



Dignity & Power **NOW**

**MUTUAL AID
IMPACT REPORT**

2023



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INTRODUCTION

MUTUAL AID FOR FORMERLY INCARCERATED PEOPLE & FAMILIES

In a world without police or prisons, mutual aid will be at the center of communities. Dignity and Power Now's (DPN) Mutual Aid program is a radical departure from conventional assistance programs – it is one that values solidarity over charity. Rooted in the principles of prison abolition, DPN's Mutual Aid embraces our community's humanity without reservation.

Mutual Aid provides funding of \$500-\$1,000 to system-impacted people with no strings attached. In addition to financial assistance, we provide essential supplies such as hygiene products, clothing, school supplies, and baby items. True empowerment comes from trusting our community's ability to make their best choices. Offering direct support allows individuals to rebuild their lives with freedom, breaking free from the cycle of dependence and control.

We are deeply appreciative of the opportunity to offer Mutual Aid support to those profoundly impacted by the oppressive nature of carceral systems. We learn about the challenges system-impacted people face when reintegrating into society. We hope to ease basic need gaps, which our system-impacted community members often face due to limited assistance and economic exclusion.

In 2023 alone, we provided Mutual Aid support to 325 individuals in Los Angeles County. The urgency and need for resources, financial support, and a sense of community remains incredibly high. The decision to focus on and support residents of LA County stems from the distressing reality that LA County operates the largest jail system in the world.¹ LA County is emblematic of the broader struggle against the Prison Industrial Complex. If we can create community care networks here, we can do so anywhere.

This Impact Report examines mass incarceration in LA County and DPN's role in leading the fight toward abolition. It explores the county's political landscape, demographic data, personal interviews, and community engagement. We hope this report demonstrates how DPN's Mutual Aid is creating a community that centers on the well-being of Black and Brown people. We invite readers to join us in embracing this abolitionist future.



MASS INCARCERATION IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

CURRENTLY, OVER 12,000 PEOPLE ARE INCARCERATED IN LA COUNTY JAILS.²

Many people are in jail simply because they can't afford bail. Pretrial detention can have devastating economic impacts on Black and Brown families, such as houselessness, job loss, and food insecurity.

AT LEAST 45 PEOPLE HAVE DIED IN LA COUNTY JAILS THIS YEAR.

These in-custody deaths disproportionately represent Black and Brown lives, leading it to one of the deadliest years on record.³ Men's Central Jail (MCJ) is known for being one of the most inhumane facilities. Out of the 45 deaths reported in LA County jails, 16 were in MCJ.

THERE HAVE BEEN AT LEAST 21 LIVES LOST IN LA COUNTY STATE PRISON.⁴

The actual number may be even higher, as some in-custody deaths have not been counted in official statistics. California State Prison, Los Angeles County (LAC), is the only state prison in the county.



CLOSING MCJ IS A LIFE OR DEATH MATTER.

The Board of Supervisors risks community members' lives every day MCJ remains open. With every dollar that goes toward prisons and policing, the Board prioritizes human caging over care.

By concentrating our efforts on LA County, we can make a greater impact in the local community. We aim to channel our resources effectively and highlight the importance of local grassroots organizing in addressing systemic injustices.

It has been two years since the publication of the **Men's Central Jail Closure Report**. The report provides a clear roadmap for shutting down MCJ within 18-24 months, written by representatives of county departments, community workgroups, and health service workers.⁵ The Board of Supervisors agreed to close the jail with no replacement in 2019 but failed to keep their promise.

