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## A YEAR OF TRANSITION — AND STILL GOING STRONG

In 2021, I was called to serve as the Interim Executive Director for the ACLU of Wisconsin. While I have been involved with this organization for more than a decade — starting out as a student alliance organizer in our youth program, then as a volunteer turned board member — taking on the role of running the Wisconsin affiliate was not a responsibility I took lightly.

2021 did not bring the reprieve many of us hoped for. January started off with an attack on our nation's capital. The pandemic that we all hoped would be over introduced new strains of variants, affecting our work, our lives, and our team. And our programs and community work had to quickly adapt, switching between in-person to virtual, to a combination of both, and then back to virtual. But even amidst all these challenges, both the old and new, one thing stayed the same: the ACLU's dedication to justice and equality for all. For over 90 years, our affiliate has answered the call when civil rights and liberties have fallen under siege, and as we prepare for an increase of attacks in this upcoming year, our team is using every resource available to not only continue the initiatives we're known for, but to remain responsive to the emerging threats that come our way.

This year, our team traveled the state, attending the Joint Finance Budget hearings scattered across Wisconsin, demanding a budget that reflected the will of the people — one grounded in justice, equity and investment in communities — especially in marginalized communities. We remained committed to challenging the criminalization and incarceration of young people, recognizing that children are still developing and instead should be given opportunities for treatment, rehabilitation, and positive reinforcement. As a result, we continue to advocate for the closure of the Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake youth prisons after a monitor report showed an increase in the use of force, restraints, and improper use of solitary confinement. We also remained active in the fight for student's rights — celebrating our recent win that ordered the Burlington Area School District to submit a written plan detailing the steps they would take to prevent further discrimination in displicine and address the racially hostile environment present in its schools.

A legal precedent which would go on to achieving similar outcomes in other Wisconsin districts.

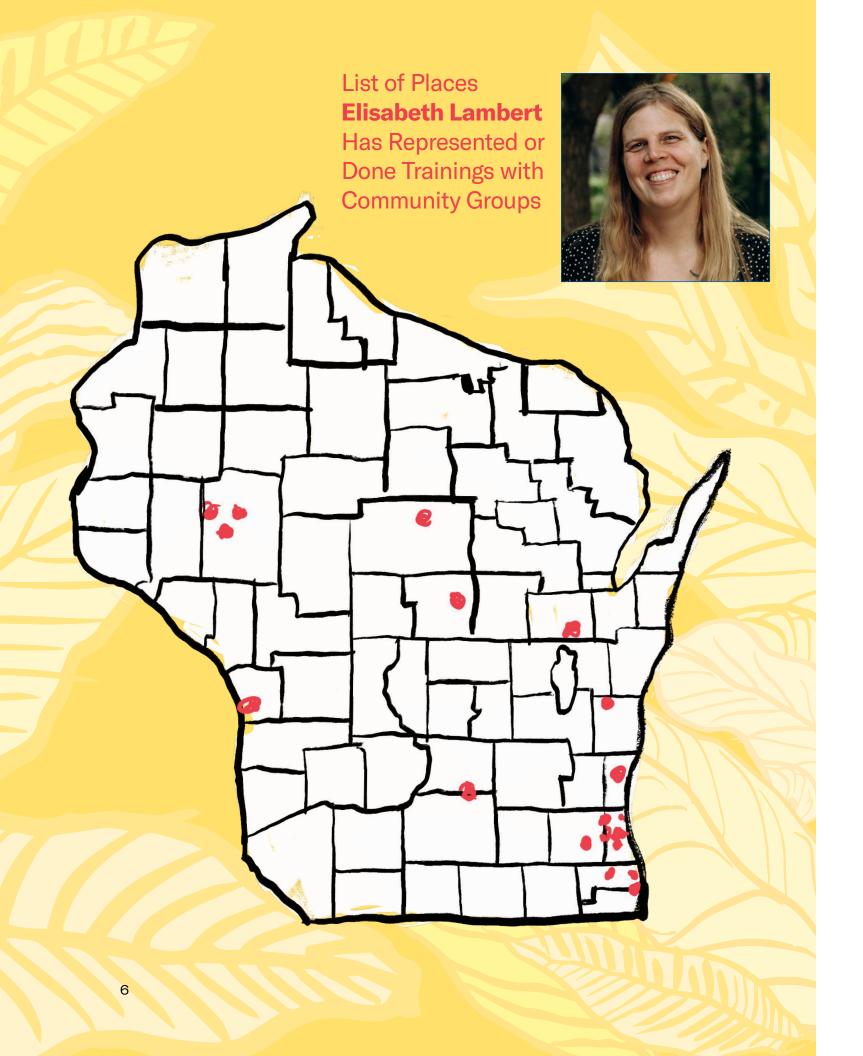
And while it's important to remember the success we experienced, we can't forget about those who stood with us along the way. Despite being another difficult year for so many, our ACLU community continued to show up when called upon, ensuring that we had the resources we needed to keep up the fight. In such a time of prolonged uncertainty, you were there alongside us, again and again without fail. Through your time, your gifts, your outreach — you played a crucial role in making all the work you'll soon read about a lived reality — and for that you should be proud.

There is still much work to do. The road ahead won't be easy, and we are anticipating the new election year to bring with it an increased number of attacks on our civil rights and civil liberties. But I remain confident that with our team of staff, donors, members, volunteers, and supporters, we'll be able to handle any threat that comes our way.

Shaadie Ali

Interim Executive Director





## **EDUCATION EQUITY**

Public school districts have a legal responsibility to provide a quality and equitable education to all Wisconsin students. Despite this law, we have received numerous complaints that this standard is not a reality for many students from marginalized communities across the state. On too many occasions, we found that districts' responses (if any at all) to complaints of harassment and discrimination were insufficient — with the majority of them choosing to either adopt half-hearted solutions that fail to foster systemic change, or attempt to minimize, and even outright deny, that problems ever existed. In response, we took immediate action, filing — and winning — a number of school-related harassment and discrimination complaints filed on behalf of affected students, compelling school administrators to reform district policies and practices so that every complaint is handled with the seriousness it deserves.

