transpired over the past 72 hours with a facilitated reflection and discussion.

10:15 - 11:30 am: Reflection & Future-Building Sessions | throughout Rubenstein Forum

Gather your thoughts and map the future with colleagues who share your "work practice." Each group will be facilitated by a member of the Inside & Out planning committee. Notes will be compiled and shared as we build toward what's next!

11:45 - 1:30 pm: Lunch & Close-Out | University Room, Rubenstein Forum



Breakout Sessions

Breakout Sessions A: 10:30 – 11:45 am

Journey to Youth Liberation: Organizing, Healing, and Hip Hop

ROOM 503

Circles & Ciphers and The Final 5 Campaign will be facilitating a workshop that will inform participants on the current Juvenile Justice system and what it looks like in Illinois. We will also have an immersive experience where participants will be able to see how Circles & Ciphers uses Hip Hop to connect with impacted young people, build community and create space for healing.

Presenters: AnnMarie Brown ([Circles & Ciphers](#)), Alicia Brown ([The Final 5 Campaign](#)), Sheriff Polk, and Destinee Bell

BOTH/AND: Dialogue, Dialectics, & Liberation

ROOM 504

How do we make sense of the distance between our ideals and our reality? Respair Production & Media co-founders Damon Williams and Daniel Kisslinger lead a teach-in exploring how to create an anticolonial practice of media-making and archive-building built on dialectical dialogue that supports radical transformation, and the unique importance of media in the fight for a liberatory future. Participants gain hands-on tools to navigate the contradictions and power dynamics in their conversations and workspaces, as well as frameworks around media's role in building transformative possibilities.

Presenters: Damon Williams (Co-Creator, [AirGo](#)) and Daniel Kisslinger (Co-Creator, [AirGo](#))

Mass Incarceration 101

ROOM 601

This will be an introduction to mass Incarceration in the United States for those who are new to the subject or who would like to see other areas of mass incarceration that are usually not discussed. Effects on the family and community will be discussed as well as other subjects that are consistent with mass Incarceration practices.

Presenters: Robert Taliaferro (Pre-Entry Manager, [Odyssey Beyond Bars](#)) and James Kilgore (Director, Advocacy and Outreach, [First Followers](#))

Queering the Family: Love and Solidarity, Inside & Out

ROOM 602

This panel features formerly incarcerated LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies who will speak about queer lives in prison and the making of "chosen families" – to borrow anthropologist Kath Weston's phrase – as a necessity for survival. These families can include lovers, partners, and friends who are the true sources of "rehabilitation," safety, and healing inside prison. The concept of "chosen family" can also be expanded to include educators, artists, advocates, and volunteers who work with incarcerated populations to promote learning,

creativity, and activism--even as the criminal "justice" system heavily polices these relationships and alliances, both inside prisons but also during re-entry.

Presenters: Dr. Edna Benítez Laborde (Coordinator of the University Studies Program for Incarcerated People [Universidad de Puerto Rico, Río Piedras](#)) Samantha Dunn, Monica Cosby, Anastazia Schmid, and Elizabeth Nelson (Assistant Professor, [Indiana University Indianapolis](#))

Re-Entry Support & the Humanities

ROOM 701

What are the most critical concerns for people coming home from prison, and how can the humanities support and uplift both those individuals and their families and communities? This session will approach these questions through the lens of formerly incarcerated artists and humanists as well as those who organize programs alongside and in solidarity with them. Featuring perspectives from Pennsylvania, Texas, New Jersey, Illinois, New York, and Indiana.

Moderator: Jasmine Tyler, Justice Policy Institute

Presenters: Keven Bott (Founder and Artistic Director, [Ritual4Return](#)) Michelle Daniel Jones ([Indiana Women's Prison History Project](#) & Doctoral Candidate, American Studies, [New York University](#)), Faylita Hicks ([Center for Art & Advocacy](#)) Damon McWhite (Interim Director, Restorative Justice, [Mural Arts Philadelphia](#))

Breakout Sessions B: 1:00 – 2:15 pm

Navigating Political Challenges

ROOM 503

This breakout session will focus on developing strategies for navigating the variety of political challenges throughout the country. As humanities councils, our founding legislation charges us with the responsibility to ensure the humanities are for everyone, including the incarcerated population. We will learn more about this charge and the balance between advocacy and support.

Although the humanities are non-partisan, humanities-related issues have become increasingly politicized and divisive. We will confront these challenges with open minds and appreciation of the differences in each state. Join us for an authentic discussion that will inspire you with new approaches to tackle these challenges.

Presenters: Johanna Bringhurst (Director of Programs, Idaho Humanities Council), Yahusef Medina (Director, Community Initiatives, [Virginia Humanities](#)), Dr. Nashid Madyun, Executive Director, [Florida Humanities Council Inc.](#), and Phoebe Stein (President, [Federation of State Humanities Councils](#))

From the Inside: A Panel Discussion on Humanities Programs and Agency

ROOM 601

Four people currently incarcerated in US facilities will talk about how they work with their state Humanities Council to participate in, create, and contribute to humanities programming in their communities. They'll discuss what they do, how they do it, and why it matters.

Moderator: Linda Small (Founder and Executive Director, Reentry Sisters)

Presenters: Brandon Wyatt, Jamal "Cincere" Jones, Panelist A, and Panelist B

Grantmaking in Impacted Communities

ROOM 602

What is the ideal grant-making program for bringing the humanities to bear on mass incarceration? Surely such a program surely (re-)center "the human" in conversations about incarceration, opening space for reflection about the interlocking systems of incarceration in the United States. Yet the answer will largely depend on the political culture of the state or jurisdiction in which the program operates; a universally-applicable grants program clashes against the reality of America's decentralized legal, political, and constitutional order. In large part due to these variations, state humanities councils across the United States find themselves at different stages in the creation and implementation of grant-making programs relating to incarceration. This panel is designed less to solve the riddle of the ideal grants program than to consider the patterns of convergence and divergence that characterize the national humanities grant-making landscape as it now stands, all in the spirit of community and collaboration.

Moderator: Mark Hallett (Director of Grants Programs, [Illinois Humanities](#))

Presenters: Joe Murphy (Director of Grant-Making, [Humanities New York](#)), Kyes Stevens (Director, [Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project](#)), Alison Cornyn (Executive Director, [Incorrigibles](#)) Cynthia Boykin, and Laura Adams (Grants Administrator, [Minnesota Humanities Center](#))

College-in-Prison: A How-To Guide for the Humanities

ROOM 701

This session will cover the nuts and bolts of offering a college-in-prison (CIP) program. We will discuss partnering with humanities councils, interfacing with the department of corrections, and curriculum development for the humanities. Funding your courses and grant writing to expand the reach of your CIP will also be considered. Finally, we will answer questions about the reinstatement of Pell funding for college students who are incarcerated, including the shifting role of the DOCs, national trends around building college programs inside correctional facilities, seeking and obtaining accreditation, and assessment best practices. Colleagues from five states will facilitate this session, so bring your questions and ideas for a lively discussion!

Moderator: Dr. Alesha Serocyzyński (Director, [Moreau College Initiative](#))

Presenters: Jessica Neptune (Director of National Engagement, [Bard Prison Initiative](#)), Sheila Meiman (Prison Education Specialist, [NASFAA](#)), and Patrick Rodriguez (Co-Executive Director, [Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prison](#))

Speaking to the Artistic Legacy of the Incarcerated in Minnesota

ROOM 702

Join the Minnesota Humanities Center, Art from the Inside, and the Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop (MPWW) to explore the transformative power of arts and humanities programming within carceral settings. This session will offer insight into the logistics, challenges, and impacts of conducting creative initiatives within detention facilities, from artmaking to writing, and showcasing that work to the public in narrative-shifting ways. Through a blend of practical expertise, lived experience, and empowered narratives, attendees will gain a more detailed understanding of what it means and takes to navigate prison bureaucracy, foster meaningful engagement, and build bridges between inside and outside through the arts and humanities.

Moderator: Dr. Corey China (Humanities Officer, [Minnesota Humanities Center](#))

Presenters: Antonio Espinosa, Founder, [Art from the Inside](#) and Zeke Caligiuri, Community Engagement Manager, [Minnesota Justice Research Center](#)

Breakout Sessions C: 2:30 – 3:45 pm

Out of Sight: Prisons in Rural America and the Role of Arts and the Humanities

ROOM 503

This session will discuss the challenges facing individuals incarcerated in rural prisons, the limited resources available in rural towns, the cultural dissonance and the legal ramifications. Panelists will also talk about their work and some effective programs they have been involved with. In the session's second half, we will invite participants to share their experiences and highlight any successful programs or partnerships taking place in their states.

Moderator: Alex Keefe ([WBEZ](#))

Presenters: Alexandra Antoine (Visual Artist), Leanne Trapedo Sims (Assistant Professor of Peace and Justice and Co-Chair, [Knox College](#)) Angel Pantoja (Reentry Policy Coordinator, [Office of Illinois Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton](#)), and Stephanie Henson (Project Director)

Dreaming in Dollars

ROOM 504

How are funders currently supporting the humanities to reach people and organizations most impacted by the carceral system? What is - and isn't - working in the status quo? Gather with colleagues from around the country for a conversation designed to inspire us to think about ways we can strategically use funding to bring about the transformations we envision.

Moderator: Chris Patterson, Crown Family Philanthropy

Panelists: JC Aevaliotis (Senior Program Officer, [Polk Bros. Foundation](#)) Bria Gillum (Senior Program Officer, Criminal Justice, John D. and [Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation](#))

Language Matters

ROOM 602

Language Matters! The words we use, the dynamic contexts we use them in, and the powerful narratives that come from their use shape our understanding of the world and the systemic impact of mass incarceration on our society. How can humanities intersectional engagement with history, philosophy and religion, modern and ancient languages and literature, fine and performing arts, media and cultural studies--via our public programs, initiatives, and collaborative discussions--help in the ongoing work of noticing and shifting our understanding of language's influence on carceral practices in our communities? What methods and strategies can humanities councils and others adopt that center the human as they engage and partner in work with people, communities, and institutions involved in and impacted by mass incarceration?

Presenters: Meghan Reedy (Program Coordinator: Narrative and Content Development, [Maine Humanities Council](#)) and Faylita Hicks ([Center for Art & Advocacy](#))

Healing, Restoration, and Community-Built Solutions

ROOM 701

This session will feature a panel of artists and advocates whose work encourages the wellness and self-determination of individuals and communities affected by violence, divestment, and incarceration. The discussion will uplift various community-based interventions, shed light on existing obstacles, and prompt attendees to reflect on their potential contributions to reparative efforts prioritizing the voices of those most impacted by mass incarceration and other forms of state-sanctioned violence.

Moderator: Tyreece Williams (Program Associate, [Field Foundation](#))

Presenters: Shannon Ross (Founder and Executive Director, [The Community](#)), Sonja Henderson (Artist/Humanist, Mothers Healing Circle) and Dawn Chamberlain (Chairperson, [Hooper Council's Positive Potential Project](#) / [Chester Cultural Arts and Technology Center](#))

Creating Liberatory Spaces: Humanities Education in Prisons

ROOM 702

This session will do a dive into the lived experiences of those who have served time in prison and the professional expertise of people who curate programming for prisons. This discussion will create a place for participants to listen and engage the panelists as they define liberatory spaces, share examples of their experiences with liberation, and share how these spaces can be made.

Moderator: Yahusef Medina (Director, Community Initiatives, [Virginia Humanities](#)),

Presenters: Patrick Rodriguez (Co-Executive Director, [Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prison](#)) and Robert Taliaferro (Pre-Entry Manager, [Odyssey Beyond Bars](#))

Experiential Sessions: 4:30 – 5:15 pm

Tea and Letters for Liberation (drop-in)

The Study Lobby

The Tea Project invites you to stop, sit, sip, and reflect over a cup of tea while writing a letter to imprisoned torture survivors. From Illinois to Guantánamo, despite the well documented use of police and military torture to extract forced confessions, many survivors remain imprisoned. To break through their enforced isolation, and as a gesture of compassion and solidarity, you are invited to write to a torture survivor in Illinois or in the US military prison in Guantánamo. Insights and guidance on writing the letters will be provided by the Center for Constitutional Rights and the Chicago Torture Justice Center.

As you write, you will be served tea in porcelain-cast Styrofoam teacups. These teacups are inscribed with floral patterns based on stories of the people imprisoned in Guantánamo who carve Styrofoam cups as a form of personal expression and resistance. The tea you drink will be prepared based on selections from the 48 recipes and traditions featured in the Tea Project archive and recipe book *Invitation to Tea*.

Presenters: Amber Ginsburg and Aaron Hughes ([The Tea Project](#))

Printing Power: Visualizing Abolition

ROOM 503

This activation will demonstrate a model of using humanities and art to engage the voices of directly impacted people in the struggle to shift the conversation around the incarcerated community. You will engage in print-making activities –aprons and supplies will be provided!

Presenters: Pablo Mendoza and Sarah Ross ([Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project](#))

Ritual4Return: A Homecoming Rite of Passage for Returning Citizens

ROOM 504

Ritual4Return's New York and New Jersey chapters invite you to bear witness to our collaboratively devised homecoming rite of passage. Following the performance, we will have a facilitated dialogue between the performers and the audience. This event is made possible through the support of Humanities New York and New Jersey Council for the Humanities.

Presenters: Alex Anderson ([Reentry Theater of Harlem](#)), Dr. Kevin Bott, (Founder and Artistic Director, [Ritual4Return](#)), Edwin “Chino” Ortiz (Executive Director, [Returning Citizens Support Group](#)), Carmelo Ortiz (Director and Co-founder, [Returning Citizens Support Group](#)) and Al-Tariq Witcher (Director and Co-Founder, [Returned Citizens Support Group](#))

Try Think

ROOM 602

Often, programs provided to incarcerated communities originate from outside the walls and are brought in. [Try Think](#), a facilitated community conversation program, was developed inside and has been brought out. Join us to hear more about the lessons we have learned about community building inside the walls, how these lessons have shaped Try Think, and how this program is helping to shape community building through conversation outside the walls. This session will be interactive and filled with discussion. Bring your questions, share your thoughts, and participate in a Try Think conversation.

