Charnal shares a moment with her mother, Lashonia Thompson-El (left), in her home after looking through baby images together for the first time on Dec. 12, 2020. ANNA RAWLS
4 Everyone on Death Row Gets a Lawyer. Not Everyone Gets a Kim Kardashian
7 An Ode to Memo, the Cellmate and Art Teacher Who Saved My Life
8 There Are Fewer People Behind Bars Now Than 10 Years Ago. Will It Last?
10 When Mom Is In Prison — And When She Comes Home
13 Stopping Violence Over Prison Phone Time? There's an App for That.
15 I'm a Teachers' Aide at My Prison. Here's What I Learned From My Toughest Student
16 These Meds Prevent Overdoses. Few Federal Prisoners Are Getting Them
19 Does Banning People With Felonies From Dating Apps Actually Make Anyone Safer?
22 The Peeps
24 Crossword
25 Reader to Reader
A Letter from Lawrence

The year 2021 is about to be old news. Going into 2022, we're proud to announce that News Inside is available in 600 prisons and jails across the country. Still, we have a lot more work to do if we are going to reach every correctional facility in the country; there are about 7,000 total.

But enough about us; let's focus on you. This year, many of you relied on electronic tablets to download and listen to music, read educational content like ours and exchange messages with your loved ones. Corey Arthur, who received a tablet equipped with phone service while he was in COVID-19 quarantine, believes tablet-based phone calls could be a corrections game changer. Check out, “Stopping Violence Over Prison Phone Time? There’s an App for That,” and you’ll see what I'm talking about.

Changing the corrections game in a disheartening way are K2 and other synthetic opioids. I've heard these drugs can turn otherwise stand-up people into zombies. The First Step Act was supposed to increase federal prisoners' access to medicine to treat opioid dependence, but three years in, less than 2% of those eligible have received it. Read all about it in “These Meds Prevent Overdoses. Few Federal Prisoners Are Getting Them.”

I know many of you will be into “There Are Fewer People Behind Bars Now Than 10 Years Ago. Will It Last?” The numbers seem to bode well for freedom seekers, but are they fool's gold?

Staying on the freedom train, there’s “Everyone on Death Row Gets a Lawyer. Not Everyone Gets a Kim Kardashian.” It gets to the heart of the debate about the role celebrities play in criminal justice reform.

Returning moms are the focus of “When Mom Is In Prison — And When She Comes Home.” This piece exposes the clash between what their loved ones expect and what returning moms can actually provide.

“I'm a Teachers' Aide at My Prison. Here's What I Learned From My Toughest Student” shows the benefit of having a soft side. “Does Banning People With Felonies From Dating Apps Actually Make Anyone Safer?” explores an important question about post-prison dating, and “An Ode to Memo, the Cellmate and Art Teacher Who Saved My Life” is an inspiring piece about a man who gave up violence for art lessons.

Finally, much props to all of you who sent in your recipes to “Reader to Reader,” our new advice column driven by you. You'll see that we posted some of them starting on page 25. Special shout out to the “Honey Bun Sausage.” No shade to the cook, but mixing pastries with food food? Nah bruh.

Letters to the Director

I read your August 2021 issue — my first ever! I found it very encouraging, enlightening, well-written and put together. My favorite story was “Mr. Sitthivong Goes to Washington.” I was sentenced to 50 years...I am trying every kind of legal research to help me appeal. Mr. Sitthivong's story gave me hope that a change may come. Also, I do not like being called an inmate, offender or convict. We are human beings and all children of God. In Illinois we are now being called “individual in custody.” News Inside thank you for an excellent magazine. I appreciated your magazine wasn’t filled with ads of companies trying to make money off of prisoners. I look forward to the next issue.

Jeremy L., Illinois

I was recently given the opportunity to read a couple of your magazines and I was fascinated by the topics being highlighted through your journalism and research. I want to thank you on behalf of myself and all of our brothers and sisters who are currently incarcerated and those who have previously come through the struggles these times have placed upon us.

Douglas H., Missouri

I recently received the August 2021 edition of News Inside...I am thrilled to finally receive something from The Marshall Project...Thank you Akiba Solomon for your insightful article; Kevin Byrd for your perspective; and Lawrence Bartley for your words.

Jason M., California

Thank you for all the insight from The Marshall's Project News Inside. I let some of the other guys read two of my issues — haven’t gotten them back, so I guess it’s a good thing...These magazines are full of helpful and beneficial information for everyone.

Edward J., Mississippi

I think the information you provide is amazing and inspirational. The access to the outside world is minimal, unfortunately. Coming across these magazines reinstated hope for me and my future.

Nicole C., New York

Lawrence Bartley

Lawrence Bartley is the Director of News Inside. He served a 27 years-to-life sentence and was released on parole in May 2018.
Everyone on Death Row Gets a Lawyer. Not Everyone Gets a Kim Kardashian.

The case of Rodney Reed — whose innocence claims were championed by the reality TV star — raises questions about celebrities’ role in the criminal justice system.