One example of our work in action took place in Burlington, where we filed an appeal to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) on behalf of Darnisha Gardbade, a mother whose two Black children both experienced frequent racial harassment from other students – including being routinely subjected to racial slurs and, in one instance, receiving harsher disciplinary action than white students. In response, DPI ruled that the Burlington Area School District (BASD) had not been doing enough to address the ongoing racial harassment and discrimation faced by students of color in its schools; and as a result, they were ordered to submit a written plan detailing the steps they would take to prevent further discrimination in displicine and address the racially hostile environment present in its schools. This victory set a legal precedent that enabled us to take bold action on behalf of students and families in districts like Chippewa Falls and Cedarburg.

But we didn't stop there. In addition to our legal efforts, we've also held numerous trainings spanning multiple districts that both educate and empower parents and students on how to utilize their school's harassment and discrimination complaint process, which can be incredibly complicated and cumbersome to navigate. During these trainings, we educate parents, students, teachers, and anyone else interested in how to engage in this process with an understanding of how the system operates; the steps needed to initiate a formal harassment claim; how to submit a complaint; and their rights within the school system. We also work to connect trained parents and community groups so that they can support one another, and continue to train members of their communities, making the tools and knowledge needed to navigate this complex system and take action more accessible to all.

## **CULTIVATIVE COALITION**

# "Students should not have to fear being harassed while they are simply trying to get an education."

Through our work in ensuring that all Wisconsin students have an equal and equitable learning environment, we have formed relationships with new coalition partners in different areas across the state.

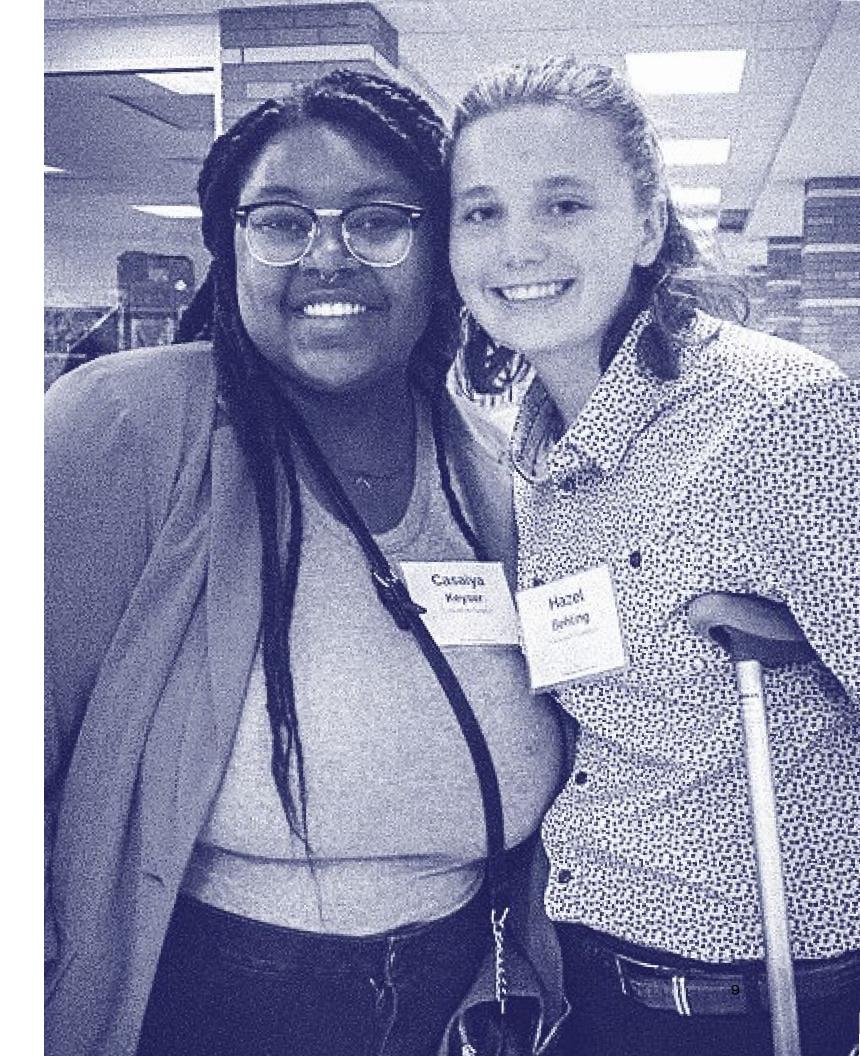
In Chippewa Falls, the ACLU of Wisconsin worked in concert with the Cultative Coalition – a group consisting of former Chippewa Falls Area Unified School District students who experienced severe and persistent discriminatory harassment at school – to address the district's unwelcoming environment for marginalized students. The Cultative Coalition formed because students were unsatisfied with CFAUSD's response to the various kinds of mistreatment they experienced.

For over a year, members of the coalition have been pushing the district to take stronger measures against discrimination and harrassment of students of color and LGBTQ+ students.

This past June, the Cultavative Coalition joined the complaint we filed against the district with DPI, acting as co-complainants, in hopes that CFAUSD will: be more transparent about the environment at its schools; implement antiharassment programming for staff and students to create a healthier school culture; and provide a clear and accessible complaint procedure and other strong supports for students who are targets of harassment.

"These students have come together and said 'as students with protected identities, we want to change the culture' and have united together to push for that change," said Elisabeth Lambert, Equal Justice Works Fellow at the ACLU of Wisconsin. "And their collaboration has been instrumental in getting district administrators to come to the table and discuss issues that for too long have been neglected."