Presenters: Rob Chang (Deputy Director, [Hawaii Council for the Humanities](#))

Storytelling 101

ROOM 701

In this workshop you will learn how to find, shape, and present stories. We will discuss the five main elements of a story and how to discover them. By learning dynamic storytelling elements, you will gain the tools to pull short stories out of everyday life. Learn how to turn an anecdote or experience into a story that illuminates a central truth about your life. This will be an interactive class with a mixture of mini-lecture, 1:1 dialogue, and small group work.

Presenters: Jen Rubin (Producer, [Wisconsin Humanities](#)) and Nestor Gomez

Bending the Bars: Exploring Strategies for Teaching & Learning in Prisons

ROOM 702

Given the more-than-physical walls of prison, what possibilities do programs have to create more just and free educational spaces inside? What challenges do education practitioners encounter in prison and what are strategies for navigating them? This workshop is for and by people working in prison education programming to engage in community over the constraints and possibilities of teaching and learning in Illinois prisons.

In this workshop, we invite you to reflect on your work, share insights ranging from pedagogy to logistics, explore existing and new strategies for unsettling the 'inside-outside' power dynamics, and build community with others actively involved in education programming in prisons.

Presenters: Alice Kim ([PNAP](#) & Director of Practice, [Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture \(UChicago\)](#)), Taji Chesimet ([University of Chicago](#)), Eliza Gonrig ([PNAP](#)), Erica Meiners (Educational Inquiry and Curriculum Studies, [Northeastern Illinois University](#)), Neomi Rao (PhD Student, [University of Chicago](#)) and James Soto ([PNAP](#))

Media Installations

Boundless Verses: Projecting Poetry on Mass Incarceration

LOBBY | THE STUDY

Boundless Verses invites you to immerse yourself in the words of poets engaged with the issue of mass incarceration — many of whom are currently or formerly incarcerated. Activating our shared space with a humanities lens from March 14th to 16th in the lobby of The Study, this installation aims to offer the public a quiet, reflective opportunity to connect with those impacted by and working against mass incarceration.

Walls to Bridges: Videos on Mass Incarceration

STUDIO 1 | THE STUDY, FL 2

Walls to Bridges invites you to sit, watch, listen, and learn about mass incarceration and those addressing it. Located on the second floor of The Study Chicago in Studio 1, this screening room will be open to the public from March 14th to 16th. Viewers will be exposed to an array of information on the history, context, and stories of mass incarceration as well as the inspired humanities-based work of organizations and individuals tackling the issue.

Art From the Inside Out

UNIVERSITY ROOM | RUBENSTEIN FORUM

Art from the Inside Out invites you to experience visual art from ten artists who are currently or formerly incarcerated. This exhibition is titled after the Minnesota nonprofit organization through which these works were made. The vision of [Art From the Inside](#) is to empower incarcerated artists to experience personal transformation and restoration. They believe that art provides the space to imagine new ways of being and to recognize our personal and collective power to change.

Special thanks to all who contributed, including our video editor, Tony Santiago, and the Planning Committee Media Working Group: Jen Rubin, Sam Opsahl, Robert Taliaferro, and Martin Matsuyuki Krause.

Tabling

Zine Station

Stop by the Zine Station anytime. You'll find paper, markers, glue, scissors, and prompts related to our gathering. Come for some creative downtime or to share your thoughts. After the Convening, the Wordsmithing Group will catalogue and collate our collective zine contributions as part of a documentary snapshot of our time together.

Haymarket Books

Purchase a book on mass incarceration from [Haymarket Books](#), which will be tabling for the duration of the Convening in the University Room lobby on the second floor.

Haymarket Books is a radical, independent, nonprofit book publisher based in Chicago. Its mission is to publish books that contribute to struggles for social and economic justice. It strives to make its books “a vibrant and organic part of social movements and the education and development of a critical, engaged, and internationalist Left.”

Thank you to Haymarket Books for their partnership, work, and donations of *The Sentences that Create Us* by [PEN America](#), gifted to each Inside & Out attendee in your welcome tote.

Sensory Space

Inside & Out will include heavy and at times vulnerable conversations. We support all attendees in their diverse needs to take the time and space to experience Inside & Out meaningfully and sustainably.

Need a breather or some quiet space? Room 502 in the Rubenstein Forum is a dedicated sensory space for the duration of the Convening, equipped with earplugs, eye masks, coloring sheets, and sensory toys.

Presenters & Performers



Laura Adams | Grants Administrator, [Minnesota Humanities Center](#)

Laura Adams is the Grants Administrator for the Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC). Drawing on years of experience and applying her wide-ranging project management skills, she facilitates the complex and nuanced relationships and compliance requirements for MHC's hundreds of grantees. Laura's attention to detail, systems thinking, and thoughtfulness are repeatedly praised by applicants and awardees. Her innovative thinking and problem-solving abilities have improved MHC's grant making practices in the last two years to more effectively administer the nearly \$20 million entrusted to MHC by the State of Minnesota.

Before receiving her Bachelor's degree, Laura was recommended for and completed the Leadership Education Seminar through the United States Marine Corps as a military spouse; and was later a recipient of the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. This experience continues to guide and shape her path of civic service and participation and influences her role with MHC.



Carol Andersen | Assistant Director, [Mississippi Humanities Council](#)

Carol Andersen is assistant director of the Mississippi Humanities Council where she administers the Council's prison education and grants programs. Originally from Iowa, she earned an undergraduate degree in journalism and mass communication from Iowa State University before embarking on a career in journalism, including writer and editor positions at several community newspapers. She later worked as an international agriculture writer for the Iowa Farm Bureau before moving with her husband to Mississippi in 2001. Prior to joining the Mississippi Humanities Council in 2005, she served as program director for the Mississippi Center for Nonprofits. During her time with the Council, she completed a master of liberal arts degree from Tulane University. Outside of her professional endeavors, Carol resides in Jackson with her husband and two daughters and is active in several community groups and organizations.



Alex Anderson | Founder and Arts Director, [Reentry Theater of Harlem](#)

Alex Anderson, founder and director of the Reentry Theater of Harlem (RTH) launched the initiative in 2020 to empower returning citizens in crafting their own path to a better life post-incarceration. Alex, a returning citizen himself, pursued education fervently during his incarceration, earning a high school diploma and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Syracuse University. Following his release, he obtained a Master of Social Work from the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College, alongside certifications in CASAC and Restorative Justice. Inspired by his own transformative journey and a profound experience at Ritual4Return in 2009, Alex channeled his love for the performing arts into creating RTH, where theater serves as a catalyst for healing and empowerment. Today, RTH stands as a beacon of hope and opportunity, changing lives and providing a platform for reentry success. Alex's dedication to social justice and community empowerment continues to inspire meaningful change in the lives of those affected by incarceration.



Laura Anderson | Director of Partnerships and Outcomes, [Alabama Humanities Alliance](#)

Laura C. Anderson, Director of Partnerships and Outcomes at Alabama Humanities Alliance, brings significant public history, museum, and nonprofit experience to her role at the Alabama Humanities Alliance. She is a graduate of the Seminar for Historical Administration, Getty NextGen Leadership Institute, and Jekyll Island Management Institute. She has served as president of the Society of Alabama Archivists, a term on the national History Leadership Awards committee of the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), and currently serves as Nominating Committee chair for the Alabama Historical Association. Before joining AHA, Laura worked as celebration and documentation coordinator for the Program for Rural Services and Research at the University of Alabama, followed by 15 years at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) in the positions of archivist, oral history project director, and director of special projects.



Rory Anderson | Assistant Art Director, [Reentry Theater of Harlem](#)

Rory's work as a Supervisor and Case manager with several not-for-profit organizations servicing underserved families and those who are formerly incarcerated and homeless, has given him a keen insight into the plight of those populations. Having been a member of all these groups during his lifetime, he has been tested and has a testimony to give to the world, which he has done by appearing in the play *The Castle*, which ran for several years off Broadway at the New World Stages and several venues in and around the New York City and various states. It was during his incarceration that he became reacquainted with the theatre. Rory is one of the founding members of RTA (Rehabilitation Through the Arts) a program founded in Sing Sing Correctional Facility located in Ossining NY. Sing Sing is a maximum-security facility with the most stringent security measures in the State of New York. It was during his time at Sing Sing that the RTA program was formed

which consisted of outside volunteers (Linda Atkins) and inmates from various walks of life and security clearance. Rory wrote and directed several plays while in Sing Sing, including *The Sniper* (performed at NYU), *Coming Home* (performed by the Ellenville Theatrical Group in Ellenville New York), *From Sing Sing To Broadway* (New Horizon Theater), *The Castle*, (New World Stages), and The Kenneth Reem's project (Stella Adler School). Rory has also appeared on stage for poetry readings at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. Rory is presently the assistant art director for the Reentry Theatre of Harlem and a contributing fellow at the Stella Adler school.



Alexandra Antoine | Visual Artist, [Illinois Humanities Grantee](#)

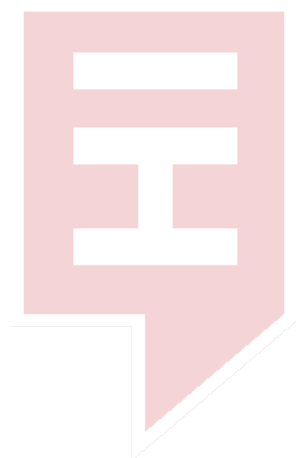
Alexandra Antoine is an interdisciplinary visual artist and cultural apprentice based in Chicago, IL. Her work acknowledges the influences of her Haitian culture and interest in portraiture, food, farming, and the physical labor that goes into traditional artistic practices of the Afrikan diaspora. She honors her ancestors always and is currently growing food in several community gardens on the West side of Chicago!

She received an undergraduate degree from a fancy art school and exhibited her work in many places but collaborating with folks throughout the Afrikan diaspora is her life's work.



Jane Beachy | Artistic Director, [Illinois Humanities](#)

Jane Beachy is a producer and curator of performances, exhibitions, public programs, and intentional initiatives and the Artistic Director of Illinois Humanities. Among the projects she has developed, directed, and produced at IH are the [Elective Studies Series](#), [Rapid Response Series](#), the [Envisioning Justice](#) initiative, and [Inside & Out: The Humanities and Mass Incarceration](#). She is also the founder and director of Salonathon, “a home for underground, emerging, and genre-defying art” that existed as a bustling weekly performance series and community gathering space from 2011 to 2018 and expanded into artist residencies at UChicago, artist retreats at Camp Wandawega, and pop-up performances and events at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, and more. Jane also has a background in arts education and has taught courses and workshops in arts leadership and curatorial practice at Northwestern University, University of Chicago, and Beloit College.



Destiny Bell | Activist

Destiny is a youth activist and abolitionist from the West Side of Chicago. She has worked primarily with #NoCopAcademy. The #NoCopAcademy campaign is an effort supported by over [85 community organizations](#) across Chicago that wants \$95 million invested in our communities rather than police training grounds. Since 2022 Destiny has worked closely with the Final 5 Campaign and is focused on shifting the way we see and support impacted youth in Chicago.



Dr. Edna M. Benítez Laborde | Coordinator of the University Studies Program for Incarcerated People | [Universidad de Puerto Rico, Río Piedras](#)

Edna is a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus and a lawyer. She has a doctorate in philosophy and literature from the State University of New York and a Juris Doctor from the UPR School of Law. She combines training in the humanities and law to advocate and work on educational and visibility projects linked to people deprived of liberty. She collaborated in the documentary *Las Mujeres de Vega Alta* (women in confinement) with director Sonia Fritz and is the producer of the documentary *Todos íbamos a ser reyes* (We were all going to be kings), whose protagonists/screenwriters are prisoners. She has published in magazines such as *80 degrees* and *Ley y Foro* on problems related to incarceration. She designed the curriculum for the literature and creative writing workshop *Desde Adentro* (From within), which has been used in several penal institutions as

part of educational courses and workshops. She is the anthologist of the book titled: *From Inside: between the university and the prison*, which contains writings by people deprived of liberty. Edna has coordinated the University Studies Program for confined people at the high school level since 2014 and master's degree since 2024 under a collaborative agreement between the University of Puerto Rico and the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation.



Reginald Dwayne Betts | Executive Director, [Freedom Reads](#)

Reginald Dwayne Betts is a poet and lawyer. A 2021 MacArthur Fellow, he is the Executive Director of Freedom Reads, a not-for-profit organization that is radically transforming the access to literature in prisons through the installation of Freedom Libraries in prisons across this country

For more than twenty years, he has used his poetry and essays to explore the world of prison and the effects of violence and incarceration on American society. The author of a memoir and three collections of poetry, he has transformed his latest collection of poetry, the American Book Award-winning *Felon*, into a solo theater show that explores the post incarceration experience and lingering consequences of a criminal record through poetry, stories, and engaging with the timeless and transcendental art of paper-making.

In 2019, Betts won the National Magazine Award in the Essays and Criticism category for his NY Times Magazine essay that chronicles his journey from prison to becoming a licensed attorney. He has been awarded a Radcliffe Fellowship from Harvard's Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study, a Guggenheim Fellowship, an Emerson Fellow at New America, and most recently a Civil Society Fellow at Aspen. Betts holds a J.D. from Yale Law School.



Dana Blanchard | Program Manager, [Haymarket Books](#)

Dana Blanchard works at Haymarket Books, a radical independent publisher based in Chicago. She is the program manager for Haymarket House, a community events space in Uptown, and also coordinates Haymarket's political education and development teams and their Books Not Bars program. She is excited to have been part of Haymarket's Writing Freedom Fellowship committee this past year. As a longtime abolitionist and former teacher union organizer, Dana is passionate about fighting for transformative change and social justice. The best part of her job is that she gets to support lots of amazing, radical, creative thinkers and organizers and amplify their work in the world.



Kevin Bott | Founder and Artistic Director, [Ritual4Return](#)

Kevin Bott (PhD) is founder and artistic director of Ritual4Return. He earned his doctorate in Educational Theater from the Steinhardt School at New York University. In 2006 Kevin began facilitating theater workshops for the prison-based non-profit, Rehabilitation Through the Arts (RTA), and in 2007 became RTA's first director of education. In 2019, Kevin was named the "Blade of Grass-David Rockefeller Fund Joint Fellow in Criminal Justice."

Kevin is trained as a community-based theater artist and, in addition to R4R, his projects include The D.R.E.A.(M.)3 Freedom Revival of Syracuse, NY—a musical tent revival for freedom and democracy; and Every Time You See Me..., a Staten Island-based meditation on race, class, power, and privilege in the wake of Eric Garner's death.