By KERI BLAKINGER and MAURICE CHAMMAH

When death row prisoner Rodney Reed found out his execution had been called off — only days before it was to occur — he was sitting in a tiny visiting room at an East Texas maximum-security prison, talking to Kim Kardashian West.

The reality TV star had traveled to the Polunsky Unit, an hour northeast of Houston, to visit the condemned man whose cause she’d taken up, repeatedly posting photos and firing off tweets in support of his claims of innocence. By the time the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals stayed the execution in November 2019, Reed’s case had attracted other celebrity supporters — from Beyoncé and Dr. Phil to Oprah and Gigi Hadid.

Two years later, Reed is finally getting a hearing next week, where his lawyers plan to present new evidence that they say shows Reed played no part in the 1996 murder of 19-year-old Stacey Stites, and that he deserves a new trial.

Whatever attention the hearing attracts, Reed’s case continues to be a touchstone in the debate over the role celebrities and publicity have come to play in the American justice system, especially in death penalty cases. The visibility of superstar involvement has only seemed to grow in recent years, as social media gives celebrities an outsized voice and Americans’ support for the death penalty wanes.

Judges do not officially consider pleas from famous people. But many jurists, including those who will decide Reed’s fate, are elected and not immune from political pressures. Governors and presidents have no such restrictions as they consider clemency, and Kardashian West persuaded then-President Trump — whose own presidential campaign was built on the power of celebrity — to free several federal prisoners who were not on death row.

Advocates against the death penalty say celebrities often bring welcome attention to individual cases, but that
Kardashian West focused public attention on Rodney Reed’s case beginning in October 2019, posting tweets and Instagram photos on his claims of innocence.

“Celebrity involvement is useful for raising up some of the injustices of the criminal justice system that we would not otherwise know,” said Cassandra Stubbs, director of the ACLU’s Capital Punishment Project. “But the idea that whether you live or die may turn on whether or not you are lucky enough to have a lawyer that can get your case in front of someone with that kind of megaphone — that’s just an indication of the arbitrariness of our system.”

For decades, individual death penalty cases have grabbed the attention of famous writers, actors and musicians. In the 1960s and 1970s, authors Truman Capote and Norman Mailer published “In Cold Blood” and “The Executioner’s Song,” respectively, both crime narratives about then-recent executions. Two decades later, Sister Helen Prejean’s book, detailing the final days of a condemned Louisiana prisoner, became the award-winning movie “Dead Man Walking.” Afterward, the film’s star Susan Sarandon became an anti-death penalty activist herself, most recently promoting the innocence claims of Oklahoma prisoner Richard Glossip.

Perhaps no person on death row attracted more attention than Gary Graham, who was convicted in a Houston murder and sentenced to death in 1981 at the age of 17. He always maintained his innocence, and eventually gained the support of actor Danny Glover and singers Kenny Rogers, Lionel Richie and Harry Belafonte.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, as the nation grappled with a crime wave, opposing executions was controversial and more than 70% of Americans supported the death penalty.

At a 1993 rally, crowds smashed Kenny Rogers’ music tapes and a Texas state senator railed against “a new level of due process — and that’s the Hollywood jury, the celebrity jury.” Graham won a stay of execution that year, but by the time he faced the gurney again, in 2000, his case had become so contentious that members of the Ku Klux Klan and the New Black Panther Party faced off among throngs of protesters outside the prison. Inside, Graham had invited actress Bianca Jagger, the Rev. Al Sharpton and Rev. Jesse Jackson to witness his execution.

This was all a cautionary tale for Anthony Graves, another Texas death row prisoner who was also working to prove his innocence at the time. He said celebrities bring attention, but that’s public relations: “The attorney staying up all night reading your case, the investigator unearthing evidence, witnesses coming forward — that’s the work,” said Graves, who was finally exonerated in 2010. Celebrities could even fund the investigations that produce new evidence, he said. “We ask that you use more than your name, that you reach into your wallet.”

Most celebrities who have focused on individual cases have supported people who claim they are innocent. Before Troy Davis was executed in 2011 in Georgia, in a case arising from the killing of an off-duty police officer, Davis’ claims of innocence were championed by singer Michael Stipe of R.E.M. and rapper Big Boi of Outkast, among many others. In Oklahoma, Julius Jones claims of innocence in a 1999 killing have recently received support from actress Viola Davis and players from the NFL and NBA.

That has prompted criticism that celebrities generally ignore incarcerated people who admit guilt, but beg for mercy.

“You have to fit a certain mold to get a chance,” said Texas death row prisoner Billy Tracy. “But there’s a lot more wrong with the death penalty than that.”

The focus on individual cases, and on innocence claims, may be changing. Many celebrities have been increasingly vocal about policy issues, including advocating for federal drug sentencing reform, ending cash bail and abolishing the death penalty altogether.

In December 2020, federal prisoner...
Brandon Bernard won the support of Kardashian West, as well as actress Alyssa Milano and lawyer Alan Dershowitz. Bernard did not claim innocence in the death of two youth ministers, but his advocates noted his limited role in the crime and his youth at the time, as they asked President Trump to spare his life. They were unsuccessful, and Bernard became one of the 13 people executed under the Trump administration.

