

2022—2023



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COVER ILLUSTRATION
BY DIEGO MALLO

BOARD MEETING PHOTOS
BY MICHAEL A. MCCOY



BEING IN WASHINGTON, DC, IN March 2023 felt like a moment in history. The city was roiling after Congress blocked a bill that would have updated Washington's more than century-old criminal code.

It was thrilling watching our journalists in action interviewing prominent members of the House, Senate, and Justice Department. We asked about their criminal justice priorities — how they see the national criminal justice landscape and their role in it. Attorney General Merrick Garland recalled The Marshall Project's founding, adding that our work had lived up to his high expectations. Sen. Dick Durbin observed that our investigation with NPR on the Special Management Unit at Illinois' Thomson Penitentiary spurred its closure.

The following day, we heard a panel discussion on the D.C. criminal code, brilliantly moderated by our reporter Jamiles Lartey, with two formerly incarcerated speakers and members of the D.C. city council and others who had worked on the revised code. Jamiles had just written a piece pointing out that D.C. is one of several places where state and federal officials have "channeled anxiety about crime into efforts to bypass local governance."

This point speaks volumes about the importance of The Marshall Project's work. In a country with the highest incarceration rate in the world, policymakers need the stories and bias-free data that only independent journalism can provide. And they need to know that we are watching them.

Liz Simons
BOARD CHAIR

AT THE MARSHALL PROJECT, WE use journalism to expose injustice. And as journalists, we present the world as it is, not as it should be.

As you read the following pages, we think you'll agree that often — far too often — the facts are a damning case in themselves.

We unveiled a new [Spotlight on Impact](#) this year to share the results of our reporting: a new police department policy, a canceled contract with a private prison company, the shuttering of an abusive prison unit, and more.

So, what makes us different from an advocacy group that's trying to make changes in U.S. criminal justice? The answer: our editorial independence. It's our secret sauce.

We would not be able to partner with mainstream news organizations — and we've co-published our work with more than 200 of them across the country — if we did not subscribe to basic principles of journalistic fairness, nonpartisanship and open-mindedness.

While advocates are essentially building a case, we are guided by a [journalistic code of ethics](#) that requires us to seek out and reflect all sides of a story, and to follow the facts wherever they lead.

Core to our mission is presenting the messy details. Those details reflect the complex reality that is the criminal legal system.

As we launch new local initiatives in places like Jackson, Mississippi, and expand our highly successful [Inside Story](#) video series for people in prison, we will continue providing you with the big, messy picture of criminal justice today. In doing so, we aim to make it more fair, transparent, effective and humane. That's our mission.

We hope The Marshall Project's journalism makes you think, and draw your own conclusions about what is fair and just in the criminal legal system — and what we as a society should be asking it to do.