Kevin is the director of Rutgers Arts Online and the interim director of Rutgers Community Arts. He lives with his wife and three children in New Jersey.



Johanna Bringhurst | Director of Programs, [Idaho Humanities Council](#)

Johanna Bringhurst joined the Idaho Humanities Council in October 2021. Johanna has a BS in Political Science from Utah State University. Previously, she was the State Coordinator for National History Day in Idaho where she helped to teach, prepare and inspire Idaho students for college, career, and citizenship. Johanna resides in Boise with her charming husband, three joyfully energetic sons, and a poodle named Maple.



Alicia Brown | [Circles & Ciphers](#)

Alicia Brown is a community leader and currently co-director of Final 5 Campaign. She is a restorative justice practitioner, circle keeper, and abolitionist. She enjoys writing and was recently published in the “Envisioning Justice Curricular Concepts Resource Guide, Incarcerated Mothers: Illinois Humanities” (2019). She also performs pieces that she has written. Alicia is a proud mother of four beautiful children, and she strives to make the world a better place for them.



AnnMarie Brown (she, her) | [Circles & Ciphers](#)

AnnMarie Brown is a radical, restorative justice practitioner and a fashion designer. In 2017 she served as the Hub Director for Circles & Ciphers through an Illinois Humanities initiative called Envisioning Justice. Through this initiative she worked to educate youth about the carceral system through the arts. Ms. Brown has continued her journey as the current Co-Executive Director for Circles & Ciphers. AnnMarie has also curated her own fashion brand called Rafasi Clothing. She works to provide healing for young people through restorative justice practices and her own work as a designer.

AnnMarie has a B.S. in Multidisciplinary Engineering with a focus in Apparel Design and Technology from Purdue University-West Lafayette.



Zeke Caligiuri | Community Engagement Manager, [Minnesota Justice Research Center](#)

Zeke Caligiuri is a writer and activist from South Minneapolis. He is the author of *This is Where I Am*, published by University of Minnesota Press. He has won multiple awards through the PEN Prison Writing Contest and is the co-founder of the Stillwater Writer's Collective, the first all-prisoner created and facilitated collective in the country. He is a contributor to the *The Sentences That Create Us: Crafting a Writer's Life in Prison* as well as *School, Not Jail: How Educators Can Disrupt School Pushout and Mass Incarceration*. He is directly impacted by over two decades of incarceration and is now currently the re-entry education coordinator for the Minnesota Justice Research Center, re-investing in the humanization of those still stuck within the captivity business.



Dawn Chamberlain | Chairperson, [Hooper Council's Positive Potential Project](#) / [Chester Cultural Arts and Technology Center](#)

Dawn Chamberlain, MPH, MBA, an international speaker and master trainer whose journey from incarceration to influence is chronicled in her best-selling book, *Cell To CEO: Stop Playing and Get Your Shiii Together*, available on Amazon, is a founding partner of the Chester CAAT Center, with efforts aimed to revitalize communities.

Currently as Chairperson of Hooper Council's Positive Potential Project, a 501c3 committed to community transformation and healing through rehabilitative arts, Dawn spearheads the Art of Expression Program and the Chester Arts Heal Initiative.

Her engaging podcast, "Stop Playing and Get Your Shiii Together: Dawn Chamberlain vs The United States of America,"

broadcasts her expertise in personal growth and societal reform on platforms such as Spotify, Apple, and IHeart Radio.

Advocating for the Second Chance Act, Chamberlain's "Choose L.I.F.E. (Live in Fierceness Everyday)" philosophy influences her impactful work. Visit www.coachdawnmichelle.com for more on her empowering narrative.



Rob Chang | Deputy Director, [Hawaii Council for the Humanities](#)

Rob, who was born and raised on Kauai, moved to Oahu to attend the University of Hawaii at Mānoa to pursue his degree in Hawaiian Studies. Rob graduated from UH-M in 1997 and became a part of the HI Humanities family in 1999. As the Director of Reading and Discussion Programs, Rob is able to pursue his desire to provide outreach to underserved communities by implementing programs such as *Motheread/Fatheread*®, *Literature & Medicine*®, and *Standing Down*®, and piloting programs such as *Try Think*. Rob loves to engage in meaningful discussion about these programs, the humanities, or local music in between bodysurfing sessions with his young son, or simply over a good plate lunch.



Taji Chesimet | [University of Chicago](#)

Taji is a writer, performer, and community organizer. As a Fourth Year at University of Chicago, he studies Race, Diaspora, and Indigeneity, concentrating on prisons, race, and cultural aesthetics of resistance. Originally from Portland OR, he has been engaged in politics and community building since high school. He was one of the former Chairs of the Portland Committee on Community Engaged-Policing, appointed by the Mayor of Portland, and oversaw efforts of the Department of Justice to implement and maintain a consent decree in the Portland Police Bureau. He was one of the Directors/Founders of the youth-run organization Raising Justice. Taji previously served on the Board of the Restorative Justice Coalition of Oregon and the Multnomah County's Local Public Safety Coordinating Committee. He has supported the work of Parole Illinois, Prison Neighborhood Arts+Education Project, the ACLU of Oregon, Race Talks PDX, Pennsylvania Innocence Project, Impact-Justice, Senator Akasha Lawrence-Spence (OR D-18),

and he advised on the mayoral campaign of Sarah Iannarone, the 2020 Public Safety Task Force and, on the revised community engagement policies for Portland's Office of Community Engagement and Civic Life. With a particular interest in community education, Taji aims to work at the intersections of Performance, De-carcerality, and Political Mobilization to fight for transformative justice and end the systems of oppression impacting all of our communities.



Corey China | [Minnesota Humanities Center](#)

Corey China currently works at the Minnesota Humanities Center, and in addition to the agency's efforts in criminal justice reform, supports the Poet Laureate for the state, the MN Writers Series, and professional development in K-12 education. She received her M.A. in Postcolonial Literature and Ph.D. in English Literature from the Institute of English Studies, University of London. Corey lives in Minneapolis, and enjoys adventuring with her family, reading science-fiction, and using the Oxford comma.



Alison Cornyn | Executive Director, [Incorrigibles](#)

Alison Cornyn is an interdisciplinary artist, researcher, and educator whose work often incorporates public memory and archives. For more than 20 years, Cornyn has initiated new forms of storytelling in installations and online, investigating pressing social issues from multiple perspectives. Many of her projects address the criminal justice system and mass incarceration in the US. She is the creative director of the [Guantanamo Public Memory Project](#) and [States of Incarceration](#) for the Humanities Action Lab, and she co-founded the [PrisonPublic Memory Project](#). Supported by Humanities New York, her current project, [Incorrigibles](#), examines the long-term use of stigmatizing language to define and confine young women. Incorrigibles collaborates with women who were incarcerated in their youth to tell their own stories and engage with young women today. These first-person testimonies counter and broaden institutional history. Cornyn teaches at the School for Visual Arts (SVA) Design for Social Innovation MFA Program in NYC.



Monica Cosby

Monica Cosby is the founder of Acting OutSide Performance Art Crew. Her life and work have been shaped and informed by the communities to which she belongs, including the community of artists & scholars with whom she was incarcerated and whose survival was and is an act of resistance against a system that would dispose of them.



Michelle Daniel Jones | Doctoral Candidate, American Studies, [New York University](#)

Michelle Daniel Jones, ABD is a sixth-year doctoral student in the American Studies New York University. Michelle's dissertation focuses on creative liberation strategies of incarcerated people. As an organizer, collaborator, and subject matter expert she creates opportunities to speak truth to power and serves in the development and operation of taskforces and initiatives to reduce harm and end mass incarceration. She has joined Second Chance Educational Alliance as a Senior Research Consultant, the Survivor's Justice Project, Women Transcending Oral History Project and serves on the boards of Worth Rises and Correctional Association of New York and advisory boards of the Jamii Sisterhood, The Education Trust, A Touch of Light, Urban Institute and ITHAKA's Higher Ed in Prison Project.

As an artist, Michelle finds ways to funnel her research into theater, dance and photography. Her co-authored play, *The Duchess of Stringtown*, was produced in 2017 in Indianapolis and New York and her artist installation about weaponized stigma, *Point of Triangulation*, ran in New York 2019 and 2020, Philadelphia 2021 with a public mural. *Makes Me Wanna Holla: Art, Death and Imprisonment*, explores COVID-19 in prisons, ran in Chicago 2023.



Samantha Dunn

Since moving to Chicago, she has worked as a chef at a local restaurant in Rogers Park called Smack Dab. She has been there for 2 ½ years now and is loving every minute of it. She uses this opportunity to educate individuals about self-growth—motivating people to be the best versions of themselves, showing them that they can be anything they want to be. Samantha has also been working with a national non-profit organization to build bridges between the larger society and incarcerated people. She has spoken at events about the oppression of the incarcerated, as well as LGBT people in general.

Samantha's goal is to get a degree in Social Justice Advocacy, and she also wants to study psychology, in order to give hope to those who have felt that nobody would ever listen to, help, or fight for them. She wants to teach society that, though our skin tones may be different and our sexuality and identity may not be same, inside we are all people, and we should all have the same rights.



Antonio Espinosa | Founder, [Art from the Inside](#)

Antonio is the founder and Executive Director of Art from the Inside. Art From the Inside creates the opportunity for incarcerated artists to have a visual voice through engaging, community-centered exhibitions of their art. After serving for almost 20 years as a senior corrections officer at Stillwater state prison in Minnesota, Antonio launched this project to bring hope and healing inside the walls. While still in uniform, he co-facilitated men's support groups, coordinated cultural events and served on advisory boards and committees for the Minnesota Department of Corrections. In 2021, he received a Bush Fellowship for his transformative work elevating the voices of the incarcerated through community-centered exhibitions of their art. In 2022, he became a policy fellow in the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and created a bill for supportive arts programming in Minnesota's state prisons which was signed into law during the 2023 legislative session. He is driven to build toward a larger transformation in the justice system and in the community.



Tyrell Ford | Community Engagement Specialist, [Voice Buffalo](#)

Tyrell Ford is a lifelong resident of New York state. He currently lives in Buffalo and is an alum of Buffalo State University (2010 BS), where he also played football and was a part of the track & field team. In 2014, he graduated with an MBA from National American University shortly after being released from jail. Tyrell currently works with VOICE Buffalo as the community engagement specialist. His passion for organizing comes from being directly impacted by the carceral system. That is why he advocates every day to change the injustice system. Within just a few brief years of entering the workforce, he quickly gained momentum and cultivated a drive to achieve tangible results that provide solutions for his community members. He is a family oriented person raising two children, both boys, with his wife. If you would like to join the movement, Tyrell is a great person to connect with to bring about the change we want to see in our community, especially through restorative justice practices.



Dawn Frisby Byers | Senior Director of Content & Engagement, [PA Humanities](#)

Dawn Frisby Byers is Senior Director of Content and Engagement at PA Humanities, where she oversees all programs and communications statewide. She has extensive experience in brand development, strategic partnerships, and all aspects of traditional and digital marketing. Her career spans from New York City to Philadelphia with positions in entertainment and cultural organizations including Bravo TV, PBS, Sesame Workshop, Harlem's famed Apollo Theater, the Grammys®, the Kimmel Center, and the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts. She received her bachelor's degree from Duke University and completed graduate work in Arts Administration at Drexel University. Dawn currently serves as the Chair of the Philadelphia Cultural Fund. Personally, she loves attending performing arts events, reading a good book, and walking around her Mt. Airy neighborhood.



Liana Glew | Prison Education Program Manager, [Penn State University](#)

Liana Glew is the Prison Education Program Manager at Penn State University's Restorative Justice Initiative. Her academic training is in American literature, and her research on disability studies and psychiatric history focuses mainly on the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. She is specifically interested in the many genres of text that came out of psychiatric institutions at the time, including paperwork, memoirs, and archival patient writing. She is the winner of the 2021 History of the Human Sciences Early Career prize, and her writing can be found in J19 and the forthcoming edited collection *Crippling the Archive*. Motivated by this research, she now works in the field of restorative justice and prison education; as the largest psychiatric treatment facility in the US is currently a county jail, she sees this work as a direct intervention into the legacy of psychiatric institutions.



Nestor Gomez

Nestor "the Boss" Gomez traveled undocumented to Chicago with his family in the mid 80's. He was 15, stuttered, and didn't know English. He didn't have a voice.

Today, Nestor is much older than 15, no longer stutters, is a USA citizen, and speaks English with a sexy Latinx accent. He has found his voice and has won more than 80 Moth slams. He is also the creator of 80 Minutes Around the World, a storytelling show that features the stories of immigrants, refugees, their descendants, and allies. Nestor also helps others find their own voice through storytelling workshops.



Eliza Gonring | [PNAP](#)

Eliza has worked with Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project (PNAP) since 2021. Currently, they serve as the Community Organizer and Intern Coordinator. Prisoner support work has been foundational to their politics for many years. Outside of work they enjoy video games, traveling, and quality time with loved ones.



Mark Hallett | Director of Grants Programs, [Illinois Humanities](#)

Mark Hallett is director of grants programs at the statewide agency Illinois Humanities, where he has worked since 2015. Prior to that, Mark was a senior program officer in the journalism program at the McCormick Foundation, one of the top 35 foundations in the U.S. Mark has an undergraduate degree in history and a master's degree in journalism, both from Northwestern University. Mark is from Chicago but has lived in Brazil, Mexico, Norway, and Spain. He speaks Spanish and Portuguese and does printmaking and photography in his spare time.



Sonja Henderson | Artist/Humanist

Sonja Henderson founded Mothers Healing Circle (MHC) in January 2020 to help Chicago Mothers heal from trauma due to the violent loss of their children. Together, through rejuvenating workshops, storytelling, legacy projects, and meditative arts, the Mothers have a sacred space to heal and disrupt cycles of pain and suffering. MHC provides a safe in-person and virtual space for gathering, sisterhood, camaraderie, rejuvenation and therapeutic modalities.

Mothers Healing Circle provides comfort during weekly communal, woman-centered and art-based healing workshops. Focusing on women and high vibrational art practices, MHC offers emotional and physical relief to Mothers who have limited resources to food and water security, herbal and ancestral medicines, self-care tools, tech and school supplies. MHC seeks to rejuvenate Mothers and rebuild their surviving families by introducing wellness practices like: Hhrticultural therapy, plant-based nutrition, massage therapy, movement, and yoga. Healing our Mothers is the first step in healing family, community, and nation.



