When the California Department of Corrections added "Rehabilitation" to its name, it also gained additional taxpayer money to provide that rehabilitation. A major aspect of rehabilitation is education: high school diplomas, GED testing, vocational training, and college programs. Unfortunately, too many students currently held in state prisons are getting left behind and are subsequently released without attaining a GED through no fault of their own.

Literacy is the basis for people doing any and all education, and literacy and education have been the foundation for most progressive and revolutionary movements. Education is not just about what happens in "official" classes or school programs. People within prisons have a long tradition of fighting for self-definition, for culture, for literacy, for education. Prisoner-initiated education programs, peer-to-peer groups and programs—whether about trauma recovery, Black history, fighting for sweat lodges and Native culture—have existed as long as prisons have (see page 5, Peer Education).

At the same time that Gov. Newsom is touting his "California Model" of so-called kinder, gentler prisons and all the great education programs that will be made available at San Quentin, those very programs have been shut down for months behind arbitrary lockdowns for "security." During COVID, education was shut down throughout the CA prisons, but not Prison Industry Authority (PIA) or cafeteria work. If you were trying to improve yourself and prep for a parole hearing (BPH) or for a GED, you were out of luck. Some people got education packets to do solo study inside an 8-person cell, but not everyone can succeed as a solo learner—and in all that noise, stress and activity!

CDCR prioritizing coerced maintenance work and profitable prison labor jobs over access to meaningful school instruction at CCWF means that many people are being paroled without GEDs during haphazard Covid lockdowns. Education at CIW suffers from disorganized and vindictive administration at the highest level, creating a hostile environment for both students and educators (see Continued on p.3
El trabajo de mantenimiento forzado y los empleos penitenciarios sobre el acceso a la educación escolar significativa en CDCr significa que muchas personas están en libertad condicional sin GED durante los bloqueos de Covid. La educación en CIW sufre de desorganización y administración vengativa al más alto nivel, creando un ambiente hostil para ambos estudiantes y educadores (ver página 5). Afecta a todos, los estudiantes están luchando para su educación, con ganancias notables a nivel universitario.

La alfabetización es la base para que las personas realicen cualquier tipo de educación, y la alfabetización y la educación han sido la base de la mayoría de los movimientos progresistas y revolucionarios. La educación no es sólo sobre lo que sucede en las clases o programas escolares “oficiales”. Las personas dentro de las prisiones tienen una larga tradición de lucha por la autodefeminación, por la cultura, por la alfabetización, por la educación. Programas de educación iniciados por prisioneros, grupos y programas liderados por prisioneros para prisioneros, ya sea sobre la recuperación del trauma, La historia Negra, la lucha por las cabañas de sudor y la cultura nativa han existido desde que existen las prisiones (ver la p. 5, Peer Education). Al mismo tiempo que el gobernador Newsom está promocionando su “Modelo de California” de los llamados más amables, más gentiles prisiones y todos los grandes programas de educación que están disponibles en San Quentin, muchos prisioneros se han quebrado-rdo durante meses tras bloqueos arbitrarios por “seguridad”. Durante COVID, la educación fue detenida en todas las prisiones de CA, pero no Prison Industry Authority (PIA) (la industria penitenciaria) ni el trabajo de cafetería. Si un prisionero estuviera tratando de mejorar y prepararse para una libertad condicional (BPIt) o para un GED, no tuvo suerte. Algunas personas recibieron paquetes educativos para hacer estudios solos dentro de una celda de 8 personas, pero no todos pueden tener éxito en aprender solos, y menos en todo ese ruido, estrés y actividad!

CDCr prioriza el trabajo de mantenimiento forzado y los empleos penitenciarios sobre el acceso a la instrucción escolar significativa en CCWF significa que muchas personas están en libertad condicional sin GED durante los bloqueos de Covid. La educación en CIW sufre de desorganización y administración vengativa al más alto nivel, creando un ambiente hostil para ambos estudiantes y educadores (ver página 5). Agotamiento, rotación, equipo anticuado, falta de acceso a la tecnología y obstáculos arbitrarios al acceso son la norma. Aún así, los estudiantes están luchando para su educación, con ganancias notables a nivel universitario.