In another case that did not involve claims of innocence, author Suleika Jaouad campaigned earlier this year to stop the execution of Quintin Jones in Texas, picking up support from actors Mandy Patinkin and Sarah Paulson. Supporters said Jones deserved mercy because he had become a remorseful and generous man. Jones was executed in May.

In the last decade, the rise of social media has made it easier for celebrities to get involved in death penalty cases: They no longer have to appear at rallies or hope reporters include their quotes in a story. They can just go live on Instagram or fire off a tweet, and expect news coverage to follow.

It can be difficult to parse why a particular case goes viral, but Reed’s story is undoubtedly dramatic. Reed, who is Black, has long maintained his innocence in the 1996 rape and murder of Stites, a White woman. But Reed struggled to get courts to consider his claims, even though new witnesses said he and Stites had been in a consensual relationship — to the displeasure of her fiancé, a White police officer named Jimmy Fennell.

Fennell himself went to prison for an unrelated sexual crime, and right before Reed’s execution was called off in 2019, the Innocence Project unveiled an affidavit from another incarcerated person, who said Fennell confessed to Stites murder and used a racial slur against Reed.

Fennell has repeatedly denied involvement in Stites death. (Fennell could not be reached. The law firm that represented him in 2019 said he’s no longer their client.). But next week, Reed’s lawyers plan to call Fennell to the stand, along with numerous other witnesses. The lawyers have argued that prosecutors did not originally turn over all the evidence they had pointing to Reed’s innocence, and that they relied on flawed scientific testimony for the timeline of the crime.

The aim, said one of Reed’s attorneys, Quinncy McNeal, is to show that “no reasonable juror would vote to convict” with the new evidence. “Not just that somebody might vote to acquit, but that nobody would vote to convict,” McNeal said.

Defense lawyers and prisoner advocates have said that while celebrity involvement can help individuals like Reed and draw attention to the death penalty generally, it can create more disparities in a system already full of them. After all, everyone on death row is appointed a lawyer — not everyone is appointed a Kim Kardashian.

But Christina Swarns, executive director of The Innocence Project, said the nonprofit legal defense organization regularly works with high-profile figures to draw attention to prisoners’ pleas, which Swarns said is only necessary because of the sheer volume of cases in the system.

“There are so many cases going on all the time that sometimes we need
celebrity involvement to make a case stand out,” she said. “It really speaks to the difficulty of getting a compelling case considered.”

Reed’s lawyer acknowledged that celebrity involvement does not help everyone. “I am not convinced that it’s a good thing systemwide,” McNeal said, “but it’s a damn good thing for Rodney Reed.”

An Ode to Memo, the Cellmate and Art Teacher Who Saved My Life

After decades in the system, I was acting like a wild horse roaming the countryside. Memo taught me how to paint through the chaos

By RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ

At the time that I met my artistic mentor, Memo, my life was crazy. I had been acting like a wild horse, roaming the countryside with no respect for life, including my own. One result was a 675-mile transfer from USP Leavenworth, a medium security prison in Kansas, to USP Lee, a high security facility in Virginia. It was my third prison in eight years.

I got to Lee at about 8:30 in the evening. As I walked with 30 other prisoners to G-Block, I could see the anxiety and curiosity in some of their eyes. By age 39, I was numb to these feelings. I was literally raised in institutions, from foster care and group homes to juvenile detention, Rikers Island and New York state prisons. I graduated into the federal system in 2007.

When we reached the first court, which looked like a small project building in New York City, I was placed in a cell with this young Mexican guy who had three standard questions.

He wanted to know if I spoke Spanish. (Yes.) He asked which “car” I was in, meaning what region, religion or gang I represented. (Just New York City.) And he asked if he could see my pre-sentencing report and sentencing minutes, paperwork that would reveal whether or not I was a rat. I proudly stated yes and pledged to present the documents as soon as my property arrived at the prison.

Two weeks into my stay, COs found contraband in my cell, and my cellmate and I got sent to the SHU (solitary confinement). When I returned to the general population two weeks later, I had a new cellmate: Memo.

I had met Memo before I went to the SHU, and I could tell by his demeanor that he had seen and been through a lot of things. Once the officers left, he too asked me if I had my paperwork. It was kind of comical, this old man requesting my paperwork, but I had to respect the ritual. I dug around in my property bag and, staring into his eyes as an equal, I handed him my documents. A slight smile came over his face, and he showed me which locker was mine.

Once Memo was sure that I was not a rat, we began to get acquainted. The main thing we had in common was art. It was clear that he had a 20-year head start when it came to painting and drawing. I asked to be his student. He told me no, that I wasn’t ready because I was always involved in prison drama.

One day I went to the art room for supplies. Memo pulled out some brushes and a blank canvas and told me to paint an image he’d picked out of a fishing magazine, a man sitting in a canoe on the lake with his back turned. I didn’t know it at the time, but he was assessing my oil painting skills.

