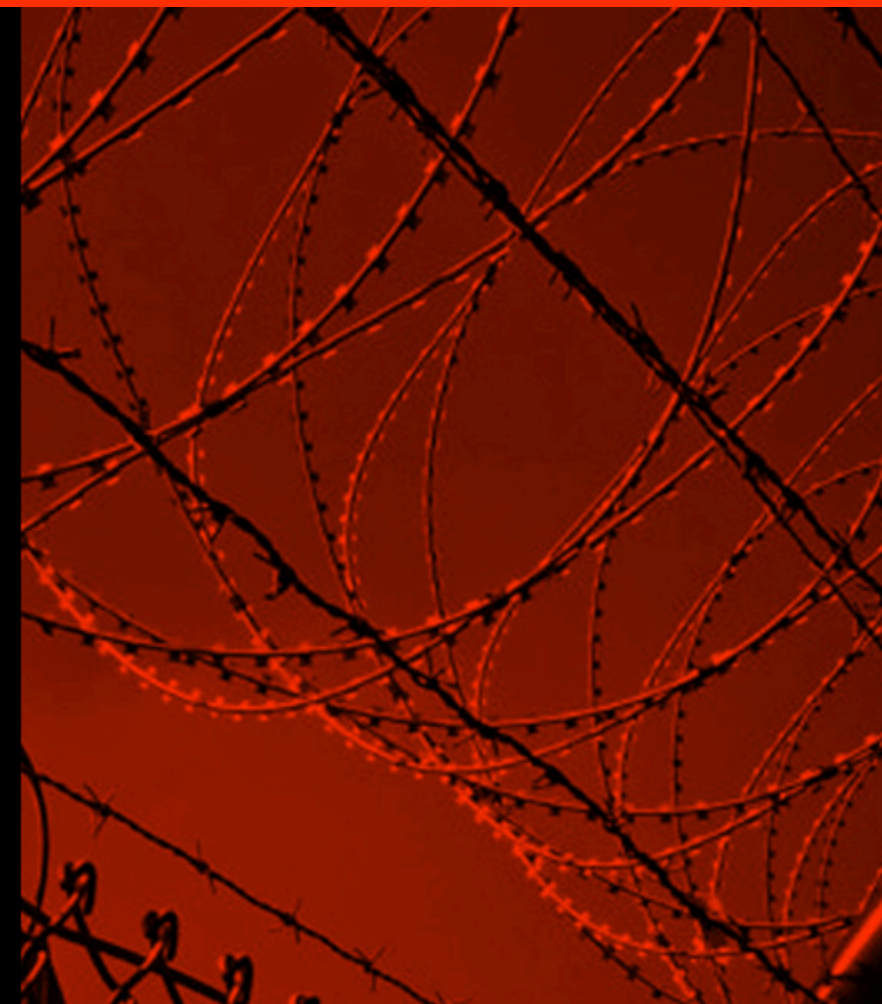
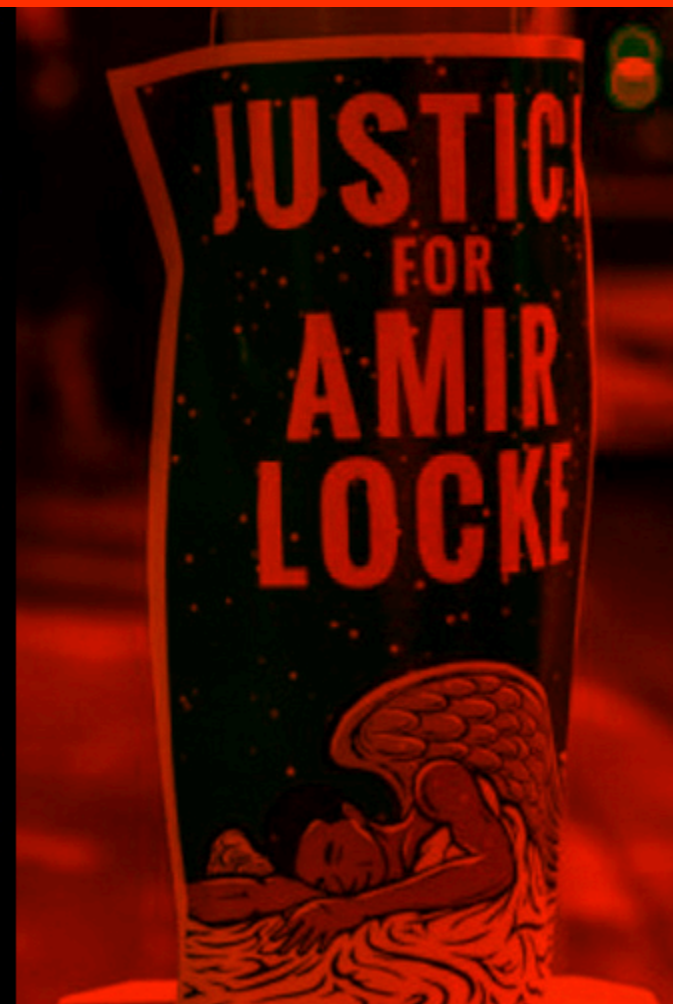


