

2007-08 Annual Report

Dear Friends of CCA:

We are very pleased to share with you highlights from our past year of work to reduce reliance on incarceration and to bring about more just and humane treatment for people caught up in the criminal justice system. In a strategic planning retreat last fall, our board and staff affirmed our commitment to “reintegrative justice,” the movement to reform our criminal justice system across its entire spectrum—from the time a person is arrested through the time that he or she prepares to re-enter society after a prison term. Our policy work in the areas of higher education, financial penalties, and human rights had national and international impact while our model programs helped youth and adults in Syracuse, Brooklyn, and Manhattan live healthier and safer lives. We thank you warmly for the support that made these accomplishments possible. With your help, we look forward to another year of progress in the fight for a more enlightened approach to criminal justice.



Top: Marsha Weissman, Executive Director
Bottom: Michelle A. Henry,
President, Board of Directors



CCA Policy Work Has Impact

New Research Identifies Barriers to Higher Education

For people who have completed prison sentences, education is the key to obtaining a job, becoming self-supporting, and reintegrating successfully into society. Alarming, research conducted by the Center for Community Alternatives shows that obstructing access to higher education for persons with a criminal record has become increasingly common.

Marsha Weissman, Executive Director, said, “Our research found instances where admissions officers use the presence of a criminal record to screen out applicants so they can reduce the number of applications to be reviewed. In other instances, the presence of a criminal history prompts additional

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Disciplinary History

- ① Have you ever been found responsible for a disciplinary violation at an educational institution you have attended from 9th grade (or the inter-
mediate school) forward, whether related to academic misconduct or behavioral misconduct, that resulted in your probation, suspension, removal, dismissal,
or other consequence? Yes No
- ② Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor, felony, or other crime? Yes No

If you answered yes to either or both questions, please attach a separate sheet of paper that gives the approximate date of each incident and
any additional information you'd like to provide regarding special circumstances, additional qualifications,
and sheet.

Policy

State Heaps Debt on Poor Caught in Criminal Justice System

While trying to balance its budget during difficult financial times, New York State has resorted to a tried and true formula—taxing the poor. Last April, New York increased the financial consequences of a criminal conviction by an estimated \$40 million annually.

Alan Rosenthal, Co-Director of CCA/Justice Strategies, said, “The state took this step in spite of warnings that adding to the debt of persons convicted of crimes—who are overwhelmingly likely to be poor—is an unreasonable and counterproductive strategy for raising revenue.”

The new legislation passed by the State increases mandatory surcharges for felony, misdemeanor, and violation convictions and imposes a new surcharge of \$170 for DWI/DWAI convictions.

CCA has challenged these increases in financial penalties in reports, policy briefs, and public presentations. In the past year, the New York State Bar Association, the Council of State Governments, and the New York Times Editorial Board, among others, have called for a moratorium on increasing the penalties and fees imposed on persons convicted of crimes.

The financial consequences of a conviction have increased despite growing understanding of the difficulties that such fees create for people trying to reintegrate into society. In-depth analysis of these issues can be found in policy briefs and papers available on CCA’s website, communityalternatives.org.

CCA Youth Speak Out for Human Rights

On February 21-22, 2008, when the U.S. government defended its record on race and human rights in Geneva, Switzerland, before a U.N. committee, four CCA youth were on hand to bear witness and testify.

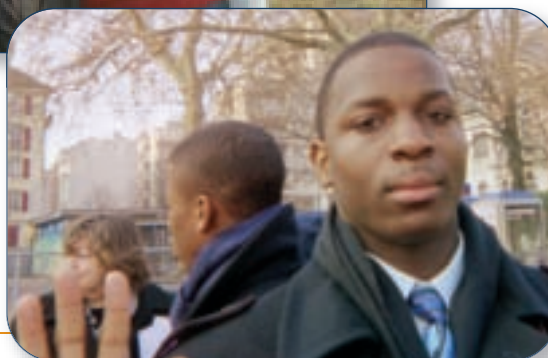
Jaquia Bolds of Syracuse and Malik Gardner of Brooklyn, both 17, testified to the assembled delegates in Geneva about their personal experiences with the U.S. school system as well as the juvenile justice system. Janiese Flagg of Syracuse and Stash McCarthy of Brooklyn, also 17, listened and took the role of respondents, available to answer any questions raised by delegates.

The youths’ trip to Geneva was part of a collaboration between CCA, the Haywood Burns Institute in San Francisco, and the Justice Policy Institute in Washington D.C., supported by the U.S. Human Rights Fund. Global Rights, an international human rights organization based in Washington DC, joined with CCA to support the visit by the four youth to Geneva.

