



AZJUSTICEPROJECT



OUR IMPACT IN 2024



OUR MISSION

To seek justice for the innocent, the wrongfully imprisoned, and those who have suffered manifest injustice under Arizona's criminal justice system.

MAKING THE ARIZONA CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM **MORE FAIR FOR ALL.**

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



LEE STEIN
President, Arizona
Justice Project

I LOOK FORWARD EVERY YEAR TO WRITING THIS MESSAGE BECAUSE IT GIVES ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON THE INCREDIBLE WORK DONE BY THE ARIZONA JUSTICE PROJECT OVER THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS.

This year is no different. Against enormous odds, the staff, volunteer lawyers and countless others repeatedly throw themselves against the wall, and remarkably, the walls keep falling down. Because of their efforts, we have the privilege of watching our clients go from being imprisoned to being free. I am sure I have said this in every one of these letters I have written – there is nothing I have done as a lawyer that compares to watching someone who had no hope walk to freedom. It takes my breath away every time. It reminds me of the importance of this work and how lucky I am to be associated with people who transform lives.

These moments, however, also come with some sadness, because we also remember the staggering numbers of people who are victims of wrongful convictions or who have suffered a manifest injustice, and who, for whatever reason, do not find the path to regaining their freedom. Sitting with the

I continue to marvel at what this organization has become. For many years it consisted of Larry Hammond and a handful of his like-minded friends, making miracles happen with no resources, except, very often, the resources Larry or his law firm provided. But no more. Today, we have lawyers, a paralegal, a re-entry program, a full-time director of operations, a legal fellow, a robust board of directors, a stable of volunteer lawyers and investigators, and many generous and varied funding sources. ”

thought of someone spending his or her life in prison for a crime he or she did not commit is almost too much to bear. So, we carefully review each of the hundreds of letters we receive each year with great care to make sure that no righteous case slips through the cracks, fully appreciating the significance to the person seeking our help.

I continue to marvel at what this organization has become. For many years it consisted of Larry Hammond and a handful of his like-minded friends, making miracles happen with no resources, except, very often, the resources Larry or his law firm provided. But no more. Today, we have lawyers, a paralegal, a re-entry program, a full-time director of operations, a legal fellow, a robust board of directors, a stable of volunteer lawyers and investigators, and many generous and varied funding sources. Despite what sometimes feels like insurmountable odds, one thing is constant – the sense of purpose everyone involved shares. The work of the Project would not be possible without the incredible contributions of every one of these people.

One person who has made an outsized contribution to the success of the Project over the last ten years

is our Director of Operations, Shawnee Ziegler. She seemingly does the job of many people all at the same time. She manages the finances and all aspects of the operations, as well as being involved in a meaningful way in the representation of our clients. There is not space in this letter to accurately describe the impact Shawnee has had on the Project, but rest assured her contribution has been immeasurable. Sadly for us, Shawnee is moving on, but she will continue to stay involved with the Project. We are forever grateful to her.

Thank you to everyone who commits their time, effort, and money to make this important work possible. Thanks for continuing to believe in and support this remarkable organization.



LEE STEIN
President, Arizona Justice Project

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





There is no shortage of individuals who need our help. Each year, hundreds of individuals in prison reach out to the AJP with claims of innocence, manifest injustice, or marijuana record expungement. ”

LINDSAY HERF

Executive Director, Arizona Justice Project

AS 2024 COMES TO A CLOSE, I AM PROUD TO NOTE THAT THE COLLECTIVE WORK OF THE ARIZONA JUSTICE PROJECT OVER THE LAST 26 YEARS HAS HELPED 51 CLIENTS REGAIN THEIR FREEDOM AND RETURN HOME! This year alone, three clients (Greg, Atdom, and Iris) walked free! The work behind each one of our cases is made possible thanks to our supporters.