**THE APPEAL**

# IMPACT REPORT

**2024**



**The Appeal is a nonprofit newsroom that envisions a world in which systems of support and care, not punishment, create public safety.**

### **The Appeal's journalism:**

**Exposes** the harms of a criminal legal system entrenched in centuries of systemic racism.

**Equips** people with the information necessary to make change.

**Elevates** solutions that emerge from the communities most affected by policing, jails, and prisons in the U.S.

## OUR WORK

# 150+

articles & newsletters

policing • prosecution • pre-trial  
punishment • criminalization • alternatives

# 66

writers

49%

BIPOC

32%

formerly /  
incarcerated

# OUR AUDIENCE

Here's some of what our readers and community shared with us this year:

**“Please keep up the sound reporting on this.**

**Things need to change badly!”**

**— attorney who cited our work in a lawsuit against a local jail**

**“[The Appeal reporter] was amazing ... Not only did she keep in contact with me my entire prison sentence, she continued to keep in touch with me post release. I appreciate all the help and care they provided for the inmates.”**

**— an impacted source from Virginia**

**“If it wasn't for your work and The Appeal I never would have known about the case ... and now there's so much organizing.”**

**— community organizer on our coverage of the Jacob Harris case in Arizona**

**“I wish you could've seen how much his face lit up when we put together that we had been involved in that story. He wanted me to share his deep appreciation for your work. That article means the world to him.”**

**— advocate who met an incarcerated source in Massachusetts**

**“[This piece] is amazing and I wish everyone in the county could/would read it, our issues would be fixed.”**

**— a medical examiner in Georgia whose county we reported on**



# IMPACTED WRITERS



Publishing incarcerated writers is core to The Appeal's mission. In 2024, this work won 3 national awards, including Prison Journalist of the Year for Contributing Editor Christopher Blackwell.

Blackwell is expanding prison journalism not just by publishing prolifically, but by encouraging more people to write. He co-founded a writers group program and incarcerated journalist Kwaneta Harris now mentors one of these groups. We were proud to publish that group's first package for Mother's Day, which was showcased in Blackwell's clemency hearing.

Blackwell and Harris also produced our first survey of incarcerated people ahead of the 2024 election.

# 21

**currently & formerly  
incarcerated writers  
created:**

# 42%

**newsletter  
columns**

**+**

# 10%

**articles**



It's an honor every time I work with The Appeal. My front-row reporting on the criminal legal system is supported and valued.

I wish other media outlets followed their example of elevating reporting from the inside, from incarcerated writers.

— Kwaneta Harris



Credit: Ariana Gomez

# TRACKING IMPACT

The Appeal seeks to catalyze change in the U.S. criminal legal system and, to measure this, tracks the impact of all our work.

We define our impact as changes that reduce harm at a large, systemic scale; directly improve individual lives; or shift public discourse—as well as significant steps towards these changes.

We track four key areas of impact: Individual, Institutional, Community, and Media.