Stephanie Henson | Project Director

Stephanie Henson facilitates a book discussion group at Mabel Bassett Correctional Facility and is involved in criminal legal reform work, in Oklahoma, through the League of Women Voters.



Adam Henze | Director of Literacy Programming, [Flanner House](#)

Dr. Adam Henze is a researcher, educator, and spoken word artist, and has shared his work in over 30 states, as well as Puerto Rico, Canada, England, Ireland, and the United Arab Emirates. Adam is the Director of Literacy Programming at Flanner House and is the Director of Power of a Sentence, a reading and creative writing program in Indiana prisons. He received his PhD in Literacy, Culture, and Language Education from Indiana University. Adam hosts the Indiana state tournament for Poetry Out Loud, in partnership with Indiana Humanities, and was the Official Poet of the 100th Running of the Indianapolis 500.



Faylita Hicks | [Center for Art & Advocacy](#)

FAYLITA HICKS (she/they) is the author of *HoodWitch* (Acre Books, 2019), a finalist for the 2020 Lambda Literary Award for Bisexual Poetry, the forthcoming poetry collection *A Map of My Want* (Haymarket Books, 2024), and the debut memoir about their carceral experiences *A Body of Wild Light* (Haymarket Books, 2026). They are the recipient of fellowships, grants, and residencies from Art for Justice, Black Mountain Institute, the Tony-Award-winning Broadway Advocacy Coalition, Civil Rights Corps, Lambda Literary, Texas After Violence Project, Tin House, and the Right of Return USA. A voting member of the Recording Academy/GRAMMYS Songwriters and Composers Committee, Hicks is an inaugural member of the Center for Art and Advocacy where they support previously incarcerated emerging and established writers and artists from around the nation. Their work has been anthologized in *Poemhood: Our Black Revival* (Harper Collins, 2024), *The Long Devotion: Poets Writing Motherhood* (UGA Press, 2022), *When There Are Nine* (Moon Tide Press, 2022), and others.



Yolanda Houston | Director, Mississippi Consortium for Higher Education in Prison, [Woodward Hines Education Foundation](#)

Yolanda Houston is a native of the Mississippi Delta. She has been in central Mississippi since 1987. She is a 1987 graduate of West Bolivar High School, in 1991 she received a B.S. Degree in Mass Communications from Jackson State University. She is also a 2006 graduate of the University of Phoenix with a master's in management and human resource anagement, where she graduated with honors. Yolanda was also a 2017-2018 fellow with the Education Policy Fellowship Program sponsored by Mississippi State University and the John C. Stennis Institute of Government. Yolanda is a 2019 graduate of Capella University where she received an Education Specialist in Educational Leadership and Administration.

Yolanda started her career in education in 2008 as job specialist for Mississippi's graduates. In 2011 she was a Tech Prep instructor for Jackson Public Schools and in 2015 a Social Studies Instructor for Hinds County School District. In 2016 – 2021, she served as the Director of Teacher Education Preparation, Director of Student Success at Hinds Community College – Utica Campus, and Coordinator of Program Effectiveness for Hinds Community College, Raymond Campus. Yolanda recently served as the full-time ABE/HSE Instructor at Holmes Community College – Ridgeland Campus.



Renaldo Hudson | [Illinois Prison Project](#)

Renaldo Hudson (he/him) is an educator, minister, and community organizer—and he focuses his work on decarceration in the state of Illinois. This work is especially important in the emerging adult justice space, because Renaldo was arrested at the age of 19 and has personally seen the impact of this work not being done. After being sentenced to death row, Hudson worked for 37 years while incarcerated in the Illinois Department of Corrections, where he became a leader, educator. Hudson developed and implemented groundbreaking programs inside the Department of Corrections, including the prison newspaper *Stateville Speaks* and the Building Block Program, a transformational program run by incarcerated people within the Illinois Department of Corrections. Hudson's work and life have been featured in such media outlets as the BBC, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Magazine, and others. Renaldo sits on the board of JHA/Real Youth Initiative board as well as the board for Clinard Dance. He is a

CUE fellow alumni, held a UChicago Fellowship as the Artist of the People, and was on the subcommittee for public safety for Mayor Johnson. He is also one of the co-anchors for the decarceration team for Justice 2020 and is a restorative justice practitioner who believes in the power of Circle Healing and the importance of community engagement. His story and work to create back-end mechanisms for the release of incarcerated people is the subject of the documentary *Stateville Calling*. He was released from prison in September 2020 when Governor Pritzker commuted his life sentence, and he joined the Illinois Prison Project as its Director of Education later that year.



Aaron Hughes and Amber Ginsburg | [The Tea Project](#)

Aaron Hughes is a Chicago based artist, curator, anti-war activist, and Iraq War veteran. Working through an interdisciplinary practice rooted in drawing and printmaking, Hughes works collaboratively in diverse spaces and media to create meaning out of personal and collective trauma, transform systems of oppression, and seek liberation.

Amber Ginsburg is a Chicago based artist teaching at the University of Chicago. She creates site-generated projects and social sculptures that insert historical scenarios into present day situations, as well as engage histories to imagine alternative futures. She often works with long-term and ongoing collaborators and together they engage multiple communities and elicit working relationships with experts in the fields of biology, political activism, legal scholarship and activism, and science fiction.

Hughes and Ginsburg collaborate on the Tea Project to create spaces for people to engage with the history and contemporary reality of extralegal detention and torture with specific attention to the Global War on Terror and Guantánamo Detention Camp. An important point that emerges from this work is the profound connection between Guantánamo and the legacy of torture and extralegal detention in Chicago. This history, rooted in racism and American exceptionalism, draws the connection between the military and prison industrial complexes, between mass incarceration and endless war.



Cuba Jackson | Coordinator, [Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition](#)

Cuba Jackson epitomizes resilience, commitment, and transformation as a dedicated abolitionist, civic leader, and entrepreneur. After nearly a decade within Maine's prison system, Cuba redirected his life towards advocacy and leadership, joining the Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition (MPAC) to champion the ethical treatment and rights of incarcerated individuals statewide.

Cuba's entrepreneurial spirit led him to establish 3T Builders and Renovators, a general contractor business dedicated not only to constructing buildings but to rebuilding lives. His business model prioritizes offering employment and training in skilled trades to system-impacted individuals, regardless of their criminal history.

As a prominent spokesperson for MPAC, he collaborates with organizations such as the Maine Humanities Council, the Freedom and Captivity Project, The Sewall Foundation, the Conscience Revolution, and Maine Health Access Foundation. His ultimate goal remains dismantling systemic barriers to justice and creating opportunities for those affected by the penal system to thrive.



Alex Keefe | [WBEZ](#)

As Engagement Editor, Alex oversees engaged journalism projects in the WBEZ newsroom and across Chicago Public Media. His work centers on finding creative ways to listen to communities served by the newsroom, then working with fellow journalists to ensure that community input informs and shapes news coverage.

Alex is also a co-founder and lead editor on Prisoncast!, an audio and engaged journalism project for people incarcerated in Illinois and their loved ones. He's worked at WBEZ for 12 years, and spent much of that time covering and editing coverage of local and state politics.



James Kilgore | Director, Advocacy and Outreach, [FirstFollowers](#)

James Kilgore is an activist and writer based in Urbana, Illinois. He is Director of Advocacy and Outreach for FirstFollowers Reentry Program in Champaign, Illinois and a Building Community Power Fellow for Community Justice. He is the author of six books, four of which he drafted during his 6.5 years in prison in California. His most recent work, *Understanding E-Carceration* (New Press, 2022), draws on his experience of spending a year on an electronic monitor after release from prison. He was a co-founder and leader of Build Programs, Not Jails which led an eight-year fight to stop a jail building project in Champaign County. His latest book, *The Warehouse*, to be released in May of 2024, is a visual primer on mass incarceration. He is the father of two sons, grandfather of three girls and the life partner of Teresa Barnes, history professor at UIUC.



Alice Kim | [PNAP](#) & Director of Practice, [Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture \(UChicago\)](#)

Alice Kim (she/her) is Director of Practice at the Center for the Study for Race, Politics & Culture at the University of Chicago. She leads CSRPC's Beyond Prisons initiative, a teaching and learning project that interrogates, disrupts, and works toward moving beyond carceral logics and systems. Kim teaches with the Prison+Neighborhood Arts/Education Project at Stateville and Logan Prisons. Kim is a co-founder of Chicago Torture Justice Memorials, the group that initiated historic municipal reparations legislation for survivors tortured by Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge's torture ring in 2015. She was a leader in the movement to end capital punishment in Illinois and nationwide; worked closely with the Death Row 10, a group of Black men who were tortured by Jon Burge's forces and sentenced to death; and was instrumental in advocating for the successful blanket commutations of Illinois' 167 death sentences in 2003. Kim is co-editor of *The Long Term: Resisting Life Sentences, Working Toward Freedom*.

Daniel Kisslinger | Co-Creator, [AirGo](#)



Daniel Kisslinger is a Chicago-based host and producer who creates dialogue-based media showcasing the stories, voices, and artworks of communities challenging power, reconfiguring public life, and reimagining our world. He is the Co-Founder of Respair Production & Media, and is the Co-Creator of AirGo, a weekly podcast in Chicago that reshapes the culture of the city and beyond for the more liberatory and creative. A twice Webby-nominated podcast producer, Daniel has also been named an Artist Fellow as part of the UIC Social Justice Initiative's Portal Project, as well as a Power of Cash Narrative Change Fellow by Economic Security of Illinois. His words have been featured in NY Times bestseller *We Do This 'Til We Free Us* and *The New Normal*, a salon journal published by The Hoodoisie. Daniel also edits CTU Speaks!, a podcast produced by the Chicago Teachers Union, and also works as a consultant helping organizations, individuals, and companies build humanizing, subject-to-subject podcasts from scratch.

Martin Matsuyuki Krause | Special Projects Manager, [Illinois Humanities](#)



Martin is a cultural programmer, researcher, writer, educator, organizer, and artist with a decade of experience working at intersections of equity in education, arts and culture, and community organizing. At Illinois Humanities, Martin collaborates on a national, statewide, and local portfolio of special initiatives including publications, special events, data analysis, and other strategic operations. Martin has developed, led, and promoted youth arts and education programs across Chicago with ArtShould, Margaret's Village, Chicago Public Schools, Logan Center for the Arts, the Smart Museum, the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures, Court Theatre, and Arts + Public Life. He has also worked in a number of pathology and social neuroscience laboratories and maintains writing, painting, sculpture, and printmaking practices. Martin studied the philosophies of mind, art, and physics at the University of Chicago with a focus on the material basis of thriving, receiving a bachelor's degree in philosophy and neuroscience and a master's degree in the humanities.



Kevin Lindsey | CEO, [Minnesota Humanities Center](#)

Kevin Lindsey serves as the CEO of the Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC), an organization whose vision is to create a just society that is curious, connected, and compassionate. Lindsey, a widely respected public policy advocate and lawyer, has previously served in the Cabinet of the Minnesota Governor as the Commissioner of the Department of Human Rights. Kevin has been honored by the University of Iowa College of Law with its Law Review Distinguished Alumni Award, the University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts with its Civitas Award for promoting Liberal Arts education, and three-time awardee by Minnesota Lawyer with its Diversity Award. Lindsey's career has focused on leveraging personal stories, finding solutions to complex problems, and building an inclusive democracy for all.



Dr. Gabrielle Lyon | Executive Director, [Illinois Humanities](#)

Gabrielle Lyon received her BA and MA in history from the University of Chicago and PhD in Education from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is a nationally recognized nonprofit leader, educator, and public speaker with experience in launching and leading social impact organizations and initiatives focused on leveling the playing field of educational access and opportunity. She joined Illinois Humanities as the Executive Director in June 2019. Prior to that she served as Vice President of Education and Experience at the Chicago Architecture Center and as a senior researcher at the Great Cities Institute at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is the founding executive director of Project Exploration, a nonprofit dedicated to changing the face of science for youth and girls of color, which was recognized locally and nationally, including with a Presidential Award for Excellence. Her honors include being named a Notable Leader in DEI by Crain's Chicago Business, a National After School Champion by the After School Alliance, Chicagoan of the Year by *Chicago Magazine*, and a Leadership Fellow with the Chicago Community Trust. Lyon has served as social impact coach at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and an adjunct professor of entrepreneurship at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management. Her current research and writing focus on the ways in which community-driven design and participatory humanities experiences bridge civic identities and catalyze social change. Lyon is the author of the graphic novels [No Small Plans](#), and [Washington By and By](#), and served as coeditor for [A Simple Justice: The Challenge of Small Schools](#).

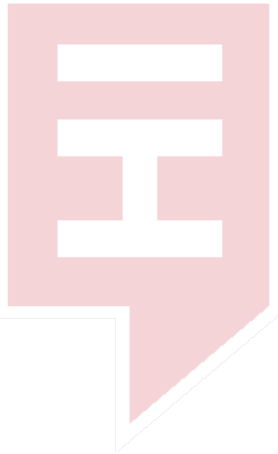


Nashid Madyun | Executive Director, [Florida Humanities Council Inc](#)

Dr. Madyun attended Mississippi Valley State University and Delta State University to obtain undergraduate and graduate degrees in History, and Southern New Hampshire University to obtain an MFA in Creative Writing. After working for the Department of Arkansas Heritage, he obtained a Doctorate in Management, conducting research in nonprofit sustainability and organizational leadership.

Dr. Madyun has served as the Director of the Stax Museum of American Soul Music, the Texas State History Museum, President and General Manager of Gibson Retail Group (a division of Gibson Music Instruments), the Art Museum and Archives of Hampton University, and most recently, as the Director of the Carrie Meek and James Eaton Sr. Southeastern Regional Black Archives Research Center and Museum at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.

He continues to teach courses in Humanities, African American Art, U.S. History and Graduate courses in Business. Dr. Madyun has served on a host of boards and public service commissions; including but not limited to, the Blues Foundation, the Austin Arts Council, Arkansas Black History Commission, Virginia State Heritage Preservation Board, and the Visit Florida Cultural, Heritage, Rural And Nature Committee, and the African American History Task force for the State of Florida.



Efraín Marimón | Director, Restorative Justice Initiative, [Pennsylvania State University](#)

Efraín is an Associate Teaching Professor at The Pennsylvania State University in the College of Education. Efraín develops community-embedded programs related to social justice, human rights, law, and education. He is the director of the Restorative Justice Initiative and the D.C. Social Justice Teaching Fellowship and founded the Street Law Program at Penn State Law. He also conducts training on law-related education for international groups.