Haya una gran diferencia de género en la forma en que CDCr administra la educación y la formación profesional. Las prisiones para hombres tienen más oportunidades de capacitación en habilidades que podrían resultar en trabajos bien remunerados, soldadura submarina, automotriz, etc. En las cárceles de mujeres, las opciones son limitadas a cosmetología, jardinería, oficina administrativa. Si educas a una mujer, afectará a toda su familia, no solo para una persona, sino para generaciones. Las cárceles de mujeres no están siendo reconocidas ni priorizadas. Todas las personas encarceladas deberían tener mejores opciones de educación y capacitación!
Welcome KD Dixon,
CCWP’s New Policy and Campaign! Organizer!

“The decision to join the CCWP team just felt right. The chance to strategize around the protection of people currently and formerly incarcerated in women’s prisons is work that’s aligned with my values. The work to dismantle the beast of Mass Incarceration is a lifelong fight, and I’m glad to be on the team with CCWP.”

KD will anchor CCWP’s policy work, help set policy priorities, and contribute to CCWP’s key campaigns toward decarceration, abolition, collective care and community living as other.KD will anchor CCWP’s policy work, help set policy priorities, and contribute to CCWP’s key campaigns toward decarceration, abolition, collective care and community living as other.

In 2014, KD reclaimed her freedom through the Delancey Street Foundation and reconnect ed with the Young Women’s Freedom Center, where young women and trans youth of all genders are transformed into leaders. This is where KD got her start in the non-profit sector, as a volunteer/alumna.

In 2017, while experiencing homelessness herself, KD was offered a Peer Counselor position with Hospitality House, where her commitment to service was forever sealed. KD began focusing on organizing and policy in 2019 through her work with Ronald “Elder” Freeman Policy Fellowship with Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC). The fellowship was designed for formerly incarcerated people to develop skills necessary to pursue careers in public policy and community organizing. KD followed that up with a 2021 Women’s Policy Institute (WPI) fellowship and worked as an Organizer with the ACLU of Northern California. KD is a member of All Of Us Or None (AOUON), a grassroots civil and human rights project that focuses on elevating formerly incarcerated people into leadership roles.

KD is a new motorcycle rider. She loves dogs, reading, and trying new coffees. She lives in the Bay Area, and is also a mentor and a motivational speaker. To contact KD, email her at: katiEdixon612@gmail.com

Credit: The Students’ and Academics’ International Aid Fund

Education Programming at CIW

by Lisa Murawski

I work in education as a clerk at CIW. There are changes initiated by teh education administration that many of us feel are limiting educational opportunities here at CIW and making it a more stressful environment. For instance, staff are writing people up on daily absence sheets even when they have medical lay-ins or ducats. The GED classes have been changed to ABE III. This reclassification denies students who were close to completing their testing the opportunity to complete their GED. Students are now allowed to test only once a month, requiring them to take the full battery of GED tests at one time, which is a lot of information to cover in one day. Two-day testing- like it formerly was- is less overwhelming for students.

There is also a new policy that students who have a regulation or rules violation are denied access to voluntary education and college courses. Correctional staff do not usually deny this right. To some of us it seems this denial is applied unfairly, and is about control. The PIC was totally ignorant to the workings of the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) until I was in college courses. Correctional staff do not usually deny this right. To some of us it seems this denial is applied unfairly, and is about control. The PIC was totally ignorant to the workings of the PIC until I was in

the CDCr gets millions of extra dollars for education programs we do not see that have. E-learning is now greatly restricted to the general population as it is now limited to 20 people at a time. Our ability to earn milestones is impacted by these policies. This is not rehabilitation if the money is not benefitting the incarcerated students it is supposed to benefit. •

