

# Newsletter

JUNE 2023

## ONE MIC

We are grateful to display this beautiful banner in our community room, a gift from participants in the Dixon Performing Arts program at Dixon Correctional Center. Here is more on the banner in the words of one of the program's facilitators, Brian Beals:

"The Banner was painted by Nicholas "Red" Haselrig and several other artists for the Dixon Performing Arts (DPA) program to display at the "One Mic" concert performed in 2020 at Dixon Correctional Center.

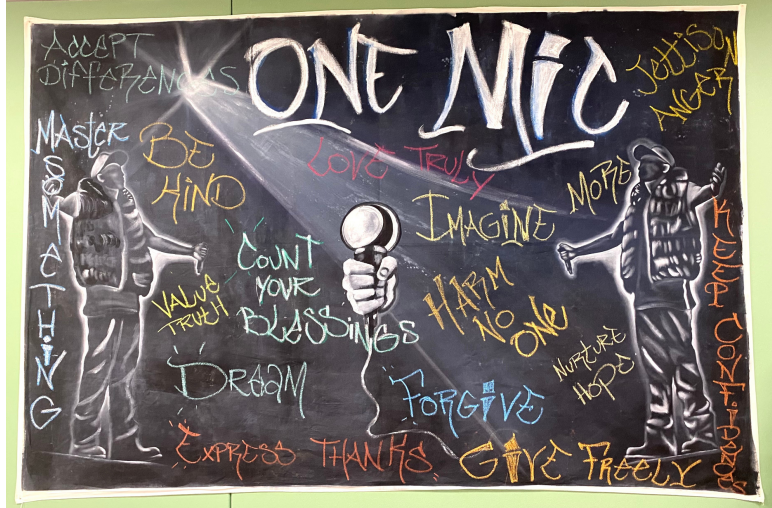
The Dixon CC Theatre Workshop (DTW) was started in 2018 by a diverse group of prisoners from different age groups.

Their purpose was to use the creativity of the theatre as a forum to amplify the voices and stories of prisoners during the era of mass incarceration. To accomplish this the DTW wrote and performed original plays, concerts, spoken word poetry, we also hosted writing expositions, and roundtable discussions.

After taking stock of all the accomplishments and successes, the DTW changed its name to the Dixon CC Performing Arts (DA) program. We hope our new name will inspire other prisoners to create prisoner-led programs that demonstrate our collective ability to lead, our dignity, humanity and our commitment to improving the lives, culture and conditions of the incarcerated. Over two hundred members of the Dixon CC community, including staff, have participated in DPA programming.

DPA Vision Statement: Transformational Therapeutic Rehabilitation Through The Arts. Mission Statement: To create original content that has a positive impact on the Dixon CC community and beyond.

The DPA donated this Banner to the CHICAGO TORTURE JUSTICE CENTER in appreciation of their hard work on behalf of incarcerated people, our families and communities. The CTJC prisoner outreach program is second to none, they call us family and they mean it." Learn more: [www.dtwtheatre.net](http://www.dtwtheatre.net)



### Words from Reginald Henderson

*Reginald Henderson wrote this statement ahead of another hearing for his and his brother Sean Tyler's petitions for a Certificate of Innocence. Reginald Sean were targeted and tortured by CPD in 1994. They were incarcerated for over two decades as a result, and were finally exonerated in 2021. They are still owed their Certificates of Innocence, which the State's Attorney's Office has challenged with little explanation. The hearing took place on Wednesday, May 24, 2023. The state prosecution claimed that they did not have time to read the motion for the hearing, so the hearing has again been continued. The next court date is June 12.*



Reginald Henderson (left) and Sean Tyler (right) stand with their supporters while speaking to the press.

Ladies and gentlemen, I stand before you today to share a story of injustice, a story of two African-American men who were wrongfully imprisoned for a crime they did not commit.

*cont'd on next page*

*Words from Reginald Henderson cont'd*

One was locked up from the age of 18 to 45, and the other was imprisoned at the age of 17 and was released after 42 years. This is a story that highlights the devastating consequences of wrongful imprisonment and the psychological and neurological effects it can have on innocent men.

The trauma of wrongful imprisonment is a real and pressing issue that we need to address as a society. Studies show that those who are wrongfully imprisoned suffer from a range of psychological and neurological issues, including anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), (PIS )and even brain damage from prolonged periods of isolation.

But the trauma of wrongful imprisonment does not end when a person is released from prison. In fact, studies show that the trauma can continue for years, even decades, after a person has been released. This trauma can make it difficult for people to reintegrate into society, find employment, or even form meaningful relationships. Moreover, the statistics on reacclimation and recidivism paint a bleak picture. According to the National Registry of Exonerations, over 2,800 people have been exonerated since 1989. Of those, 1,639 were African-American men. And while exoneration is a critical step towards justice, it does not undo the harm that has been done. In fact, many people wrongfully imprisoned struggle to adjust to life outside prison, leading to a higher rate of recidivism.