Efraín is the founder and director of “The Restorative Justice Initiative” (RJI) and the founder and director of the D.C. Social Justice Teaching Fellowship.

Part of Efraín’s work includes developing, maintaining, and supporting community partnerships in and outside of Centre County. Efraín has partnered with local schools like the Delta Program and State High, the Hawaii State Judiciary and Hawaii Department of Education, and several international organizations. These projects support the development of curriculum materials, professional development, training, or coursework for in-service or pre-service teachers, lawyers, and civic leaders. Similarly, Efraín has partnered with The Law Society of Scotland, the University of Hong Kong’s Human Rights Clinic, and the U.S-Russia Social Enterprise Exchange to train law students and civic leaders on best practices in law-related education. Efraín has also led sessions for The American Bar Association’s Committee on Law-Related Education; The National Council for Social Studies (N.C.S.S.); UK Conference on Street Law; and the Global Alliance for Justice Education (G.A.J.E.).



**Damon McWhite | Interim Director, Restorative Justice,
[Mural Arts Philadelphia](#)**

Damon McWhite is the Interim Director of the Restorative Justice department at Mural Arts Philadelphia, responsible for the coordination, implementation, and management of strategy and curriculum planning. With over 14 years of experience in recruitment, staffing, and higher education working with diverse populations, Damon understands the value and need for workforce development in justice-impacted communities. He believes in the power of restorative justice and its ability to heal and uplift while rebuilding relationships between offenders, victims, and affected communities. His work with Coded By Kids and their initiative 1Philadelphia, is focused on making Philadelphia the capital of equitable tech and innovation, directly impacting underrepresented Philadelphians. Damon graduated from Wake Forest University with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and is passionate about creating opportunities for advancement for individuals from underrepresented communities.



**Yahusef Medina, MPA | Director, Community Initiatives,
[Virginia Humanities](#)**

Yahusef Medina serves as the director of Community Initiatives at Virginia Humanities. In his role, Mr. Medina provides leadership and expertise in broadening and strengthening community partnerships statewide. Mr. Medina leads the Virginia HBCU Scholars fellowship, and the Virginia African American Cultural Resources Task Force, and works across the organization to co-design and develop educational content. Before his current role, Mr. Medina worked with youth and families in the K-12 public school system as well as the juvenile justice system as an education and re-entry program specialist in Harlem, N.Y. In addition to his work at Virginia Humanities, Mr. Medina serves on the board of directors for the AfroLatino Forum, as chair of the Education and Career Training committee for the Virginia Latino Advisory Board, and is a visiting scholar at the Center for Minority Serving Institutions in the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University.



Sheila Meiman | Prison Education Specialist, [NASFAA](#)

Sheila Meiman is an experienced advocate, practitioner, consultant, and analyst in the field of higher education in prison. Her expertise include STEM education, financial aid, program creation and expansion, student and academic support, data, transfer and direct-to-work credentials, and technology. She has over a dozen years of experience as a program administrator, has managed a first-round Second Chance Pell site, and has served as a mathematics professor for both campus and system-impacted students. She currently serves as the Prison Education Specialist at the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA). Meiman holds a BS from Carnegie Mellon University, as well as a Master of Science in Engineering from Purdue University. She also holds a Master's Certification in Program/Project Management from American University. In their Vanguard Series, NJBIZ named Professor Meiman one of the 2018 Leaders in Higher Education in New Jersey.



Erica R. Meiners | Professor, Educational Inquiry and Curriculum Studies, [Northeastern Illinois University](#)

Writer, educator and organizer, Erica R. Meiners' current books include *For the Children? Protecting Innocence in a Carceral State* (University of Minnesota 2016), a co-edited anthology *The Long Term: Resisting Life Sentences, Working Towards Freedom* (Haymarket Press 2018); the co-authored *Feminist and the Sex Offender: Confronting Sexual Harm, Ending State Violence* (Verso 2020); and the co-authored *Abolition. Feminism. Now.* (Haymarket 2022). Her publication credits include *Radical Teacher*, *Women's Studies Quarterly*, *The Advocate*, *Boston Review* and many others. Her awards include the 2015 Henry Trueba Award from the American Education Research Association and a 2016 Soros Justice Fellowship, among others. Erica is a member of her labor union and teaches classes in education, gender and sexuality studies,

and justice studies. Most importantly, Erica works alongside others in a range of ongoing mobilizations for liberation, particularly movements that involve access to free public education for all. A member of Critical Resistance, the Illinois Death in Custody Project, the Prison+Neighborhood Arts / Education Project, and the Education for Liberation Network, Erica is a sci-fi fan, an avid runner, and a lover of bees and cats.



Pablo Mendoza | [PNAP](#)

Pablo is a proud father and someone with a lived carceral experience. He served 22 years within the I.D.O.C where he resisted state violence through education and organizing. He is currently enrolled at NEIU and working to find plausible solutions to healing from the traumas of violence. He aims to end violence through creative solutions that front healing principles and individual accountability. Pablo is piloting this creative solution as co-creator of Walls Turned Sideways. At WTS, Pablo is learning what the real time needs are for communities disrupted by hyper incarceration. He does so as he himself is suffering much of the same marginalization and hurdles that mire down those he tries to help.



Joseph Murphy | Director of Grant-Making, [Humanities New York](#)

Joe Murphy is Director of Grant-Making at Humanities New York (HNY), where he oversees HNY's Post-Incarceration Humanities Partnership, among other grants and programs. Before joining HNY, Murphy was the Interim Program Director of the Leon Levy Center for Biography at the CUNY Graduate Center, where he oversaw fellowships and public events including a major conference on the art of political biography. From 2010-13, he was an interim director at the Gotham Center for New York City History, where he organized free public events, including a two-day event commemorating the centennial of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire in 2011. He received his Ph.D. and certificate in American Studies from the CUNY Graduate Center in 2016 and his B.A. in History from Temple University in 2004.



Jyothi Natarajan | Program Manager, [Haymarket Books](#)

Jyothi Natarajan is an editor, writer, and cultural worker based in Portland, Oregon. As Program Manager at Haymarket Books, she administers the Writing Freedom Fellowship, which recognizes and supports emerging and established poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers impacted by carceral systems. The inaugural cohort of Writing Freedom Fellows was announced this past February. Prior to her work at Haymarket, Jyothi spent nearly a decade working at the Asian American Writers' Workshop, where she edited the literary magazine *The Margins* and helped to establish The Margins Fellowship for emerging writers. She is the recipient of the 2017 Wai Look Award for Outstanding Service to the Arts. Jyothi is involved in anti-caste and anti-Hindutva organizing and collaborates with the literary social practice project De-Canon.



Elizabeth Nelson, PhD | Assistant Professor, [Indiana University Indianapolis](#)

Elizabeth Nelson, PhD is an assistant professor in the Medical Humanities and Health Studies Program at Indiana University–Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI) and an adjunct assistant professor of Africana studies and history. A medical historian, Elizabeth's primary research interests center on modern institutions of confinement, such as mental hospitals and prisons. Elizabeth is currently working on a collaborative book project on the 1994 closure of Indiana's Central State psychiatric hospital; this project is inspired by newsletters published by patients with intellectual disabilities in the late 1980s, as well as a Mellon foundation-supported initiative to address Post-Carceral trauma with the FIRE Collective (Formerly Incarcerated, Radically Empowered). Since 2018, she has coordinated the Indiana Women's Prison History Project and is coeditor with Michelle Daniel Jones of the edited collection *Who Would Believe a Prisoner? Indiana Women's Carceral Institutions, 1848–1920* (The New Press, 2023).



Jessica Neptune | Director of National Engagement, [Bard Prison Initiative](#)

Jessica Neptune is Director of National Engagement for the Bard Prison Initiative, a program she helped create as an undergraduate in the late 1990s. She leads BPI's Consortium for the Liberal Arts in Prison and the BPI Summer Residency for emerging college-in-prison practitioners. In 2018, she founded the Women's College Partnership at the Indiana Women's Prison, now run by Notre Dame and Marian University. As an ACLS Public Fellow, she worked with the Obama Administration's Federal Interagency Reentry Council, co-leading interagency working groups on Children of Incarcerated Parents and Incarcerated Women. She holds a B.A. from Bard College and an M.A. and Ph.D. in American History from the University of Chicago. Her scholarship is on the making of the carceral state and the policies and politics at the nexus of race, poverty, addiction, and punishment.



Carmelo Ortiz | Director and Co-founder, [Returning Citizens Support Group](#)

Carmelo Ortiz is a returning citizen raised in Newark, NJ. Carmelo is the co-founder of the Returning Citizen Support Group ("RCSG"), a grass-root, non-profit, peer-to-peer support group that is run and managed by system-impacted individuals. As an alumni of the New Jersey State Transformative Education in Prison ("NJ-STEP") program, Carmelo is a Rutgers-Newark graduate who completed, with Honors, his Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice in the fall of 2019. Carmelo also works as a Program Coordinator at the Youth Advocate Program, where he supports the returning citizen population with jobs and housing referrals, transportation, and other vital re-entry services. He is also an MOU partner with the New Jersey Department of Corrections, working with soon-to-be-released men to develop an "Individualized Service Plan" (ISP) to meet the immediate needs, including housing, upon their release. As part of his commitment to successful re-entry outcomes for returning citizens, Carmelo recognized housing as a paramount concern for returning citizens. From this recognition, a visionary initiative, Second Chance Developers, was created in partnership with his brother Edwin Ortiz. Through Second Chance Developers, Carmelo brings together his experience and passion to bridge the gap between the need for housing and the overarching goal of community empowerment.



Edwin Ortiz | Executive Director, [Returning Citizens Support Group](#)

Edwin 'Chino' Ortiz is an advocate for justice reform and a beacon of hope for individuals impacted by mass incarceration. After serving an arduous 30-year sentence, Edwin faced the harsh reality of reintegration upon his release in September 2016. His journey was marked by numerous challenges, with housing insecurity standing out as a formidable obstacle. For over a year, he navigated the complexities of life by couch surfing, a stark reminder of the struggles returning citizens face. Undeterred by his own tribulations, Edwin emerged as a catalyst for change. Today, he stands as the Executive Director and Co-Founder of the Returning Citizens Support Group, Inc., a grassroots organization based in Newark, NJ. This organization, born out of Edwin's first-hand experience, focuses on addressing the multifaceted needs of individuals reentering society after incarceration. Edwin also founded Second Chance Developers, a visionary initiative with the mission of building wealth and fostering community development through the construction of affordable homes. Edwin's commitment extends beyond mere shelter, aiming to create safe, sustainable, and affordable housing for Newark residents, particularly those with a history of incarceration.



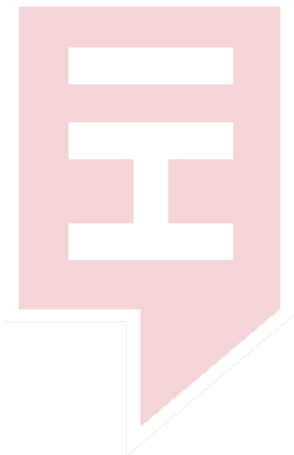
Angel Pantoja | Reentry Policy Coordinator, [Office of Illinois Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton](#)

Angel Pantoja currently serves as the Reentry Policy Coordinator for the Office of Illinois Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton. He was formerly the Project Coordinator for the Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice working directly with the Illinois Coalition for Higher Education in Prison (ILCHEP). In his former role, he was called to support the many educators and Higher Education programs in correctional institutions across the state by collaborating with the Illinois Department of Corrections. His most rewarding role is educating the general public about the importance of higher education in prison, which he does by visiting and facilitating classes at universities and colleges across Illinois.



Joseph Peterson | Assistant Professor -- School of Humanities, [University of Southern Mississippi](#)

Joseph Peterson is a professor at the University of Southern Mississippi, where he teaches courses in European and World History. He facilitates a book club for readers who are incarcerated at South Mississippi Correctional Institution. With the men there, he has had the privilege to participate in vibrant discussions of books, including *Sing, Unburied, Sing* by Jesmyn Ward, *East of Eden* by John Steinbeck, *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas, *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, and more.



Sherrif Polk

Sherrif Polk “Da Greatest” is a speaker and abolitionist from the West Side of Chicago. From 2011 to 2022, Sherrif was a youth leader at Circles & Ciphers. Through his work with Circles and Ciphers, he has traveled across the country, leading restorative justice circles training at Harvard Law School, Yale Law School, the Ohio Lucas County Court, and Northwestern Law School. In 2015, he also became a part of another community-based organization called Austin Coming Together (ACT) to bridge the gap between elders and youth. Currently, Sherrif is a youth leader with the Final 5 Campaign and continues to work towards advocating for abolition in the city.



Neomi Rao | PhD Student, [University of Chicago](#)

Neomi Rao is a PhD student in Political Science at the University of Chicago. Broadly, her research focuses on how organizers and activists in social movements imagine better worlds and enact strategies to advance their goals, with a specific focus on contemporary movements to abolish carceral systems. She holds a BS in Biology and a BA in Linguistics from the University of Maryland, a MA in Social Sciences from the University of Chicago, has worked in non-profit organizations in the U.S. and in India, and is an active organizer in the UChicago graduate student union. At Beyond Prisons, she has assisted with facilitating the PNAP Think Tank and served as a TA for mixed-enrollment classes with UChicago and Stateville students.



Meghan Reedy | Program Coordinator, [Maine Humanities Council](#)

Meghan Reedy has an abiding fascination with people and communities and the cultures we create through our everyday lives. She has spent most of her professional life involved with books and words, looking for ways to understand and amplify their potential for meaningful positive impact on people's lives. She's now working with books and people as a Program Coordinator for Maine Humanities, where she heads up Discussion Project programming in correctional facilities across Maine and helps orchestrate an annual Big Question event.



Patrick Rodriguez | Co-Executive Director, [Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prison](#)

Patrick Rodriguez is the co-executive director of the Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prison and the director of Georgia State University's Prison Education Project. In his work, Patrick builds and advances equitable, high-quality educational pathways to degree completion for incarcerated people throughout the state of Georgia. Through his work with the National Executive Council at Columbia University's Center for Justice, he is widely known as a national thought leader on prison education programs and policy. He spent 52 months incarcerated in Georgia prisons and leads with that lived experience by centering and uplifting the voices of the students he serves. Since his release in 2019, he has expanded in-prison degree programs, including increasing enrollment of new students who are incarcerated and creating powerful re-entry initiatives to support continued education post-release. Patrick builds bridges across southern perspectives by placing the value of human life at the front of the conversation to create a new way forward, to strengthen people, families, communities, and our workforce. He is a Class of 2023 Obama Leaders USA, a Camelback Fellow Alum, an Education Trust Justice Policy Fellow, a Fund for New Leadership Fellow, and has been named 40 under 40 by *GA Trend*.