California Coalition for Women Prisoners

Credit: Pete Railand for Justseeds

Peer Supported Education

by Laura Latrell Parviance

I was totally ignorant to the workings of the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) until I was in it. In living my amends, I wanted to be open to where I could be of service. Sharing my academic skillset with my peers appears to be one of major contributions I can offer, uplifting others while also helping to starve the beast that is the PIC. The Peer Literacy Mentor Program (PLMP) dropped in my lap amidst the COVID lockdowns and I was open to training in adult education. We aren’t just tutors, we are mentors! Most students in prison are facing complex challenges to pursuing a GED. While adult learners tend to have the advantage of more experience and motivation, they also tend to experience shame and anxiety tied to learning. Students need to feel safe in learning environments, to be supported and understood. The chaos and uncertainty of access to programs can be incredibly disheartening to people that already struggle with insecurities and are just starting to recognize a need to develop self-worth and confidence. The PIC thrives when human potential and worth is obscured. Educating us actually disrupts their business model.

Peer education in prison doesn’t depend on assignment ducats. We can all help contribute to the uplifting of each other every day. Each of us has a unique skill set that we’re meant to share, and we all know that the only people we can truly rely on are each other.

California Coalition for Women Prisoners

Credit: Pete Railand for Justseeds
Unapologetically HERS Leadership

Unapologetically HERS, Healing Experiences Through Research Solutions (UAHERS), is a purpose-driven organization dedicated to improving knowledge-based opportunities and capacity-building efforts within California women’s prisons.

UAHERS Participatory Action Research Leadership Program (PARLP) is a transformative initiative aimed at increasing the impact of peer-led interventions through research and analysis. The program equips incarcerated advocates with critical thinking, analytical and communication skills both inside and outside of prison. Participatory Action Research (PAR) is at the core of UAHERS’ approach, actively involving individuals impacted by social issues in the research process. This collaborative and democratic approach empowers community members to be active participants rather than passive subjects, ensuring their insights and perspectives are valued.

In 2022, UAHERS launched the inaugural PARLP which produced the Pathways to the Freedom Toolkit. This toolkit provides incarcerated individuals with information and resources on resentencing opportunities and avenues for pursuing liberation. It aims to empower individuals with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions and take appropriate action.

During a 34-week period, UAHERS engaged incarcerated individuals from CCWF yards B, C, & D in a process focused on resentencing opportunities. The research team, including UAHERS and community researchers, utilized methods such as observation, meetings, one-on-one conversations, document reviews, surveys and focus groups. The involvement of community researchers who possess firsthand knowledge and understanding of the community ensured the research process was inclusive, generating valuable insights.

Thematic analysis of the focus group discussions and survey data revealed key findings and recommendations. These findings highlight critical areas where improvements and support are needed to address the challenges faced by incarcerated individuals seeking resentencing. The key findings include:

- Minimal or No Knowledge of Resentencing Opportunities
- Insufficient Support and Resources
- Difficulty Navigating Resentencing Language
- Anticipated and Existing Barriers
- Misinformation and Misperceptions

These key findings provide crucial insights into the experiences and needs of those incarcerated in CA women’s prisons seeking resentencing. They inform UAHERS’ ongoing efforts to advocate for improved support systems, access to resources and a fairer criminal justice system.

UAHERS is excited to announce the upcoming cohort of the Participatory Action Research Leadership Program (PARLP) with a focus on Access to Higher Education In Prison which will take place inside the CIW (California Institution for Women). Anyone housed in CIW who is interested in participating can contact UAHERS for an application. The next cohort will provide incarcerated individuals at CIW with the tools, knowledge, and skills to contribute to impactful research and advocate for meaningful change.

Reentry and Education—Project Rebound

As CCWP Membership Coordinator Leesa Nomura walked across the stage to receive her BA from California State University Fullerton (CSUF), she raised her arms above her head, flashed two peace signs and then blew kisses as the crowd cheered her on. Leesa obtained her associate’s degree in Sociology in prison, one of her “proudest moments” inside. But she knew she wasn’t finished.

