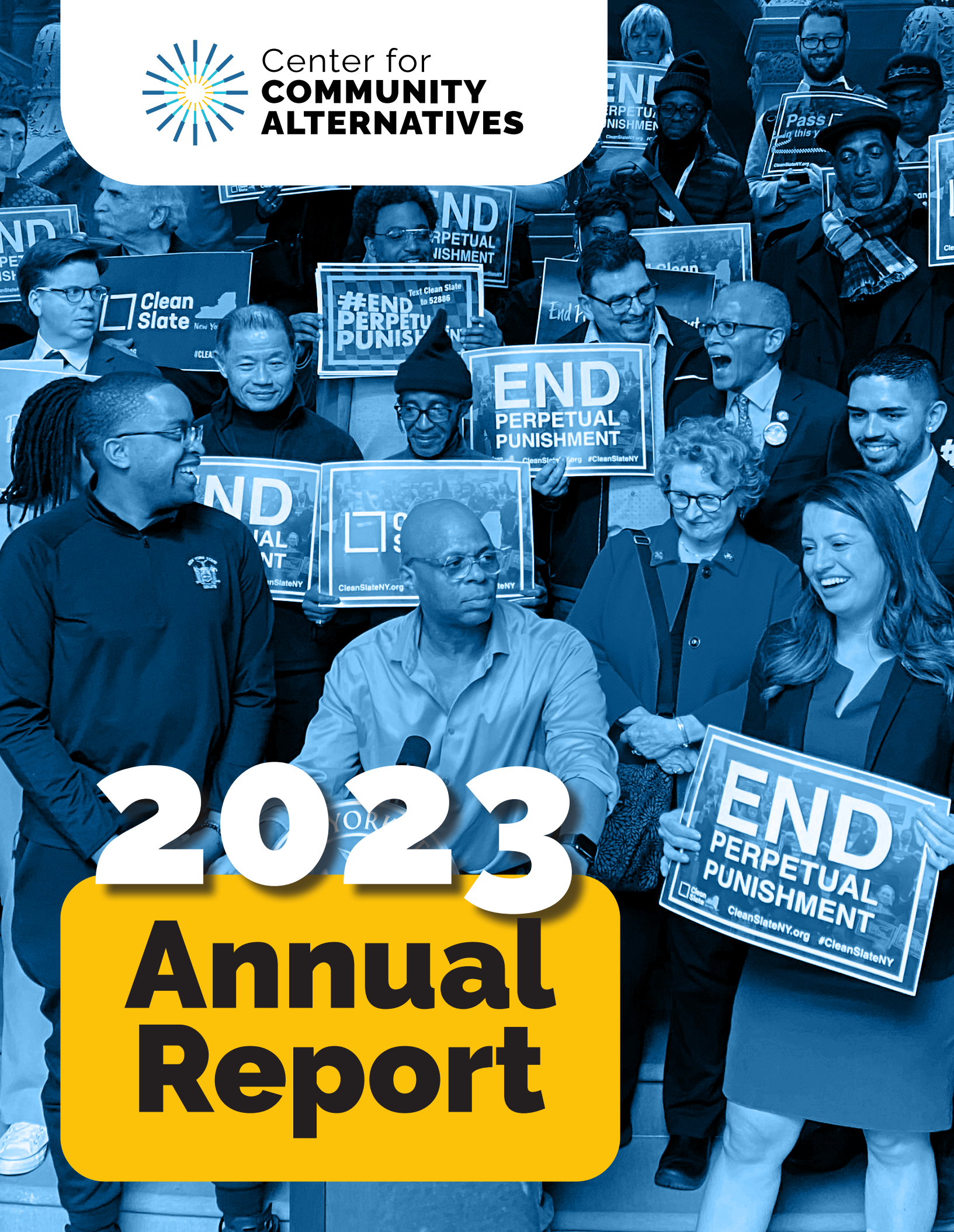


Center for  
**COMMUNITY  
ALTERNATIVES**



# 2023

# Annual Report

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**August 3rd Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Press Conference**