I’m proud to say I passed with flying colors, but he didn’t
say much more than, "At least you know something." Still, Memo’s approval meant everything to me. I say this because when he paints, his colors dance around each other in harmony. I particularly love how he gives the color violet so much meaning on a portrait of a face.

Memo didn’t take me on as a student until a year later. I had moved into my own cell and continued to act like a wild horse, getting into fights. It got so bad that Memo refused to walk with me. He didn’t want to be around if someone snuck up behind me and stabbed me up. I couldn’t blame him for feeling that way because it was a great possibility.

The major turning point of my life came early one morning. I was in my cell fighting one of my homies for some stupid reason, and it was like a scene out of an action movie. Blood was pouring out of a deep gash in my top lip, a wound I’d sustained when my face slammed against the sharp corner of a locker. My homie was also bleeding, from a deep cut over his eye. Between the two of us, there was blood everywhere. We fought until the other homies arrived and broke it up. They cleaned up the cell, so there was no sign of our fight. Neither one of us got stitches, even though I’m sure we needed them. Our pride got in the way of us getting medical attention. We dressed our own wounds — with office tape and toilet tissue — and looked like fools with those makeshift Band-Aids on our faces. If you look at my top lip closely, you can still see the scar.

Memo watched the whole situation unfold, and I later found out that he was the one who alerted my homies to the fight. A couple of days passed before he approached me. I suspect he was waiting to see if the person I was fighting was going to retaliate against me, or if I was going to be sent to the SHU.

Memo walked right up to me and pulled me into his cell. He asked me if I loved art. I said yes. After a long pause, he made me an offer: "If you could stay out of trouble rather than running towards it. "How can you paint if you are always looking behind your back, or you’re always in the SHU?" he asked me. "I need you to choose which person you are. And if your homies are really your homies, they will want you out of harm’s way."

I chose art. Where I once painted exactly what was in front of me, Memo taught me how to draw with emotion. I began to understand how oil painting mimics parts of life. The same way a single brush stroke can throw an entire painting off, I needed to admit that I had always been a reactionary person. My tendency to react before thinking was causing too much chaos in my life. It was Memo who taught me how to pause and think about what I might lose before making another bad brush stroke. This lesson applied to painting and to life. And that’s how my mentor saved my life through art.

Rafael Rodriguez is serving 55 years for kidnapping and armed robbery. Readers can follow his artwork on Instagram at @rafaelrodriguezarts.

### There Are Fewer People Behind Bars Now Than 10 Years Ago. Will It Last?

Census data show incarceration rates are down. It may have more to do with the pandemic than broad reforms.

**By WEIHUA LI, DAVID EADS and JAMILES LARTEY**

Nearly 2 million adults were incarcerated across the country, according to the decennial census/2020 census. The latest figures show a 13% drop in the total number of incarcerated people, or nearly 300,000 fewer people, compared...
Nearly 2 million adults were incarcerated across the country, according to the 2020 decennial census. Each circle represents the incarcerated population in a county.

with the 2010 Census.

Roughly one-third of the drop in total numbers occurred in just two populous states — California and New York. In total, 41 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico saw reductions in the total number of incarcerated people.

In five states, the number of incarcerated people actually increased compared with a decade ago, but the incarceration rate still shrank because their total population grew more quickly than the prison population. Just four states — West Virginia, Alaska, Nebraska and Arkansas — saw their incarceration rate increase.

Counting incarcerated people during a pandemic

The decennial census offers a comprehensive and geographically granular look at the U.S. population by attempting to collect information about where everyone lives as of April 1. By definition though, it is a snapshot of a brief moment in time, which is a limitation in trying to capture fluctuating numbers.

If the census was held later in the year, for example, it might have shown a more substantial drop. The Marshall Project’s COVID-19 tracker showed state and federal prisons had 100,000 fewer prisoners in June 2020 than in April, when the census was taken. Another study estimated that from mid-year 2019 to mid-year 2020, county jails nationwide had 185,000 fewer people.

Experts say that a combination of factors contributed to this decrease: The court system and parole offices slowed down as they moved operations online, which has reduced the number of people who were sentenced or caught up in parole violations. In many jurisdictions, police departments also cut back on proactive tactics, such as traffic stops, and the number of drug crimes dropped significantly. Some prison and jail officials also rushed to empty out facilities to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks.

Broadly, these numbers have already started to tick back up as criminal courts begin to reopen and the criminal justice system is returning to normal, according to a recent report from the Vera Institute of Justice. Given how unstable incarceration rates have been since the start of the pandemic — which overlapped with the entire period of census data collection — it may be impossible to draw any long-term conclusions from the apparent drop seen in census data.

Prison gerrymandering

The most consequential function of the census — in fact, the reason the Constitution mandates a census every 10 years — is to divide state populations into roughly equal legislative districts. This has profound ramifications for incarcerated people because in most states, they are counted in the places where they are held, not in the communities where they are from.

The practice, dubbed “prison gerrymandering,” dilutes the political power of urbanized areas — where many people live, but where the incarcerated are not.