Sarah Ross | [Prison + Neighborhood Arts/Education Project](#)

Sarah Ross is an educator and artist whose work uses narrative and the body to address spatial concerns as they relate to access, class, anxiety and activism. She co-founded the Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project (PNAP), a cultural project that brings together artists, writers and scholars in and outside Stateville prison to create public projects concerning segregation, criminalization and incarceration. In other collaborative projects, she has developed a series of research based projects about land use and global agriculture. Her work has been exhibited in Los Angeles, New York, Montreal, Copenhagen, Rio De Janeiro, among other places; she is the recipient of grants from the Propeller Fund, Graham Foundation, and the Illinois Art Council. She is a faculty in Art Education and Sculpture at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.



Shannon Ross | Founder and Executive Director, [The Community](#)

Shannon Ross is the Executive Director of The Community, which he founded with invaluable outside support in 2014 while serving a 17 year prison sentence. The Community addresses the effects of the criminal punishment system with two arms: Pre-entry and Correcting the Narrative. Pre-entry leverages the most widely-read publication in the Wisconsin prison system (The Community newsletter) and is developing a learning platform and a fellowship program to provide incarcerated people with high quality resources, info, encouragement, guidance, and training to return to society as successfully as possible, rather than trying to get prepared after release. Their Correcting the Narrative campaign showcases the successes, humanity, and agency of people with criminal records to counteract fear, pity, and spectacle narratives. Ultimately, they seek to bring society and the system-impacted community exactly where they need each other to be. Since his release September 2020, Shannon is also a founding partner of the Multidimensional Justice Solutions firm Paradigm Shyft, an Ed Trust Justice Fellow alumni, a Represent Justice ambassador, a consultant with Marquette University's Higher Education in Prison program, a graduate of the Masters in Sustainable Peacebuilding program at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, and a first-time father.



Jen Rubin | Producer, [Wisconsin Humanities](#)

Jen is the Executive Producer of Love Wisconsin, a program of Wisconsin Humanities. She co-produces the Moth StorySlam in Madison, is a producer of Human Powered podcast, and co-hosts the storytelling podcast Inside Stories. She leads storytelling workshops inside Wisconsin prisons with the Odyssey Beyond Bars Project. She is the author of 'We Are Staying: Eighty Years in the Life of a Family, a Store, and a Neighborhood.'



Alesha Seroczynski | Director, [Moreau College Initiative](http://www.hcc-nd.edu/moreau-college-initiative/)

Alesha is the Associate Dean and Director of Strategic Initiatives at Holy Cross College. For the past ten years, she has been managing the Moreau College Initiative, a degree-conferring program sponsored by Holy Cross College and the University of Notre Dame for men who are incarcerated at Westville Correctional Facility (<http://www.hcc-nd.edu/moreau-college-initiative/>). MCI has been offering classes in the liberal arts since 2013; and in 2016, they became one of 67 programs nationwide that offer Second Chance Pell scholarships to its students. MCI will celebrate its 10th Commencement this May. To date, they have conferred 120 Associate and 35 Bachelor of Arts degrees. Alesha has published and presented at several international venues; her most recent article is entitled “Becoming Vulnerable with the Vulnerable: A Pedagogy of Hope for Incarcerated Students of the Liberal Arts.” Alesha earned her B.A. in Psychology from the University of Texas at Dallas, and Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology from the University of Notre Dame.



Linda Small | Founder and Executive Director, Reentry Sisters

Linda Small is the executive director of Reentry Sisters, a nonprofit support organization specializing in a gender-responsive and trauma-informed approach to women’s reentry. She serves on the New England Commission for the Future of Higher Education in Prison at the Educational Justice Institute at MIT. She is a Columbia University Women’s Collective Leadership Fellow, focusing on changing the impact of the carceral state on women and girls. She is a lead scholar at the Justice Scholars Network and Colby College Justice Think Tank, highlighting the scholarship and research of justice-impacted people.

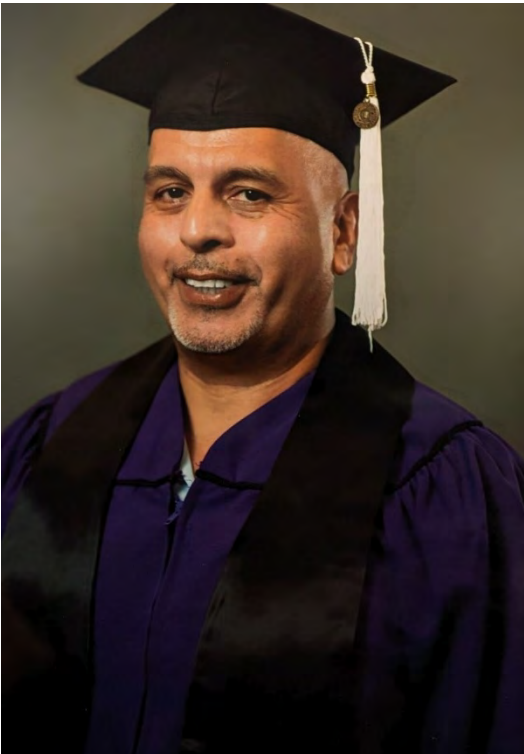
Linda is part of an American Council of Learned Societies grant team for the Freedom & Captivity Curriculum Project, developing community-based classes taught by incarcerated people. She is a program facilitator for the Maine Humanities Council and a program coordinator for the Maine Advocacy Coalition. She is a DJ for Justice Radio, a talk show about the carceral state.



Elgin Smith | [DJ L O Kari](#)

Elgin Bokari T. Smith, aka L O Kari, is a Chicago-based DJ, Activist, Visual, and Performing Artist from St. Louis, Missouri. Born in 1987, L O Kari was heavily influenced by the soulful sounds of RnB, Jazz, Hip Hop, Gospel, and Alternative Rock. While attending Central Visual and Performing Arts High School in St. Louis, Elgin discovered that he had an ear for music and began creating music on piano and guitar while adding his unique flavor. Now known as L O Kari, Elgin has performed domestically and abroad - ranging from New York, St. Louis, Ohio, Seattle, South Korea, Japan, and all over the Chicago land area. He has shared stages with the likes of Bone Thugs and Harmony, Ruby Ibarra, The Terra Godz, Saba, Da Brat, Clark Airlines, Mega Ran, Bop Alloy, No Name Gypsy, DJ Esco, Young Chop, Lil Crazed, Rebel Diaz, Twista, and Chingy... to name a few.

Elgin also gives back to his community as a Teaching Artist, is a former Program Director turned Artistic and ED of Stomping Grounds LAI, and President of the activist and artist collective, Elephant Rebellion. Elgin also is the co-creator of Pocket Con, the comic book convention that celebrates characters of color.



Jimmy Soto | [P+NAP](#)

Exonerated after 42 long years of incarceration, Jimmy Soto is a human rights advocate who hit the ground running since he walked out of prison just before Christmas in 2023. While incarcerated he earned his bachelor's degree from Northwestern University's Prison Education Program (NPEP) and was an active member of the Prison+Neighborhood Arts/Education Project's (P+NAP) Think Tank. He is now a Reparations Research Assistant at Northwestern University, a volunteer paralegal at Northwestern Law School's Community Justice Center, and is a Justice Practitioner Fellow at the University of Chicago's Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture.



Phoebe Stein | President, [Federation of State Humanities Councils](#)

Phoebe Stein is president of the Federation of State Humanities Councils. Stein served as the executive director for Maryland Humanities from 2008 to 2020 and has been an advocate for the humanities at local, state, and federal levels for more than 20 years. During her tenure at Maryland Humanities, Stein expanded the council's partnerships and resources and hosted a local public radio spot, "Humanities Connection," while growing the council's programs. She served on the Federation Board of Directors from 2013 to 2017 as both vice chair and as a member of the Legislative Committee. In 2016, she was recognized as one of "Maryland's Top 100 Women" by The Daily Record. Before joining the Maryland council, Stein was

the director of public affairs at Illinois Humanities. She received her Ph.D. and M.A. in English from Loyola University of Chicago and her B.A. in English from the University of Michigan. Stein serves on the board of the National Humanities Alliance and on the advisory councils of Humanities Indicators, a project of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and National History Day



Kyes Stevens | Director, [Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project](#)

With over twenty years of experience in prison arts and education innovation and administration, Kyes Stevens is a national leader in the field. Stevens is founding director of the Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project at Auburn University, one of the most esteemed and longest-running arts and education programs in the country offering access to sustained and quality educational experiences to those incarcerated in state prisons. Under Stevens' leadership, APAEP has developed community education programming across arts, humanities and STEM programming; has developed two Auburn University off-site college degree programs inside the Alabama Department of Corrections; as well as a re-entry educational center. In her founding role, she created the traveling art exhibition of APAEP, established the bi-annual anthology project, launched Books Behind Bars, which has placed more than 22,000 volumes inside prisons across Alabama. APAEP has served over 6000 people in its 22 year existence, including the first BS Degree graduation inside the ADOC from a major public university in December of 2023



Robert Taliaferro | Pre-Entry Manager, [Odyssey Beyond Bars](#)

Robert is a former intelligence analyst for the US Army, a multi-award winning editor and journalist, an artist and he is currently completing a masters program at Metro State University on St. Paul, MN, which he will receive May 2024 after receiving his BA in May 2023.

Robert was also incarcerated for 38 and a half years in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Tennessee, all while serving time for Wisconsin.

He currently is a spokesperson for the University of Wisconsin's Odyssey Beyond Bars program which he attended while in prison.

Robert is the founder of a consulting LLC in Minnesota and is developing an extensive Correctional curriculum with the input and support of the state of Minnesota's Parole and probation officers. He recently gave the keynote closing address to the yearly conference of probation and Parole officers in Minnesota.



Leanne Trapedo Sims | Assistant Professor of Peace and Justice and Co-Chair, [Knox College](#)

Leanne Trapedo Sims was born in Johannesburg, South Africa: Apartheid was the ferment for her political and social commitments. She is the Daniel J. Logan Assistant Professor of Peace and Justice and Co-Chair at Knox College. Her book—[Reckoning with Restorative Justice: Hawai'i Women's Prison Writing](#)—was published with Duke University Press, 2023. Her work interrogates the intersections of gender, Indigeneity, violence and state power in colonized Hawai'i.

At Knox, Trapedo Sims is shaping a new, interdisciplinary program in Peace and Justice with a focus on critical carceral studies and abolition. She is director of the Prison Education program with the proximate Henry Hill Correctional Center and is building an Inside-Out-style Prison Exchange program with Hill.

Her work has appeared in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* and in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* special issue, "Mapping Gendered Violence: Contemplating Conflict and Crisis in Contemporary Societal Struggles."



Jasmine Tyler | Executive Director, [Justice Policy Institute](#)

Jasmine L. Tyler assumed the role of Executive Director at the Justice Policy Institute (JPI) in February 2024, marking the beginning of a dynamic chapter in the organization's legacy. A seasoned and influential advocate for justice reform, Ms. Tyler brings with her over two decades of profound experience in progressive policy advocacy, executive leadership, and board development – as well as a proven track record of achievement and an exciting vision for the organization's future.

Ms. Tyler's advocacy has played pivotal roles in the passage of landmark legislation, such as the federal Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 and the District of Columbia's Good Samaritan Overdose Prevention Amendment Act of 2012. She also helped to repeal the federal syringe exchange funding ban in 2016 and contributed to the passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016.

She's worked with Congress and the executive branch on a range of federal criminal justice, drug and public health, immigration, and national security policy issues. Ms. Tyler has also engaged in numerous human rights treaty reviews through many United Nations bodies, including the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the most recent UN General Assembly on the World Drug Problem, the Commission to Eliminate Racial Discrimination, and the US Universal Periodic Review.



Tyreece Williams | Program Associate, [Field Foundation](#)

Tyreece Williams is currently the program associate at the Field Foundation where he works across the foundation with primary responsibility of supporting our Art and Leadership Investment program areas. He works with organizations, cooperatives, collectives, and artists leading projects in historically and systemically divested communities of Chicago. He also supports Field's Leaders for a New Chicago program.

Before joining the Field Foundation, Tyreece worked as the program manager for Illinois Humanities' Envisioning Justice initiative, which leverages the arts and humanities to envision alternatives to the enduring injustice of mass incarceration. In this role, he managed the program's grantmaking portfolio and developed free, high-quality humanities experiences throughout Illinois designed to enrich individual and community-based visions of justice.

Tyreece is committed to uplifting arts and cultural work in Chicago—inviting us to challenge the status quo and use our collective talents and resources to build more affirming, interconnected, and empowered communities.



Damon Williams | Co-Creator, [AirGo](#)

Damon A. Williams is a movement builder, organizer, hip-hop performing artist, educator and media maker from the south side of Chicago. He is the Co-Founder of Respair Production & Media, and the Co-Creator of AirGo, a weekly podcast in Chicago that reshapes the culture of the city and beyond for the more liberatory and creative. He is the co-director of the #LetUsBreathe Collective, an artistic activist organization birthed out of supply trips to support the Ferguson uprising in resistance to the murder of Mike Brown. Williams and #LetUsBreathe transplanted the experiences from the front lines and continue to organize direct actions and community enrichment events throughout the streets of Chicago and in their movement building community center The #BreathingRoom Space, with the mission of utilizing cultural production and popular education to redistribute power and resources, eradicate systemic violence, and transform inequity. In honor of his leadership, Damon been named a TIME Magazine's 2020 Guardian of the Year, a Field Foundation 2021 Leader for a New Chicago, a Margaret Burroughs Fellow by the UIC Social Justice Initiative's Portal Project, and a Power of Cash Narrative Change Fellow by Economic Security of Illinois.