Since the organization's inception in 1998, the AJP's founder, the late Larry Hammond, had a knack for building teams and bringing together the nation's top forensic experts (DNA, fire science, ballistics, etc.), investigators, and legal practitioners to work, for free, on AJP cases. Today, we are still at it. Each case that we pursue is carefully selected and an investment in correcting a serious injustice. The organization's ability to tackle difficult feats has been, and still is today, on the shoulders of incredible teams of dedicated people.

There is no shortage of individuals who need our help. Each year, hundreds of individuals in prison reach out to the AJP with claims of innocence, manifest injustice, or marijuana record expungement. AJP staff and interns tirelessly vet each case and, in the end, only a fraction of the cases move forward to investigation and legal representation. It takes years of work between the time we accept a case to when a client walks free. The work doesn't stop there. Our dedicated Re-Entry team assists clients in making a successful transition back into the community.

This year we advanced efforts to cut down on wrongful convictions before they occur with policy reforms, such as improving eye-witness identification procedures. We pursued sentencing fairness through strategic litigation in the courts and worked with law makers on a bill to allow a limited number of people a chance at parole. In 2025, we will launch an effort to pass a law allowing those who have been wrongly convicted in Arizona to apply for recompense for the time and freedom lost.

At the end of the day, the greatest joy is witnessing our freed and exonerated clients rebuild their lives and emerge as leaders in the community. These men and women are using their voices to support one another and to improve the system for those still incarcerated.

The impact of this organization is built on the support of dedicated donors. Together, we are stronger!
THANK YOU.

Sincerely,

LINDSAY HERF

Executive Director, Arizona Justice Project

FREEDOM ACHIEVED IN 2024

WITH THE TENACITY, PERSISTENCE, AND COMPASSION OF OUR STAFF
AND PRO BONO PARTNERS, WE WELCOMED HOME OUR 51ST CLIENT THIS YEAR!

NEW MEMBERS OF THE AJP FAMILY!

TWO OF OUR CLIENTS WELCOMED NEW MEMBERS TO THEIR FAMILY THIS YEAR!

LaTasha welcomed a baby boy and
Christian, a baby girl!

LaTasha regained her freedom in 2022 and
has been making the most of her time by
working, spending quality moments with her
family, and publishing her book.

Christian hit the ground running in 2023!
He has received multiple promotions at his
job, recently purchased a house, and got
married. We love seeing our clients rebuild
their lives after release.



FREDDY RAMON

FREDDY RAMON RECEIVED AN ABSOLUTE DISCHARGE THIS YEAR!

Freddy was only 15 years old when he and two
other teenagers were arrested and charged
with felony murder. A shooting at a convenience
store resulted in one person's death. Though
Freddy was in the vehicle when the shooting
inside the store occurred, he was charged and
convicted for the crime.

After serving 28 years in prison, Freddy was
released on parole in December 2020 and
entered into a transitional housing program
where he thrived. From there, Freddy obtained
full-time employment and met his now-fiancée!

In September of this year, the Board of
Executive Clemency recognized Freddy's
contributions to the community, excellent
employment history, relations with family and
friends, support system, disciplinary-free parole
record, and granted him an absolute discharge.
Congratulations to Freddy!





GREGORY SCHMIDT

GREG REGAINED HIS FREEDOM ON MAY 10, 2024, AFTER 26 YEARS OF INCARCERATION. Greg was convicted for a 1998 offense and sentenced to 25 years in prison. For over 20 years, Greg maintained a spotless disciplinary record, engaged in programming, education, community service, and employment to prepare himself for coming home one day.

In 2021, Greg contacted the AJP for help after a notification was circulated in the prison about release eligibility. Greg was told that he was not eligible for release or for parole consideration, which meant Greg would likely spend the rest of his life in prison.

After a review of his case and sentencing record, AJP determined that any further incarceration beyond the 25-year mark would be unjust punishment. In partnership with pro bono assistance from the law firm Coppersmith Brockelman, AJP filed a civil lawsuit seeking Greg's release from prison.

The lawsuit was quickly settled, and Greg was released from the Yuma prison facility into the arms of his sister and the AJP team! Greg was welcomed home by his supportive family.