1 While all states draw new boundaries every 10 years, not all of them actually use the decennial census. These practices vary between states and often attract controversy. In 2020, Illinois Democrats used the American Community Survey, another U.S. census product that offers better statistical reliability at the expense of geographic precision. Republicans criticized their choice.
incarcerated people come from — and adds to the political power of rural areas where prisons, jails and detention centers are often located.

Since incarcerated people in the vast majority of states are denied the right to vote, these rural areas gain political representation from incarcerated people who are virtually excluded from civic life.

Confusingly, even those incarcerated people who can vote in Maine and Vermont, do so with an absentee ballot from their pre-incarceration precinct, despite being counted as residents of wherever they are incarcerated at the time of the decennial census.

Twelve states ended the practice before drawing up new districts in 2021, and will count incarcerated people in their home district moving forward.

**Incarceration in Most States Stayed Relatively Flat**

In most states, the raw numbers of incarcerated people didn’t change much, despite widespread efforts to decarcerate prisons and jails during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Instead, a few populous states lost a larger share. For example, California’s incarcerated population shrank by 50,000, and New York’s by 30,000. Together, they account for approximately one-third of the national decrease in incarcerated population, while representing less than one-fifth of the country’s population. Nine states saw an increase in the incarcerated population.

The incarceration rate provides another perspective. Many southern states with slightly higher incarcerated populations also saw the fastest population increase in the past 10 years. Because the number of people in these states grew faster than the number of incarcerated people, their incarceration rates still went down.

After taking changes in the general population into consideration, four states — West Virginia, Alaska, Nebraska and Arkansas — are the only ones with a higher incarceration rate than in 2010. West Virginia had the largest change, with 3,000 more incarcerated people.

One key reason West Virginia trended in such a different direction than the rest of the nation: population loss. The state lost 3.2% of its population between 2010 and 2020, dramatically more than anywhere else in the country. The next most depopulated state was Mississippi, which only lost 0.2%.

Also contributing to West Virginia’s growth is the increasing number of people who are waiting in regional jails for their trials, according to Quenton King, a criminal justice policy analyst at the West Virginia Center for Budget and Policy.

King’s research shows that from fiscal year 2010 to 2019, West Virginia’s jail population grew by almost 30%, leaving the jails over their maximum capacity. Moreover, it became increasingly difficult for counties to pay for incarceration, King said.

“We used to have county jails, but counties couldn’t afford them,” King said. “So now we have regional jails, where about seven counties share one, but even then counties have difficulty paying their share.”

Ultimately, the reasons prison populations remain stubborn in West Virginia are similar to the reasons they were mostly flat across the country. "We have local elected leaders, prosecutors and magistrates who still fall into this old school mindset of incarceration being the way to fix social ills," said Eli Baumwell, the Advocacy Director for the ACLU of West Virginia. "Until that changes, unfortunately, I think the state is going to keep seeing these numbers climb up."

---

**When Mom Is In Prison — And When She Comes Home**

“Oh, Mother of Mine,” a short documentary and photography project by Anna Rawls, explores the generational impact of incarcerating mothers.

Charnal Chaney takes a deep breath on her yoga mat as affirmations play from her phone speaker in Southeast Washington, D.C. Chaney, 31, begins most mornings this way, going to the gym and meditating before waking up her two eldest children for school.

This early morning routine, she says, is an everyday practice toward healing the trauma of her upbringing. Chaney’s first memory of her mother, Lashonia Thompson-El, is visiting her in prison. It would be 18 years before she connected with her outside its walls.

In a living room on the other side
of Southeast Washington, 44-year-old G. King, a mother of four who was incarcerated for nine years, puts on mime makeup and gold satin gloves. She steps in front of a computer monitor filled with faces of women, and to the notes of “Worthy is the Lamb,” makes interpretive gestures, using movement to connect with herself and other women trying to rebuild their lives after prison.

These are scenes from “Oh, Mother of Mine,” a short documentary and photography project in which I followed Chaney and King — the daughter of an incarcerated woman and an incarcerated mom, respectively — over six months, exploring the impact of prison separation on families. In the film, Chaney asks what it means to be a mother. For her, the answer is ensuring that maternal wisdom is passed down through generations, while for King, it is tied to her own self-empowerment after returning home, so she can be more present for the children she was separated from.

The number of women in prison has grown over 700% from 1980 to 2019, according to The Sentencing Project. Over half of all women in U.S. prisons in 2016 were mothers, affecting the family structure and child development of families like Chaney and King’s.

Chaney was 3 years old when her mother was incarcerated. Her grandmother would take her to visit her mother in the D.C. Jail. Though she only faintly recalls details of this early time, the feelings she worked to suppress as a little girl are vivid: disappointment, heartache and confusion. Her voice cracks as she unravels her memories, noting how her grandmother discouraged her from showing these emotions to her mother during visits.

“One day she was like, ‘Every time you cry like that, or you act like that, it makes your mom sad, she already gotta be in and be away from you. So you can’t act like that. It isn’t making it better.’ And I don’t remember crying ever since then,” Chaney recalls.