Photo by Lucy Chrysiliou

**Front Cover Photo: Marvin Mayfield leads Albany Clean Slate Rally**  
**Back Cover Photo: Patrick Stephens speaks at Albany Clean Slate Rally**

Photos by Tanya Linn Albrigtsen-Frable

## Dear Supporters and Friends,

This year has been a remarkable year of openings for CCA! After two years of hard work in planning and development, CCA opened its new integrated treatment program in downtown Brooklyn. By "integrated" we mean that it combines person-centered social services with outpatient drug treatment and/or medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for opioid use. Because state prisons now provide medication-assisted treatment, often methadone, for people in prison, it is crucial that people coming out have access to immediate continuation of treatment. However, because we want to be fully engaged in responding to the opioid crisis, the program is open to all persons needing its services.

This Autumn, we are opening our new Youth Center in the Brownsville neighborhood of Brooklyn. It seeks both to reduce gun violence and to open up better pathways for youth by encouraging community involvement, providing job opportunities, and creating safe neighborhood space for youth. CCA has designed the Center's space to provide a warm, inviting multi-purpose place where youth can safely gather.

We continue to open our new youth services in Rochester as well. As a way of resisting the "school-to-prison pipeline" we are replicating our transition advocacy program, which has successfully operated in Syracuse for many years. The program seeks to reduce the number of out of school suspensions and to help suspended students transition back to mainstream school. In Rochester, we have also created a Youth Advisory Board to help create a new program that will provide young adult mentors for youth with cases in family court or with the criminal legal system. This program models the notion of having justice-involved youth teach us how they can best be supported.

Likewise, our organizing and advocacy efforts have opened up new opportunities for all New Yorkers. Those with conviction histories will benefit from passage of the Clean Slate Act, which after a period of time allows criminal records to be sealed, reducing the barriers people in reentry continue to face with employment, education and housing. All New Yorkers will benefit from the selection of a progressive Chief Judge, who has a record of standing up for people engaged in the criminal legal system. These are but a few highlights. Inside you will find much more on these and other stories.

We want to thank all of you for supporting this work and making these exciting developments possible!

Sincerely,

Daniel Arshack, Esq. + David C. Condliffe, Esq.

*Board President*

*Executive Director*

# Wellness Center Opens in Downtown Brooklyn

In August, 150 government officials, public health and community leaders, law-makers and advocates gathered to celebrate the opening of CCA's new Wellness Center in Downtown Brooklyn. The Center expands on CCA's decades of treatment and harm-reduction services by becoming New York's first integrated opioid treatment program tailored for people who have been involved with the criminal legal system.

The Wellness Center offers comprehensive harm reduction services for substance users and those in recovery, including medication-assisted opioid treatment, mental health counseling, court advocacy, health education, and employment support provided by a multidisciplinary team of experts and peers.

What New York has needed for a long time is an integrated opioid treatment program that is tailored to the needs of people who have been impacted by the criminal injustice system. CCA's Wellness Center confronts the stigma, shame and punishment so many active users face. Instead, we commit to providing the highest quality holistic treatment and support that all of our community members need to thrive.

Carole Eady-Porcher,  
CCA Board of Directors



August 3rd Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Press Conference  
Photo by Lucy Chrysioliu

# CCA Opens Youth Center in Brownsville, Brooklyn

This Autumn, CCA is opening a flagship Youth Center in Brooklyn's Brownsville neighborhood, which will serve as a community-building space for young people engaged in CCA programming. The Center will feature a full schedule of paid training opportunities, restorative justice programming, arts and literacy, education access, and community organizing activities.

The Youth Center presents an exciting opportunity to deepen connections between young people and their communities and provide long-term support to youth affected by the criminal legal system. It will also allow CCA staff to address the recent increase in gun violence in the communities we serve, as the Center will be the focal point for a number of strategies that have proven effective in addressing the root causes of violence, including providing job programs for young people, providing services in localized spaces, and engaging young people via credible messengers.