"We hope that in the future, the Chippewa Falls School District will take the claims of harassment made by their students seriously. The District needs to surround those students with support and safety so that they can fully participate in their school experience without fear of further harassment," the Cultavative Coalition said in a statement. "Students should not have to fear being harassed while they are simply trying to get an education, and the Chippewa Falls School District owes a welcoming and safe environment to its students."





In Wisconsin, and especially in urban areas like Milwaukee, people of color and people with disabilities are far more likely to rely on public transportation to get to work, school, shops and hospitals.

# TRANSIT EQUITY AND I-94 EXPANSION

One of the challenges of defending civil rights and liberties is that our battles don't always stay won, especially as we operate in an ever-changing political climate. One example of this is the renewed state and federal effort to expand I-94 in the city of Milwaukee – a project that they withdrew after we sued them over it back in 2017.

For two decades, we have worked on environmental justice and transit equity issues. In Wisconsin, and especially in urban areas like Milwaukee, people of color and people with disabilities are far more likely to rely on public transportation to get to work, school, shops and hospitals. Yet while the state and federal governments pay for highway after expanded highway – in large part to facilitate commuting to our largely segregated suburbs – transit has been allowed to languish – which has a discriminatory effect on these communities. Moreover, communities of color are more likely to bear the burdens of massive highway projects, like higher exposure to air pollution caused by vehicle and truck traffic. So not only will Black and Brown people who are more likely to reside in the affected areas have less access to the transportation they rely on, but they will also have compromised air quality and health risks.

The government's renewed effort to expand I-94 – not just by adding lanes, but by vastly increasing the footprint of some of the interchanges – once again threatens these communities. Thus in early 2021, we and our allies notified the U.S. Department of Transportation of our concerns, seeking to ensure that the project did not go forward without an updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). As a result of these efforts, the state agreed to do a new EIS – but we remain deeply concerned that the flaws of the previous project will not be remedied, and that the public transportation needs of communities of color and persons with disabilities will not be addressed. Once the EIS is prepared, we expect to prepare and file extensive comments – and to consider whether litigation will again be necessary.

The ACLU of Wisconsin was one of the first – and is still one of the few – ACLU affiliates to take on transit equity work. It hasn't always been easy to get key decision-makers to make the connection between transportation and racial and environmental justice, but through our combined efforts in coalition with our partners, we are beginning to see improvements. We all must understand that transportation policies and practices have profound racial implications, as well as environmental ones, and we will continue to work to accomplish those goals.

### RETHINKING JUVENILE LIFE SENTENCE

Children sentenced to life in prison have the right to a meaningful chance to earn their freedom.



"The named plaintiffs in this case have gotten jobs and are experiencing success re-integrating into their communities. They have earned promotions, found homes, received driver's licenses, and purchased cars. More importantly, they've reconnected with family members and loved ones, spouses and children, and have been able to provide care and support for loved ones who are aging."

**Emma Shakeshaft** 

In 2019, with the support of the private law firms Quarles & Brady and Foley & Lardner, and attorneys Issa Kohler-Hausmann and Avery Gilbert, the ACLU of Wisconsin filed a class-action lawsuit in federal court. The suit sought to stop unconstitutional refusals of parole-eligible people sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes they committed as youth.

Wisconsin's parole system does not provide a meaningful second chance at freedom for people with life sentences who committed crimes as children and fails to use a standard of rehabilitation and reform and therefore imposes excessive punishment, which violates the Eighth, Fourteenth and Sixth Amendments.

Since bringing the case three years ago, our legal team has helped eight of its named plaintiffs return home from prison, offering them a path to redemption that had long been denied.

Emma Shakeshaft, staff attorney and researcher for the ACLU of Wisconsin who works on this case shared, "The named plaintiffs in this case have gotten jobs and are experiencing success re-integrating into their communities. They have earned promotions, found homes, received driver's licenses, and purchased cars. More importantly, they've reconnected with family members and loved ones, spouses and children, and have been able to provide care and support for loved ones who are aging."

And that's only the beginning. The ultimate goal of this litigation is to compel the state to change the standards used to determine parole eligibility to include rehabilitation and maturation in their considerations, and provide adequate protection against arbitrary and erroneous denials.

"The fact that our clients have been released and are now thriving speaks to the tremendous capacity for change that incarcerated people have. Everyone is more than the worst decision they have ever made, and people should not be condemned to spend their entire lives in prison for mistakes they made as children. Wisconsin must fulfill its constitutional obligation to provide juvenile lifers with a legitimate opportunity to earn their freedom," Shakeshaft said.

Greg Everts, a partner in Quarles & Brady's Madison office, said "I have worked on criminal justice policy, prosecuted white-collar fraud and, in pro bono work, sought to ensure that our criminal justice systems treat people fairly. It's been rewarding to work with the ACLU in seeking to vindicate the rights of juveniles sentenced to life in prison and create a fairer parole process. The Supreme Court has recognized that young people are uniquely capable of change and redemption, and this case seeks to ensure that our clients, who show they've grown up and rehabilitated themselves while in prison, have a meaningful chance at freedom."

### **BRIDGING THE GAP**

## How private practice lawyers help ACLU litigation move forward

Everyone familiar with the ACLU of Wisconsin knows that our work in the courts is a cornerstone of who we are and what we do, but we wouldn't have our long track record of legal success without the support that we receive from our legal partners in the private sector.

Though the ACLU generally leads each case we take on, the collaboration we count on from outside attorneys working pro bono is vital for the sustainability of our efforts. In addition to their legal acumen and strategic partnership, firms like Quarles & Brady and Foley & Lardner have consistently provided us with crucial (and oftentimes expensive) resources like personnel and technology for managing large, complex cases that would be difficult for a non-profit organization to manage alone.