IRIS VILLA

IRIS WAS RELEASED ON OCTOBER 24, 2024, AFTER SERVING OVER SIX YEARS IN PRISON. Iris was initially sentenced to 14 years in prison. AJP attorney, Martin Hutchins, represented Iris as part of our Marijuana Expungement Program.

During a review of Iris's case, it was discovered that a prior drug conviction was used incorrectly to enhance her sentence. In addition, Iris was one of several co-defendants in the case but received the harshest sentence of 14 years, while all other co-defendants were sentenced to 3-4 years on probation, despite being equally involved in the offense. Based on those two factors, the judge re-sentenced Iris to time-served!

During her incarceration, Iris focused on self-improvement, engaged in programming, and acquired skills that will be valuable as she reintegrates into the community. Iris's family has provided unwavering support and continues to stand by her upon release.

FREEDOM ACHIEVED IN 2024



ATDOM PATSALIS

ATDOM REGAINED HIS FREEDOM IN SEPTEMBER 2024 AFTER SERVING ALMOST 11 YEARS IN PRISON.

At age 20, Atdom was prosecuted on 25 counts of non-violent burglary-related crimes. When police interviewed Atdom on the burglaries, he took responsibility and told police where to find the stolen items so they could be returned to their owners. However, when it came time for punishment, the Mohave County Superior Court judge sentenced Atdom to 292 years in prison. This was the most excessive punishment case we have ever seen at the Project.

In 2018, Atdom wrote to the AJP for help. AJP took on Atdom's case and over the next five years represented Atdom through the federal system of review arguing that the 292-year sentence violated the 8th Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment. Unfortunately, the courts denied relief.

In 2023, we threw the "Hail Mary" seeking a commutation (shortening) of sentence through Arizona's Executive Clemency process. The AJP presented statewide sentencing data showing that the average sentence for someone in Atdom's position was 5-7 years, and not 292 years. Members of the Arizona Board of Clemency recommended a commutation of sentence from 292 years to "10 years to life." On July 24, 2024, the Governor granted commutation.

While incarcerated, Atdom worked hard not to lose hope. Atdom is now 31 years old and sober. He spent his days in prison reading books on psychology and philosophy, working in the recreation room, practicing cross-fit and yoga, making cheesecake, writing a book, and creating music that he hopes to perform in the free world.

CASE REVIEW & INVESTIGATION



AZJUSTICEPROJECT



2024 CASE LOAD

2

Amicus Briefs

15

Fact Investigations

12

Parole/Clemency Hearings

18

Post-Release Re-Entry Assists

123

Intake Applications and Reviews

10

Cases in Court/Litigation

137

Prop 207 Expungement Petitions

RECLAIM YOUR FUTURE

**EXPUNGING
PAST MARIJUANA
RELATED RECORDS**

*THE RECLAIM YOUR FUTURE (RYF) CAMPAIGN
MARKED ITS THIRD YEAR ON JUNE 30, 2024.*

*LAUNCHED ON JULY 1, 2021, THE CAMPAIGN
WILL CONTINUE THROUGH JUNE 2025, AIMING
TO PROVIDE OUTREACH AND LEGAL SERVICES
FOR THE EXPUNGEMENT OF MARIJUANA
OFFENSES IN ARIZONA.*



The passage of Proposition 207 (“Prop 207”) legalized adult recreational use of marijuana and provided a path for individuals with convictions and arrest records to have those matters undone and sealed.

Prop 207 also required the Department of Health Services to award grant funding to non-profit organizations to engage in expungement-centered work for the community. AJP, along with six other legal and community organizations, work in collaboration under this grant to fulfill the RYF campaign. RYF educates individuals and entities about the marijuana expungement law and expands access to expungement to as many people as possible. The RYF Campaign has been incredibly successful throughout its 3 ½ years of operation.

SINCE ITS INCEPTION, RYF HAS ACCOMPLISHED THE FOLLOWING:

- Held 233 clinics to educate the public about their rights under Prop 207.
- Provided direct representation in 267 cases.
- Launched 2,433 ads across digital and printed platforms and held 303 informational sessions.
- Provided legal assistance leading to the completion of 760 self-representation petitions.