DPN FOR ABOLITION



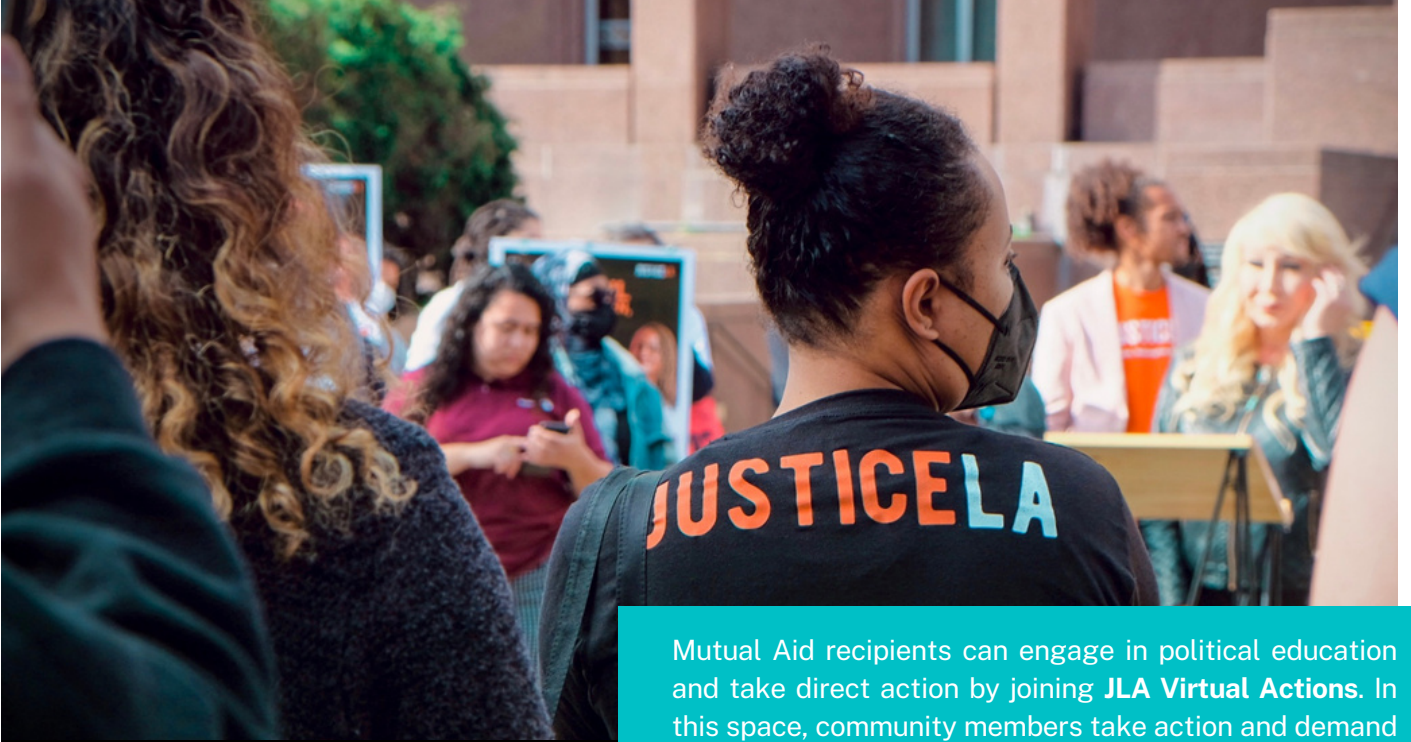
Since 2012, DPN has been fighting for an abolitionist future, and with formerly incarcerated community members leading the way, we have made huge wins. The Mutual Aid program serves as the first point of contact for community members to engage with the abolition movement. We have made 136 connections to DPN programs, which has allowed Mutual Aid recipients to join the fight for abolition.

Grounded in transformative and healing justice principles, DPN centers healing on the path toward liberation. Several DPN programs address the trauma of incarceration, systemic racism, and violence, such as the **Health and Wellness Program** and the **Community Care Healing Project (CCHP)**. Programs like **Legal Support** also provide direct assistance to those facing the lasting effects of incarceration.

While liberation begins with meeting basic needs, community power is also essential. DPN programs like **Family Meetings, Forever Rooted, and Support Group** serve as a space for indirectly and directly impacted community members to heal, learn about abolition, and cultivate leadership skills in the community. **Project Stop the Lines** centers specifically system-impacted youth leadership through community-based mentorship.

Current **DPN campaigns** include increasing transparency and accountability of the LA County jail and prison system through the **Civilian Oversight Commission** and the **Sybil Brand Commission**. DPN's Co-Executive Director Mark-Anthony Clayton-Johnson serves as a Sybil Brand commissioner, whose role involves conducting monthly inspections of LA County jails.





DPN also anchors the **JusticeLA Coalition** (JLA), a group of grassroots organizations, advocates, and impacted families and communities fighting for abolition within LA County. JLA works to stop LA's jail expansion and redirect funds away from incarceration to community resources and mental health programs. The coalition aims to **reclaim, reimagine, and reinvest** in community-based care systems.

Mutual Aid recipients can engage in political education and take direct action by joining **JLA Virtual Actions**. In this space, community members take action and demand the Board of Supervisors (BOS) invest in care rather than increase police and prison budgets.

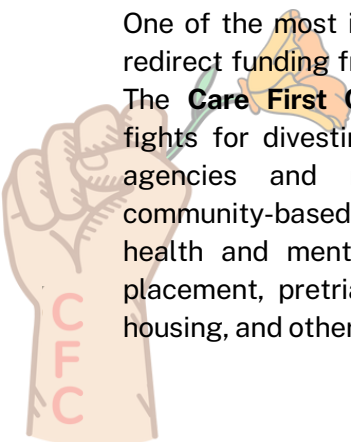
Another campaign effort JLA prioritizes is the **Campaign to Close MCJ**. This year, the JLA team met outside the BOS on Tuesdays to apply pressure and hold them accountable for their promise to shut down MCJ. The Campaign to Close MCJ remains in full force until the doors are closed forever. Community members can also build power through the virtual **Close MCJ Community Meetings**.