Al-Tariq Witcher | Director and Co-Founder, [Returned Citizens Support Group](#)

Al-Tariq Witcher is an accomplished advocate, entrepreneur, and community leader who has overcome a troubled past to become a beacon of hope and empowerment for justice-impacted persons. Proudly born and raised in Newark, NJ, Al-Tariq had a promising future until mischievousness and substance abuse derailed his life and led to over 20 years in prison. While incarcerated, Al-Tariq dedicated himself to fighting for the rights of his fellow prisoners and their families. Since his release in 2011, he has refocused that energy towards his community. Al-Tariq earned a degree in Paralegal Studies from Essex County College, and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Rutgers University. He has held various positions in social services and logistics.

As senior organizer with the Essex Chapter of New Jersey Together, Al-Tariq works with a diverse coalition of religious and nonprofit organizations to address community issues such as poverty, affordable housing, education and criminal justice reform. He is also a youth mentor with Rise2gether and serves on the Hudson County Advisory Board for the Reduction of Gun Violence.

Al-Tariq is a co-founder of the Returning Citizens Support Group, a peer-to-peer mentoring program that provides support and resources to justice-impacted persons. He is also the Associate Director for Rutgers Re-entry Opportunity Programs for Entrepreneurship in Newark (RE-OPEN).



Brandon Wyatt

Brandon V. Wyatt is an Universal Truth Seeker that finds Divine and Universal Laws in everyday life. Despite being incarcerated for over 20+ years, he has managed to overcome and transcend the limitation and stagnation associated with incarceration. He was born and raised on the Southside of Chicago. During his incarceration, he has accomplished significant feats in the academic and creative realm. He has earned two associate degrees, become a certified automotive technician, and is currently enrolled in Northwestern's Prison Education Program, with the ambition of earning his bachelors degree. He also has been involved with Illinois Humanities campaign, "Envisioning Justice " for over 6 years, and has made steady and consequential contributions, along with being a co-creator of the initiative, " Our Agreements ", that examines society's consent to injustices and equalities, primarily " Smalltown, USA" and their allowance of mass incarceration to fester within their town and spaces.



Laurie Zierer | Executive Director, [PA Humanities](#)

As executive director of PA Humanities, Laurie Zierer strategically focuses on redefining the humanities to build community, foster learning, and make meaningful change in Pennsylvania with ground-breaking programs like Chester Made, PA Heart & Soul, and Teen Reading Lounge. She is a vocal advocate for the cultural sector at the state and national levels, informed by participatory research projects like Humanities in Action: A National Perspective, the PA Humanities Discovery Project, and PA CultureCheck. Laurie also has recently published on centering the human in graduate education and emergent strategies in philanthropy. She is a former high school English teacher, and she holds a B.A. in English from Temple University and an M.A. in Rhetoric from Penn State. Laurie currently serves on the board of Leadership Philadelphia.

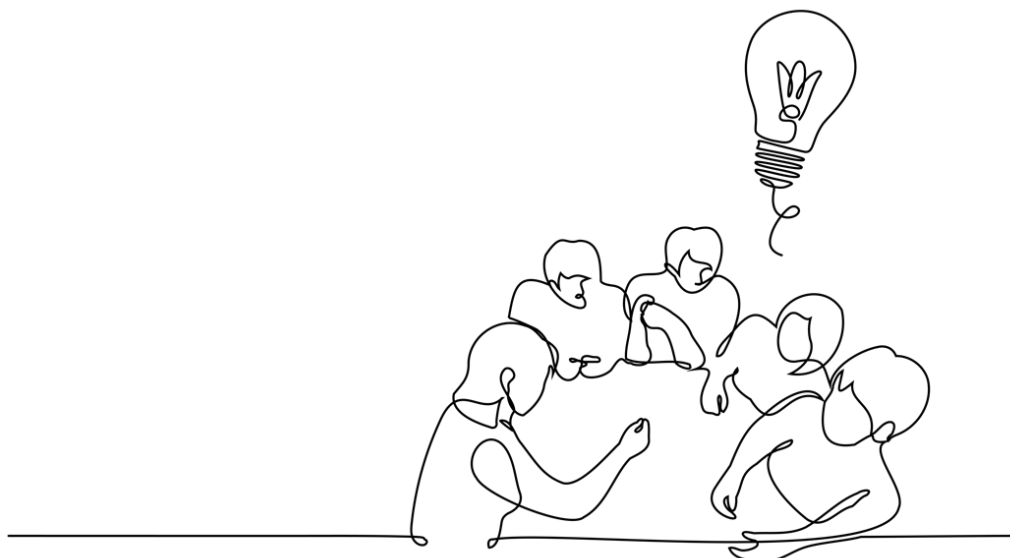
Repository:

Humanities Council Work on Mass Incarceration

To best situate this unique gathering within the context of the inspiring work councils and partners are doing in this space, to build a more comprehensive and accurate picture of this national landscape, and to facilitate skill- and model-sharing, Illinois Humanities issued a national survey in February 2024 of state humanities councils on their engagement with the issue of mass incarceration, including submissions of topical media and programming. We received media and programming submissions from 22 councils, spanning original programming inside and outside of detention facilities, media created by people who are currently and formerly incarcerated, grantee partners' work, and an array of public engagements. Submissions were aggregated into a first-ever repository: in this [document](#), media and programming submissions are categorized by state with hyperlinks to Prison Policy Initiative's profile of each state.

The idea for this repository was recommended during the “humanities and mass incarceration” pre-conference session at the National Humanities Conference in 2022. Thank you to those who helped originate this effort.

Please note that this repository is not comprehensive of all state humanities council work regarding the issue of mass incarceration, nor is it comprehensive of individual councils' work in this space.



Resources on Mass Incarceration

In an effort to help ground us in the history, data, status, and enormity of mass incarceration, the Planning Committee has aggregated a number of data points and further resources into a [Mass Incarceration 101 document](#). *Special thanks to Jen Rubin of Wisconsin Humanities and Martin Matsuyuki Krause of Illinois Humanities for compiling this document.*

About Humanities Councils

Humanities Councils are the national non-profit partners of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) created to support the humanities at the local level. There are 56 councils, located in every U.S. state, Washington DC, and US jurisdictional territories. (Not all of us use the word "council" in our names.) We ensure the humanities are a vibrant part of our country's public life and accessible to all individuals, regardless of their background or where they live.

Each State Humanities Council is unique. We provide grants to support local humanities organizations and projects. Many of us also organize programs such as public lectures, workshops, exhibitions, documentary films and podcasts, and educational, reading and discussion programs. We tailor our work to the cultural and historical contexts of our individual state or territory, but we share the common goals of making the humanities accessible to a broad audience, and to strengthening communities by bringing diverse voices and perspectives together.

Councils receive funding from a variety of sources, including the NEH. To learn more about the National Endowment for the Humanities' Political and Social Advocacy guidelines, please refer to this [document](#).

Site Visit

Walls Turned Sideways

by the [Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project \(PNAP\)](#)

an art gallery and community space dedicated to artists and communities impacted by incarceration

2717 W Madison ST., Chicago, IL 60612

Our friends at [Walls Turned Sideways](#) welcome you to explore their space in East Garfield Park. Currently up is their inaugural exhibition, *It Ain't That Funny: Comics by Arkee Cheney and artists at Stateville Prison*.

To use public transit from The Study to Walls Turned Sideways, consider taking the #172 bus from 60th Street and Woodlawn, transfer to the #55 bus at Woodlawn & 55th Street, and take the Green Line from the Garfield Green Line Station to California.

Neighborhood Guide

Attractions		
Name	Address	Distance from Hotel
Museums & Performance Spaces		
Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society	5701 S Woodlawn Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.4 mi
Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures	1155 E 58th St, Chicago, IL 60637	0.4 mi
Renaissance Society	5811 S Ellis Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.5 mi
Smart Museum of Art	5550 S Greenwood Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.7 mi
Court Theatre	5535 S Ellis Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.8 mi
Museum of Science and Industry	5700 S DuSable Lk Shr Dr, Chicago, IL 60637	0.9 mi
DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center	740 E 56th Pl, Chicago, IL 60637	1.0 mi
Hyde Park Art Center	5020 S Cornell Ave, Chicago, IL 60615	1.7 mi
Arts + Public Life	301 E Garfield Blvd, Chicago, IL 60637	1.8 mi
South Side Community Arts Center	3831 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60653	3.9 mi
Landmarks		
Jackson Park	Southwest side of Hyde Park	0.5 mi
Washington Park	West side of Hyde Park	0.6 mi
Garden of the Phoenix	6300 S Cornell Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	1.0 mi
57th Street Beach	East side of Hyde Park	1.3 mi
Promontory Point	East side of Hyde Park	1.4 mi

63rd Street Beach	East side of Hyde Park	1.6 mi
Public Art		
“Nuclear Energy” by Henry Moore	Ellis Avenue between 56th and 57th Streets	0.6 mi
“Why” by Richard Hunt	West side of Smart Museum at 5550 S Greenwood Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.7 mi
“Sky Landing” by Yoko Ono	On Wooded Isle in Jackson Park	0.9 mi
“Fountain of Time” by Lorado Taft	6000 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	1.0 mi
“Agrifolia Majoris” by Nancy Rubins	Lakefront, north of Promontory Point by 54th Street	1.6 mi
“Ecstasy” by Virginio Ferrari	5200 S. Hyde Park Blvd., Chicago, IL 60615	1.6 mi
Hyde Park Murals	Lake Park Avenue underpasses	n/a
Architecture		
Laird Bell Law Quadrangle by Eero Saarinen	1111 E. 60th St., Chicag, IL 60637	0.2 mi
Robie House by Frank Lloyd Wright	5757 S Woodlawn Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.3 mi
The Joe and Rika Mansueto Library by Helmut Jahn	1100 E 57th St, Chicago, IL 60637	0.6 mi
University Apartments by I.M. Pei	1451 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	0.9 mi
Campus North Residential Comms, Jeanne Gang	5500 South University Ave Chicago, IL 60637	0.9 mi
Heller House by Frank Lloyd Wright	5132 S Woodlawn Ave, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi
The Promontory Apartments by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe	5530 S Shore Dr, Chicago, IL 60637	1.3 mi

- ◇ [More Public Art at UChicago](#)
- ◇ [More Architecture at UChicago](#)
- ◇ [More Architecture in Hyde Park](#)

Shopping		
Name	Address	Distance from Hotel
Specialty		
First-Aid Comics	1617 E 55th St	1.1 mi
Kayra Imports	1001 E 53rd St	1.2 mi
Silver Room	1506 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi
Miyagi Records	307 E Garfield Blvd, Chicago, IL 60637	1.7 mi
L1	319 E Garfield Blvd, Chicago, IL 60637	1.7 mi
Books		
Seminary Co-op	5751 S Woodlawn Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.3 mi
57th Street Books	1301 E 57th St, Chicago, IL 60637	0.5 mi
Powell's	1501 E 57th St, Chicago, IL 60637	0.7 mi
Convenience & Grocery		
Jewel-Osco	6014 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.6 mi

Walgreens	1554 E 55th St	1.0 mi
CVS	1228 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.0 mi
Hyde Park Produce	1226 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi
Target	1346 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi
Trader Joe's	1528 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi
Valley of Jordan	1009 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.2 mi
Ace Hardware	5422 S Lake Park Ave, Chicago, IL 60615	1.2 mi
Whole Foods	5118 S Lake Park Ave, Chicago, IL 60615	1.5 mi

Food & Drink			
Name	Address	Distance from Hotel	Cuisine
Restaurants			
Truth Be Told	1227 E 60th St, Chicago, IL 60637	0 ft	British
Medici On 57th	1327-1331, 1327 E 57th St, Chicago, IL 60637	0.5 mi	Italian
Seoul Taco	1321 E 57th St, Chicago, IL 60637	0.5 mi	Korean-Mexican fusion
Salonica	1440 E 57th St, Chicago, IL 60637	0.6 mi	Greek & American
Saucy Porka	1164 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	0.7 mi	Asian-Latin fusion
Nella Pizza e Pasta	1125 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	0.8 mi	Italian
Roux	1055 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	0.9 mi	Southern
Ascione Bistro	1500 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.0 mi	Italian
Cedars Mediterranean Kitchen	1206 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.0 mi	Mediterranean
Dawn: an AM Eatery	1642 E 56th St, Chicago, IL 60637	1.1 mi	Southern
Can't Believe It's Not Meat	1368 1/2 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi	American Vegan & Vegetarian
Small Cheval	1307 E 53rd St 1st FL, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi	American
Morry's Deli	5500 S Cornell Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	1.1 mi	NYC-style deli
Snail Thai	1649 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi	Thai
Thai 55	1607 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi	Thai
Harold's Chicken Shack	1208 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi	American
Giordano's	5311 S Blackstone Ave, Chicago, IL 60615	1.2 mi	Italian & Chicago Deep Dish
Shinju Sushi	1375 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.2 mi	Japanese
Virtue	1462 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	Southern
Chant	1509 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	Asian fusion/Global
Ja'Grill	1510 E Harper Ct, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	Jamaican
Valois Restaurant	1518 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	American cafeteria
Cajun Boil & Shake	5500 S Shore Dr, Chicago, IL 60637	1.3 mi	Cajun
Nando's Peri-Peri	1447 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	South African
Rajun Cajun	1459 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	Indian and soul food

Daisy's Po-Boy and Tavern	5215 S Harper Ave, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	American
Strings Ramen	1453 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	Japanese
Kilwin's	5226 S Harper Ave, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	Confections
14 Parish	1644 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.4 mi	Caribbean
Uncle Joe's Jerk Chicken	1461 E Hyde Park Blvd, Chicago, IL 60615	1.5 mi	Jamaican
Tacos El Pastor 53	5319 S Hyde Park Blvd, Chicago, IL 60615	1.5 mi	Mexican
Gorée Cuisine	1126 E 47th St, Chicago, IL 60653	1.8 mi	West African
Bronzeville Winery	4420 S Cottage Grove Ave, Chicago, IL 60653	2.5 mi	American/Global
BARDAVID	1201 E 60th St, Chicago, IL 60637	230 ft	Mediterranean
Cafes			
Sip & Savor	5301 S Hyde Park Blvd, Chicago, IL 60615	1.5 mi	
Plein Air	5751 S Woodlawn Ave, Chicago, IL 60637	0.3 mi	
Cafe 53	1369 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.1 mi	
Philz	1425 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.2 mi	
Starbucks (on 55th)	1174 E 55th St	0.7 mi	
Starbucks (on 53rd)	1530 E 53rd St · (773) 324-1241	1.3 mi	
Bars & Nightlife			
Jimmy's Woodlawn Tap	1172 E. 55th Street, Chicago, IL, United States, Illinois	0.7 mi	
The Cove	1750 E 55th St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	
Falcon Inn	1601 E 53rd St, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	
The Promontory	5311 S Lake Park Ave W, Chicago, IL 60615	1.3 mi	