**300+**

impacts in 2024

Cited in

**11**

regulatory changes +  
government reports

Cited in

**15**

legislative testimonies,  
reports + hearings

Cited in

**9**

legal filings

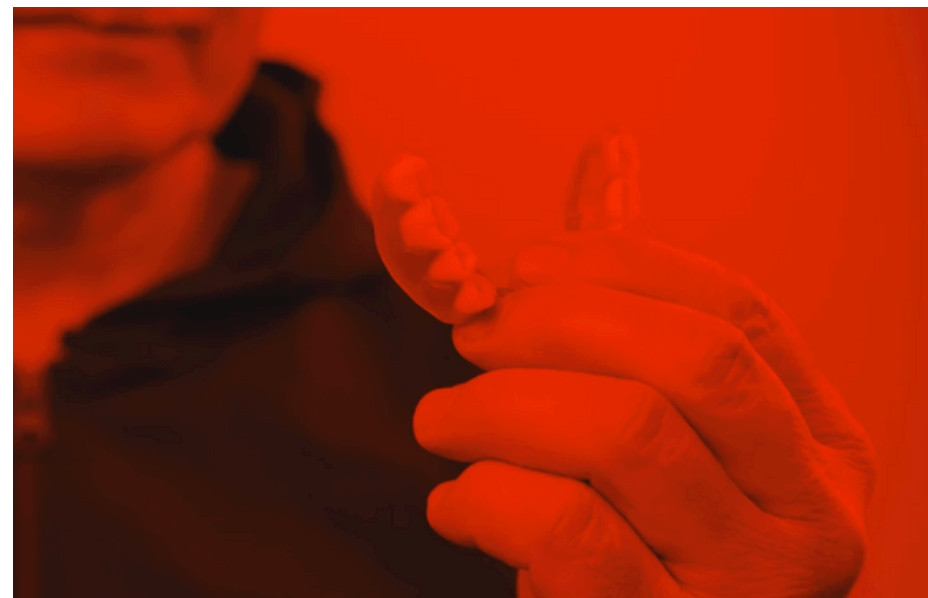
# IMPACT: INDIVIDUAL



## **Three young people were granted a chance for post-conviction relief**

after our investigation into the Phoenix Police Department's killing of 19-year-old Jacob Harris, their friend whose murder they were charged with. The judge granted their requests because of "extraordinary circumstances" now surrounding their cases. After our reporting, **Arizona lawmakers introduced two bills to try to repeal felony murder.**

A Department of Justice official referenced Harris's killing when they released findings of a civil rights investigation into the Phoenix police. A push for broad change continues.



## **Critical dental care was provided to an incarcerated man**

in Massachusetts after we reported he had lived without his front tooth for three years. This year, our coverage of Wellpath, the state's prison medical provider and the country's largest prison healthcare company, was **cited by U.S. Senators Elizabeth Warren and Edward J. Markey**

who sent a letter to its executives and parent company, private equity firm H.I.G. Capital, calling out the company's failures to provide adequate care and requesting detailed information about its operations.



# IMPACT: INSTITUTIONAL



**The Federal Communications Commission ended exorbitant phone call prices for incarcerated people.** Cut by more than 50%, prices are now capped at 6¢ a minute in prisons and large jails. The FCC—which also ended kickbacks to agencies—cited our reports examining problematic telecom contracts with jails and sheriffs.



**U.S. Senator Jon Ossoff called for the Department of Justice to collect information on deaths in custody,** after earlier requests to investigate Georgia’s Clayton County and Fulton County jails. Ossoff’s letter was based on our reporting on the growing number of Clayton County deaths. Our reporting was also cited in a lawsuit against the jail.