Leesa left prison on January 26, 2020, and began college the next day. She was part of Project Rebound, a public university program that supports formerly incarcerated people matriculating into college. Including her time in prison, it took Leesa seven years to complete her Bachelor’s of Science in Health and Human Development with a major in human services. “To walk that graduation stage, not only proved to myself that I’m worthy,” Leesa said, “it proved to my children that their mom is keeping her promises to never turn back to drugs, never return to prison, and to always, be someone that they can look up to.”

Incarcerated students face significant barriers to education. It took Leesa four years to get into a college program in prison. Despite her dedication to her studies inside and outside prison, a new set of challenges emerged once she was released and attended college at CSUF. She battled self-doubt and imposter syndrome as she began on-campus classes. Fortunately, she could share these feelings with her peers in Project Rebound who affirmed that she wasn’t alone.

Romarilyn Ralston, CCWP leader and Executive Director of Project Rebound at CSUF, says many incoming college students experience imposter syndrome or need community. With formerly incarcerated students “it’s magnified 20 times because most of our experiences with the criminal legal system have been so traumatic and detrimental to our self-esteem and to our self-worth, that even though we are able to complete the application, fulfill the requirements to be a student, we still don’t feel like we belong,” Romarilyn added that it’s not the academic work that poses challenges, “it’s all the emotional support,” she said. “It’s self-confidence. It’s being able to talk to your professors about who you are and what you can bring to the table. It’s also about what your needs are, what you don’t understand and what you may lack, especially when it comes to technology. We’re so ashamed of where we’ve been and of why we don’t know some things, that we won’t even ask for help.”

Project Rebound supports and facilitates a community of students who have an incarceration experience and who have also been successful in achieving high levels of education. Romarilyn herself is a great role model. Like Leesa, she always loved learning and wanted to go to college—a dream which prison initially derailed. When she was finally able to enroll in college courses at CIW, “it was a dream come true.” Once released, Romarilyn pursued her bachelor’s degree and completed her graduate degree. In taking the Project Rebound job, her mission was simple: she wanted “to create space for people like me, who loved learning, who loved books, who wanted to fulfill their childhood dreams.” Seven years later, “our recidivism rate at CSUF is 0.02%,” Romarilyn said, emphasizing how critical education is to disrupting criminalization.

Both Leesa and Romarilyn shared proposals for improving education inside and outside. “I want to see education in prisons be just as important as any job,” Leesa said. “People should be able to be full-time students.” The education programs inside need to be quality programs, Romarilyn added. College programs can’t just exist in prisons, they need to provide pathways to on-campus programs. Ultimately, Romarilyn said, “we need to see ourselves as scholars in institutions of higher learning, not institutions of punishment.”
I am in solidarity with my sisters in Afghanistan, deprived of their rights to education, as I once lived there. I am attending college in prison, a blessing that CDCR offers freely to us. I am grateful for the passage of Prop 57 in 2017 that allowed people like me, incarcerated on a 28 to life sentence, to receive milestones which give us time off our sentences for completing each class. I was going to Merced College and Palo Verde College and also pursued education through Offenders Mentors Certification Program (OMCP), as an Alcohol & Other Drug (AOD) Counselor. I passed the national Alcohol & Other Drug (AOD) Counselor exam and received my certification after completing 2080 intern hours at CIW.

I am currently enrolled into Feather River College, to attain my A.S. Degree in Sociology. To continue my education while incarcerated means that I can turn this experience into my stepping stool. The mind is a terrible thing to waste so I love to dig deep and learn new things, having the opportunity to attend an education program helps this prison community and the free world. It pushes us to become a better person. It also challenges us and builds up character. The main limit to education programs are the class subjects or majors to choose from and how some colleges make us pay for the books.

I had the honor of celebrating my friends Liyah, Kelly, Leesa, and Cat Spiak, along with over 100 Project Rebound CSU graduates in earning their Bachelor and or Master degree. One of the theme songs for the graduation was Drake’s “Started from the Bottom”. That’s right, we started from the bottom when they told us we were meant to die in prison and deserved nothing more. Now we are out here defining the impossible and re-shaping narratives about the stereotypes of incarcerated & formerly incarcerated people.