Carroll Bogert
PRESIDENT



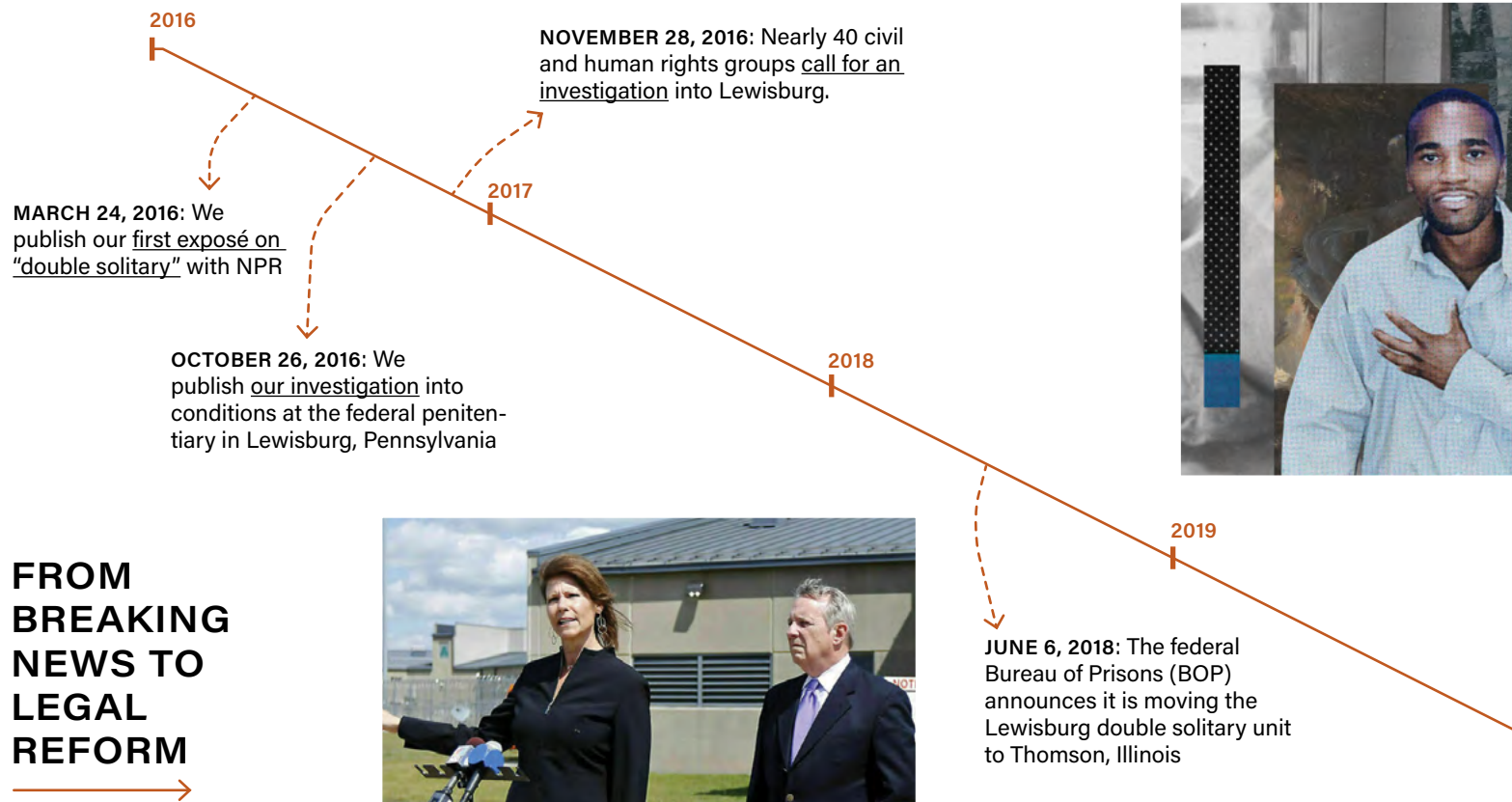
Susan Chira
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Taking on One of the Most Violent Units in the Federal Prison System

IN 2016, OUR REPORTER CHRISTIE Thompson received a tip about rising homicides in Illinois prisons. She continued her investigation for six years, and it led to the closure of one of the deadliest prison units in the United States.

Thompson found that the homicide spike was related to the practice of “double solitary,” housing two men in a cell meant for just one. In a room smaller than a parking space, the men had to take turns standing up. It’s not hard to see how violence resulted.

In 2016, NPR and The Marshall Project published our initial investigation into double solitary in Illinois



Former U.S. Rep. Cheri Bustos and Sen. Dick Durbin at Thomson. EILEEN MESLAR/TELEGRAPH HERALD



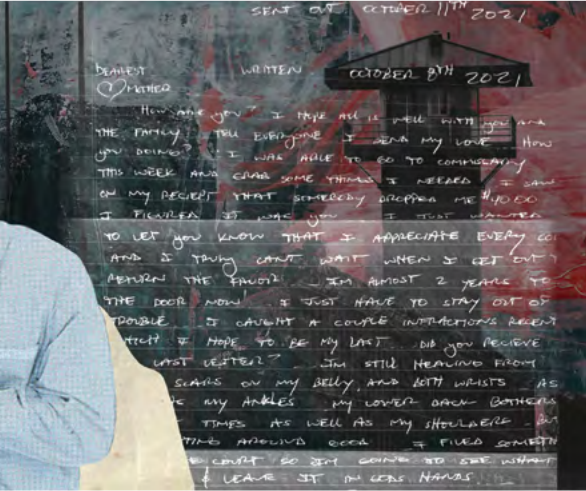
Sue Phillips holds a picture of her deceased son Matthew. Matthew died after an attack at the Thomson prison in March 2020. ALLYSON ORTEGON FOR NPR

and across the country. Hailed as the first nationwide study of the problem, the story made it difficult for Marshall Project reporters to get access to Illinois prisons for years.

Thompson and her reporting partner, Joe Shapiro of NPR, turned next to a federal prison in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. **People at Lewisburg described being handcuffed naked to cold, concrete slabs if they refused double solitary.** That investigation, “[28 Days in Chains](#),” prompted nearly 40 advocacy groups to band together and push for change.