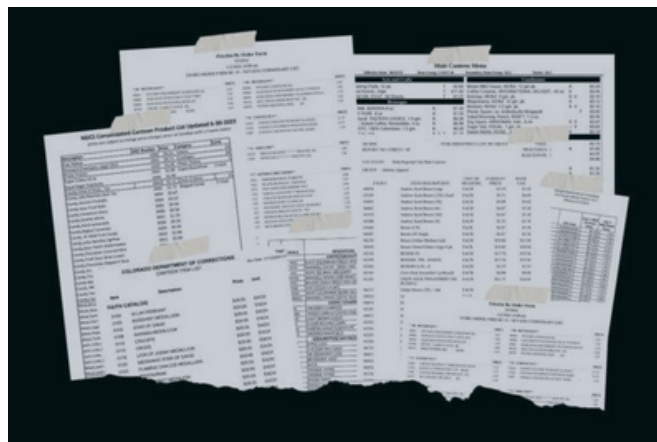
**The Inspector General testified to a Senate Committee** after our investigation of sexual abuse at federal prison FCI Tallahassee. We also joined a legal challenge against the Bureau of Prisons sealing records on conditions at FCI Dublin. A judge unsealed most, revealing guards accused of sexual misconduct were transferred to other prisons.



**The Department of Justice was ordered to release data** on people who die in prison, jail, or police custody after we filed a federal Freedom of Information Act lawsuit in 2022. The DOJ must hand over records on more than 100,000 in-custody deaths previously withheld from the public. We expect to receive these records early next year.



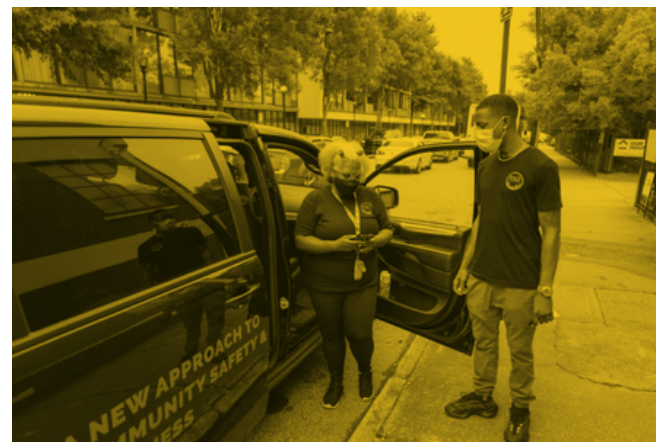
# IMPACT: COMMUNITY



**We published Locked In, Priced Out, the first national database of commissary prices.**

Numerous organizations and scholars use this to research reforms and one advocacy group is using it to push for lower prices.

We also inspired a formerly incarcerated reader to collect local jail commissary lists.



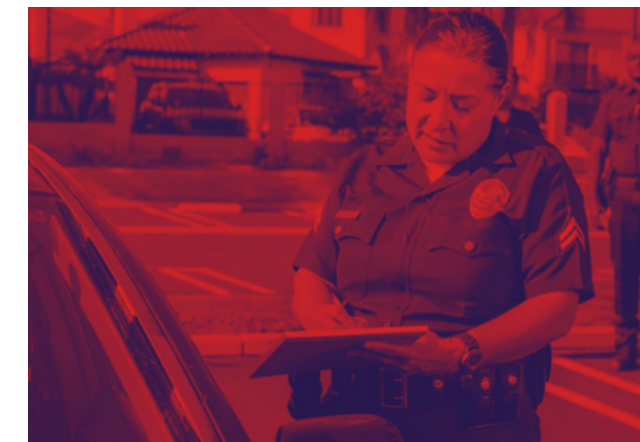
**A pre-arrest diversion program was able to continue their work in Georgia.**

After we reported on a secret bidding process excluding the current provider, Policing Alternatives & Diversion Initiative, the process was cancelled and the Atlanta City Council approved PAD's new contract.



**Illinois residents successfully pressured leaders to drop "Street Cop" police training.**

Residents said they learned about the controversial program—which provides violent, racist training—from our reporting. After they discovered Burr Ridge Police Department's upcoming training, it was cancelled by the police chief.



**We offer a platform for advocates and impacted people to express their views.**

We've published a piece from a public defender on pretextual stops, an incarcerated activist on pretrial release, and an advocate's commentary about the viability of a prison telecom company.