Ny Nourn, APSC Co-Director & CCWP member

May 18, 2023 not only ends Spring semester, but upon its conclusion I earned AA’s in both Psychology and in Sociology. When I was first arrested and facing a death sentence, I decided to get the last credits I needed to obtain a diploma. The county jail offered the GED, and with nothing but time in a cell I focused on math, a major challenge for me. I got it! Later on I decided to challenge myself with college and this opportunity has given me a boost in self-esteem and confidence to reach pinnacles I have yet to see. My LWOP sentence does not define my being. Ironic that my last class was in philosophy. I will pursue a degree in law! Yes, it’s true that knowledge is power, as well as endless possibilities. I will. I can!!

Robbin Machuca, CCWF

Education for Liberation

Tracing inside is full of negotiations. The limitations are clear: no technology, including audio, video, and PowerPoint, tools that make teaching more seamless and engaging. You are also responsible for printing all the materials and never know how many students you will have due to factors out of your control, like lock downs and commissary shopping schedules. Many of the classes take place at night, after both students and teachers have already had long days. But the experience is deeply rewarding. I have never encountered more brilliant students. Their commitment, curiosity, and kindness pushes me to be the best teacher I can be and to show up every week bringing in thoughtful, high-quality, and radical education. The learning is two-way as much as I teach, I learn, and it is a privilege to be in community and conversation together. My students challenged and informed my thinking and our class became the highlight of my week. I will never forget our last day of class when we had a graduation ceremony. As I called each student’s name, they walked to the front of the class, shook our hands, and shared reflections about their experiences in the class. In return, the class shared what they appreciated about each student, what they learned from them, and we clapped for each person’s dedication and perseverance. It was a joyful celebration, even as a guard stood outside the classroom rolling his eyes, physically attempting to cut off our cheer. Leaving is always hard and it is devastating that we are not allowed to stay in contact after building and cultivating such deep-rooted relationships.

Teaching Inside CA Prisons, Anon

Continued on p.10
The Fire Inside California Coalition for Women Prisoners

and encourage literacy and all forms of learning. Libraries should be part of every prison to support cultivating a space for all to learn. Well resourced without having to pay. Even with its ugly parts, I’m the last public spaces where someone can exist, still require late fees- and yet they stand as one of currently operate - reliance on police, some libraries to access resources. There are issues in how libraries interact with youth daily. Recidivism is reduced dramatically through education and employment assistance. People who earn a GED are only 55% likely to be rearrested; people who obtain vocational training are 30% likely; people who earn an Associate degree are 13.7% likely; and people who obtain a Bachelor degree or more are 5.6% likely to be rearrested. DJJ is set to close in June and youth will move into county facilities (SB823- see #68), putting responsibility for educating system-imprisoned youth on local institutions.

Non-profit organizations are creating community based educational programs (CBEPs) via the YouthBuild Charter School of California (YCSC) system which provides job training and educational opportunities for “at-risk” youth ages 16-24, including those who have dropped out of high school or have been incarcerated. Phal Sok, a Cambodian refugee who is also formerly incarcerated and a survivor of ICE detention, has attended and worked at CBEP sites. Now an advocate for immigrant families and underserved youth in Los Angeles, Sok heard another community member remark, “You can’t expect something that we can do that most likely doesn’t work.””，

Continued on p. 9

Stop ICE Transfers!

On 3.29.23 CCWP member Marisela Andrade won her bond hearing and was released from ICE detention after 17+ months. She returned home to California the following day to meet the conditions of her state parole AND to continue her fight for asylum and a pardon from Gov. Newsom.