- Tracked 992 successfully granted petitions, which include petitions filed through direct representation and self-represented litigants.
- Successfully litigated the re-sentencing of six individuals which led to three of them being immediately released from prison.
- Worked with The Civil Rights Restoration of Rights Clinic at University of Arizona’s Law School leading to approximately 1,000 expungements being granted.
- Partnered with Ben & Jerry’s to launch an email campaign encouraging prosecutors to file expungement petitions on behalf of impacted people.
- Partnered with Free Our Vote for a mail campaign targeting people with convictions that may have impacted their voting ability.

A special thank you to our Marijuana Expungement Program Manager, Attorney Martin Hutchins, and Program Administrative Coordinator & Paralegal, Lenna Ortega, for their dedicated work and support.

VISIT THE RYF WEBSITE AT [AZEXPUNGE.ORG](https://azexpunge.org) TO ASSIST IN OUR OUTREACH EFFORTS BY FOLLOWING THE CAMPAIGN ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

AJP RE-ENTRY TEAM

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF AJP'S DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK, TANSHA HARRELL, AJP HAS CONTINUED TO ASSIST CLIENTS BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER RELEASE FROM INCARCERATION.

In Arizona, there are very few re-entry services for those released from prison. To address specific re-entry needs, our social work team creates a tailored plan for each client who is preparing to re-enter into the community and provides vital support upon release.

A re-entry plan often includes identifying housing, employment, counseling, and access to basic needs such as healthcare and food assistance. The realities of re-entry are nuanced, and it takes a creative and strategic approach to formulate and implement a successful plan. Thank you to our re-entry team for their dedication to our clients!



LARRY HAMMOND JUSTICE FELLOW THYME MORTON

IN SEPTEMBER, WE WELCOMED THYME MORTON AS THE SECOND LARRY HAMMOND JUSTICE FELLOW, a position funded by The Lodestar Foundation.



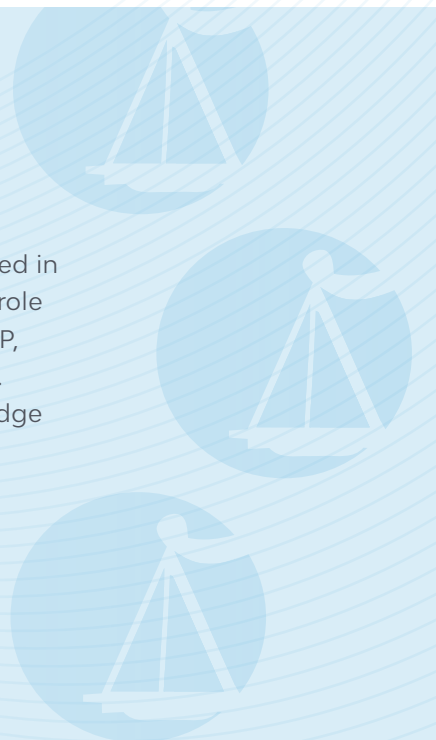
Thyme earned her Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and Spanish from Wellesley College before graduating with her J.D. from Boston College Law School. During her time at Boston College, she gained valuable experience as a student attorney in the Parole and Compassionate Release Clinic, navigating the intricate social, legal, and political issues surrounding parole and compassionate release.

She further honed her legal skills through participation in the Boston College Civil Litigation Housing Justice Clinic, the International Human Rights Practicum, and the Jessup Moot Court Team. Her diverse experiences in legal advocacy have equipped her with a deep understanding of the complexities within the legal system and a commitment to justice.

>> AJP INTERNS

Throughout 2024, AJP worked with 11 student interns who assisted in case screening and investigations, legal research and writing, parole advocacy, social media, and marketing. Since the inception of AJP, student interns have always played a significant role in our work. Having support from student interns and also imparting knowledge about wrongful convictions to the next generation is vital.

OUR 2024 STUDENT INTERNS WERE EXCEPTIONAL, AND WE KNOW THEY WILL GO ON TO HAVE IMPACTFUL CAREERS.