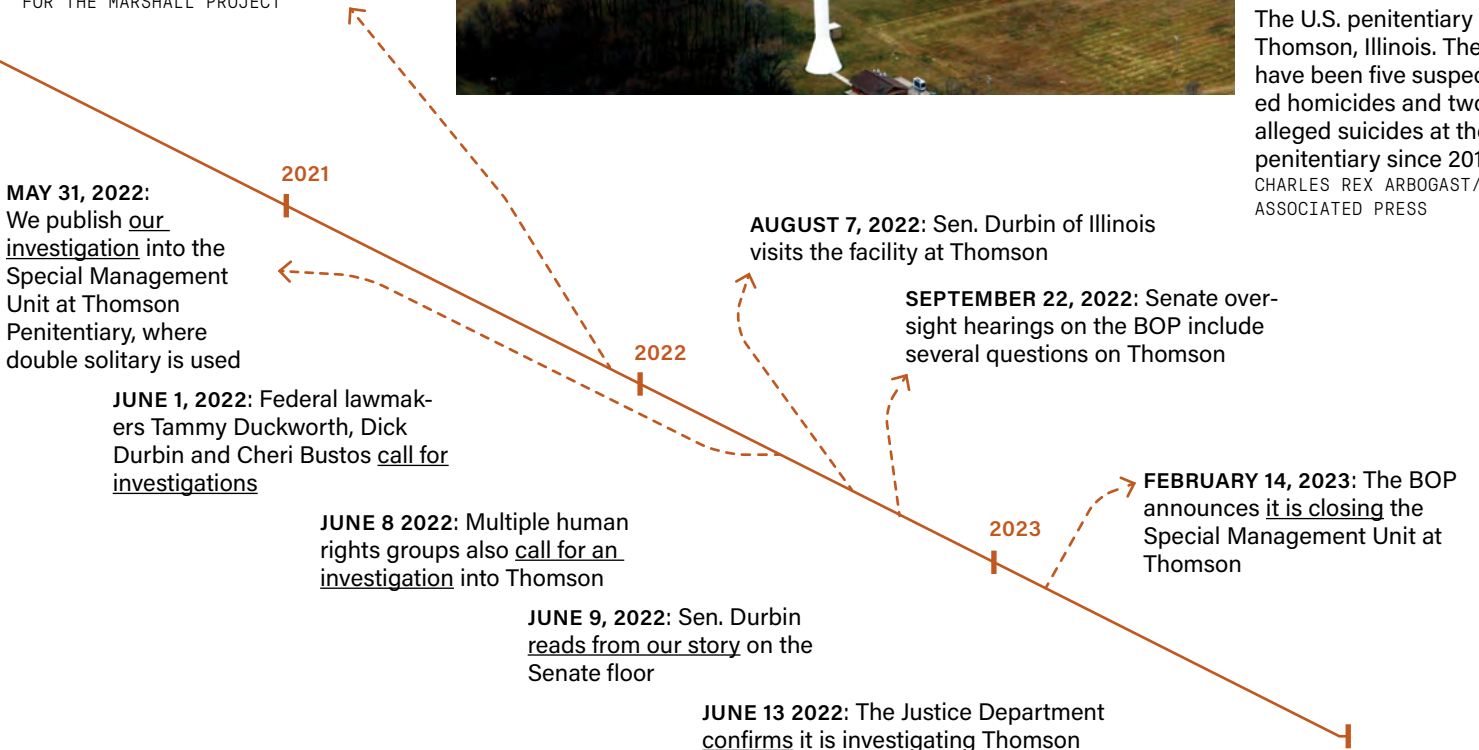
In 2018, the abusive unit at Lewisburg moved to a new federal facility in Illinois, Thomson Penitentiary. Shapiro and Thompson followed. They found conditions in Thomson even worse, with double solitary persisting and people still being shackled to their beds. A total of five alleged homicides and two suicides have been recorded since 2019.

The [investigation](#) landed like a bombshell in 2022. Dick Durbin, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee and Senator from Illinois, called for an investigation within a day. **In February 2023, the Bureau of Prisons shut the abusive unit at Thomson down.**



Bobby “AJ” Everson was killed at the U.S. penitentiary in Thomson, Illinois in December 2021. Everson had been writing letters to his family for months describing dangerous conditions. COLLAGE BY AARON MARIN FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

The U.S. penitentiary in Thomson, Illinois. There have been five suspected homicides and two alleged suicides at the penitentiary since 2019. CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/ ASSOCIATED PRESS





Our Unique Audience: People in Prison

AT THE MARSHALL PROJECT, WE regard people in prisons and jails as one of our most important audiences. We distribute quality journalism behind bars more widely than any other major news outlet in the United States.