Marisela now has an asylum appeal court date in San Francisco in May 2023. Until then, she is home and deepening her ties with family and community. To continue to support Marisela please contact info@womenprisoners.org, ATTN: Marisela

CCWP member Nataly Mariner, a Salvadoran transgender immigrant, earned his parole in March 2023 after over 15 years in prison. Nataly is a survivor of severe gender-based violence both in El Salvador (he left at age 17 after surviving multiple sexual assaults) and after arriving in the United States. He has an ICE detainer; if CDCr turns him over to ICE instead of releasing him on parole, Nataly faces certain violence and possible death based on extensive documentation of rampant violence targeting LGBTQ+ people in El Salvador. To support Nataly please contact: info@womenprisoners.org, ATTN; Nataly

In early 2017, the California Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) released a report showing 74.2% of formerly incarcerated youth were rearrested, 53.8% were reconvicted of new offenses, and 37.3% had returned to state custody within three years of release from DJJ. “If you look at rates of education post-incarceration, the more educated you are the rate of recidivism just drops down to lower single digits,” said Jenny Rogers, an Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center (ACJJC) librarian who interacts with youth daily. Recidivism is reduced dramatically through education and employment assistance. People who earn a GED are only 55% likely to be rearrested; people who obtain vocational training are 30% likely; people who earn an Associate degree are 13.7% likely; and people who obtain a Bachelor degree or more are 5.6% likely to be rearrested. DJJ is set to close in June and youth will move into county facilities (SB823- see #68), putting responsibility for educating system-imprisoned youth on local institutions.

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The YCSC, which has 15 school sites across California, states that their way of teaching rejects traditional models of “generic, one-size-fits-all curricula and standardized testing,” and continuation school models that “often rely on packets or independent study assignments with little support from teachers.” Instead, students earn a high school diploma through social justice work and community action projects. But U.S News and World Report found that YCSC sites ranked significantly lower compared to state standards in academic proficiency in 2022 – math near 0%, reading at 5%, and science at 2%, and had a graduation rate of 28%, though YCSC claims it’s at 85%. The bottom line, Sok argues, is that after students graduate, nobody checks in with them. He believes students are unprepared, noting multiple instances where graduates still struggled to write an email. “Young people come from a broad range of experiences, particularly folks from heavily impacted communities,” said Sok. If youth lack a stable family life or a consistent home “it’s difficult to learn.”

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The Fire Inside California Coalition for Women Prisoners
¡Santuario para sobrevivientes de abuso sexual de FCI Dublin!

Traducido por Laura Santos

El 5 de junio, John Bellhouse, ex gerente de seguridad penitenciaria de FCI Dublin, fue declarado culpable de cinco cargos de abuso sexual. Es el quinto oficial de FCI Dublin en ser condenado por perpetuar abuso contra múltiples mujeres encarceladas en la prisión federal.

Los miembros de Dublin Prison Solidarity Coalition (Coalición de Solidaridad con las Prisiones de Dublin) una asociación de personas que actualmente y anteriormente encarcelados en FCI Dublin y organizaciones comunitarias, han hablado con más de 120 personas que sufrieron abusos y represalias del personal en la prisión, muchas de las cuales han contribuido a la investigación penal federal. Aunque defensores dan bienvenida a la responsabilidad pública, los sobrevivientes tienen claro que el enjuiciamiento de unos malos actores no abordará el problema sistémico que perpetúan una cultura de abuso en la prisión y no mantendrán a los sobrevivientes seguros o ayudarlos a sanar. La Coalición ha instado a los fiscales federales y al Departamento de Justicia a brindar un mejor apoyo a los sobrevivientes, a través de la liberación de la custodia, protección contra deportación y acceso a atención de salud mental sólida y centrada en los sobrevivientes.