The impact made by the CCA youth in Geneva was reflected in the Concluding Observations issued by the U.N. Committee, which charged the U.S. to do more to remedy the effects of racial discrimination in the juvenile and criminal justice systems and other areas. The UN Committee called for the U.S. government, along with local school districts, to review their “zero tolerance” school discipline policies, with a view to limiting the imposition of suspension or expulsion and providing training for police officers deployed in schools.



Clockwise from top right: Stash McCarthy; Malik Gardner; Janiese Flagg and Jaquia Bolds





Judge Michael Corriero with CCA youth graduate Alando Fletcher

“Second Chance Act” Passed by U.S., with CCA Support

Together with colleagues in criminal justice reform, CCA contributed to the public momentum that ultimately led to passage of the “Second Chance Act” by the U.S. Congress in spring 2008. The Second Chance Act will help States and localities better address the needs of individuals reentering the community from the criminal justice system. It authorizes grants for community-based services, including drug and mental health treatment, job training and education opportunities, housing, and other necessary services. Coinciding with passage of the Second Chance Act, on April 9, 2008, CCA co-hosted an Issues Forum on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C., co-sponsored by Congressman Bobby Scott and Congressman Keith Ellison. The forum, cosponsored with the National H.I.R.E. Network, addressed issues of employment, education, enfranchisement, and equality (the 4 E’s), particularly as they relate to people with criminal histories.

CCA’s Executive Director Named to State Advisory Boards

Marsha Weissman has been named to three statewide advisory committees: the Governor’s Juvenile Justice Task Force; the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Commissioner’s Advisory Board; and the Division of Criminal Justice Services’ Statewide Reentry Service Provider Advisory Council.

The Center for Community Alternatives (CCA) is a leader in the field of community-based alternatives to incarceration. Our mission is to promote reintegrative justice and a reduced reliance on incarceration through advocacy, services and public policy development in pursuit of civil and human rights.

New Research Identifies Barriers to Higher Education *continued from page 1*

admissions requirements—such as a letter of reference from a prison official or a year’s waiting period before admission.”

CCA also found instances in which the admissions officer defers to the university security department to make a final decision.

“College admissions officers justify screening applicants for criminal records in terms of their concern for campus safety,” said Patricia Warth, Co-Director of CCA/Justice Strategies. “However, our research uncovered no correlation between campus crime and the presence of students with past criminal records.”

Furthermore, since the great majority of men and women coming out of prison are people of color, the impact of limiting admission for persons with criminal records is to exclude qualified applicants of color from higher education, a racially discriminatory practice.

CCA shared the results of its research in a policy paper “Closing the Doors to Higher Education: Another Collateral Consequence of a Criminal Conviction,” and presented its findings and concerns at conferences and convenings in New York, North Carolina and Washington, D.C.

The research efforts were supported by a grant from the Fulfilling the Dream Fund. CCA is now pursuing the research project in other states and working with colleagues, including the Legal Action Center/National H.I.R.E. Network, to build a movement that will open the doors of colleges and universities to people with criminal records.

“Increasing opportunities to pursue higher education is a critical element in our campaign for reintegrative justice,” said Ms. Weissman. “It’s imperative that colleges and universities adopt a more enlightened approach toward reviewing the applications of people who have criminal records. Many of these people are now assets to their communities and will make real and positive contributions to life on campus.”

CCA Services for Youth, Men, Women Expanded

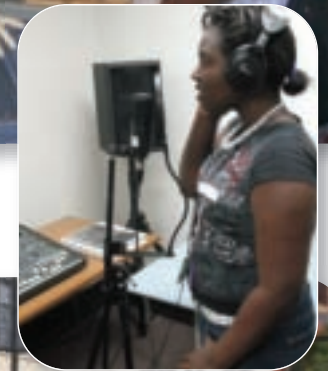


CCA After School Services Reach More Youth

Over the last year, CCA has significantly expanded its alternative-to-detention and alternative-to-incarceration programs for youth in New York City's juvenile justice system. CCA initially helped pilot alternative-to-detention (ATD) services for youth ages 12 to 15 in Brooklyn Family Court through a program called CHOICES Unlimited. The success of this pilot led to a City-wide initiative now operating in all five boroughs, with CCA providing services to all youth in Brooklyn. The intent of this innovative program is to provide information and options to encourage judges to release youth who can be served in the community more effectively than in detention facilities. Youth in the ATD/CHOICES Unlimited program participate in after school services that include educational support and tutoring, recreational activities and arts-related experiences.