The District of Columbia has no state-based prison system of its own, meaning residents convicted of felonies are sent to federal prisons. Chaney’s mom was transferred to a federal prison 300 miles away in Danbury, Connecticut, which she remembers taking seven hours to reach. In 2004, The Sentencing Project reported that 84% of parents in federal correctional facilities were housed more than 100 miles from their place of residence at arrest, making visits difficult and expensive.

Chaney’s visits became less frequent after her mom’s transfer, but from the ages of 9 to 13,
Chaney says her father cut off communication with her mother.

At the height of this, Chaney remembers her mom making attempts to communicate. She tried calling Chaney’s school to talk with her, at times sending women she was locked up with who had reentered society to go try taking Chaney’s picture there.

When Chaney was 13, a judge granted her mother access to see her. It was then that Chaney learned what she was incarcerated for: double murder. One night in 1993, her mother fatally shot two women after an altercation in front of a dental office.

Though communication resumed, it would not repair the hurt Chaney experienced in her pre-teen years. Chaney attended 11 different schools, moving around between family members.

"I feel like over the years, anytime something happened, it was just like,
"If my mother was here, this wouldn’t be happening.’ Or, ‘I can’t wait til my mother come home, and I would have somebody that genuinely love and care for me.”

At 16, Chaney got pregnant with her first child, Amijah. “I think I just wanted somebody to love me unconditionally,” Chaney said. “So yeah. I was like, I’m going to keep my daughter.”

She went on to have four more children: Aaliyah, twins Blake and Bryce, and Malakai.

Chaney says her pain didn’t resurface until her mom was released from prison in December 2011, when Chaney was 21. The initial excitement of reconnecting wore off when Chaney realized she and her mom wouldn’t automatically become best friends, as she had envisioned.

“One day I was just going through something and I called her, and she didn’t answer the phone. And I texted her and I was just like, ‘All these years, you made it seem like you was writing them letters like you’re going to be this certain type of mother, but you’re not even showing up at all,’ ” Chaney said of the first few years of her mom’s release.

Chaney’s suppressed emotions from childhood led to a domino effect when her mother couldn’t be fully there for her. “It was hard for me to want to be a mother and show up for my own children, because she wasn’t being a mother and showing up for me.”

G. King, the mother of four, felt pulled in different directions upon her release from Maryland Correctional Institution for Women in 2017 after serving nine years for forging checks. While King managed to land a job as a government contractor thanks to the diligent preparation she did for her re-entry, she wasn’t prepared for how hard the transition would be on her mental health and personal relationships.

"Everybody had a responsibility for me without allowing me to get myself together," King said.

King’s incarceration had upended her family in 2009. Her two daughters were raised separately — one by her mom and one by their father — and had gradually decreased communication with her as they got older.

“Tmissed Woo’s graduation. She was my baby, so that bothered me. I missed the birth of all of my grandchildren, all seven of them. I missed my son getting married. My grandmother who raised me passed, so I missed my mother’s mother passing,” King said. “I just missed so much, so much, so much.”

In time, King realized she couldn’t show up for others until she first showed up for herself, a lesson that informed the book she wrote in prison, “Get Yourself Together First.”

And so, as she did for emotional release while she was incarcerated, King turned to miming, which she discovered in a class in prison. “I found it was a tool to find songs and display, whether it was my pain or how I felt, and get that out,” King said.

While King was miming in prison, the chaplain suggested that she start her own prison ministry, through which she began teaching other incarcerated women to mime. Today, outside of prison, she continues teaching miming to other women who are returning from prison in her community and at her church.

Like King, Chaney turned to movement as a means to process emotions, especially the panic attacks and suicidal thoughts she says she experienced after her twins were born.

“For me, yoga is a moving meditation,” Chaney said. “It gets the emotion through your body, it heals. And when you’ve been through a lot of trauma, you got to heal that to get it out your aura.”

Today, she’s a yoga instructor for women, children and even newborns, spurred by her mother’s incarceration to empower and educate others in Washington’s Ward 8, where 27% of families live below the poverty line and have limited access to mental health resources.

“We are connected to our kids in more ways than others. You know, it’s not just all about physically, always showing up,” Chaney said.

“The work you’re doing with yourself can still impact your children as well.”

Anna Rawls is a visual anthropologist and photographer based in Washington, D.C. Driven by her deep curiosity, social awareness and aesthetic understanding, she works alongside individuals and communities to create work that expands analysis, communication, and interpretation of the human experience.

Stop Violence Over Prison Phone Time? There’s an App for That.

While Corey Devon Arthur was quarantining, people in the unit got tablets equipped with telephone apps. “If we all had the option to use a phone app, the value of violence would plunge,” he writes.

By COREY DEVON ARTHUR

Over the decades I’ve been in prison, I’ve seen firsthand how communication with the outside world comes at a price. All too often, prisoners are forced to use their blood as currency just to use the phone.

I learned this lesson early. In 1994, at age 16, I was locked down on Rikers Island in C-74 Adolescent Jail. We were known as “adolescents at war.” With only two phones in each house of 40 or so prisoners, the violence over making calls never ended. Some prisoners got stabbed, lacerated or busted to white meat. Their stitches ranged from 20 to a buck fifty.