Programs offered at the Center will include:

- Community Carpenters: a health-equity-themed workforce training opportunity for justice-involved youth
- NextGen Neighborhood Network: NYC's primary reentry and employment initiative for youth returning home from detention/incarceration which CCA coordinates in partnership with nine grassroots organizations
- Youth Action Leadership Council: a training opportunity designed to develop young people's leadership skills through youth-led civic engagement projects
- Success Essential Skills: a soft skills work readiness training program
- Advanced Career Pathways: a vocational training and paid internship program

CCA will serve upwards of 300 youth annually via the Youth Center and support an additional 500 Brownsville community members through regular workshops, activities, outreach, and community events.



Architectural Rendering of CCA's Brownsville Youth Center

# Youth Services Grow in Rochester

Our Youth Services in Rochester continue to expand in 2023 as we replicate our successful Syracuse work in the region.

Our Transition Advocacy Program in Syracuse has over a decade of experience interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline. Transition Advocates in Rochester have trained with this team to support students and their guardians throughout the disciplinary process for out-of-school suspension, with the goal of keeping students in school.

This year, the Youth Programs in Rochester launched a 12-member stipended Youth Advisory Board to co-design our new Youth Justice Peer Mentorship Program. The Youth Justice Peer Mentorship Program will pair young adult mentors with resolved family court and criminal legal cases to support young people with pending system involvement.

Youth Advisory Board members design opportunities that will be available for young people in the Youth Justice Peer Mentorship program. For example, leading YAB member Skye R. has designed a Sports Club for youth who want to try out for sports such as volleyball, track and soccer. The club is meant to encourage youth confidence through peer support.

**What makes CCA's Youth Services unique is the way we advocate for youth, and that we support youth to advocate for themselves and their peers. We truly value the youth voice, and work alongside them as partners. We're not just another agency working with youth—we're working for youth.**

**Nkem Norris**  
Director, Youth Services  
Rochester



**Nkem Norris, Director of Rochester Youth Services**  
Photo by Tanya Linn Albrigtsen-Frable

# A Year of Triumph and Loss for Advocacy & Organizing

CCA led The Court NY Deserves and organized the defeat of Justice Hector LaSalle's nomination for Chief Judge of New York's highest court. LaSalle pushed to uphold wrongful arrests and convictions, and signed decisions that would undermine the rights of workers and women. This was a first-of-its-kind victory - never before had the Senate rejected a Governor's nomination for Chief Judge. The Court New York Deserves subsequently secured the nomination and confirmation of Justice Rowan Wilson, who has a record of standing up for the rights of incarcerated people and others entangled in the criminal legal system.

In April, our beloved Director of Organizing, Marvin Mayfield, unexpectedly passed away. Marvin was a freedom fighter who led with his heart. He galvanized people across New York State to end racist and unjust sentencing laws, win a clean slate for people with conviction records, support parole justice, and protect bail reform. He did this with a deep and unwavering belief that the world can and will change - and that it is our collective power and the leadership of impacted people and families who will make that change real. The New York State Senate and Assembly passed a resolution in his honor.

In June, we won historic passage of the Clean Slate Act, the most expansive record sealing bill in the country, which will automatically seal old conviction records and allow formerly incarcerated New Yorkers to access jobs, housing, and education. The bill was passed with an unprecedented coalition of businesses, labor unions, and civil rights organizations, which our team spent years organizing.

"The passage of the Clean Slate Act is transformative for me and millions of New Yorkers who share my struggle," said member-leader Melinda Agnew. "In October of 1999, I was sentenced to three years' probation. I completed my sentence, and since then, I have become a mom and a grandma, returned to school, obtained both my bachelor's degree and my master's. Yet 25 years later, despite all that I have done to give back to my community, I am still turned away from jobs, denied promotions and rejected from housing programs because of my two-decade old conviction. While our fight to end perpetual punishment for all people is on-going, we celebrate the Legislature for their commitment to Clean Slate."