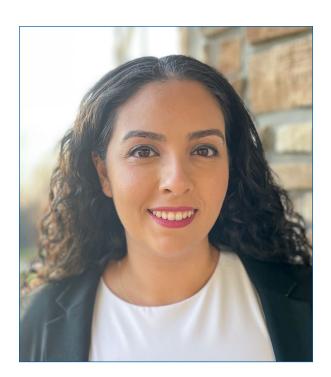
In addition to the case seeking fair parole for juveniles sentenced to life, Quarles & Brady has acted as co-counsel on our lawsuit against the Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake youth prisons, and our case on behalf of LGBT student groups seeking to defend the Madison School District's inclusive and supportive policies for transgender students against an attack by conservative groups. Over the years, both Quarles & Brady and Foley & Lardner have also assisted with ACLU amicus briefs in state and federal courts.

"Small firms and solo practitioners are also important partners in many of our cases. But large firms like Quarles and Foley are especially important in impact litigation cases, where we are trying to change systems and institutions. Such cases are enormous, complicated undertakings that require a massive amount of resources, labor, and expertise," said Legal Director Larry Dupuis. "These private attorneys have gone above and beyond to make some of our most landmark legal victories a reality."

"There is nothing that we as attorneys hold more true than the fact that in order for our justice system to work, it needs to work for everyone," said Michael Levey, national pro bono partner at Quarles & Brady. "It is with that in mind that our firm has provided pro bono support on ACLU cases for many years. We have a longstanding commitment to trying to address the justice gap in our country through a variety of pro bono efforts, and partnering with the ACLU provides an important opportunity for our attorneys to give back in a meaningful way."

# THANK YOU TO OUR 2021 LEGAL PARTNERS

CASE	FIRM	LAWYERS		
Weddle v. Evers (voter ID)	Dechert	Neil Steiner, Angela Liu, Anna Do, Tharuni Jayaraman, Selby Brown		
Doe v. Madison Sch Dist (trans student rights)	Quarles & Brady	Emily Feinstein, Adam Prinsen		
Cedarburg Sch Dist v. DPI (racially hostile school climate)	Salawdeh Law Office	Rebecca Salawdeh		
Heredia v. Tate (parole for juvenile lifers)	Quarles & Brady Foley & Lardner	Gregory Everts, Martha Snyder, Patrick Proctor Brown, Ellen Cranberg & Madison Hartman, Quarles Hilary Vedvig, Holden Brooks, Dan Kaplan, Katelynn Williams, Tara Dobbs, Paul King & Jasmine Reed, Foley		
JJ v. Litscher (Lincoln Hills/ Copper Lake conditions)	Quarles & Brady	Lauren Zenk		
Collins v. City of Milwaukee (stop & frisk)	Covington & Burling	Shanya Dingle, Jon Dougherty		
English v. City of Milwaukee (unlawful dispersal and false arrest during protests)	A. Steven Porter Attorney at Law	Steve Porter		
West v. Kind (amicus trans employee rights)	DLA Piper	John Hamill		
In re C.G. (amicus trans right to name change)	Ballard Spahr	Matthew Kelley		



## WELCOME TO THE TEAM NOUR KALBOUNEH!

In August of 2021, Nour Kalbouneh joined the ACLU of Wisconsin and quickly became an integral part of our team, supporting both our Legal and Community Engagement & Advocacy Departments.

Nour, who grew up as an undocumented immigrant, was detained and thrown into the legal system at a young age, witnessing first hand the injustices happening to the people all around her. During college, she volunteered at a prison, helping incarcerated residents earn their bachelor's degrees. This experience led her to later pursue an internship with the Innocence Project, an organization that helps people who are

"These kinds of wins help improve the quality of life for these individuals, and I'm honored to be a part of the team that makes it possible."

wrongly convicted get exonerated. She then decided to bring her talents to the ACLU of Wisconsin as our Legal Intake and Community Engagement Coordinator.

Nour's job at our affiliate is not an easy one. As the point person responsible for handling all of our legal intake requests, she manages the extremely difficult task of reading through all of our intake letters, emails, and voicemails that come to our organization from people across Wisconsin requesting help and support with their legal issues. On average, she receives approximately 20 to 30 letters when we receive mail, a colossal volume of emails, and anywhere from five to 15 voicemails each day.

After reviewing the materials, Nour evaluates whether or not the request for support is something our affiliate is able to assist with, and if so, she elevates the information to our team of lawyers in the legal department. In the instance we are not able to provide the assistance the person is seeking, Nour will track down key resources and point the individual in the direction that is most likely to help them access the help they need.

Approximately 90% of our legal intake requests are from incarcerated people and their families, citing medical care issues and injustices they are facing while incarcerated, including abuse, excessive lockdowns, and food quality issues.

Through intake, we also receive information about discrimination in schools and school board meetings, as well as persistent issues with police departments. This information is critical to keeping our organization connected to the community, and aware of the current issues occurring across the state.

And while we are thankful for the role Nour plays in this process, we also know that reading about injustices and abuses of power daily can be mentally tasking. "At the beginning, it was really, really hard for me and it took a toll on my mental health," Nour shared. "I'd feel really bad about doing simple things like going out to eat with my friends or relaxing at home because I knew people were experiencing all these horrible things."

One of the ways Nour copes with the high mental demand of her role is by celebrating the wins achieved by our involvement with a request for support. One example of this occurred when she helped our legal team reverse the ban on correspondence in jails. While reviewing intake requests, she received a letter from an incarcerated person in Oneida County Jail. Though their complaint was primarily a medical care issue, the person mentioned briefly that the jail had stopped allowing the incarcerated people to receive physical mail, something Nour quickly confirmed by visiting their website. "I thought, incarcerated people are already going through so much. Why would the jail make the choice to isolate them further?" She reached out to our Legal Director, Larry Dupuis, and the legal team filed open record requests while Larry reached out and spoke with the jail in question. These combined efforts ultimately led to the jail reversing its policy.