We distribute a print magazine, *News Inside*, to facilities across the U.S., reaching over 200,000 people. But an estimated 60% of incarcerated people are illiterate or have low literacy skills. We wanted to reach them, too.

In February, we debuted *Inside Story*, a video news magazine written, directed and produced by formerly incarcerated staff of The Marshall Project.

“I always wanted to do a series like *Inside Story*,” says Lawrence Bartley, publisher of The Marshall Project Inside. **“I know what it’s like to be a hungry mind in prison.”**

Bartley teamed up with Donald Washington, Jr., who also joined The Marshall Project after his release from prison. They had known one another on the inside. Washington taught himself video skills and directed two pilot episodes with Bartley as host.

Those pilots caught the attention of James Goldston, the former president of ABC News, who urged the team to think bigger. When VICE Media signed on as a production partner in 2022, the contours of an eight-episode show began to take shape.



Hearing the perspectives of the incarcerated brings hope. Seeing people like you succeed gives you a pathway forward.

—SHARIEF N., Cheshire Correctional Institution, Connecticut

It feels good to see Inside Story talk about the truth of what it is to be incarcerated. We're fortunate to get this series in our N.C. prisons.

—CADELL K., Nash Correctional Institution, North Carolina



Stories like this change my mind. Working in the criminal justice system myself it helps to see what is on the other side. . . Keep shining the light on these issues.

—TWITTER USER



Since its launch, *Inside Story* has been viewed in more than 450 prisons and jails in 40 states, via tablets and closed-circuit prison television. More correctional facilities have continued to approve the show since then. Meanwhile, *Inside Story* is wildly popular on the outside, as well: By summer 2023, 1.4 million people had watched episodes on YouTube and Instagram.

“It’s just so different when the people who were directly involved or affected by policy get to take that leadership position in the storytelling,” Subrata De, executive vice president of VICE News, later told The New York Times of VICE’s decision to sign on as production partners.

Clockwise from top left : VICE News correspondent Alzo Slade interviews Manny Davis, center, and Therrin Dew, right, for a segment on juvenile detention at Angola prison in Louisiana; Tyra Patterson talks during boxing practice about her work after release from prison; Ali Siddiq reflects on his career in comedy and his start in prison; a still from an animation on the economy of solitary confinement (XAVIER BÖHM FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT).

Bottom left and right corners: Inside Story host Lawrence Bartley interviews comedian Luenell on her own history of incarceration and making it in show business.



Supporting Local Journalism

We're partnering with dozens of local newsrooms around the country, helping them publish investigative journalism on criminal justice.

Race and Policing in Ohio

LOCAL TELEVISION HAS A HUGE impact on how people perceive crime and criminal justice. Our partnership with News 5 Cleveland has produced terrific results.

Most Black Clevelanders know that driving through the mostly White suburb of Bratenahl risks a traffic stop. But it's almost impossible to avoid the village, which is tucked into urban Cleveland, if you're driving through the city's northeast.

Reporter Mark Puente, a two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist, examined Bratenahl's citation records. He found more than half did not record the race of the person stopped. **Understanding the racial dynamics at play would require a more sophisticated analysis.**

We reviewed police records from 2020 through late 2022 and examined the home addresses listed in citation records, comparing them to demographic data from the most recent census. The overwhelming majority of these stops involved Cleveland residents. One-third came from neighborhoods that are majority Black. Combining this with the records where race was recorded, **we determined that around 60% of people pulled over were Black, in a town where 75% of the population is White.**

Over the period we examined, Black motorists paid more than \$400,000 in fines to the tiny, wealthy, majority-White village surrounded by Cleveland and Lake Erie.

A visit to Bratenahl traffic court corroborated our findings: "Everybody looked like me in court," one Black woman told our reporter. "It was just so aggravating."

Our story was published in November 2022 with local media partners, including the influential News 5 Cleveland TV station. It had nearly immediate impact. **Within weeks, Bratenahl started requiring handwritten daily traffic logs from officers, which record the race of the person who has been stopped. Traffic citations declined significantly the following month.**

Top image: Police outside the Bratenahl town hall. GUS CHAN FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

Center image: Magistrate Andrea Rocco handles traffic citations at the Mayor's Court. GUS CHAN FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