One of the most important pieces of abolition is to redirect funding from policing into community care. The **Care First California** coalition, led by DPN, fights for divesting dollars from law enforcement agencies and reinvesting them in effective community-based services, addressing issues like health and mental health care, job training and placement, pretrial diversion and reentry services, housing, and other basic need services.



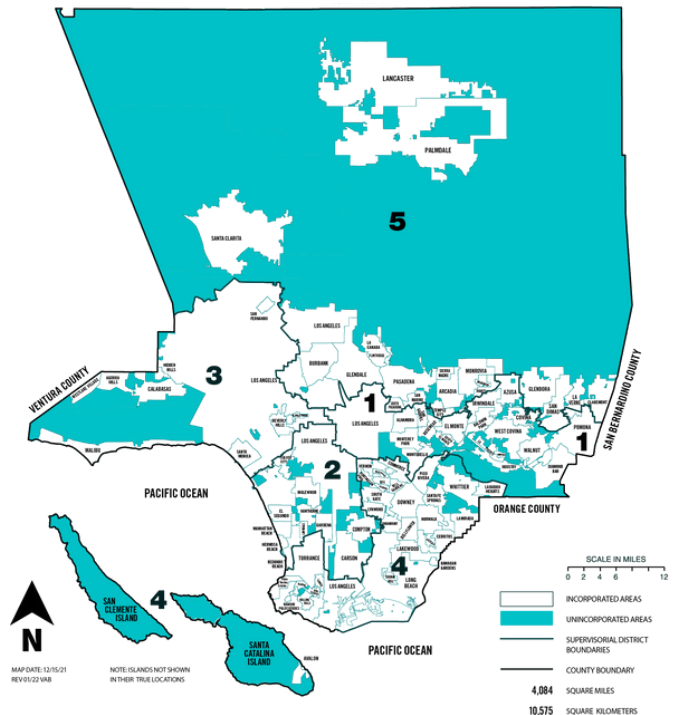
Coalition members, volunteers, and the community have put in countless hours to advocate for a system that prioritizes care over incarceration. For more information on the coalition's campaign efforts, check out the following reports: the [Care First, Jails Last Alternative to Incarceration Report](#), the [Men's Central Jail Closure Report](#), and the [Year One Spending Plan for Measure J](#).



MAPPING MUTUAL AID IMPACT

LA County has about 10 million residents but just 5 county supervisors. Each board member is responsible for approximately 2 million residents of LA County, arguably making them some of the most powerful politicians in local government. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) create laws and manage the county's budget. While the county's budget could better address issues such as housing, the BOS prioritizes increasing police and prison budgets time and time again.

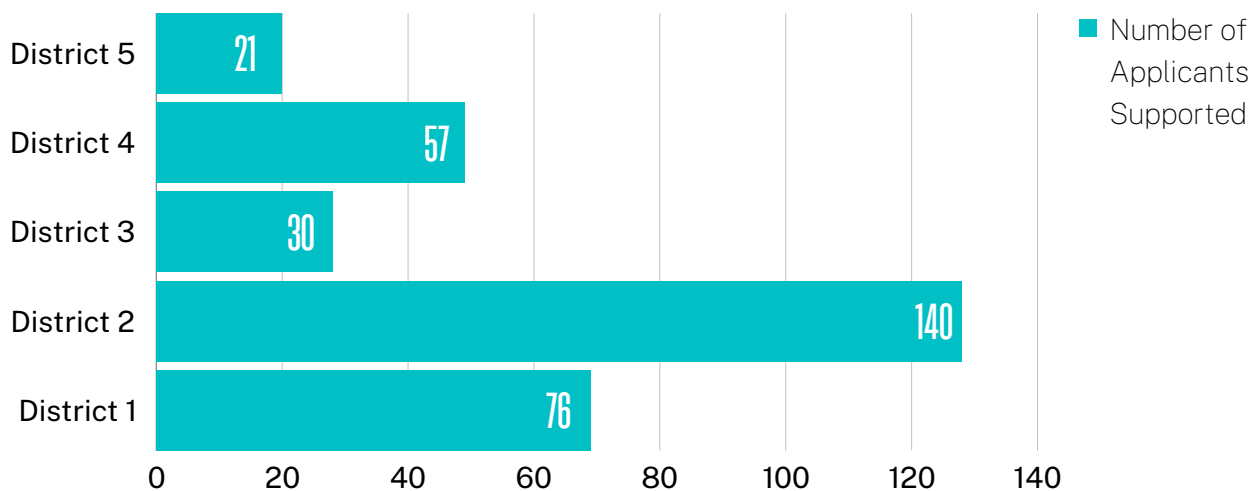
This is why DPN focuses on supporting system-impacted communities to reduce recidivism. As the movement for abolition grows, the demand for community funding and humane safety systems grows with it.



Source: County of Los Angeles

ANALYZING LA COUNTY DISTRICTS OF RECIPIENTS, 2023.