The trauma of wrongful imprisonment is compounded by the fact that many of those who are wrongfully imprisoned come from disadvantaged communities. As was the case with my brother and I we were raised in the impoverished community of Chicago's Inglewood during the crack epidemic. We were raised in a single parent household by an African American woman, trying to make ends meet. This is a story that is all too familiar in our society, where people of color are disproportionately impacted by poverty, lack of access to education, and systemic racism.

And if this was not enough, my brother, and I were released from prison in the midst of a global pandemic, where we faced not only the challenges of reacclimation but also mental, spiritual, and biological pandemics.

My friends, we cannot allow this injustice to continue. We need to work together to reform our criminal justice system, to ensure that it is fair and just for all. We need to invest in education, job training, and economic development in our most vulnerable communities. And we need to provide support and resources for those who have been wrongfully imprisoned, so that they can rebuild their lives and reintegrate into society.

But most of all, we need to recognize the humanity of those who have been wrongfully imprisoned. They are not just statistics, they are not just numbers, they are human beings who have suffered a great injustice. We owe it to them to fight for justice, to fight for their rights, and to ensure that this never happens again. Not just for my brother and I but for the hope that justice for all will be the goal we look to reach.

## A look at our May celebrations



Photos from our 6th anniversary party on May 20th. Top left: Community members gathering together, eating, and chatting outside. Top right: community members sitting inside the community room, where the One Mic banner is displayed. Bottom: Justice Cream handing out cones of our custom flavor "Reparalines and Cream".

Photos from the Reentry Dinner on May 24th



## Send love to a Mother of the Movement



After celebrating the anniversaries of the Reparations Ordinance and the Center in May, we are reminded of the many Mothers of the Movement whose vision, leadership, and strength are at the heart of our work and continue to guide our community.

We hope you will help us honor them with messages of love, support, and solidarity! We are collecting messages here at the Center and will mail them to the Mamas.

### How to write your note:

Write and send a note to us and let us know who your love note is for. You are welcome to send more than one message, or to share your message with more than one of our moms!

That's it – we'll take care of the rest! Thank you for helping us shower these mamas with some of the love they continue to show us and our movement every day.

### Mamas (and Papa)

**Christina Borizov**, Mother of survivor Johnny Borizov

**Denice Bronis**, Mother of survivor Matthew Echevarria

**Rosemary Cade**, Mother of survivor Antonio Porter

**Bertha Escamilla**, Mother of survivor Nick Escamilla

**Esther Hernandez**, Mother of survivors Juan and Rosendo Hernandez

**Dorothy Holmes**, Mother of Ronald "RonnieMan" Johnson, who was killed by Chicago Police

**Mary L Johnson**, Mother of survivor Michael Johnson

**Anthanette Marshbanks**, Mother of Archie Lee Chambers Jr., who was killed by Calumet City Police

**Papa Frank Ornelas**, Father of survivor Robert Ornelas

**Regina Russell**, Mother of survivor Tamon Russell

**Armanda Shackelford**, Mother of survivor Gerald Reed

**Denise Spencer**, Mother of survivor Michael Carter

**April Ward**, Mother of survivor Mickiael Ward

**Arewa Karen Winters**, Aunt of Pierre Loury, who was killed by Chicago Police

### Please mail notes to:

Chicago Torture Justice Center  
6337 S. Woodlawn Ave  
Chicago IL 60637

## Illinois Prison Project Legal Clinic

The Illinois Prison Project hosts a bi-monthly drop-in legal clinic via Zoom every first Tuesday of the month from 4 PM-5 PM Central Time and every third Saturday of the month from 9 AM-10 AM CST.

IPP's legal clinic provides legal advice and consultation to people who have loved ones incarcerated in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Clinic hours will focus on commutation and administrative remedies and is a great opportunity to ask questions directly to one of our attorneys. For more info, visit <https://www.illinoisprisonproject.org/resources>



## THE REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY OF ACUPUNCTURE

Did you know that acupuncture has a revolutionary history? Acupuncture is a homeopathic wellness practice of inserting fine needles into the skin to treat a number of ailments or address imbalances of energy in the body, according to Traditional Chinese Medicine. It is a thousands-year-old practice that originates from China.