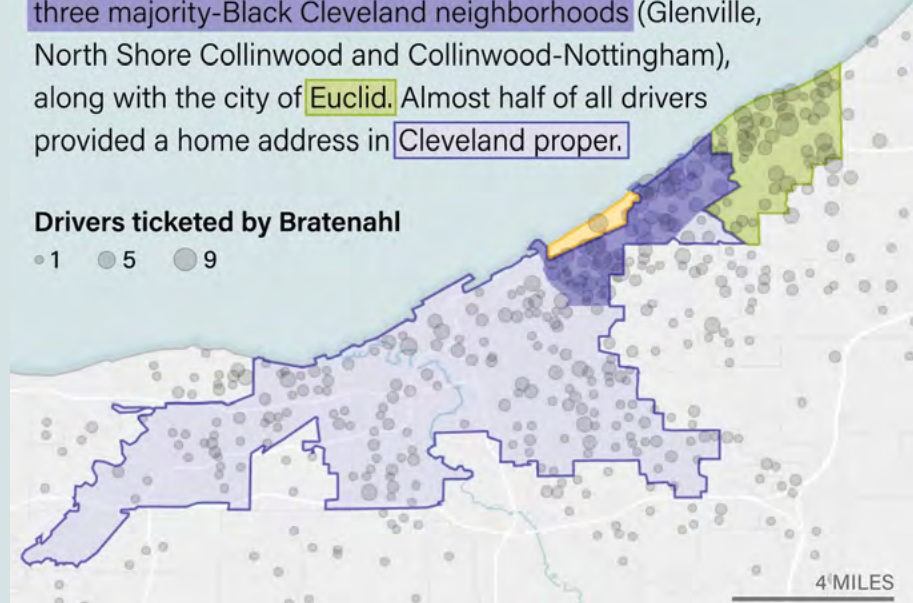
Right: Data on traffic tickets issued by Bratenahl police obtained from the Village of Bratenahl Mayor's Court docket. MAP LAYERS FROM NATURAL EARTH, CLEVELAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION AND THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU; DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS FROM THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU.



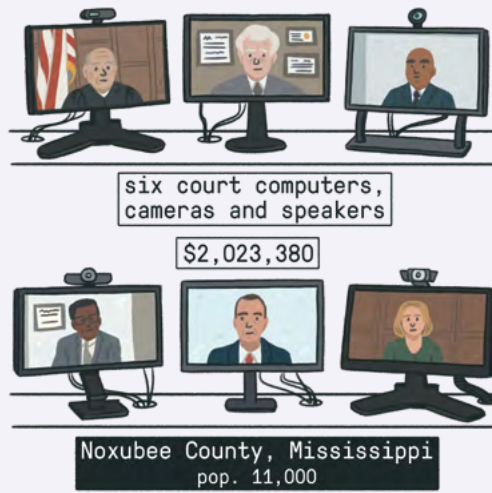
Nearly all traffic tickets issued by the **Bratenahl** Police Department between Jan. 1 and Sept. 15, 2022, cited drivers who live outside the village. About one-third came from **three majority-Black Cleveland neighborhoods** (Glenville, North Shore Collinwood and Collinwood-Nottingham), along with the city of **Euclid**. Almost half of all drivers provided a home address in **Cleveland proper**.

Drivers ticketed by Bratenahl

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4 MILES



Harnessing Data for Local Reporting

WE HAVE ASSEMBLED A FIRST-RATE team of data journalists who have the skills to build and analyze large data sets, identifying newsworthy patterns. It is painstaking and expensive work to gather data, archive it usefully, and develop the statistical tools to make sense of it. Many struggling local newsrooms cannot afford to do what we do.

At The Marshall Project, we want to help other news outlets dig deeper. **So we are making our resources available to our peers and partners.**

We have opened up our database of books banned in prison systems, enabling journalists to understand the rules in prisons and jails in their respective states. We trained local journalists on two other databases that The Marshall Project developed: one cataloging FBI crime statistics, and the other tracking federal funds meant to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 (American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, funds), which were often diverted to law enforcement.

Local stories on the use of ARPA funds appeared in Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, Florida, Texas and Arizona. More than two dozen local stories on FBI crime statistics appeared as a result of the data we compiled and trained local journalists across the country to use.

The Marshall Project published our own stories on these topics, too, but **the real strength of the databases we have created is that they empower local journalism**. Our data team has equipped local journalists across the country with tools and training to do their own deep-dive investigations. The result is important local reporting that would otherwise be too time-consuming and resource-intensive for many newsrooms to undertake.