The chart below provides insight into the distribution of Mutual Aid recipients across LA County. This approach enhances the ability to assess where aid is reaching, tailor resources efficiently, and foster community empowerment.



Based on the information recipients reported, most recipients reside in District 2. District 2, represented by Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, includes 12 cities, 18 unincorporated areas, and 13 neighborhoods. Some areas are Carson, Compton, El Segundo, Gardena, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, and portions of Los Angeles.

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

The following data highlights some of the accomplishments of Mutual Aid in addressing the specific needs of the community, underscoring the importance of continued efforts. The information below is self-reported by recipients.

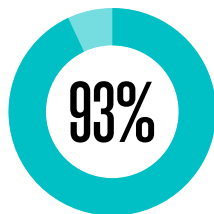
The Mutual Aid program relies on word-of-mouth between vast networks of system-impacted families and individuals. These strong networks allow the program to reach those who need it and foster solidarity. Building power and trust within system-impacted communities serves as the foundation for sustained advocacy and building a more equitable future.



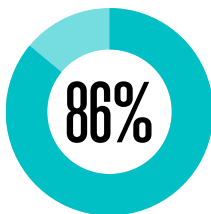
65%

of recipients learned about Mutual Aid through a friend

The program defines **Directly Impacted** as an individual who was previously been incarcerated and **Indirectly Impacted** as a person who is supporting an incarcerated loved one. The program focuses support and outreach to Black and Brown communities because they are disproportionately represented in the carceral system.



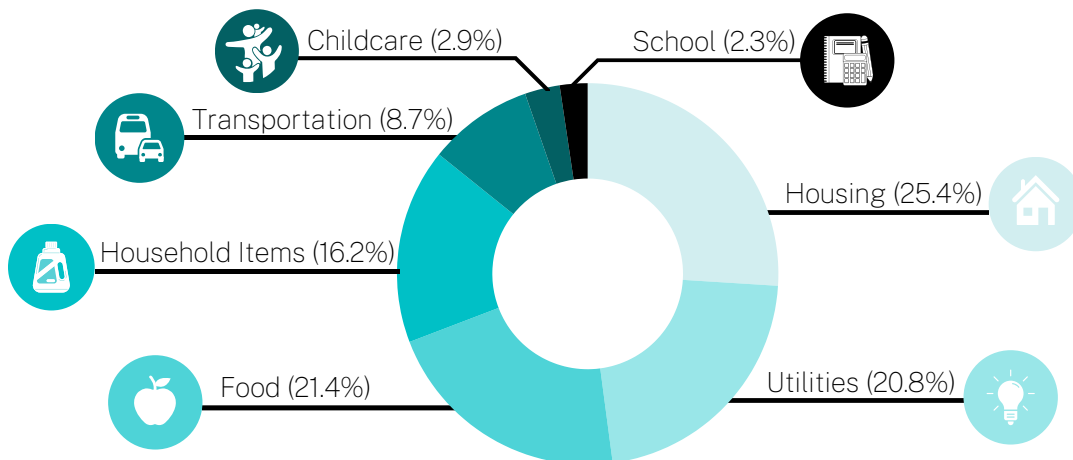
93% of recipients are directly impacted



86% of recipients identify as Black or Brown

UTILIZATION OF FUNDING BY RECIPIENTS

The chart below shows the various categories in which recipients used Mutual Aid funding. This data highlights the type of basic needs the community is struggling to meet, and where the county could allocate additional resources.



325
System-Impacted People Supported in 2023

2,178
Individuals Supported since 2020

5,820
Household Members Supported since 2020

*Household members may include anyone in the household who shares living expenses with the recipient.

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

We held conversations with members of the Mutual Aid community who shed light on their experiences with the program, the challenges they faced with incarceration, and their resilience as they journey through reentry and healing. Read their stories below.



MELANIE ROBLEDO
Community Resource Coordinator

Q: How has the Mutual Aid program affected you or your family?

A: The very first time that I got Mutual Aid, it allowed me to gain the self-confidence where I felt like I belonged. I felt like I could look like other people. It really gave me some sort of self-confidence. I was able to eat my first meal at a restaurant. To some people that may seem trivial but it really made a difference to me. That meal I actually shared with my children. So being able to contribute or participate in the things that I neglected to do for a long time, really did a big move for me internally where I felt like I had a place somewhere.

“MUTUAL AID CAN BE SEEN AS AN OLIVE BRANCH TO THOSE WHO ARE IN DISBELIEF THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARE.”

Q: What would you like to tell the funders who made this program possible?

A: I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude for the financial support that has led to linkages within the reentry community. The mutual aid can be seen as an olive branch to those who are in disbelief that there are people who care. This opportunity is a bridge between incarceration and the community.

Q: Could you clarify what you meant when you said “those who are in disbelief”?