La Coalición ha pedido refugio para los sobrevivientes de abuso que no son ciudadanos. El personal de FCI Dublin dirigió el abuso a mujeres no ciudadanas, y los investigadores federales se han basado en el testimonio de decenas de víctimas y testigos que no son ciudadanos. Sin embargo, las agencias involucradas en los procesamientos, incluida la Oficina del Fiscal de los Estados Unidos, la Oficina Federal de Investigaciones (FBI) y la Oficina del Inspector General, se han negado repetidamente a ayudar a los sobrevivientes a obtener alivio de inmigración para víctimas o protegerlos de otra manera de la deportación. Como resultado, al menos 11 mujeres que fueron agredidas sexualmente por los guardias de la FCI Dublin ya han sido deportadas, y al menos 26 se enfrentan actualmente a la deportación incluidas las mujeres que testificaron contra el ex guardián García en su juicio en diciembre y las que testificaron contra Bellhouse en su juicio.

Cristal, una sobreviviente que no es ciudadana que sufrió y denunció abusos por parte de múltiples ex FCI Dublin guardias, ahora está en detención de inmigrantes en el Northwest Detention facility en Tacoma, WA y esta enfrentando la deportación. Cristal declaró: “Los guardias nos atacaron porque sabían que no éramos ciudadanos, y asumimos que seríamos deportados y se saldrían con la suya. Sobreviví los abusos y amenazas de los guardias. Después de hablar, sobrevivi al acoso y las represalias constantes. Ahora he sobrevivido siete meses en detención de ICE. No sé cuánto más abuso quien que sobreviva. Todo lo que estamos pidiendo es una oportunidad de regresar a nuestras comunidades y reunirnos con nuestros hijos y curarnos de todo lo que nos hicieron pasar”.

La Coalición ha lanzado la campaña #SanctuaryForSurvivors para exigir que ICE pare de detener y deportar a inmigrantes sobrevivientes de abuso sexual del personal penitenciario, y que el DOJ ayude a los sobrevivientes a acceder al alivio de inmigración. Como resultado, al menos 11 mujeres que fueron agredidas sexualmente por el personal de FCI Dublin ya han sido deportadas, y al menos 26 se enfrentan actualmente a la deportación incluidas las mujeres que testificaron contra el ex guardián García en su juicio en diciembre y las que testificaron contra Bellhouse en su juicio.

Sanctuary for Survivors of FCI Dublin Sexual Abuse

On June 5th, John Bellhouse, a former prison safety manager at FCI Dublin was found guilty of five counts of sexual abuse. He is the fifth Dublin correctional officer to be convicted of perpetrating abuse against multiple women incarcerated at the federal prison.

Members of the Dublin Prison Solidarity Coalition, a partnership of people currently and formerly incarcerated at FCI Dublin and community organizations, have spoken with over 120 people who suffered staff abuse and retaliation at the prison, many of whom have contributed to the federal criminal investigation. While many advocates welcome public accountability, survivors are clear that the prosecution of a handful of bad actors will not address the deep, systemic issues that perpetuate a culture of abuse at the prison, and will not keep survivors safe or help them to heal. The Coalition has urged federal prosecutors and the Department of Justice to better support survivors, through release from custody, protection from deportation, and access to robust, survivor-centered mental health care.

The Coalition has called for sanctuary for noncitizen survivors of abuse. FCI Dublin staff targeted noncitizen women for abuse, and federal investigators have relied on the testimony of dozens of noncitizen victims and witnesses. However, the agencies involved in the prosecutions – including the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Office of the Inspector General – have repeatedly refused to help survivors secure victim-based immigration relief or otherwise shield them from deportation. As a result, at least 11 women who were sexually assaulted by FCI Dublin guards have already been deported, and at least 26 are currently facing deportation – including women who testified against former warden Garcia at his trial in December, and those who testified against Bellhouse at his trial.

Cristal, a noncitizen survivor who suffered and reported abuse by multiple former FCI Dublin guards, is now in immigration detention at Northwest Detention facility in Tacoma, WA and is facing deportation. Cristal stated: “The guards targeted us because they knew we weren’t citizens, and assumed we would be deported and they would get away with it. I survived the guards’ abuse and threats. After I spoke up, I survived the constant harassment and retaliation. Now I’ve survived seven months in ICE detention. I don’t know how much more they can expect me to survive. All we are asking for is a chance to return to our communities and reunite with our kids and heal from everything they put us through.”