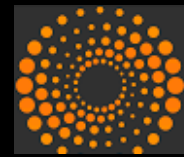
## Community Engagement

**The Appeal staff engaged with our community and spoke at events, including: Deaths in Custody Conference, The Clean Slate Initiative's Annual Convening, and the Felony Murder Convening.**

# IMPACT: MEDIA

## Citations: National Outlets

The New York Times



REUTERS

The Marshall Project

Mother Jones

ESSENCE

The Intercept



## Local Outlets

The Philadelphia Inquirer

The Boston Globe

ARIZONA  
LUMINARIA



TIMES  
of SAN DIEGO

NJ Spotlight News

ORLANDO  
WEEKLY

## Justice Data

Research and Projects Editor Ethan Corey led a tutorial for journalists on criminal justice data at NICAR, an annual data journalism conference. He taught more than 50 journalists and students how to use web scrapers to gather data on police misconduct, pretrial release decisions, and more.

## Prosecutor Tracker

When police arrested pro-Palestinian college protesters, we created the only national prosecutor tracker, shifting the national conversation from police to more than 120 prosecutors. The tracker was republished by Teen Vogue and cited by the New York Times, the Marshall Project, The Nation, Mother Jones, and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

# PUBLISHING PARTNERS



## Local Outlets



# AWARDS

## Winner



**Journalistic Impact Award**

LION Publishers Sustainability Awards



**Prison Journalist of the Year**

Stillwater Awards for Prison Journalism



**Best News Story**

Stillwater Awards for Prison Journalism

## Finalist

**Business of the Year**

LION Publishers Sustainability Awards 2024

**Operational Resilience**

LION Publishers Sustainability Awards 2024

**Most Impactful Journalism**

Stillwater Awards for Prison Journalism 2024

**Breaking News**

Online Journalism Awards 2024

**Best Investigative Journalism**

Nonprofit News Awards 2024

**Insight Award for Explanatory Journalism**

Nonprofit News Awards 2024



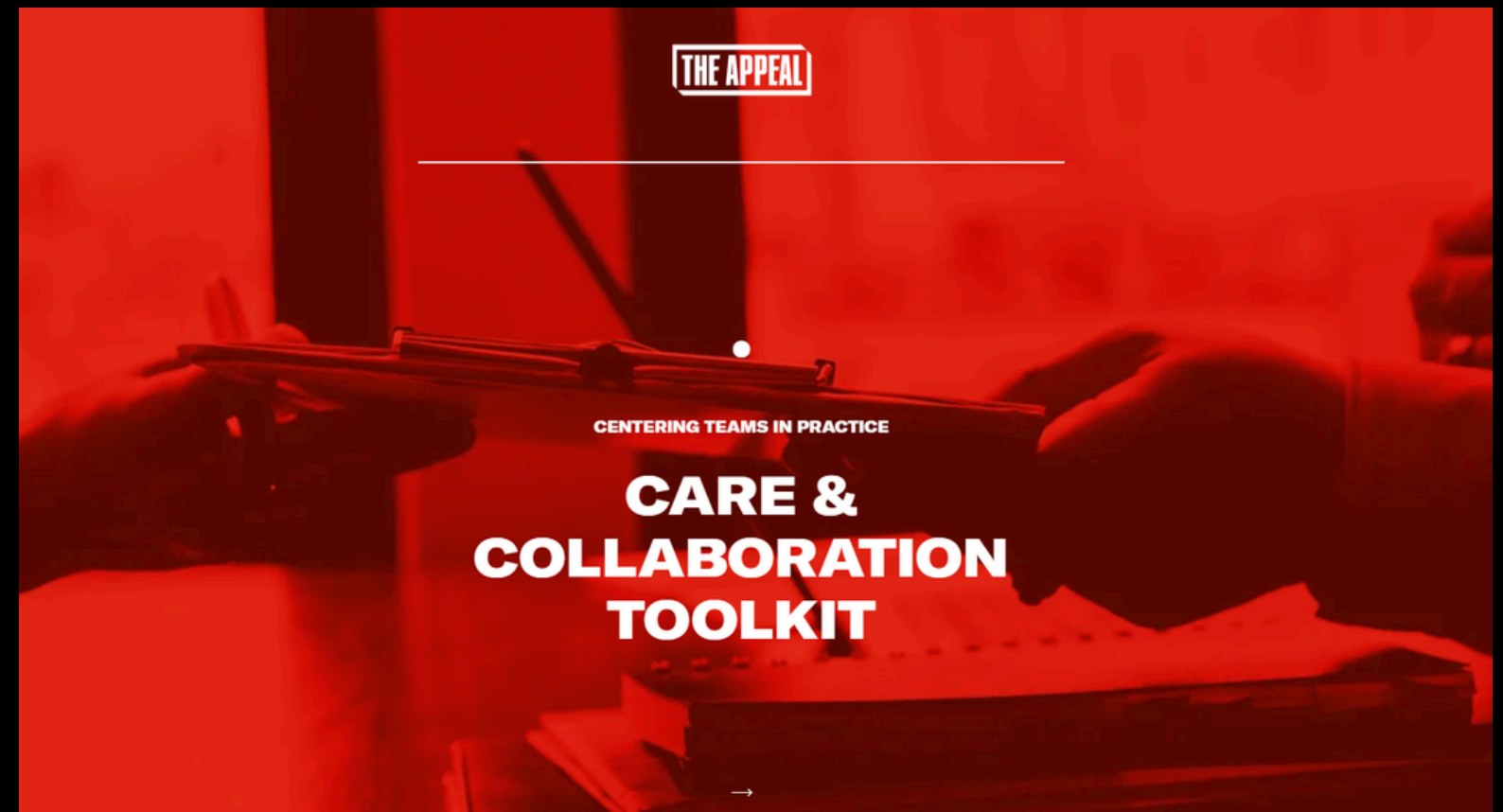
# WORKER-LED JOURNALISM

As one of the first worker-led nonprofit newsrooms in the U.S., The Appeal hopes to model a new path for the future of journalism.