STRATEGIC LITIGATION AND POLICY INITIATIVES TO CREATE A FAIRER SYSTEM



THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, WE CONTINUED TO EDUCATE THE COURTS VIA FRIEND OF THE COURT BRIEFS AND PROPOSE LEGISLATION ON ISSUES WE BELIEVE ARE IMPORTANT TO CREATE A FAIRER SYSTEM FOR ALL.



JUVENILE LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE

SINCE THE U.S. SUPREME COURT'S DECISION IN MILLER V. ALABAMA IN 2012, THE ARIZONA JUSTICE PROJECT HAS ADVOCATED FOR YOUTH OFFENDERS SENTENCED TO LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE THROUGH LITIGATION, ADVOCACY AT PAROLE HEARINGS, AND SUPPORT FOR POLICY CHANGES.

Approximately 30 youth offenders in Arizona are serving a sentence of natural life, which means they are not eligible for any type of early release, including clemency.

AJP continues to act as a clearinghouse for lawyers seeking re-sentencing hearings for these individuals.

AJP's Senior Litigation Counsel, Karen Smith, along with the Federal Public Defender's Office, Arizona Attorneys for Criminal Justice, the Arizona Capital Representation Project, and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers filed an amicus brief in a case before the United States Supreme Court. This brief asked the court to review the Arizona Supreme Court's recent decision, which denied youth offenders the opportunity to prove they were improperly sentenced. In our work at the Project, we have witnessed that young people have a remarkable capacity for change and rehabilitation. By denying juveniles the chance for life beyond prison walls, we undermine principles of humanity.

AJP also continues to advocate for youth offenders through representation at parole hearings. AJP, with assistance from volunteer attorney Donna Berlinski, helped Tiffanie, a youth offender sentenced to life with the possibility of release after 25 years, succeed in securing release on parole.



EYEWITNESS IDENTIFICATION

MISTAKEN EYEWITNESS IDENTIFICATIONS CONTRIBUTED TO APPROXIMATELY 72% OF THE DNA EXONERATIONS THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN THIS COUNTRY.

Decades of research in social and memory sciences inform the criminal justice system on how eyewitness identification evidence is collected, emphasizing procedures used by law enforcement to reduce misidentification and improve accuracy.

Over the past year, Strategic Litigation Counsel, Hope DeLap, worked with the Arizona Attorney General's Office (AZAG) to survey law enforcement agencies on their current eyewitness identification practices.

We found that there is no uniform eyewitness identification procedure in Arizona and each law enforcement agency has slightly different policies and procedures.

The AJP then convened a working group, including members of the Arizona Attorney General's Office, a judicial officer, a retired judge, a policy expert, and an ASU social science professor Dr. Laura Smalarz. The working group ended 2024 with consensus on statewide recommendations for law enforcement to utilize in its collection of eye witness identification evidence in criminal investigations..

The AJP, along with crime survivor Jennifer Thompson, and ASU professor Laura Smalarz conducted a training at the 2024 Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police conference on eyewitness identification collection and best practices.



POLICY REFORM

Our Strategic Litigation Counsel, Hope DeLap, along with our Executive Director, Lindsay Herf, met with Everett Berry, Representative David Marshall Sr., and Jim Norton in Flagstaff to discuss legislation that would address parole fairness within the Arizona criminal justice system.

As part of this Program, AJP has also successfully advocated for parole for several people- three of whom were released this year.



LEGISLATIVE BREAKFASTS

IN JANUARY 2024, AJP HELD LEGISLATIVE MEET-AND-GREETS AT THE ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE, FOR BOTH THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE SENATE.

The purpose of these meetings is to educate lawmakers about the work of AJP and to garner support for proposed legislation. AJP focused on legislation to address inequities in sentencing regarding Arizona state prisoners' parole eligibility.