The Coalition has launched the #SanctuaryForSurvivors campaign to demand that ICE stop detaining and deporting immigrant survivors of prison staff sex abuse, and that DOJ help survivors access immigration relief. They are calling on ICE to #FreeCristal immediately! For more info and to join the work: info@womenprisoners.org ATTN: Dublin Survivors•
The Next Issue of Fire Inside (#71) will focus on CCWP’s planning for the future. What do you think the important focus for CCWP advocacy should be in the next year? Prison Closure? Stopping ICE Transfers? Expanding Resentencing Legislation? What are your ideas? Please share your thoughts.

Welcome Homes

Tammy Guy
Precious Johnson, May 2023
Tracy Kaufman
Tyler Witt

Cat Spink, now at Home Free! on Treasure Island

Calling for Essays

The American Prison Writing Archive (APWA) is an internet-based, non-profit archive of first-hand testimony to the living and working conditions experienced by incarcerated, formerly incarcerated people, and prison volunteers. Anyone who lives or volunteers inside American prisons from all writing skill levels can contribute non-fiction essays and poetry, based on first-hand experience. 5,000 word limit. Visit us at:

PRISONWITNESS.ORG

Anyone interested in providing writing needs to include a signed permissions-questionnaire (PQ) obtained by writing to the address below. Hand-written contributions are welcome. There are no reading fees and The Archive will cover postage for responses. We will read all work submitted. For more information and to request the PQ, please write to:

American Prison Writing Archive
Johns Hopkins University
3410 N. Charles St.
Baltimore, MD 21218

APSC4 Pardon Campaign:

Even when people do win their asylum case they are still potentially vulnerable to deportation. A pardon from the governor is an important tool in derailing deportation. For more info on the APSC4: www.asianprisonersupport.com

The work to secure justice and safety for so many other people coming out of CA jails and prisons—continues. The passage of the HOME Act (AB 1306, Carrillo) would prevent the continued detention and trauma to our immigrant and refugee communities and families. To get involved in work to pass the HOME Act, please contact: http://www.iceoutofca.org

Stop ICE Transfers!

Tammy Guy

Tammy Guy
Precious Johnson, May 2023
Tracy Kaufman
Tyler Witt

Yes, I want to support folks in women’s prisons!

☐ Please contact me to volunteer
☐ Enclosed is my $_____ contribution to help send a newsletter subscription to a person in women’s prison

Phone/email: ________________________________

Please make checks payable to: CCWP/LSPC, 4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608

Credit: Asian Prisoner Support Committee
APSC Staff members (L to R): Maria Legarda, Borey “Peejay” Al, Nghiep “Ke” Lam, & Chanthon Bun

The Next Issue of Fire Inside (#71) will focus on CCWP’s planning for the future. What do you think the important focus for CCWP advocacy should be in the next year? Prison Closure? Stopping ICE Transfers? Expanding Resentencing Legislation? What are your ideas? Please share your thoughts.

We will not use your name unless you check the box below:

☐ I want my name to appear in the newsletter

Name: ____________________________

Mail to: __________________________________________________________

☐ I would like to get the next issue of The Fire Inside

Yes, I want to support folks in women’s prisons!

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ISSUE #70, JULY 2023
EDUCATION
Network on Women in Prison
California Coalition for
Women Prisoners
4400 Market St.
Oakland, CA 94608

COME WORK WITH US!
CCWP SF Bay Area       CCWP Los Angeles
4400 Market St.         PO Box 291585
Oakland, CA 94608      LA, CA 90029
(415) 255-7036 x4
www.womenprisoners.org
info@womenprisoners.org

CCWP MISSION
CCWP is a grassroots abolitionist organization, with members inside and outside prison, that challenges the institutional violence imposed on women, transgender people and communities of color by the prison industrial complex (PIC). We see the struggle for racial and gender justice as central to dismantling the PIC, and we prioritize the leadership of the people, families and communities most impacted in building this movement.

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