As the new guy in 4 Main — a unit nicknamed “House of Pain” — it was much easier to write a letter. But I needed to call home and tell my momma I was OK and the date of my next court appearance. Before I could even touch a phone no one was using, another prisoner stepped to me. “You get six minutes on the jack. Get yours in the morning or you can get this right now,” he threatened in a thick Bushwick, Brooklyn accent.

My opponent’s words held no value to me. Not even his 10 or so Latin King comrades seemed costly; I had spent dudes like them in minutes. But the broken rug cutter in his right hand did have the power to make a hefty withdrawal of my blood. I looked to the correctional officer in the officer
bubble, hoping she would buy me some time. But she raised the newspaper she wasn’t supposed to be reading higher, until she completely vanished.

I didn’t call home that night. Neither did my opponent. We fought. We hurt each other for the right to use the phone.

In 1998 I found myself in Attica Correctional Facility, where hardened men were like the living dead. We could only make collect calls, and our loved ones paid the cost. And the violence was rampant. To take and maintain total control over the phones, the stronger prisoners buried the weaker ones like hidden treasure. Administrators tried to better regulate phone usage and stop the violence, but the strong owned and meted out the phone time. It was the very definition of a hostile takeover.

I was at Fishkill Correctional Facility last year when COVID-19 flexed on humanity. I was voted chairman of the Inmate Liaison Committee (ILC) and took an oath to represent the population’s pain to the administration.

Thankfully, COVID missed me. But it came close enough for the contact tracing system to quarantine me for two weeks. The prison turned Special Housing Unit (SHU) 200 — the box — into a quarantine facility.

I was fine living in the isolation of the SHU; I grew up living in cells. But Fishkill is a medium-security prison with a lot of dorm housing. After the madness of dorm life, I sat back and chilled out. It helped that I had the equivalent of a cell phone.

Every prisoner has access to a free JPay tablet that holds downloaded music, movies, games and fee-based “secure messaging.” But everyone in the SHU got a second tablet with a built-in phone app. Suddenly, everyone had their own phone, regardless of whether they were quarantining or being disciplined.

It dawned on me that we were holding the solution to an age-old prison problem. If we all had the option to use a phone app, the value of violence would plunge. We would no longer have to withdraw each other’s blood to make calls.

Armed with this new technology, I decided to bring the issue to the next ILC meeting with prison administrators. On April 30, 2020, I argued that outfitting every tablet with phone capabilities would reduce violence among prisoners. The administration argued against it on grounds that it would require internet capability. The way the buildings are wired, there is no Wi-Fi, they said. Getting it would require approval from the Central Office.

I counter-argued from every angle, so they could see all the scars I had collected over the last 23 years. But they didn’t take me seriously. Their posture signaled indifference; some laughed. At that point, my carefully crafted coat began falling apart at the seams. I spoke out in the voice of my 16-year-old self, the one with 3-inch gashes on my left cheek. The administrators would not budge an inch. Our pain was their stock and trade.

Right before the meeting ended, I closed my eyes and listened for my people. I was trying to hear their voices from the depths of countless prisons. Then I recalled something horrible I had actually seen: a four-man fight over using the phone.

The only consolation is that the transcripts of these meetings are government documents reviewed by the commissioner’s office. It’s one of the few times the system can’t officially suppress the voice of the prison population.

I faced the administration again, in late June, this time as a second-term ILC chairman. I renewed my request to have the phone app placed on all the JPay tablets. The bosses denied me again for the same reasons. They didn’t hear me last year, and they didn’t in June. Maybe they never will. But I won’t stop advocating until they do.

Corey Devon Arthur was born in Brooklyn in 1977 and has been incarcerated for robbery and murder since 1997. He has earned a legal research certification and studied through Rising Hope and Nyack College. Arthur is currently serving his second term as chairman of the Inmate Liaison Committee at Fishkill Correctional Facility. He’s a proud member of Empowerment Avenue, a collective of incarcerated writers. Arthur is also passionate about drawing and is currently working on a trilogy of short stories.

Thomas Mailey, spokesperson for the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervi-
already been incarcerated for nearly 10 years by then, and, as a mid-sized White guy, I survived those years by staying mostly under the radar.

Now I was taking on a job that basically called for people to focus their attention on me.

I was inexperienced, to say the least; I had not even taken a tutor training session yet. In fact, my only real qualification for the job was that I had passed my GED test two years earlier. Then, on my first day, I learned that the woman who had taught high school-level math when I took my GED courses was also new to the class.

My first real trial came in the form of a student who was only a year younger than me, a student many would consider a “hard case.” He would often act out the way someone would if they were still in middle school. He tried making funny comments at inappropriate times to disrupt the class. If we had spelling words on the board, he would change the letters around when he thought no one was looking. He would also pretend he didn’t know what the teacher was talking about, saying “what?” and “why?” over and over. One of his favorite things to do was make a scene by crumpling up his worksheets or homework and throwing them in the trash.