Another significant expansion was recently introduced in partnership with the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice. This program, Life Transitions, provides life skills training to youth while they are in detention and after care support to these young people once they are released. Youth can participate in a range of after school and community-based services. They can also choose to be trained as peer leaders who will eventually conduct outreach and guide other youth to redirect their lives towards school and employment and away from crime and jail.

In Syracuse, New York, CCA expanded drug prevention services to youth who have been suspended from school and are involved in the juvenile justice system. In collaboration with the Syracuse City School District, CCA provides young people with developmentally appropriate cognitive-development services that help them understand how drug use undermines their life goals. Youth are connected with activities and interests that help them find alternatives to drugs and street life. Also in cooperation with the Syracuse School District, CCA provides mentoring and support groups to youth who have an incarcerated parent. These services help young people cope with the loss of their parent, adjust to new caregivers and stay connected to parents behind bars.



Youth referred to CCA by the courts participate in activities that help them build trust in one another and serve the community at the same time. From top to bottom: a group trip to Six Flags; volunteering at Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen; using the sound studio at the Syracuse Carnegie Alternative School; playing basketball; receiving a certificate of completion from CCA staff Delores Moody at a graduation ceremony.

Substance Abuse Treatment Services Receive Support

CCA's work with men and women involved in the criminal justice system who are struggling with substance abuse has received a boost from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services SAMSHA office. A new SAMSHA grant will help CCA bring its men's and women's substance abuse treatment programs in Brooklyn and Manhattan into closer alignment so that the resources of the two programs can be shared. Services will also be enhanced by adding a full time mental health staff person, increasing the capacity to serve clients.



Above: CCA/NYC staff confer about a client case.



Left: Members of the CCA Recovery Network display their banner during a National Recovery Month event at a Syracuse park.

CCA Sentencing Advocacy Services Expand To Buffalo

The Client Specific Planning program (CSP) one of the foremost sentencing advocacy services in the nation, has expanded to Buffalo, New York. Beginning July 2008, CCA has merged with the local Buffalo CSP project, bringing our services to western New York. CCA has co-located its CSP program in the Buffalo Legal Aid Office to ensure that services are accessible to the Erie County defense bar.

Syracuse Employment Services Program Leads to Certification

The REAL program that operates out of the CCA/Syracuse office emphasizes job readiness training, education assessments, and placement as well as relapse prevention support. Through this initiative, program participants have a chance to earn a "National Workforce Readiness Certificate" endorsed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the Department of Labor. The certificate helps to show prospective employers that an individual is ready and prepared for work. A new partnership with the State Division of Parole introduces parolees newly returning to the Syracuse area to this program. It also encourages them to participate in support services available from the Recovery Network of New York. The Recovery Network recently received support from SAMHSA to expand to Rochester and Albany, with peers taking leadership roles in providing long term recovery supports to people moving to sober and crime-free lives.



Rachel-Storm Heasley, Career Resources Coordinator, with successful CCA graduates.

Local students will travel to UN hearing

Hessinger's Jaquie Boldt and Nottingham's Janiese Flagg leave for Switzerland today.

By Elizabeth Doran
Staff writer

Two Syracuse high school sophomores leave today for Geneva, Switzerland, for a United Nations hearing on racial discrimination and the United States' human rights record.

Jaquie Boldt, of Hessinger High School, and Janiese Flagg, of Nottingham High School, will spend a week in Geneva observing the hearing. Boldt will get a chance to testify during the hearing.

"I'm really excited to go,"

said Boldt, who was selected along with Flagg by the Center for Community Alternatives in Syracuse. The organization, with offices in New York City and Syracuse, works with at-risk youth, families in crisis and those struggling with substance abuse, HIV and AIDS.

"I want to tell the committee how we need to do something about racism, and how I feel the school district isn't always fair," she said. "If I say the truth and get my viewpoint out and not hide it inside, hopefully, I can help make a change."

Boldt said she'll testify about being sexually harassed and



FLAGG

BOLDT

young women in Geneva.

In Geneva, the teenagers will observe as the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination hears reports from the U.S. State Department and Justice Department on the U.S. human rights record. The U.N.