2024 INNOCENCE NETWORK CONFERENCE

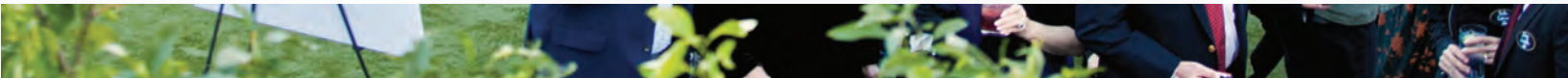
Members from AJP attended this year's Innocence Conference in New Orleans. AJP staff presented on topics including federal habeas litigation, re-entry, clemency, microaggressions, secondary trauma, and language and cultural awareness.

The Conference provides a great opportunity for innocence organizations around the world to come together and share litigation strategies, updates in forensic sciences, resources for re-entry and client support, best practices, and development and policy strategies. Thank you to the Innocence Network for putting on another successful conference!





ONE INJUSTICE IS ONE TOO MANY GALA



ON MARCH 1, 2024, AJP held its annual fundraising Gala at the Scottsdale Resort and Spa. Over 400 guests attended this year, and our presentation included a compelling panel from our former clients along with our Executive Director, Lindsay Herf.

This event is our main fundraiser for the year, as well as a great opportunity for our clients to gather. Thank you to all who made this year's Gala a success! We look forward to seeing you again in 2025!





ARIZONA PUBLIC DEFENDER ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

The Arizona Justice Project attended the annual Public Defender Conference in Arizona and led sessions on post-conviction relief litigation in Arizona, parole and clemency, excessive sentencing and federal habeas litigation.

» BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT

On February 24, 2024, AJP co-sponsored an event with the AZ Village Network and the AZ Faith Network for a community discussion in celebration of Black History Month. Thank you to the panelists, David Sheppard, Jeanine Bashir, Tansha Harrell, and Khalil Rushdan, and to all who attended.



Thank you to the panelists—David Sheppard, Jeanine Bashir, Tansha Harrell, and Khalil Rushdan—and to everyone who attended.



WRONGFUL CONVICTION DAY

On October 2, AJP along with the Post-Conviction Clinic at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law held an event to address the real-life implications of wrongful conviction and life after incarceration.

Former AJP client, Khalil Rushdan and Post-Conviction Clinic client, Freddie Solano talked about their time incarcerated, re-entry, and what they are doing now.



LUNCH AND LEARN AT DORSEY WHITNEY

In July, the law firm Dorsey Whitney hosted AJP for a **"LUNCH-N-LEARN"** where AJP talked about the mission of AJP, our case work and programs, as well as opportunities for volunteer lawyers to get involved.

SPEAKING EVENTS

AJP Staff and Clients have spoken to various groups throughout the year, including Arizona State University School of Criminology, The Arizona Village Network, ASU Preparatory Academy, Gilbert Rotary Club, Brophy High School, South Mountain High School, and Banner Health.



JENNIFER THOMPSON EYEWITNESS IDENTIFICATION

The AJP, along with crime survivor Jennifer Thompson, and ASU professor Laura Smalarz conducted a training at the 2024 Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police conference on eyewitness identification collection and best practices.



ONE FOR JUSTICE TUCSON EVENT

ON OCTOBER 24, 2024, AJP HELD ITS FIRST LARGE EVENT AT DON MARTIN'S CLUB IN DOWNTOWN TUCSON. The event was generously sponsored by Don Martin, Piccarreta Davis, Snell & Wilmer, Sethi Schmidt Akmajian, Mercaldo Law Firm, Hollingsworth Law Firm, and Inter-State Investigative Services.



Over 100 AJP supporters and clients gathered to enjoy food, live music, and a special presentation by AJP. Thank you to everyone who attended!

HOLIDAY CARD MAKING & OPEN HOUSE



SHOE & CLOTHING DRIVE

In August, AJP hosted a shoe and clothing drive to bring in needed items for our clients and their families.

We had an amazing amount of donations, and we were able to put together backpacks for each of our clients. Thank you to all who dropped off items!