CCA Staff and Members with Speaker of the New York State Assembly Carl Heastie in Albany after passage of Clean Slate



Edith Mayfield speaks with CCA members at Albany Communities Not Cages Rally  
Photo by Khalil Stephens



## Pathways to Workforce Projects in Central New York

With two historic construction projects underway, the redevelopment of the I-81 interchange and the construction of Micron Technology's semiconductor manufacturing plant, demand is high for skilled trade workers in Onondaga County. CCA's Reintegration Services program is working to ensure that people returning home from incarceration have the training and support necessary to access these exciting career opportunities.

In partnership with training providers Onondaga-Cortland-Madison Board of Cooperative Educational Services, State University of New York's Educational Opportunity Center, and the Building Trades, CCA will be connecting justice-involved people to training programs in electrical, HVAC, plumbing, welding, and other trades. These programs will prepare participants for tens of thousands of high-wage jobs with decades-long career potential.

As Central NY begins this exciting new chapter in workforce development, CCA will continue to support justice-involved individuals as they overcome obstacles to employment and break the cycle of incarceration.



## Continued Success in Reentry Advocacy

Our Reentry Advocacy services provide one-on-one advocacy for people with conviction histories to address barriers to employment, housing, licensure and higher education. For many years the NYS Bar Foundation has supported our reentry advocacy work. This year, CCA received private funding to expand our work in our Rochester office.

In 2023, Reentry Advocacy provided legal services and individualized 1:1 know your rights information to 140 people; 98 clients' cases are ongoing. This year, staff were able to identify and correct all of the errors on 24 of our clients' records. One client had their record fully sealed, and sealing motions are in process for others. Eight clients obtained Certificates of Rehabilitation from a court or from DOCCS, including two who had been clients for several years. Five clients received either a professional license or state agency clearance to work after our advocacy, and one was able to advance in their job after obtaining a Certificate of Good Conduct, which removed a statutory bar for the position. In another win, a client applied for a job and learned they had a 9-year-old arrest. The Reentry Attorney in the program filed for and obtained dismissal of the case.

Reentry Advocacy has continued to do outreach and public presentations at the public library, colleges, and in partnership with other service providers.



## Mitigation Services Continue to Expand

CCA's Mitigation Services program has expanded to Madison and Broome Counties, offering support for New Yorkers facing criminal charges by providing an assessment of each person's particular circumstance and giving defense counsel the context needed to argue for an alternative/reduced sentence.

The program mitigates the human costs of incarceration – lost earnings, adverse health effects, separated families – and generates significant savings for the public. In New York, the average cost of incarcerating an individual in prison for one year is almost \$70,000.

CCA continues to provide mitigation services in NYC/Westchester, Syracuse, and Rochester. In Syracuse, CCA also now provides psycho-social assessments as part of Onondaga County's new domestic violence court program. In the coming year, CCA plans to expand its mitigation services, particularly in Dutchess and Ulster Counties.



## New Offerings from Alternatives to Incarceration Program

As part of our commitment to providing services that are responsive to participant needs, CCA's Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) program is now offering a self-regulation curriculum, which recognizes participant trauma and removes punitive language often present in traditional "anger management" programs. The curriculum provides short-term, solution-focused strategies that satisfy court mandates while also allowing for creative, individualized support for each participant.

We have also launched a monthly Parents' Corner event at CCA's office in Downtown Brooklyn. Parents' Corner is designed to connect parents/guardians of ATI participants to a support network of peers through interactive activities and group sessions covering topics such as self-care and parenting techniques. As we continue to develop our family engagement offerings, we plan to add home-based family counseling services.



# CCA's CUSE and CORE Centers Provide Youth Recovery Support Services

In response to a rise in substance use among young people, CCA's CUSE and CORE Centers are developing comprehensive peer recovery support services designed for youth ages 13 to 17 in Syracuse and Rochester.