We have shared our experiences with newsrooms and spoken at events for the National Press Club, Online News Association, Institute for Nonprofit News, LION Publishers, and numerous universities.

In 2024, The Appeal partnered with the Reynolds Journalism Institute to launch the [Care & Collaboration Toolkit: Centering Teams in Practice](#).

This is a resource hub for news organizations rethinking how they can better engage their communities and support their journalists.





# OUR TEAM & SUPPORTERS

## LEADERSHIP

**Tara Francis Chan**  
Managing Editor & Operations Director

**Molly Greene**  
Strategy & Legal Director

## EDITORIAL TEAM

**Ethan Corey**

**Jerry Iannelli**

**Meg O'Connor**

**Elizabeth Weill-Greenberg**

## CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

**Christopher Blackwell**

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Josie Duffy Rice**  
Former president of The Appeal; podcast host, Crooked Media; journalist, writer, and consultant

**Jody David Armour**  
Roy P. Crocker Professor of Law  
University of Southern California

**Jason Flom**  
Co-founder & CEO  
Lava for Good and Lava Media

**Craig Hunter**  
Executive Editor  
The Trace

**Johnny Perez**  
Director of the U.S. Prisons Program  
National Religious Campaign Against Torture

**Zara Rahim**  
Strategic communications expert, cultural and political commentator, producer, and advisor

**Hannah Riley**  
Director of Programming  
Center for Just Journalism

**Liliana Segura**  
Senior Reporter  
The Intercept

**Jasper Wang**  
Co-owner and Vice President of Revenue & Operations  
Defector Media

**Ethan Corey**  
Research and Projects Editor  
The Appeal

## FUNDERS

**Meadow Fund**

**The Just Trust**

**Wellspring Philanthropic Fund**

**The Reva and David Logan Foundation**

**University of Missouri's Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute**

**The Miami Foundation**

**Institute for Nonprofit News**

**AAN Publishers**

**Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation**

**700+ individual donors**

# **THE APPEAL** **IMPACT REPORT**

Template by Natalie Pryor  
Produced by Tara Francis Chan