Top: Examples of how cities and states spent billions of COVID-19 relief funds on police, prisons and the courts. SUSIE CAGLE FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

Left: The Marshall Project's searchable database of banned books. SOURCE: STATE CORRECTIONAL AGENCIES

Which books are banned in prisons? California

Filter by title or author Page 1 of 143 >

TITLE/AUTHOR	BANNED IN	REASON
100 DEADLY SKILLS	Apr 2016	Threat/security
100 EUROPEAN GRAFFITI ARTISTS	Feb 2017	1,2 Obscene Material
100 JAPANESE TATTOO DESIGNS BY HORIMOUJIA: PART II	Jan 2016	Nudity/3006
100 NO EQUIPMENT WORKOUTS	Jan 2017	Promotes Violence
100 UK GRAFFITI ARTISTS	Feb 2017	1,2 Obscene Material
100 Years of Tattoos	Dec 2019	Contraband
1000 TATTOOS	Sep 2015	Nudity/3006
1000 TATTOOS	Jul 2019	Nudity
1000 TATTOOS	Jan 2018	Nudity
1001 MOVIES YOU MUST SEE BEFORE YOU DIE	Mar 2018	Physical Violence

Bringing Hidden Abuses to Light



Pregnancy and Prison

WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE OFTEN overlooked in discussions of criminal justice. They constitute less than 10% of the prison population — but they are the fastest-growing segment of that population.

Designed with men in mind, the prison system has uniquely painful effects on women. That was true even before the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, in which the Supreme Court ruled that abortion is not protected as a constitutional right. After that controversial ruling, **The Marshall Project set out to illuminate how the criminal legal system affects women and girls' reproductive health.** We worked with five women to craft personal essays about their experiences with pregnancy, motherhood, or reproductive care in prison or jail.

One woman told the story of going to prison with young children, and the sorrow and redemption she felt as her sentence ended and she prepared to emerge as a grandmother. Another woman related a horrifying story of a forced hysterectomy. A third shared her history of postpartum depression in jail and her journey to become a doula; today, she helps pregnant women who are incarcerated.

The *Dobbs* decision threatens to criminalize a whole new cohort of women: those deemed to endanger or neglect their unborn child. We have been

investigating how prosecutors are using “fetal personhood” doctrine. We reported on 50 cases of women prosecuted after suffering miscarriages and stillbirths after testing positive for drugs — even though there is no conclusive link between methamphetamine use and miscarriages or stillbirths. Many of the women caught in this dragnet had to leave their young children to serve time in prison.

In a follow-up story, we examined efforts by Oklahoma prosecutors to charge pregnant women for child endangerment — sometimes for using drugs like medically prescribed marijuana. Some women have received life sentences for these newly defined crimes.

These trends are likely to continue in states that are moving to criminalize abortion. Our newsroom will stay on the case.



TOP: ILLUSTRATION BY ULISES MENDICUTTY FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

RIGHT: ILLUSTRATION BY DION MBD FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

Listen Up! Reaching More Than a Million With Podcasts

PEOPLE GET THEIR NEWS FROM varied sources, and The Marshall Project is committed to engaging them wherever they are. This year, we spoke to audiences through their headphones, with the debut of two new podcasts. Both developed a rich narrative over multiple episodes — and reached more than a million listeners. **Both were among the 100 top podcasts in the country in 2023.**

“Violation” tells the story of Jacob Wideman, a bright but troubled high school student who murdered his summer-camp roommate in 1986. Son of the noted author John Edgar Wideman, who has written award-winning books about criminal justice, Jacob subsequently served decades in prison for the crime. He became a model prisoner, and, over the strenuous objections of the victim’s family, was finally paroled. After he missed one follow-up appointment with a psychologist, he was sent back to prison.

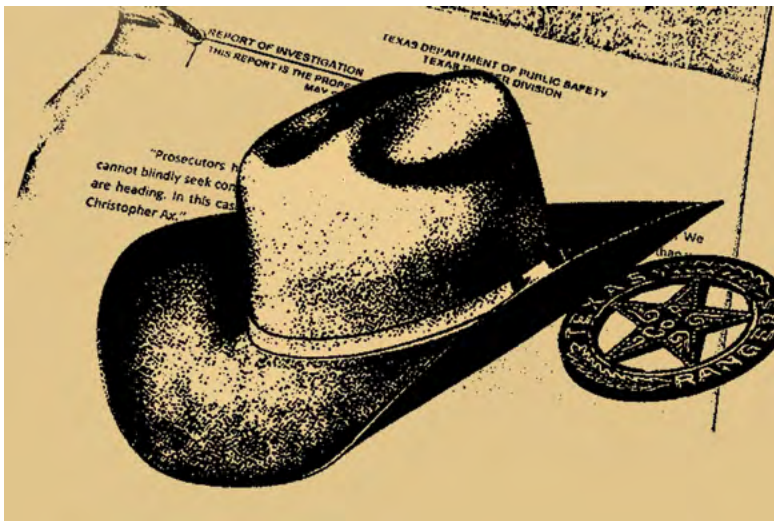


DIEGO MALLO FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

“People are listening to the whole season,” says Audience Director Ashley Dye, “and some are replaying episodes. On social media, people are publicly thanking The Marshall Project and WBUR for the podcast. It’s a fascinating story, and I’m gratified it has garnered that much interest.”