For more recommendations in Hyde Park, please visit the resources below:

- ◇ [Hyde Park Chicago: The Ultimate Neighborhood Guide](#), The Haute Seeker
- ◇ [How to Spend 24 Hours in Chicago's Hyde Park](#), Choose Chicago
- ◇ [A Guide for What to Do in Hyde Park, Chicago](#), Condé Nast Traveler
- ◇ [Neighborhood Attractions](#), the University of Chicago

For more recommendations across Chicago, please visit the resources below:

- ◇ [A Guide to Black-Owned Bars and Restaurants in Chicago](#), The Haute Seeker
- ◇ [First-Time Visitor's Guide to Chicago](#), Choose Chicago
- ◇ [Chicago City Guide](#), Lonely Planet
- ◇ [The 32 Best Chicago Attractions](#), TimeOut

Inside & Out Attendee Directory

State	First Name	Last Name	Organization
Alabama	Laura	Anderson	Alabama Humanities Alliance (AHA)
Alabama	Kyes	Stevens	Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project
Alabama	Tameesha	Matthews	Auburn University's Alabama Prison Arts + Education Project
Arkansas	Leatrice	Glenns	Arkansas Humanities Council
Arkansas	Asya	Webster	Arkansas Humanities Council
Arkansas	Dawn	Jeffery	Little Rock Freedom Fund
Arkansas	David	Jolliffe	The Prison Story Project
District of Columbia	Anthony	Mitchell	National Endowment for the Humanities
District of Columbia	Yennie	Tse	National Endowment for the Humanities
Florida	Yvonne	Hill	Circle of Community Leadership Inc.
Florida	Nashid	Madyun	Florida Humanities Council Inc
Florida	Pamela	Carithers	Lincoln Park Main Street
Georgia	Patrick	Rodriguez	Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prison
Hawaii	Cheryl	Edison	Chaminade University of Honolulu --Humanities
Hawaii	Robert	Chang	Hawai'i Council for the Humanities
Idaho	Sara	Fry	Boise State University
Idaho	Johanna	Bringhurst	Idaho Humanities Council
Idaho	Omi	Hodwitz	University of Idaho
Illinois	JC	Aevaliotis	Polk Bros. Foundation
Illinois	Samantha	Dunn	A move to remember
Illinois	Amelia	Ortiz	American Council on Education
Illinois	Jessica	Neptune	Bard Prison Initiative
Illinois	Faylita	Hicks	Center for Art & Advocacy
Illinois	Taji	Chesimet	Center for Study fo Race, Politics, and Culture
Illinois	Amanda	Carlson	Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events
Illinois	AnnMarie	Brown	Circles & Ciphers
Illinois	Alicia	Brown	Circles & Ciphers
Illinois	Chris	Patterson	Crown Family Philanthropies
Illinois	Tracye	Matthews	CSRPC
Illinois	Mike	Brawn	Education Justice Project

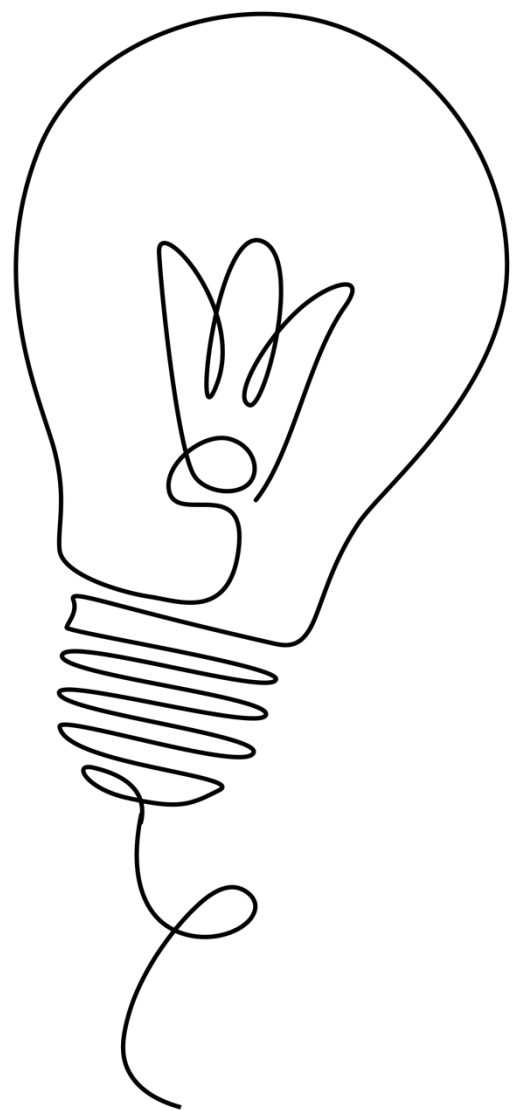
Illinois	Chrissy	Ferree	Education Justice Project
Illinois	Katie	Fizdale	Education Justice Project
Illinois	Rebecca	Ginsburg	Education Justice Project
Illinois	Jamie	Hines	Education Justice Project
Illinois	Ashton	Hoselton	Education Justice Project
Illinois	Crushion	Stubbs	Education Justice Project
Illinois	Tyreece	Williams	Field Foundation of Illinois
Illinois	James	Kilgore	FirstFollowers
Illinois	Sarah	Joyce	Glitter Guts
Illinois	Eric	Strom	Glitter Guts
Illinois	Allyson	Esposito	Good Chaos
Illinois	Hosik "Steve"	Moon	Grand Victoria Foundation
Illinois	Tuyet	Ngo	Grand Victoria Foundation
Illinois	Dana	Blanchard	Haymarket Books
Illinois	Jyothi	Natarajan	Haymarket Books
Illinois	Nora	Daley	Illinois Arts Council Agency
Illinois	Encarnacion	Teruel	Illinois Arts Council Agency
Illinois	Fairouz	AbuGhazaleh	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Rebecca	Amato	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Jane	Beachy	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Madeline	Cruz	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Michael	Foley	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Vicki	Garza	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Mark	Hallett	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Morven	Higgins	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Joanne	Hsu	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Kurt	Kindt	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Martin Matsuyuki	Krause	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Hannah	Kucharzak	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Karen	Loda	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Gabrielle	Lyon	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Matt	Meacham	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Asante	Owusu-Brafi	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Willy	Palomo	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Angel	Pantoja	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Aanika	Pfister	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Brooklyn	Rue	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Hannah	Sugarman	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Zerline	Thompson	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Robert	White	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Tia K.	Williams	Illinois Humanities
Illinois	Renaldo	Hudson	Illinois Prison Project

Illinois	Maya	Dukmasova	Injustice Watch
Illinois	Jasson	Perez	Just Impact Advisors
Illinois	Leanne	Trapedo Sims	Knox College
Illinois	Meredith	Nnoka	Lawndale Christian Legal Center
Illinois	Bria	Gillum	MacArthur Foundation
Illinois	Erica	Meiners	Northeastern Illinois University
Illinois	Eliza	Gonring	PNAP
Illinois	Pablo	Mendoza	PNAP
Illinois	Sarah	Ross	PNAP
Illinois	Daniel	Kisslinger	Respair Production & Media
Illinois	Damon	Williams	Respair Production & Media
Illinois	Corinne	Kannenbergh	Restore Justice
Illinois	Michele	Kenfack	Restore Justice
Illinois	Elgin	Bokari Smith (aka DJ L O Kari)	Stomping Grounds
Illinois	Amber	Ginsburg	The Tea Project
Illinois	Neomi	Rao	University of Chicago
Illinois	Alice	Kim	University of Chicago - Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture
Illinois	James	Soto	University of Chicago - Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture
Illinois	Ashli	Anda	University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Illinois	alexandra	antoine	Visual Artist
Illinois	Alex	Keefe	WBEZ
Illinois	Alex	Keefe	WBEZ
Illinois	Destiny	Bell	
Illinois	Monica	Cosby	
Illinois	Sonja	Henderson	
Illinois	Aaron	Hughes	
Illinois	Sherrif	Polk	
Illinois	Tony	Santiago	
Indiana	Joseph	Capdevielle	Holy Cross College: Moreau College Initiative
Indiana	Shannon	Dunne	Holy Cross College/University of Notre Dame
Indiana	Adam	Henze	Flanner House
Indiana	Elizabeth	Nelson	Indiana University Indianapolis
Indiana	Sam	Opsahl	Indiana Humanities
Indiana	Anastazia	Schmid	
Indiana	Alesha	Serocynski	Moreau College Initiative
Indiana	Megan	Telligman	Indiana Humanities
Kentucky	Derek	Beaven	Kentucky Humanities
Kentucky	Melissa	Diego	Kentucky Humanities

Kentucky	Sinclair	Marie	Gateway Regional Arts Center
Maine	Cuba	Jackson	Maine Prisoner Advocacy Coalition
Maine	Samaa	Abdurraqib	Maine Humanities Council
Maine	Meghan	Reedy	Maine Humanities Council
Maine	Linda	Small	Reentry Sisters
Maryland	Lindsey	Baker	Maryland Humanities
Maryland	Alexandra	Cenatus	Maryland Humanities
Maryland	Alicia	Jones McLeod	Black Leadership Institute
Maryland	Ruschelle	Reuben	Maryland Department of Labor
Michigan	Dale	Brown	Western Michigan University/Center for the Humanities
Michigan	Kyle	Fisher-Grant	Michigan Humanities
Michigan	Jennifer	Rupp	Michigan Humanities
Minnesota	Laura	Adams	Minnesota Humanities Center
Minnesota	Zeke	Caligiuri	Minnesota Justice Research Center
Minnesota	Corey	China	Minnesota Humanities Center
Minnesota	Ann	Deiman-Thornton	Art from the Inside
Minnesota	JESSICA	ESPINOSA	Art from the Inside
Minnesota	Antonio	Espinosa	Art from the Inside MN LLC
Minnesota	Kevin	Lindsey	Minnesota Humanities Center
Minnesota	Jennifer	Marx	Art from the Inside
Minnesota	Luke	Scott	Art from the Inside
Minnesota	Lux	Thunberg	Art from the Inside
Mississippi	Carol	Andersen	Mississippi Humanities Council
Mississippi	Yolanda	Houston	Woodward Hines Education Foundation
Mississippi	Joseph	Peterson	University of Southern Mississippi
New Jersey	Kevin	Bott	Ritual4Return
New Jersey	Sylvester	Cruz	NJ Council for the Humanities
New Jersey	Carmelo	Ortiz	Returning Citizens Support Group
New Jersey	Edwin	Ortiz	Returning Citizens Support Group
New Jersey	Joseph	Szumowski	New Jersey Council for the Humanities
New Jersey	Al-Tariq	Witcher	Returning Citizens Support Group
New York	Rory	Anderson	Re-entry Theater of Harlem
New York	Alex	Anderson	Reentry Theater of Harlem
New York	Cynthia	Boykin	Incorrigibles
New York	Amy	Brozovich	Humanities New York

New York	Alison	Cornyn	Incorrigibles
New York	Michelle	Daniel Jones	NYU
New York	Yassmin	Fashir	Correctional Association of New York
New York	Tyrell	Ford	Voice Buffalo
New York	Guest of Joseph	Murphy	Humanities New York
New York	Joseph	Murphy	Humanities New York
New York	Sara	Ogger	Humanities New York
Ohio	Rebecca	Asmo	Ohio Humanities
Oklahoma	Stephanie	Adams	Oklahoma Department of Corrections
Oklahoma	Stephanie	Henson	Project Director for Let's Talk About It program at the Department of Corrections
Oklahoma	Rayne	McKinney	Oklahoma Humanities
Pennsylvania	Jean-Pierre	Brice	PA Humanities
Pennsylvania	Dawn Frisby	Byers	PA Humanities
Pennsylvania	Dawn	Chamberlain	Hooper Council's Positive Potential Project/Chester Chester Cultural Arts and Technology Center
Pennsylvania	Efrain	Marimon	Penn State
Pennsylvania	Damon	McWhite	Mural Arts Philadelphia
Pennsylvania	Sheila	Meiman	NASFAA
Pennsylvania	Keith	Reeves	Swarthmore College
Pennsylvania	Laurie	Zierer	PA Humanities
Puerto Rico	Edna	Benitez Laborde	Universidad de Puerto Rico, Río Piedras
Puerto Rico	Sonya	Canetti Mirabal	Fundacion Puertorriqueña de las Humanidades
Puerto Rico	Natalia	Olivero Huffman	Fundacion Puertorriqueña de las Humanidades
Puerto Rico	Pedro Angel	Reina Perez	University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras
Vermont	Morgan	Irons	Vermont Arts Council
Vermont	Ryan	Newswanger	Vermont Humanities
Vermont	Leanne	Porter	Vermont Humanities
Vermont	James	Sturm	Center for Cartoon Studies
Virginia	Terri	Erwin	Virginia Interfaith Center
Virginia	Yahusef	Medina	Virginia Humanities
Virginia	Phoebe	Stein	Federation of State Humanities Councils
Virginia	Jasmine	Tyler	Justice Policy Institute (JPI)
Wisconsin	Nestor	Gomez	
Wisconsin	Jimmy	Guterrez	Human Powered podcast
Wisconsin	Kevin	Mullen	UW Odyssey Project

Wisconsin	Shannon	Ross	The Community / Correcting the Narrative
Wisconsin	Jen	Rubin	Wisconsin Humanities
Wisconsin	Robert	Taliaferro	Alum of Odyssey Beyond Bars
Wisconsin	Dena	Wortzel	Wisconsin Humanities



Social Media

Share your Inside & Out experience on social media, using **#InsideAndOutHumanities** and tagging **@ILHumanities** when you do! Use this [toolkit](#) to help you get started.

Special Thanks

In the words of author, educator, and organizer Mariame Kaba: “nothing we do that is worthwhile is done alone.” That could not be more beautifully and abundantly true of Inside & Out, a Convening that has been lovingly shaped by many minds, hearts, and hands.

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About Illinois Humanities

Illinois Humanities is a statewide nonprofit organization that activates the humanities through free public programs, grants, and educational opportunities that spark conversation, foster reflection, build community, and strengthen civic engagement for everyone in Illinois.

www.ILHumanities.org