"It really reminded me why I do this work. Being able to receive mail from your loved ones is important since incarcerated people are often isolated. These kinds of wins help improve the quality of life for these individuals, and I'm honored to be a part of the team that makes it possible."

In addition to managing all of our legal intake requests, Nour also works closely with our Community Engagement Department, specifically in our Youth Program working with our Rufus King Student Alliance. During student alliance meetings, which take place after school hours at our partner school locations. students and members of our youth team meet to discuss current events, create art, and discuss and participate in civic engagement opportunities wherever applicable.

"Watching these young people talk about the really important issues they are trying to fix is inspiring to me. I'm just in awe of how motivated and revolutionary these young people are," Nour said. "It gives me hope for the future knowing these are our next generation of leaders".

### **CASE UPDATE: VOTER ID**

In 2011, we filed our voter ID case, shortly after Wisconsin's infamous voter ID law went into effect. Over the course of 11 years, more than 200,000 documents, numerous filing and appeals, and countless hours of legal work later, our case has led to a number of improvements that have made both securing and using a photo ID to vote less onerous.

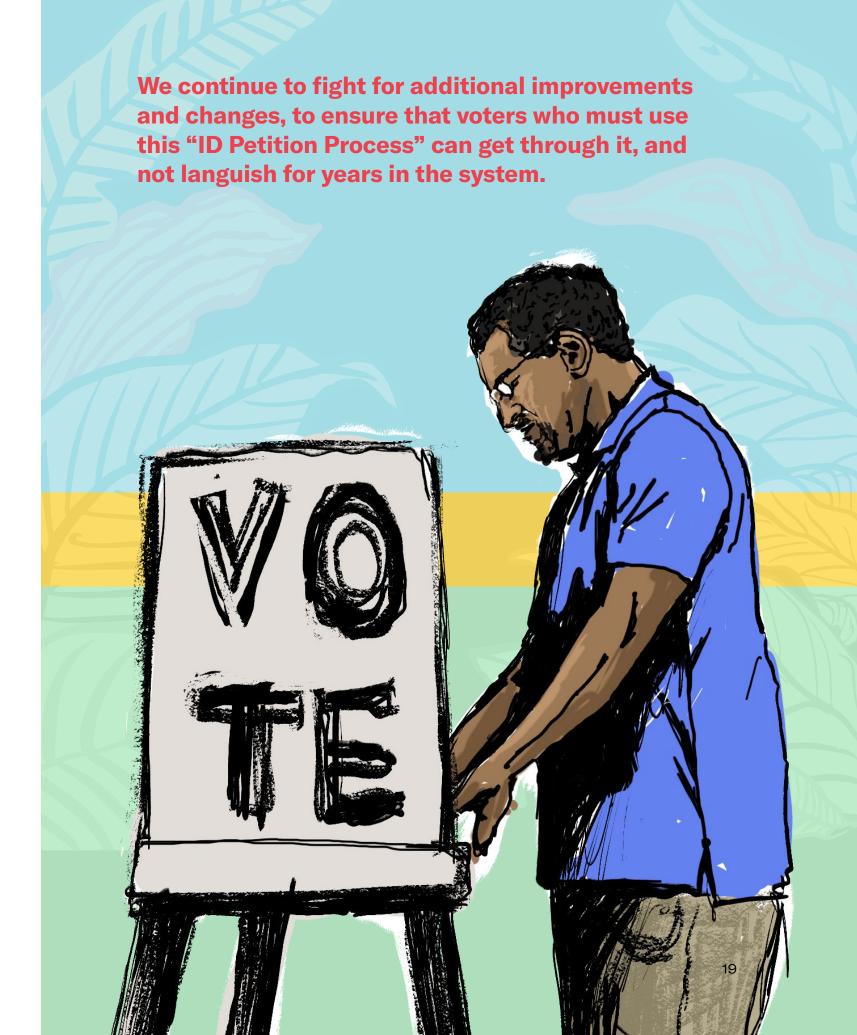
When we first went to court, there was a long list of documents people needed to obtain and produce to the DMV just to get an ID to vote. Some of the documents voters needed to get this "free" ID - like birth certificates - usually cost money that the voters themselves had to pay, and other times documents that the DMV demanded did not exist. This, of course, was a way that eligible voters could be disenfranchised. In addition, the process - including understanding what documentation was needed and how to access it - was confusing, and difficult for eligible voters to navigate. For example, one of our original plaintiffs was in her 80s, still lived in the house in a small town where she had been born, had never seen her birth certificate, and when she finally did see it she found out it had errors - so DMV would not accept it without her going through costly and time consuming procedures to change it. Another voter spent hundreds of dollars trying to change his birth certificate to the DMV's satisfaction because it erroneously used "Junior" as his middle name instead of at the end of his name.

Our extensive litigation and litigation by other partners and allies ultimately led to the state setting up – and repeatedly improving – a process that now allows Wisconsin voters to get the IDs they need to vote even if they lack documents like birth certificates, without having to pay for those documents.

In addition, our case originally challenged limitations on the kinds of IDs that could be used to vote. Ultimately the state changed the law to allow veterans' administration IDs and Wisconsin technical college IDs to be used as valid IDs to vote.

While our involvement in this work has resulted in improvements in Wisconsin's voting process, our fight is still not over. We continue to fight for additional improvements and changes, to ensure that voters who must use this "ID Petition Process" can get through it, and not languish for years in the system.

Handling a case for more than a decade, through trials, hearings, and multiple appeals, is neither easy nor inexpensive. In 2021 alone, we took about 10 depositions and defended others, reviewed tens of thousands of documents, and had multiple court hearings to prepare for yet another voter ID trial. That is why your continued support is so critical. It keeps our organization at full fighting power – allowing us to take on any and all attacks on our civil rights and liberties whenever and wherever they may occur – no matter how long the battle might take.