— OUR IMPACT IN 2024 —



MOMENTS OF FREEDOM

Reflecting on priceless moments captured on camera as we look back on 2024



HONOR ROLL OF DONORS*

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*Based off our 2024 Fiscal Year: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

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Christina Jameson	Lawrence Liu	Barry Mitchell	

It has been an honor to serve as the student member on Arizona Justice Project's Board of Directors. It has given me unique insight into what an efficient and effective non-profit organization can do when united by the sincere desire to overcome injustice. The team and clients of the Arizona Justice Project have been great examples of a humility and kindness that is only gained through adversity. I feel extremely lucky to have had this time with all of them. ”

– Geri Cunningham, Student Board Member

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS*

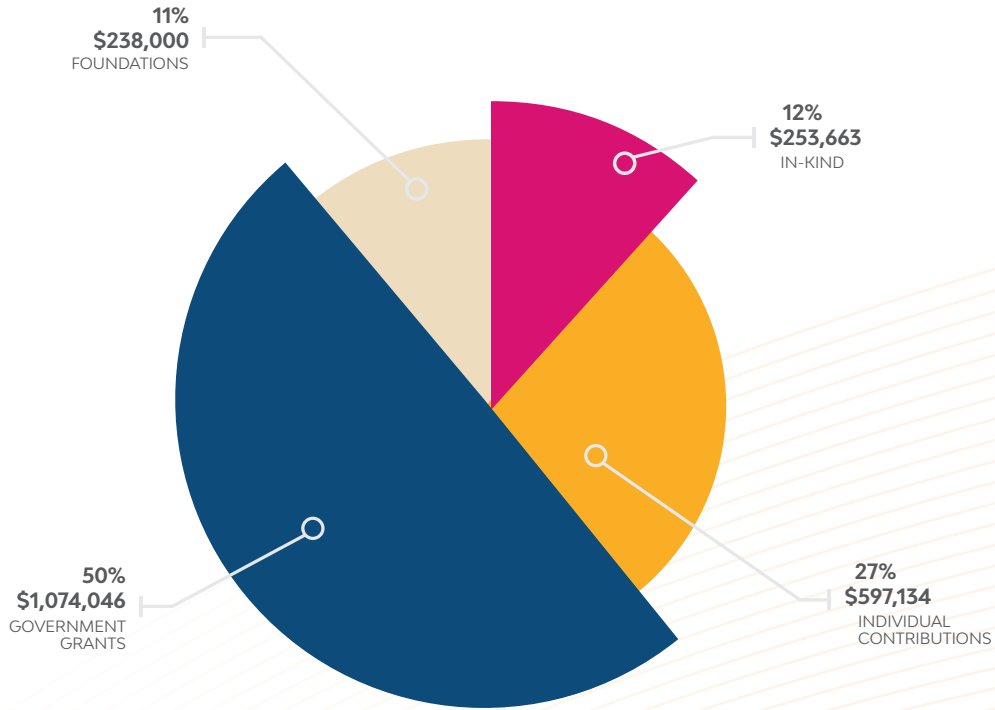
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*Based off our 2024 Fiscal Year: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

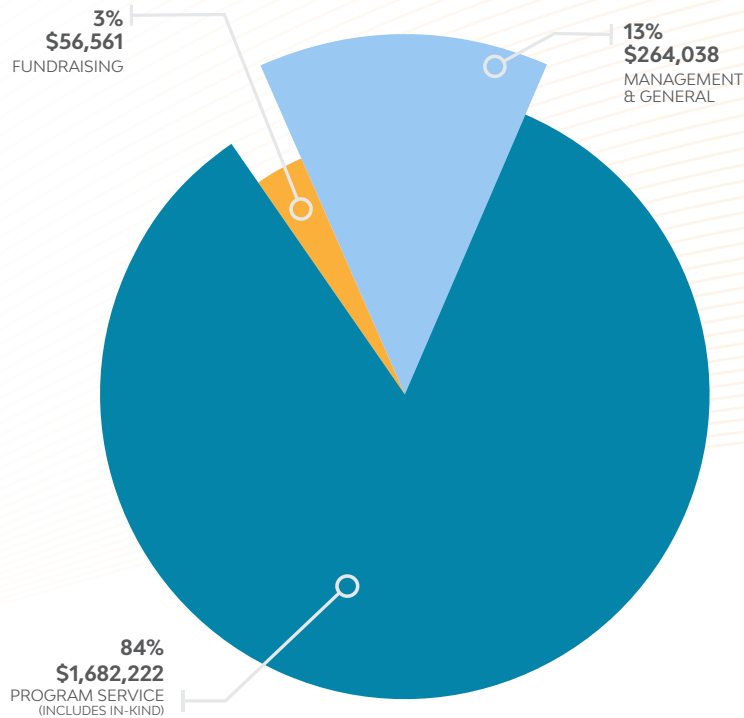
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FISCAL YEAR 2024 REVENUE