Deputy Director
Josefina Bastidas was
featured in a full-page
profile in the NY
Daily News



Co-Director of Justice
Strategies Alan Rosenthal



CCA in the News

Deputy Director Josefina Bastidas was featured in a full-page profile in the September 11th edition of the *New York Daily News*. Headlined "Trying To Do More With Less and Keep a Smile on My Face," the article by Erasmo Guerra traced Ms. Bastidas's history from her early years as a district judge in Venezuela to her current work at CCA. Ms. Bastidas told Guerra that her work at CCA was her "personal ministry." She added, "There's no better success than to see the people you helped now helping others. You know you have made a difference."

CCA youth in the Brooklyn Youth Advocacy Project appeared in an evening news segment on WABC-TV on July 11th. They gave credit to CCA's programs and staff for helping them avoid repeated trouble with the law.

The *Syracuse Post-Standard* highlighted CCA on four occasions in the past year. On Feb 16, it published an article about CCA youth traveling to Geneva; on February 23, it cited the views of Co-Director of Justice Strategies Alan Rosenthal; on July 12, it again quoted Mr. Rosenthal on the increasing fees and surcharges levied against New Yorkers

convicted of crimes; and on September 22, an opinion piece by Marsha Weissman called attention to the fact that the FBI had cited New York State as the fourth safest in the nation. Ms. Weissman noted that New York had "achieved this status while reducing incarceration" and called on other states and communities to "bring these lessons to scale."

Marsha Weissman had a letter published in the May 27th *New York Times*, criticizing the excessive fees and surcharges imposed on people convicted of crimes. Alan Rosenthal, Co-Director of Justice Strategies was quoted on the same topic in an article by Emily Jane Goodman published in the September 22nd edition of *The Nation*.

The *Gotham Gazette*, a monthly newsletter published by the Citizens' Union, interviewed Marsha Weissman for a June article about reducing recidivism by people with criminal records. She told reporter Michelle Chen, "People are going back to the very neighborhoods that are hardest hit by poverty and racism, and...incarceration itself has depleted them of social capital....Why do we only focus on the back end to address those issues?"

Financial Statements

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007 AND 2006

ASSETS

	2007	2006
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 43,197	\$ 265,433
Grants and contracts receivable	1,898,791	1,846,385
Client specific planning receivables	108,196	128,736
Prepaid expenses	3,508	1,524
Total current assets	<u>2,053,692</u>	<u>2,242,078</u>
PROPERTY:		
Furniture and equipment	156,176	156,176
Less accumulated depreciation	151,858	144,191
Property—net	<u>4,318</u>	<u>11,985</u>
SECURITY DEPOSITS	110,551	80,303
TOTAL	<u>\$ 2,168,561</u>	<u>\$ 2,334,366</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES:		
Short-term bank borrowings	\$ 767,628	\$ 1,165,000
Accounts payable	110,656	55,308
Accrued payroll and payroll taxes	260,009	224,489
Deferred revenue	186,469	117,847
Total current liabilities	<u>1,324,762</u>	<u>1,562,644</u>
NET ASSETS—UNRESTRICTED	843,799	771,722
TOTAL	<u>\$ 2,168,561</u>	<u>\$ 2,334,366</u>

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2007 AND 2006

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

	2007	2006
SUPPORT		
Grant and Contract:		
City of New York	\$ 1,653,548	\$ 1,451,704
Onondaga County Bar Association	53,012	148,722
New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives	212,299	422,985
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration	1,890,624	1,275,416
New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services	618,664	442,071
New York State Department of Health	291,489	319,419
New York State Department of Correctional Services	105,634	—
City of Syracuse	7,500	7,500
Syracuse City School District	82,317	12,472
Court Appointed Special Advocate Services—All Sources	50,332	88,462
Medical & Health Research Association of NYC, Inc.	393,116	728,516
New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services	108,729	159,134
New York State Office of Children and Family Services	269,049	258,428
Onondaga County Department of Health	20,408	21,526
Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES	70,223	5,286
New York State Department of Education—21st Century	216,356	219,037
Onondaga County Office of the District Attorney	22,146	47,109
Bronx Defenders Association	2,261	84
Total grant and contract support	<u>\$ 6,067,707</u>	<u>\$ 5,607,871</u>
Foundation:		
Robin Hood Foundation	116,053	—
Public Interest Project—Fullfilling the Dream	85,880	63,379
Public Interest Project—U.S. Human Rights Fund	48,649	24,128
U.S. Conference of Mayors Foundation	52,615	17,385
Annie Casey Foundation	3,184	19,546
HIV Mac Global	719	3,140
New York Community Trust—Crossroads	34,622	19,168
Kennedy Foundation	—	6,000
MONY Foundation	—	1,318
Total foundation	<u>\$ 341,722</u>	<u>\$ 154,064</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT	<u>\$6,409,429</u>	<u>\$ 5,761,935</u>