## **LEGAL INTERNSHIPS**

#### The role they play in the affiliate

By: Larry Dupuis, Legal Director

At the ACLU of Wisconsin, we have a successful legal department, and one of the reasons that it runs so effectively is the talented legal interns who work in tandem with our expert team of lawyers each year.

Every summer, law students from across the country apply and interview to join one of our two internship programs, which includes the recently established Athan Theoharis Summer Internship. The selected interns work with ACLU staff lawyers and cooperating lawyers to develop valuable skills like client interviewing, legal research, writing, community organizing, and exposure to impact litigation. It's important to us that our students gain as much experience as possible across all the different aspects of our legal work and we hope that our time together inspires them to consider areas of law that will further advance the fight for civil rights and civil liberties.

Having a new group of legal interns each year also plays a critical role in expanding our capacity to take on more work. By assisting with trial and pretrial prep; developing deposition questions; gathering and reviewing documents; creating examination questions for witnesses; helping draft briefs; and assisting with the legal research and analysis for the ACLU of Wisconsin's legal cases, interns help our staff attorneys complete projects faster and take on new cases that they may not have otherwise had the time to do. Additionally, their fresh perspectives provide new insights into our efforts, and their knowledge of the latest technologies continues to prove valuable when it comes to keeping our department updated on the latest trends.

Unfortunately, in the current legal and political environment, there's no shortage of legal issues - especially those pertaining to civil rights and liberties. That's why we're so grateful for the students who decide to pursue our internship opportunities and dedicate their summers to learning more about the legal aspects of our work. No matter where their legal careers may take them, we know they will leave our programs with the skills and knowledge needed to make a positive impact wherever in the world they may go.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in participating in one of our internship programs, please see the internship page on our website at <a href="www.aclu-wi.org/en/about/internship-opportunities-fellowships">www.aclu-wi.org/en/about/internship-opportunities-fellowships</a> or email (legalinternship@aclu-wi.org) for more information.

#### Did you know?

There have been 63 people who have interned for the legal department since 2002.

#### **2021 LEGAL INTERNS**

Stephen Hsu UW-Madison Law School

**Myasar Ihmud**University of Illinois-Chicago

**Lauren Jones**Marquette Law School

Olivia Craft
Intake intern, UW-Whitewater

## Where are they now?

What some of our former legal interns are up to...

**Elisabeth Lambert** – Clerk for a federal judge and returned as Equal Justice Fellow

**Darrell Hill** - Policy director for ACLU of Arizona

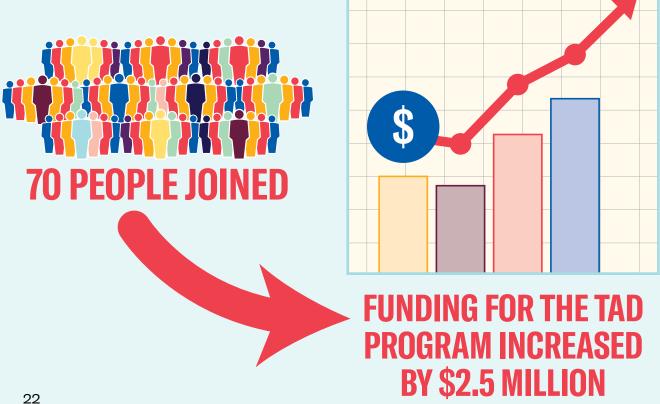
**Mayann Silver** – Reporter at public radio station WUWM

## **BUDGET HEARINGS**

After Governor Tony Evers introduced his 2021 biennial budget, laying the foundation for what Wisconsin will look like over the next two years, the ACLU of Wisconsin jumped into action, traveling to the three in-person budget hearings held throughout the state, as well as attending a virtual hearing.

One of our goals this budget session was to increase funding for the Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) Program, so when we learned of a budget surplus, we wasted no time activating volunteers and activists in different regions of the state. Advocates were trained on the best practices to give effective testimony, like how to use storytelling and personal experiences to make a greater impact, and they were provided with a toolkit with additional resources to further aid their efforts. Additionally, we worked closely with our coalition partners, like the Wisconsin Public Education Network, supporting one another on the ground and virtually.

In the end, over 70 people joined us in Rhinelander, Menomonie, and Whitewater, and funding for the TAD program increased by \$2.5 million, a huge success. "Not only did we achieve an important policy goal, but we were able to activate people and build up ACLU power in regions of Wisconsin that may not be as familiar with our work," said Shaadie Ali, who served as Interim Executive Director in 2021. "Overall, our involvement in this critical process helped us build stronger relationships with organizations and people all over Wisconsin."





## **VOTING RIGHTS PREVIEW**

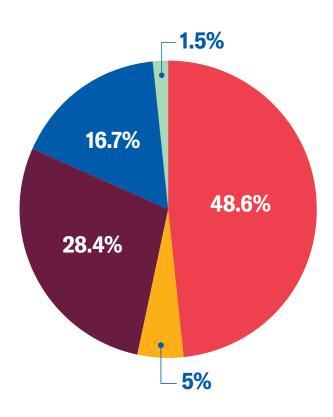
This year, we are monitoring a batch of voter suppression bills that threaten the voting rights of all people in Wisconsin - and our democracy as a whole - that include increased obstacles to registration, cutbacks on early voting, the elimination of drop boxes in certain areas in Wisconsin, absentee ballot changes, and strict voter identification requirements.