Supported by New York State's SOR-3 initiative, recovery groups are person-centered and self-directed, recognizing recovery as an ongoing process. To promote youth engagement, CCA has developed clubhouse/afterschool activities, including a sound engineering program where young people can learn to make beats with guidance from a professional sound engineer and explore their passion for music.

CCA's CUSE and CORE Centers also continue to operate their longstanding adult peer support services, designed to help formerly incarcerated individuals achieve employment, education, and other personal goals throughout the ongoing process of recovery.



**Freedom Commons Staff and Community**  
Photo by Hany Osman

## Freedom Commons Celebrates Four Years

CCA's Freedom Commons is celebrating four years of providing an innovative combination of affordable, permanent supportive, and emergency/transitional housing designed for low-income people in Syracuse, including those returning home from incarceration.

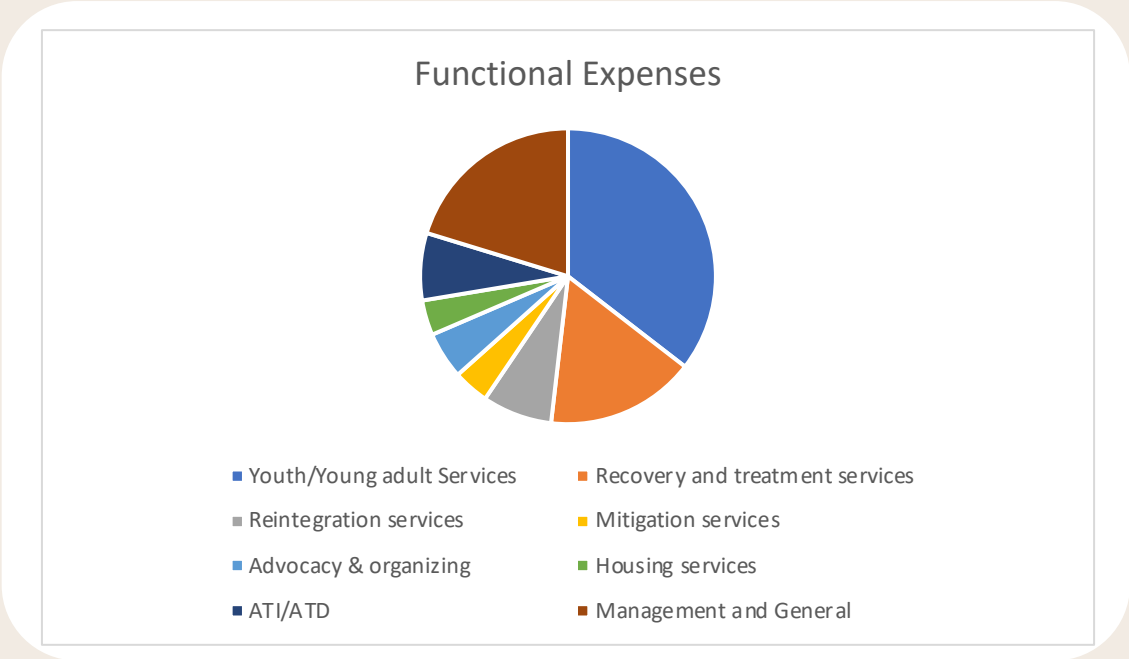
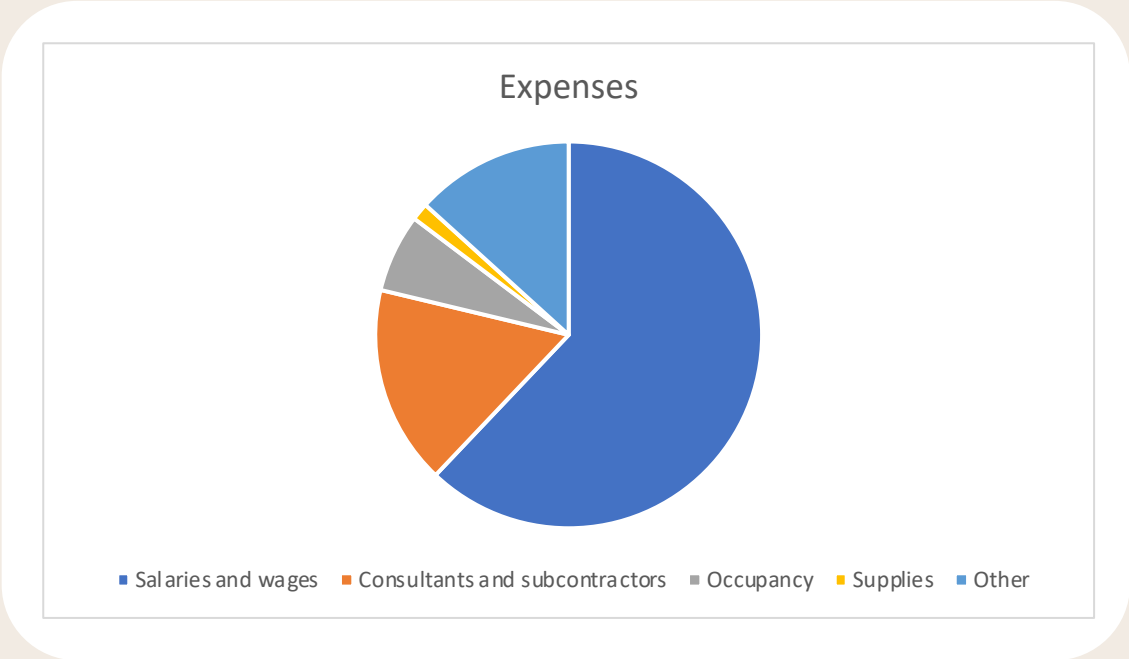
In partnership with the Syracuse Housing Authority, this groundbreaking project continues to garner strong support, including an official shelter designation from the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance and a Rapid Re-housing grant via HUD's Continuum of Care program.