	2007	2006
REVENUE		
Client specific planning	146,758	225,953
United Way of Central New York	91,653	80,542
Rental income	12,375	24,750
Miscellaneous revenue	14,886	48,534
Contributions	24,672	25,534
Interest income	1,807	3,511
Total revenue	292,151	408,824
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$ 6,701,580	\$6,170,759
EXPENDITURES		
Program Services:		
New York State Demonstration/Client Specific Planning	128,793	108,773
Onondaga County ACER and PROUD Program	63,364	171,581
Crossroads	689,517	758,815
SAMHSA Programs	1,659,355	1,006,400
Youth Advocacy Program—Syracuse	111,370	270,260
Strategies for Success	125,742	99,753
SCSD Connections	27,799	—
After School Alternatives—Syracuse	155,506	158,282
Youth Advocacy Program—New York City	495,115	452,221
Robin Hood	98,267	—
New York City—After School—Community Monitoring	270,753	11,440
Office of Children and Family Services	92,259	87,710
New York State Department of Health—Choices	317,026	302,963
Family Court Client Specific Planning	187,855	209,571
NYC Common Council Adult Specific Planning	52,424	8,578
CASA	106,959	113,319
MHRA Programs/Choices-1A and Precise-A/Co-Factors	101,026	447,473
MHRA Programs/Buddies/Women's Choices/Positive Choices	353,249	249,055
21st Century	214,354	213,286
HIV Mac Global	819	3,140
Parent Success Initiative	60,677	9,260
Total program services	5,312,229	4,681,880
Management and general	1,317,274	1,377,416
Total expenditures	6,629,503	6,059,296
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	72,077	111,463
NET ASSETS—BEGINNING OF YEAR	771,722	660,259
NET ASSETS—END OF YEAR	\$ 843,799	\$ 771,722



Betty Carroll, newly named Coordinator of CASA in Onondaga County



Bill Byrne, President of Byrne Dairy, and Christine Abaté, CCA Deputy Director, at the annual CASA Light of Hope Breakfast

Michael P. Freedman, former President of the Board of Directors, with Michelle Henry, current President



Patricia Warth, Co-Director of Justice Strategies

10 YEARS OF VOLUNTEER WORK WITH FOSTER CHILDREN

The CCA/CASA program celebrated 10 years of work with children in foster care in Onondaga County, holding a Volunteer Appreciation Day and a Light of Hope Breakfast, which raised \$6000 in contributions to support the program. CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) volunteers speak up for children who have been removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect and help to ensure that children in foster care don't fall through the cracks of the system. Betty Carroll, a long-time CASA volunteer, has been named the new coordinator of the program this year. Bill Byrne, President of Byrne Dairy, received the "Our Hero" Award.

CCA SUPPORTERS GATHER IN SYRACUSE AND MANHATTAN

CCA supporters gathered at the Syracuse Community Folk Art Gallery on June 5th to hear presentations by staff and youth who had recently returned from a U.N. hearing on human rights in Geneva, Switzerland. At a gathering on October 28th at the beautiful Nathan Cummings Foundation in midtown Manhattan, guests took in a panoramic view of the city and heard the moving, first-person success stories of three CCA clients. Said Jonathan Simmons, who completed a prison sentence in 2007 and is now assistant manager of a retail store: "I needed help and encouragement...someone to relate to me and let me know that anything is possible and impossible is nothing. By coming to CCA I was able to find all of that."



Above: CCA client Jonathan Simmons and family

As this report goes to press, we have just learned that Michael P. Freedman, longtime loyal Board member and leader of CCA, passed away. We will miss Michael's vision, commitment and intellect and extend our heartfelt sympathy to his family.



CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR JUSTICE

- 39 West 19th Street, 10th Floor
New York, NY 10011
T: 212.691.1911 F: 212.675.0825
- 115 East Jefferson Street, Suite 300
Syracuse, NY 13202
T: 315.422.5638 F: 315.471.4924
A United Way agency
- 25 Chapel Street, 7th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
T: 718.858.9658 F: 718.858.9670

Marsha Weissman
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Christine Abaté, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Josefina Bastidas, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Alan Rosenthal, Esq.
CO-DIRECTOR OF JUSTICE STRATEGIES AND COUNSEL

Patricia Warth, Esq.
CO-DIRECTOR OF JUSTICE STRATEGIES

Joseph G. Scro, CONTROLLER

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