A: There is real disbelief that there are people out there who genuinely want to see you succeed and my experience with Dignity and Power Now has been immediate. You immediately saw that they wanted to make those connections for people who have been recently incarcerated in the form of mutual aid. Then you later find out about all these incredible other services that you guys offer.

Q: What are some challenges for individuals returning home and seeking support?

A: A lot of individuals have felt that someone or something has failed them. Maybe even themselves. Maybe not even blaming or pointing fingers at someone else but there is this shame and guilt that’s attached to the things that have happened to them. Even if you learn to forgive yourself, there’s always someone who wants to bring it back up. You do fall into this level of believing that there’s no trust out there until you get wrapped around by organizations. That’s when you really begin to open your eyes.

Q: What do you think life would be like if more funding went towards community-based care?

A: I think it would have a tremendous impact on the recidivism count. I really feel that people wouldn’t be going back as often if they had the care that they needed out here. I don’t remember where I heard this from, “Consequence is easy. You punish people, that’s easy, but rehabilitation takes commitment.” That’s what the communities are doing. It’s a commitment to individuals to rehabilitate them, provide them support, or encourage them. Some people don’t need fixing, they just need encouragement.



JEREMEY SUGGS

Career Coach

Q: How has the Mutual Aid program affected you or your family?

A: It's not often that you find organizations that are willing to actually take initiative to help people out on the level that I received from mutual aid. I was shocked at the actual level of support. You guys sent out the hygiene products, the clothing, the money. That money actually helped me to lift a burden off of my family for a critical period of time during which I was trying to secure employment. More than that, I drew the connection between what you guys were doing and the journey mutual aid is on to abolishing prisons. That's a huge movement. It was inspiring and it was very helpful.

Q: What are some of your thoughts on the Mutual Aid program?

A: Mutual Aid has a worthy mission in the abolition of so-called correctional facilities. There are much more effective ways to deal with crime and rehabilitation of offenders than prison. Mutual Aid has been brave and bold enough to begin practical steps toward this end. Hopefully, one day, we will share this ideal as a society.

Q: How does being separated from society impact an individual's ability to reintegrate into it later on?

A: I was in the Federal Bureau of Prisons for seven and a half years [...] While I'll tell you that there is a vast majority of inmates amongst me that did not want to change, it wasn't for the reason that they were consciously choosing not to change. It was for the reason that they didn't even know that legitimate genuine change was available to them. They are basically isolated from the majority of society. They become socially inept or they don't have the skills to communicate effectively and interact with other people. As an extension, they can't develop the workplace skills and software understanding to be able to thrive in a business or an employment setting. In order for a person to know exactly what they want, they have to know what's available to them. Otherwise, they are just settling for what they've been exposed to. That is the loophole that keeps them in the cycle of going back to prison.

“THERE ARE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE WAYS TO DEAL WITH CRIME AND REHABILITATION OF OFFENDERS THAN PRISON. MUTUAL AID HAS BEEN BRAVE AND BOLD ENOUGH TO BEGIN PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARD THIS END.”

Q: How do you imagine your life would have turned out if you were able to receive community-based care rather than incarceration?

A: I would have had more of an opportunity to thrive than I did while in prison...For me, yes, I was headed down a path that very likely could have led to death. However, I do not believe for a split second that I had to go to prison. The same change I underwent in prison, that could've been done in society. What if I actually met someone with whom I related and who was in the position to give me that access to a rehabilitated program that was focused on me actually getting better? I felt like I could have thrived. More so than I did in prison. Even though I gave it a hundred fifty percent, I could be doing two hundred percent if I would've had the opportunity to take advantage of the community.



PATRICK SAMPSON
Reentry Navigator, Writer

“I AM VERY THANKFUL FOR THE LIFE THAT THIS PROGRAM HAS SHOWN TO ME DURING A TIME WHEN I FELT MY NEW FREEDOM WAS BECOMING TOO MUCH.”

Q: How has the Mutual Aid program affected you or your family?

A: This program helped me support myself and take some pressure off of my family. It also provided me with a weekly platform to share and express myself. I was able to meet other people and build relationships with other returning citizens that shared the same passion to give back and make a difference. I am very thankful for the life that this program has shown to me during a time when I felt my new freedom was becoming too much.

Q: What did you mean when you said your "freedom was becoming too much"?

A: At the time I was dealing with work and wanting to do other things and not being able to do them because of scheduling. I was supposed to be in school getting my BA degree and this job kind of got in the way of that. That was a little bit overwhelming. I felt like I was being pulled a lot in different directions. With parole you're kind of free but you're kind of not. You have a lot of restrictions. I had an idea of what my life would be like when I got out and parole had an idea of what it should be like. That was a conflict right there.

Q: You said you were able to build relationships with other returning citizens who share the same passion as you. What are those passions?