This support allows CCA to deliver high quality education, employment, and reentry services to Freedom Commons residents and connect Academy (emergency/transitional) residents to safe, affordable housing. We look forward to continuing to help people create new life narratives and to offer the support needed to make the transition from incarceration to homeownership a reality.

**Christopher Reed, Resident Advisor at Freedom Commons**  
Photo by Tanya Linn Albrigtsen-Frable



# Operating Revenues and Expenses



<b>SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Government Grants and Contracts	\$13,067,503	\$10,403,288
Contributions and Other Revenue	\$3,011,150	\$2,729,144
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$16,078,653</b>	<b>\$13,132,432</b>

<b>EXPENSES BY COST CATEGORY</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Salaries and Wages	\$9,826,974	\$7,821,590
Consultants and Subcontractors	\$2,635,897	\$2,049,149
Occupancy	\$1,035,400	\$1,103,150
Supplies	\$230,272	\$114,814
Other	\$2,100,394	\$1,138,318
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,828,937</b>	<b>\$12,227,021</b>

<b>EXPENSES BY PROGRAM AREA</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Youth/Young Adult Services	\$5,614,192	\$4,478,136
Recovery and Treatment services	\$2,590,506	\$1,820,405
Reintegration Services	\$1,209,332	\$990,183
Mitigation Services	\$620,863	\$491,514
Advocacy & Organizing	\$814,104	\$505,472
Housing Services	\$606,941	\$521,408
ATI/ATD	\$1,165,265	\$1,083,614
Management and General	\$3,207,734	\$2,336,289
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,828,937</b>	<b>\$12,227,021</b>

**Center for Community Alternatives** (CCA) supports and builds power with people across New York State who have been affected by mass incarceration, criminalization and community disinvestment.

Through a statewide network of direct services, advocacy and organizing, and by supporting the leadership of directly-impacted people, we advance civil and human rights for all New Yorkers.

CCA works to build a world where everyone has what they need to thrive.



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