Our second podcast, “Just Say You’re Sorry,” examines the interview techniques of a famed interrogator for the Texas Rangers. It details the sometimes manipulative and possibly coercive techniques that garnered him the moniker “serial killer whisperer.”

“Just Say You’re Sorry” takes a deep look not only at the actions of one interrogator — actions that may have led to many miscarriages of justice — but also into the nature of police techniques and how they are used and misused in practice. **In May 2023, the Texas Legislature voted to ban courtroom testimony based on “forensic hypnosis,” an interrogation tactic featured in the podcast.**



BO-WON KEUM/THE MARSHALL PROJECT

By the Numbers

“Violation” was downloaded over **ONE MILLION** times; “Just Say You’re Sorry” had **400,000** downloads.

More than **50,000** people follow us on Instagram. One post, on nutrition in prisons, was viewed **36,000** times.

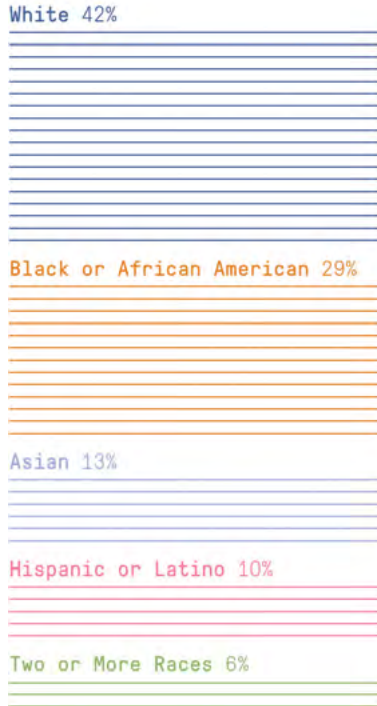
Our stories had **1.2 MILLION** views through Apple News from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

Our “Ask Me Anything” on Reddit about our survey of sheriffs was one of Reddit’s most popular for that series in 2022, and was “upvoted” over **12,000** times.

Diversity at The Marshall Project

A BREAKDOWN OF RACE, ETHNICITY AND GENDER AT THE MARSHALL PROJECT AS OF JANUARY 2023

RACE



GENDER



WHEN I CAME TO THE Marshall Project as the new Director of Careers and Culture, I had a clear mandate: build on the strong existing foundation and continue to make it an excellent place to work. “Excellent” being an umbrella, to encompass ideas such as: diversely staffed; remote-friendly; inclusive to all; ambitious and innovative.

In 2022, we started making small changes to our process and protocols, and I’m thrilled to report we have more transformative projects on the horizon.

REMOTE-FIRST

Building a remote-first culture that is still friendly, warm and inclusive can feel daunting at times. One of the first things we added was new staff programming: a quarterly, virtual meetup to do something out of the ordinary. We provided lunch for all staff, who then gathered over Zoom for a special presentation of our new *Inside Story* video series. This allowed staff who couldn’t join in New York for the launch party to also engage with the celebration.

TEAM BUILDING

Building team culture can be difficult while working remotely, but The Marshall Project has risen to the challenge. We regularly gather at our all-staff retreat and in-person when we can, whether it’s for a colleague passing through the New York office or organizing a World Cup watch party. Every chance we get to laugh together builds our connections as a team; every good memory helps strengthen our muscles for great collaboration.



HIRING & RECRUITING

There has been ample progress made in diversifying our staff and leadership team, and much more we want to accomplish. We’ve taken several steps this year to empower our hiring managers to run fair, equitable, transparent processes, with an eye toward building trust and our reputation among job candidates as being a humane place to work.

An example of this work is the series of editors’ hiring webinars that we hosted ahead of hiring our most recent staff writers. This allowed more than 200 job candidates to connect with our editors, ask their questions anonymously, and learn how to best put together a complete and robust application for each role. We were praised by applicants who felt this was a fair and attractive way to support them early in the process. We were also praised by industry peers, with colleagues at The New York Times and Los Angeles Times confirming they adopted and built on our idea.