FISCAL YEAR 2024 EXPENSES



MISSION PARTNERS



The Arizona Attorneys for Criminal Justice (AACJ) founded the Arizona Justice Project twenty-six years ago and this amazing organization continues its commitment to the AJP through financial support, board participation, and assistance on cases. Thank you, AACJ, for your unwavering support!

THE INNOCENCE NETWORK

As the fifth innocence organization to form in the U.S., the AJP assisted with the founding of the Innocence Network, a group of innocence organizations throughout the country. Today, there are 71 innocence organizations in the Network and our collective work has inspired the founding of innocence organizations all over the world.



CREATIVE PARTNERS

Team FabCom continues to be a valuable partner to the AJP, offering essential support in website management, technical services, strategic marketing, and artistic branding. Most importantly, they help us amplify the impact of our work and share the stories of our clients with the world.



R³ INVESTIGATIONS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the numerous investigators who have supported us over the past year. Their tireless efforts in tracking down witnesses, fact-checking, uncovering new evidence, and assisting with interviews have been invaluable.

A huge thanks to R3 Investigations and Inter-State Investigations.

We would not be able to do this work without them!



THE
TEAM
BEHIND
IT ALL



LINDSAY HERF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lindsay joined AJP in 2008 and her legal work has focused on post-conviction litigation in state and federal court and representation of clients before the Arizona Board of Executive Clemency.

KAREN SMITH

SENIOR LITIGATION COUNSEL

Karen is an experienced post-conviction defense attorney and has represented indigent clients for over a decade.



Karen is directly involved in AJP's post-conviction case litigation in state and federal court.

HOPE DELAP

STRATEGIC LITIGATION COUNSEL

Hope works on combatting wrongful convictions through strategic litigation and developing policy reforms to improve the criminal justice system in Arizona.

TANSHA HARRELL

DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

Tansha focuses on supporting the re-entry process for clients and supervises the AJP Re-Entry internship program.

SHAWNEE ZIEGLER

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Shawnee manages grants, events, internships, financials, incoming case processing, and day-to-day business.

KATIE PUZAUSKAS

LEGAL STRATEGY COORDINATOR

Katie manages communications and social media, as well as providing legal strategy advice for cases going into litigation.

MARTIN HUTCHINS

MARIJUANA EXPUNGEMENT PROGRAM MANAGER

Martin manages the Reclaim Your Future statewide coalition working to expunge marijuana-related records, arrests, and convictions for individuals throughout Arizona.

LENNA ORTEGA

ADMINISTRATIVE

COORDINATOR & PARALEGAL

Lenna is responsible for day-to-day client correspondence and is the administrator for the Reclaim Your Future Coalition, including organizing grant reporting and data collection for all Coalition partners.

THYME MORTON

LARRY HAMMOND JUSTICE FELLOW

Thyme joined AJP in 2024 as the Project's second Larry Hammond Justice Fellow. Thyme assists the Project with investigation and litigation efforts, including legal research, drafting pleadings, reviewing incoming cases, and advocating for clients.



For more than 25 years, we have been Arizona's sole nonprofit organization dedicated to providing direct legal services to the wrongly convicted and those who have experienced manifest injustice. Our efforts have helped bring 51 individuals home.



azjusticeproject.org