A: I've written a couple of pamphlets like workbooks that deal with conflict resolution. My passion is to finish editing them and have them put on some platforms. I've been a writer for a long time. Anything that can help somebody slow down and see things in real time, I'm all for that. I write about different tools that I believe will be helpful to people who are facing difficult times. Things that I didn't use when I was younger, which led to my incarceration, but things that I use today that keep me free.

Q: Would you like the Mutual Aid program to continue?

A: It is a proven fact, statistically, that when incarcerated individuals who have done an extensive amount of time return, their success is normally predicated on the support they have when they get out. Not just financial support, I mean you gotta have that to live but someone to talk to. Someone to give you direction, someone to hear you out and maybe not even give an opinion. All those things are very valuable to people coming out. This program provides that. I certainly believe it would make a big difference for the program to stay because it is a need. You got to have programs like that for people to restore their lives. I believe that it works. It's working and you can see it by talking to the people that benefit from it.

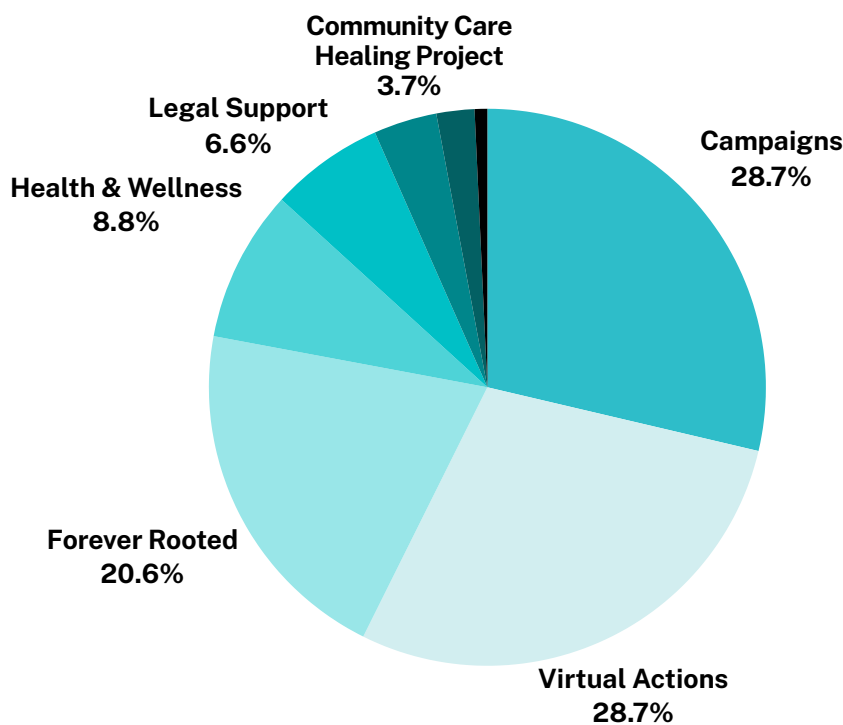


CONNECTING RECIPIENTS TO DPN PROGRAMS

The Mutual Aid team connects with each person individually to share about the resources, programs, and community events DPN offers. Conversations between the team and the community are fluid and personal, from thoughts on abolition and the state of mass incarceration to exchanging life stories and favorite hobbies.

These one-on-one conversations often open the door for impacted community members to join the abolition movement, find a family within DPN and build their leadership. The data below shows the number of Mutual Aid recipients that continue on with abolition work within DPN.

TYPES OF REFERRALS MADE TO DPN PROGRAMS



136

Total Referrals Made in 2023

312

Total Referrals Made Since 2022

533

People Supported at Community Events

136 referrals (and counting!) have been made to other DPN programs and resources in 2023. Many Mutual Aid recipients have become active participants in DPN programs, speak at campaign actions, give public comments, and have become a powerful force in the abolition movement.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHTS

These community leader spotlights shine a light on community members who came to the Mutual Aid program due to financial need but found a home within DPN. These empowered individuals are active in DPN's programs and lead conversations about abolition. We are grateful to be working alongside these folks. There's no telling where their leadership may take them!

DELIA GODINA

During a Zoom meeting, a group of community members were asked "Who is ready to step up in this work? Who is ready to take the next step?" and Delia Godina spoke up loud and clear "I'm ready!" Delia first found out about the Mutual Aid program through a friend who was incarcerated with her.

"I was literally in a bind," Delia said. "My car payment was up, I had just lost my job. I had two babies at the time. So calling [the Mutual Aid program] and letting them know what happened, you guys moved real quick on it. You guys supplied me with diapers and stuff I needed and it was such a blessing for me."

Going on to be an active participant in the Forever Rooted program and onto the Support Group, Delia found a group of friends that supports her "mentally, physically, and spiritually." She says the Support Group feels like a security blanket and a "comfort zone" to her now.

"It's always nice to hear somebody else's success. Because it's like, they're doing it, I can do it too," Delia said. "It gives you that motivation."