ONBOARDING & ORIENTATION

At the heart of my work is ensuring that folks aren’t just hired and forgotten. It’s imperative that we work as a team to successfully onboard new staff and set them up for future success at The Marshall Project. To that end, my team recently launched a new onboarding protocol. This ensures all staff have the same first steps and resources.

Next, to iterate upon that progress, I will be designing and implementing a new hire orientation program in collaboration with Chief Strategy Officer Ebony Reed.

Emma Carew Grovum
DIRECTOR OF CAREERS AND CULTURE



JUAN BERNABEU FOR THE MARSHALL PROJECT

Our Supporters

OUR AWARD-WINNING INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM PLAYS a vital role in reforming the criminal justice system. We depend on many partners to support this work. The following generous donors gave \$10,000 or more between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

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| Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation | Helen Gurley Brown Foundation | Meltzer-Thorne Family Fund | Social Justice Fund |
| The Chris Wilson Foundation | Henry L. Kimelman Family Foundation | | Wellspring Philanthropic Fund |

Financing our Growth

THE MARSHALL PROJECT ADOPTED AN ambitious Strategic Plan in 2022. We are opening five local newsrooms over five years; investing in audiences directly affected by the criminal legal system; and enhancing the capacities of our national newsroom to produce more groundbreaking, award-winning journalism.

We are managing that growth carefully. We've established a Growth Fund to help us make investments in local coverage and to challenge local philanthropists to match our commitment.

We maintain a reserve fund at 10% of the total annual operating budget as a contingency for emergencies.

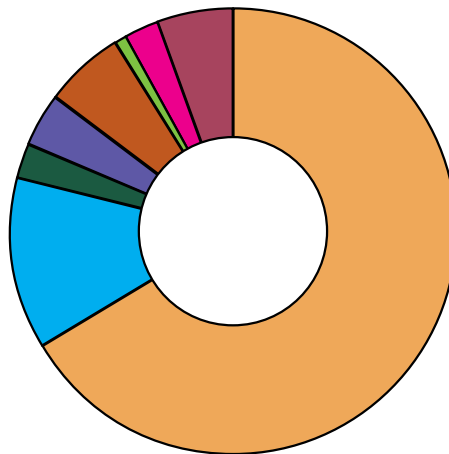
Revenue

Individuals + Family Foundations	8,010,000
Foundation Grants	5,835,000
Membership	880,000
Earned Revenue	495,000
Total	15,220,000



Expenses and contributions to designated funds

Newsroom salaries, benefits and payments	10,025,000
Other salaries	1,915,000
Occupancy and office expense	350,000
Professional fees	600,000
Newsroom expenses	890,000
Marketing/outreach	110,000
Contribution to Reserve Fund	410,000
Contribution to Growth Fund	800,000
Total	15,100,000



Awards and Recognition 2022-2023

2023 AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MAGAZINE EDITORS NATIONAL MAGAZINE AWARD
General Excellence, Special Interest

2023 AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MAGAZINE EDITORS NATIONAL MAGAZINE AWARD
"Who's Really Cycling In and Out of Cleveland's Courts?"
Best Digital Illustration

2022 MISSOURI HONOR MEDAL FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN JOURNALISM

2023 ONLINE JOURNALISM AWARD
General Excellence

2023 ONLINE JOURNALISM AWARD
"The Mercy Workers"

2022 ONLINE JOURNALISM AWARD
"No Light No Nothing,"
Collaboration and Partnerships

2023 MURROW AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION
"Testify"

2022 SIGMA DELTA CHI AWARDS
"How the Newest Federal Prison Became One of the Deadliest"

2022 SIGMA DELTA CHI AWARDS
"Closing Argument"

2023 SOCIETY FOR NEWS DESIGN
16 Medals of Excellence in 13 Categories

2023 SOCIETY OF PUBLICATION DESIGN AWARDS
"Art of Bidding"

2023 SOCIETY OF PUBLICATION DESIGN AWARDS
"Dear Ira"



Photo of Thurgood Marshall, chief attorney for NAACP, at NAACP regional meeting in Atlanta. BETTMAN ARCHIVES/VIA GETTY IMAGES

The Marshall Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit news organization that seeks to create and sustain a sense of national urgency about the U.S. criminal justice system. We have an impact on the system through journalism, rendering it more fair, effective, transparent and humane.

Support Our Journalism

Scan our QR code to make your secure, tax-deductible donation online, or visit us at themarshallproject.org/donate.

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