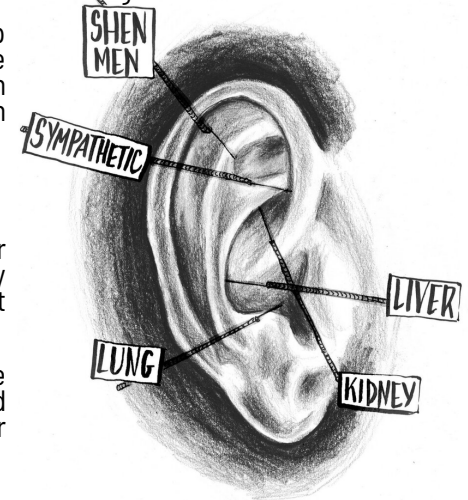
At the height of the 1970s' drug addiction epidemic in the South Bronx, the Black Panthers and the Young Lords came together to address the epidemic of public health institutions and politicians ignoring and even exacerbating through intensified policing in Black and Latino communities. In an effort to provide treatment and care to their communities, these groups formed the Lincoln Detox People's Program. An article by Hyperallergic mentions that "the staff, which included Tupac Shakur's stepfather Mutulu Shakur, sought not merely to wean people off drugs, but to awaken them to the material conditions which caused them to be plagued with addiction in the first place." Acupuncture was one of the treatments they used to treat drug detoxification.

While acupuncture is traditionally performed with needles, acupressure allows you to reap the benefits of it without having to use needles. Similar to acupuncture, acupressure is the technique of applying pressure to certain areas of the body as a means of healing. You can even practice acupressure on yourself using the NADA (National Acupuncture Detoxification Association) Protocol:

### How to perform the NADA Protocol:

Using the diagram, apply pressure using your fingers to pinch or press these points on either or both of your ears. You can do this as often as you may need to. It can be part of your daily meditation in the mornings or before you sleep. You can even use it at times when you might feel anxious, depressed, tense, or stressed.

While acupuncture/acupressure can be useful in many ways, they are not proven to be a cure from disease or illness. It is an everyday wellness practice that can be easily incorporated into your daily routine, and can bring you back to your body in moments of intense emotion or stress. We hope it is another tool you can incorporate in your ongoing healing.



#### KIDNEY POINT:

*improves willpower, calms fear, good for backache, aids digestion*

#### LUNG POINT:

*controls breathing, cleanses skin, stops diarrhea, letting go mentally*

#### SHENMEN POINT:

*calms the mind, helps with sleep, nervous tension, lowers blood pressure*

#### SYMPATHETIC POINT:

*pain killing action, stops sweating, reduces abdominal cramps*

#### LIVER POINT:

*lifts depression, strengthens digestion, improves blood circulation, helps aches & pains*

## ARE YOU INSIDE AN ILLINOIS PRISON? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

WBEZ Chicago & Illinois Public Radio present **Prisoncast!**, a live radio broadcast serving people in Illinois prisons & their loved ones outside. Listen **Sunday, Sept. 17th from 2 to 4pm** on your local public radio station or your tablet's FM app! It's an afternoon of songs, sounds and dedications to share with folks outside – even when you're apart. It also includes news & information **specifically for people in Illinois prisons, your families and outside connections.**

*And we want your requests to drive our show! Write your answers to the survey below and mail them to:*  
**Alex Keefe, c/o WBEZ, 848 E. Grand Ave., Chicago, IL. 60611-3509.**

**\*\*\*Must be received no later than Aug. 4! We'll play as many requests as possible but will not get to them all.\*\*\***

1. Tell us your name, nickname (if applicable), pronouns and whether we have permission to say your name on the air.
2. *Prisoncast!* seeks to serve you & your loved ones outside with accurate news & practical information. Is there a question you have for our journalists, an issue we can explore or explain, or a topic you think we should discuss?
3. What is a sound from outside prison walls you'd like us to record and broadcast? Why do you want to hear that sound? (Previous examples: Lake Michigan waves, a basketball game, a roller coaster, rain on a tin roof.) *If the sound occurs at a specific location or requires us to be in contact with someone, please provide details.*
4. Is there a song you'd like us to play during the show? Why do you want to hear it? Feel free to include a short dedication.
5. What's something you want people on the outside to know about you or your life on the inside?
6. How did you get this survey and learn about *Prisoncast!*?
7. Do you have a special recipe you'd like to share that uses food available from commissary? Don't forget to give us the ingredients & step-by-step instructions. Tell us what it tastes like and why you like it!
8. WBEZ & Illinois Public Radio are planning a **Prisoncast! holiday special to air Dec. 17, 2023** on public radio stations across the state. What was your favorite holiday tradition or activity with LOs outside prison? We may record some to air on the show. *If the sound occurs at a specific location or requires us to be in contact with someone, please provide details.*

produced by

**WBEZCHICAGO**

Your NPR news source

*Your LOs outside can also make requests & record dedications that we'll play on the radio! Leave a message at 312-893-2931 or send a voice memo to [prisoncast@wbez.org](mailto:prisoncast@wbez.org). Also, email to find out more about WBEZ's September event in Chicago for families & children of people in Illinois prisons!*