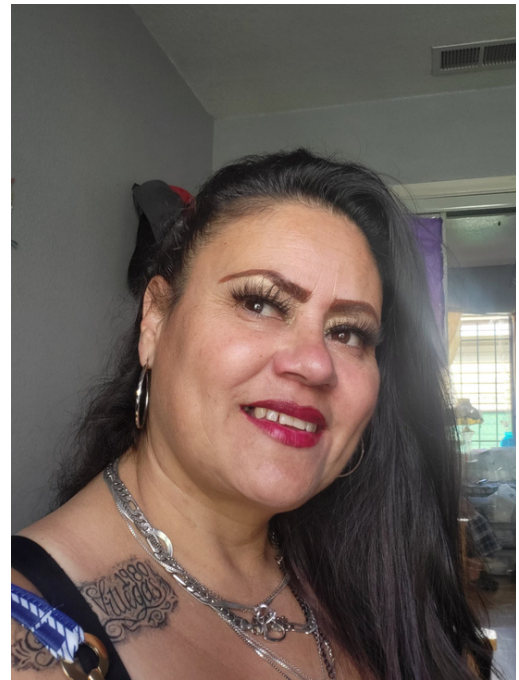
Delia brings that motivation to DPN events too, especially the campaign rallies outside jails that serve as a way for us to support those who are currently incarcerated.

"We are letting them know that regardless if you're inside, you're not lost. You are loved, you are cared for and we're fighting for you," Delia said.

Alongside supporting those currently incarcerated, it is DPN's mission to fight for ample resources for community members returning home. It is not uncommon to hear stories of individuals being released after decades with no support or resources at all. At most, individuals receive \$200 and nowhere else to turn. We've heard many stories of adults being released with the same clothes they entered with as adolescents or being released in the middle of winter with no shoes, pants, or underwear.

One recently released community member even reached out to their parole agent for support since he had been sleeping in a public library and was struggling to get back on his feet. He was told by the agent that if things were "so bad" to voluntarily check himself back into prison. Situations like these are part of the reason Delia is so passionate about DPN and building a world that values community care over incarceration.

"How do you expect one to survive out here if you're not helping and giving us avenues to look forward to coming out and succeeding in life," Delia said. "And to me, [DPN] gave me that – the will not to quit."



Communities grow not only through involving more people but also by recognizing that so many of us have been through similar experiences. Delia is especially passionate about reaching others who had a similar upbringing – those who grew up in households where you were not supposed to use your voice.

"Sometimes we still don't have the courage enough to speak on how we were raised, like you don't ask for help. You're supposed to be able to do stuff on your own," Delia said. "But no, I'm supposed to use my voice. I want my voice heard. Right now I have that choice to make my voice heard. And I want it."

The DPN community only exists because of fierce community voices like Delia's. Building power and community requires vulnerability and trust in each other. At DPN it is much more about the quality of connection. As Delia said she's not concerned with how many folks find support within her words, but if even one person can connect with her story, "that's what counts."

TANIA BROWN

At a time when COVID-19 led to unemployment and rent payments were looming, Tania Brown heard about Dignity and Power Now through a friend she was incarcerated with. Trying to start a family is no easy task, especially during the pandemic so when she heard about the Mutual Aid program, Tania said she didn't believe it.

"I didn't think it was real, because I didn't know they had programs for formerly incarcerated folks," Tania said. "[...] There's a lot of resources for people that haven't been incarcerated, or, you know, some of the criteria is you can't be in jail. So to have a criteria just for us and to make sure that we're okay, it meant a lot."

Unfortunately, support programs that center system-impacted folks are few and far between. Many of our community members think it is a scam or assume it has many strings attached or hoops to jump through in order to receive support. With DPN's Mutual Aid support, Tania said she was able to pay half her rent and buy her baby diapers and other essentials. With some room to breathe from day-to-day expenses, Tania had a fire lit within her after hearing about all the different programs available.

She started by joining Forever Rooted, a leadership program for individuals who've been incarcerated and are looking for a place to come together, heal, and grow.



Forever Rooted runs for 7 weeks, meeting weekly to check in and go through a fluid curriculum that is tailored to the needs of each small group. They cover a range of subjects from abolition and grassroots organizing to general wellness check-ins and sharing resources.

"I love the check-ins because you get to see people that you were incarcerated with or that have the same type of similar background, and you're able to exchange resources," Tania said. "You just never know what someone's going through and how much they need support. You can see somebody else's success and it can encourage you to want to do more because you might be at your breaking point."

Like all graduates of the Forever Rooted cohort, Tania was invited to be a part of the Forever Rooted Alumni Support Group. Members of the Support Group commit parts of their lives to this community and this liberation work. They are the ones discussing current events within the abolition movement and choosing to stay and engage with one another on a bi-weekly basis. It is also, as all of our DPN programs are, a support system.