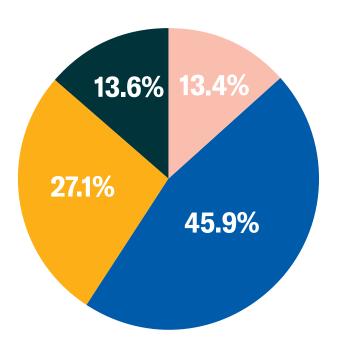
The worst bills in circulation would weaken (or even dismantle) the authority of the Wisconsin Election Commission to administer elections, and would transfer that authority to the legislature. This marks a serious threat to election integrity. Other bills seek to restrict voter eligibility, both implicitly and explicitly. For instance, we've written extensively about the "poll tax bill" that would require formerly incarcerated individuals to pay fines and fees in order to retain their eligibility to vote. More subtly but equally onerous are the bills that function implicitly by creating barriers for eligible voters, such as the competing bills that would purge voter rolls (SB761/AB730 and SB804/AB847).

Additionally, we're monitoring the legal situation with drop boxes in the state, meaning that Wisconsin voters would have more than 500 fewer places to conveniently drop off their absentee ballots before election day. Their removal disproportionately impacts lower-income, communities of color, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Although Law Forward is leading our coalition on the litigation front, we're keeping close tabs because in this evolving landscape our role in public education is crucial regardless of the outcome of the legal case. 23

### **FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

### FY 2020 Per Current Audit





#### **Support & Revenue**

Grants & Contributions: \$1,368,207

Restricted Funding: \$141,800

Membership Income: \$799,507

Awarded & Donated Legal Fees: \$471,154

Trust Gain (Loss): (\$4,341)

Other Revenue: \$41,374

Total Support & Revenue: \$2,817,701

#### **Expenses**

Public Policy: \$215,757

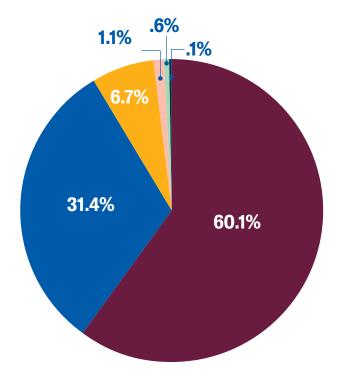
Litigation & Education: \$741,358

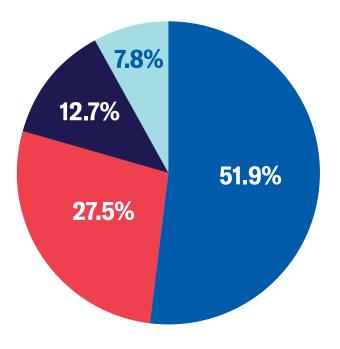
Management & General: \$437,192

Fundraising: \$219,736

**Total Expenses: \$1,614,043** 

## FY 2021 Per Current Audit





#### **Support & Revenue**

Grants & Contributions: \$1,866,556

Restricted Funding: \$207,454

Membership Income: \$974,969

Awarded & Donated Legal Fees: \$34,862

Trust Gain (Loss): \$20,093

Other Revenue: \$3,141

Total Support & Revenue: \$3,107,075

#### **Expenses**

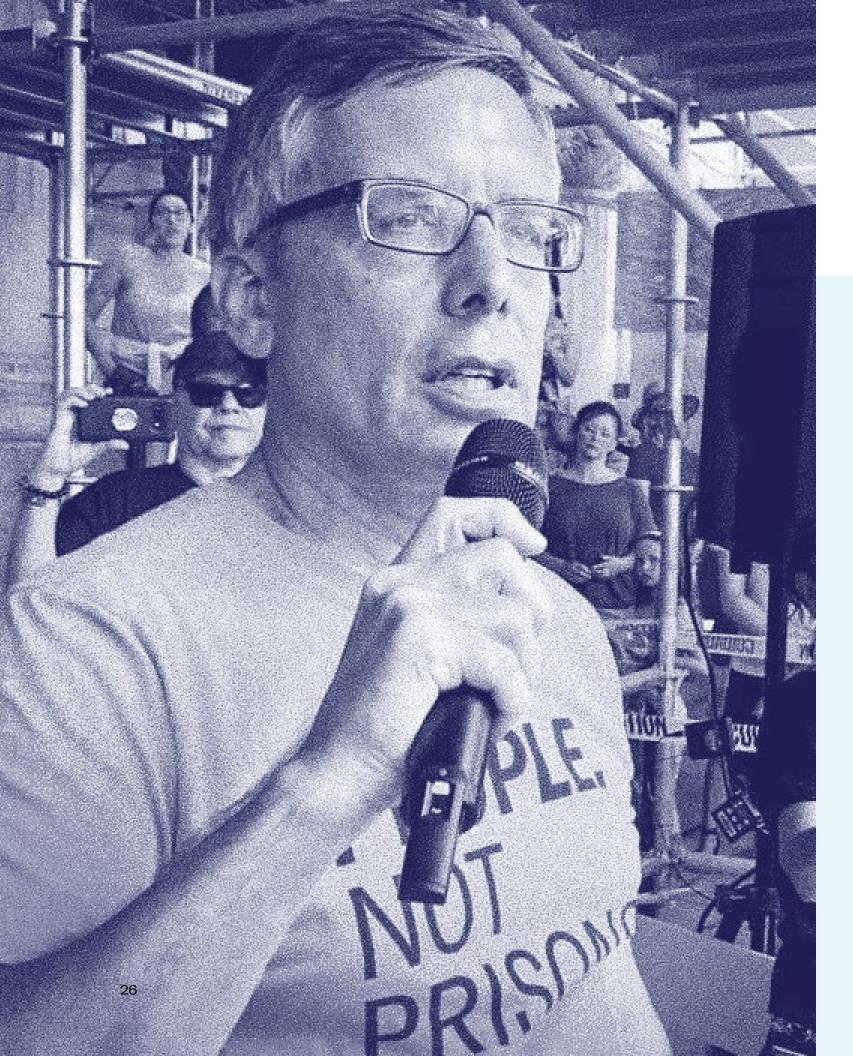
Public Policy: \$261,680

Litigation & Education: \$1,066,823

Management & General: \$566,263 Fundraising: \$161,405

**Total Expenses: \$2,056,171** 

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## STAFF ATTORNEY HONORED BY COMMUNITY SHARES WISCONSIN

In September, ACLU of Wisconsin Staff Attorney, Tim Muth, was the recipient of the Community Shares of Wisconsin's Linda Sundberg Civil Rights Defender Award. Read excerpts from his nomination letter below:

"Tim was in his office at the prestigious law firm of Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren S.C. in April 2014, when he looked out the window and noticed commotion at Red Arrow Park in Milwaukee. Then he heard the gunshots. He later learned that what he witnessed was the killing of Dontre Hamilton by a Milwaukee police officer. In the emotional aftermath, he decided that as soon as he could, he would retire from the firm and use his formidable legal talents to fight for those on the margins of society who need help the most.

Fast forward to April 2016, two years after Dontre was killed. Tim called ACLU Legal Director Larry Dupuis, told his story, and offered to devote 500 hours a year to the ACLU of WI, which constitutes about half the time he lives in Wisconsin. He spends the other half of the year living and volunteering in El Salvador, where he and his wife are combating human rights abuses. Tim also writes the popular English language blog covering issues in El Salvador: www.elsalvadorperspectives.com/

To have an attorney of Tim's caliber working for us pro bono is a game changer. We greatly appreciate the support we receive from attorneys and firms who take on cases and help us out, but they usually have to fit us in between their paying clients. Tim is giving us his dedicated time without distraction. Without Tim's help, for example, the case we filed in 2017, challenging conditions at the Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake youth prisons, would have taken much longer to file and litigate, putting more children at risk of abuse and neglect. The case challenged the use of solitary confinement and pepper spray on incarcerated youth; led to a federal court preliminary injunction; and ultimately a settlement that has profoundly reduced the use of isolation to only short "time outs" and eliminated pepper spray use entirely.

Tim continues to be a key part of our litigation team, challenging dispersal orders and the arrests of two people during protests against police brutality in Milwaukee in 2016. In 2020, he led our legal efforts to get the Wisconsin Supreme Court to order the Department of Corrections to release elderly, ill or otherwise vulnerable populations of incarcerated individuals from custody to limit the spread and impact of COVID-19 in prisons and jails. Additionally, Tim is involved in our case challenging the state's failure to provide meaningful parole opportunities to people who were sentenced to life in prison as juveniles.

Tim is also deeply involved in addressing immigrants' rights in Wisconsin. In 2018, he obtained data from sheriffs' departments around the state, analyzed it, and prepared a report regarding the extent to which the sheriffs' departments turn incarcerated individuals over to immigration authorities. He also helped lead the charge to ensure that a city in northwestern Wisconsin declined to support an effort by a private company to build an immigration prison there. And it worked - no new prison was constructed.

Volunteers are essential to the work of any non-profit. In this case, Tim Muth has made it possible for us to defend some of the most vulnerable citizens in our society, incarcerated children and immigrants."

## LEGAL OBSERVER CAPTAINS AND IMPACT

"Thanks to the dedicated support of our 15 legal observer captains, who lead a team of approximately 250 legal observers, this program has remained a powerful force for our affiliate."



One of the ways people can volunteer for the ACLU of Wisconsin is by joining our Legal Observer program and becoming a legal observer. Legal observers act as legal witnesses to political demonstrations and document the events of public protests, including any incidents of police misconduct or violations of the rights of protesters. They are committed to defending free speech in a way that is as objective as possible so that their documentation can be used as evidence if police misconduct or obstructions to

constitutionally protected free speech are challenged in court. Their volunteer efforts are critical to keeping us connected to on-the-ground activities and they expand our capacity to be in multiple locations across the state at the same time.

Thanks to the dedicated support of our 15 legal observer captains, who lead a team of approximately 250 legal observers, this program has remained a powerful force for our affiliate.

"They're a huge on-the-ground group that's incredibly knowledgeable and passionate – and they're always ready to go whenever and wherever they are needed," shared Shaadie Ali. Interim Executive Director.

Over the past year, we've activated our legal observers multiple times, including for court rulings; the court's decision in the case of Jacob Blake, who was shot by Kenosha Police; for International Women's Day; and in the days leading up to the verdict in the case of Kyle Rittenhouse.

"Even in these hard moments during protests, we know we're activating a strong network of legal observers – and their dedication never fails to impress us," Ali said.

If you would like to join this volunteer program, please visit our website at www.aclu-wi.org/en/community-engagement/legal-observer-training to learn more.

## **HOW TO GET INVOLVED**



**Donate:** Your gift to the ACLU of Wisconsin Foundation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law and supports litigation and civil rights education in Wisconsin and across the country. The ACLU receives no government funding and does not charge its clients for legal representation. Our work depends entirely on private donations and legal fees earned from successful cases.



Become a monthly donor (our Guardians of Liberty): Strengthen our lobbying efforts and grassroots activity by becoming a member of the ACLU of Wisconsin! Paying annual dues of \$35 or more entitles you to a membership in the state and national ACLU. Monthly donors also reduce our costs, meaning that a greater portion of your gift goes directly to fight injustice.



**Workplace Giving:** Many companies provide employees a variety of ways to donate to their favorite organizations, even offering convenient options like payroll deduction. This is a perfect way to make a larger contribution and pay for it in small, more feasible installments.



**Planned Gifts:** Naming the ACLU as a beneficiary of your will, life insurance policy or retirement fund is a simple and effective way to support the future of civil liberties.



**Volunteer:** There are many ways you can take action as a volunteer! Visit **aclu-wi.org/get-involved** to learn more.

Please contact our Development Department for more information at **liberty@aclu-wi.org** or **(414) 272-4032 x218**.

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