"I love the fact that at one point when I was down on my knees, begging for help, nobody judged me. They just came in, they reached out to me, and they supported me. Anthony took me out for lunch. I had Wilma calling me and James calling me," Tania said. "[...] The support was everything for me."

Tania blossomed within the Forever Rooted space and is one of DPN's most passionate members. At events, you can spot Tania engaging folks in conversations, lifting folks up, and sharing her excitement and passion with the whole room.



She is always spreading the word about DPN's programs and offering a helping hand. It is no surprise that Tania is pursuing a career as a Peer Support Specialist. She said she found the confidence from the Forever Rooted space to pursue this new career path.

"If I never came across [Forever Rooted] classes, I would still doubt myself. Like, no, I can't do school. I cannot take that test. I'm not gonna do it. Because that's what I do, I tell myself, I can't take a test. I can't do it because I have ADHD," Tania said. "But I just took it. I just did it. And now I love it."

There's no doubt Tania will excel in her new career path with her wisdom and the support of the whole DPN community behind her.

"Thank you [DPN] for opening up a space just for us," Tania said. "I really want to thank you for the support I had on my journey since I've been out and since I've been involved with DPN. I love the fact that we have a safe space for all of us."

DPN would not exist without community members like Tania who show up to events bringing her leadership and passion to organize right alongside us.



RAYNETTA TOWNSEND



“Everybody I told did, and they thanked me later. And now, they’re a part of Dignity and Power themselves. They show up to events and it makes me feel good as a person,” Raynetta said.

Raynetta has been deeply a part of the DPN community since she went through the Mutual Aid program. She’s participated in Family Meetings, the Forever Rooted cohort, and now the Support Group. She regularly attends campaign events and meetings to demand the closure of Men’s Central Jail.

After attending one of DPN’s rallies to Close Men’s Central Jail and hearing many mothers speak about their children being murdered in prison, she remembered how difficult it was for the women in her own family to process the murder of a young cousin who was incarcerated in Twin Towers. She remembered how it truly was “an eye-opener” for the whole family.

“My auntie and my mother had a belief that when their kids were in jail, they could sleep and thought they’re going to be at peace because they knew that their kids was somewhere safe,” Raynetta said, “until my cousin was murdered.”

You can find Raynetta Townsend at Dignity and Power Now events always smiling and bringing good energy with her beautiful babies in her arms. But before she knew about DPN, she heard about the Mutual Aid program, like so many, in a time of need.

“I was at a point where I became single, going through a divorce. And I was left alone with no help. [...] I was late on my rent and about to get evicted,” Raynetta said. “So the check that I received from [the Mutual Aid program] was a lifesaver. I was also pregnant, had a baby coming and the diapers and all the essentials and everything, really helped me. It helped me a lot. It gave me hope to carry on and gave me hope to just keep going and not give up because there’s people out there that will help.”

No time was wasted, as soon as Raynetta was supported she was looking to support others by connecting other system-impacted individuals to the Mutual Aid program. She encouraged others to read about DPN’s abolitionist mission and all the resources available.

This activated Raynetta, as she and her family realized jails would never be a safe place. She became even more active in the Support Group. She was even invited to represent DPN at a conference in Sacramento. What makes the DPN community so powerful is that every community member has a story about what brought them to this movement and ignited their passion to fight for abolition. For Raynetta, the killing of her young cousin inside the Twin Towers was a catalyst.

“It’s another reason why I chose my passion to step in,” Raynetta said. “You know, it’s like you didn’t have a voice while you were incarcerated, or wrongfully incarcerated like my cousin, but now you’re out. You can do something about it. It doesn’t matter if it’s 20 years later, you’re here. This is gonna help not just him, but everybody else that went through the pain and suffering.”

At DPN, we fight for families whose loved ones were killed inside prison, we fight for those outside still struggling to get back on their feet, and for future generations we hope will live in a world that chooses care over cages.

“It gives me hope,” Raynetta said. “[...] I’ve done 16 years in prison. And it was always like follow the rules, fear the police because they were always going to be right. But to sit out there and protest and speak and rally without any drama and get our word across, it helped me to believe that I do have a voice and I can speak now.”

Raynetta definitely has a voice and a powerful one at that. She plans on continuing to grow with DPN and having her children grow up in a supportive community like this as well. She dreams of representing DPN at future conferences, sharing her story, and being upfront and personal with making change.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend our sincere gratitude to the funders and donors whose invaluable contributions have ensured the continuity of the Mutual Aid program and the abolition movement. Each contribution, big and small, brings us closer to a future that prioritizes care over cages.

We particularly wish to express our heartfelt appreciation to Catalyst Cares for their generous donation of backpacks and school supplies, which we have distributed to families impacted by incarceration. We are inspired by their unwavering commitment to making a difference.

This support gives us the fuel we need to keep the movement pushing forward. Together, we can lead with love and heal our communities.



**We thank you for your continued support in DPN's
Mutual Aid efforts.**

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