In a maximum security prison like this one, his blatant disrespect might have led to a fight. But I was intent on handling the situation without violence. Something in the deepest part of my brain kept nagging at me, telling me I needed to help him.

I wondered if I was compelled by my desire to be a better person or by the requirements of the job. Or maybe I just felt challenged by him and had to win. But something made me want to see him pass this class.

I later realized that he was exactly how I was in high school and early on in my incarceration, which started at age 18. I was him! I was the pain in the butt who gave the people trying to help me a hard time. That’s why I knew intuitively how to help him.

One day, he crumpled up a worksheet, threw it in the trash and walked out to go to the bathroom. I was starting to get really frustrated with this particular behavior, so I told myself that if he wanted to be the center of attention, then I was going to give him all the attention he could handle.

I got up, dug the worksheet out of the garbage, smoothed it out as best I could and placed it back on his desk.

When he came back into the room and saw the paper on his desk, he gave a little laugh. He crumpled up the worksheet again, threw it away and sat back down. I slowly returned to the trash can and grabbed the paper, smoothed it out in a very exaggerated way and set it down in front of him.

I didn’t say a word, but I was challenging him with direct eye contact. I knew this could lead to a fight if he felt I was making a fool of him, but I was fairly confident that I was

I’m a Teachers’ Aide at My Prison. Here’s What I Learned From My Toughest Student

His disrespectful classroom antics could have sparked a fight. But as a former “hard case” myself, I was determined to help him.

By THOMAS KOSKOVICH

When I became a teachers’ aide for a basic adult education class here at New Jersey State Prison, I learned much more than I ever expected. I had
reading the situation correctly.
He looked back at me and said, "I'm just going to throw it away again."
"That's fine," I replied. "I'll just pick it out again and put it back on your desk."
He broke eye contact, looked down at his desk and said in a low voice, "I'll just start tearing the papers up."
So I told him we had plenty of tape. We went back and forth a few more times, and then he announced, "I'm stubborn and I won't be moved. I'm like a mountain."
"Well, I'm stubborn, too," I shot back. "And I have a whole bunch of time, so I'll be like the wind."
A confused look washed over his face, and he asked why I would want to be like the wind. I explained how, with enough time, wind could wear down a mountain. He wanted me to show him where I got this information, so I grabbed a science book and showed him the chapter that explained erosion. He was hooked.
After I was able to show him that there were interesting things out there to learn, he began to let down his guard. He was still a pain in the butt, but I was able to get him to do at least some of his work. I started by making deals with him, like if he'd do three questions out of 10 I'd give him full credit. He could even choose which questions he wanted to complete. Eventually, he began to finish all the questions just to show me that he could. He wanted me to be proud of him. I was, and I often told him just that.
I didn't really understand what I had achieved with him until the day he passed the test that would allow him to move up to the next level. After he got his scores, he came over to my desk to show me. In a quiet voice, so no one else could hear him, he said, "Thank you for not giving up on me." I was stunned, but then a deep sense of "Thank you for not giving up on me."

First incarcerated at age 18, Thomas Koskovich is 43 years old. When he is not working as a teachers' aide, he is reading sci-fi and fantasy novels, writing and watching funny videos on TV. Koskovich was originally sentenced to death for homicide, but the sentence was overturned through appeals. He is currently serving two consecutive life sentences plus 30 years for double homicide and armed robbery at New Jersey State Prison, and won't be eligible for parole until 2067.

These Meds Prevent Overdoses. Few Federal Prisoners Are Getting Them

Three years after the First Step Act required the Bureau of Prisons to treat more people with medications for opioid addiction, only a tiny fraction are receiving them.

By BETH SCHWARTZAPFEL

In 2018, Congress passed the First Step Act, a wide-ranging prison reform legislation that, among other things, required the federal prison system to expand access to medications for people addicted to opioids. Amid a historic spike in overdoses, both inside prisons and jails and in the country at large, the idea was to save lives: These medications reduce drug use and protect against overdose, and the weeks just after release are a particularly vulnerable time for formerly incarcerated people.
The Act came with tens of millions of dollars for implementation. Yet bureaucratic inertia and outdated thinking about addiction treatment means the federal program is still serving only a tiny fraction of those eligible, The Marshall Project has learned.

As of July, the Bureau of Prisons had only 268 people on medications to treat opioid dependence, according to Jeffrey A. Burkett, who helps oversee the rollout of the program as the National Health Services Administrator for the BOP. This is less than 2% of the more than 15,000 people the bureau itself estimated were eligible, according to a recent Government Accountability Office report.

Even as the Department of Justice — the parent agency of the BOP — investigates other prisons and jails for not providing these medications, the bureau "lacks key planning elements to ensure this significant expansion is completed in a timely and effective manner," the Government Accountability Office said.

Methadone and buprenorphine — sometimes referred to as "medication-assisted treatment," or MAT — both activate the opiate receptors in the brain, which quiets the compulsive cravings that are a hallmark of addiction and make it difficult to get high or overdose. They have emerged as the most effective treatment for opioid addiction: Decades of research show that they reduce drug use, overdose, death, crime and risky behavior like sharing needles. A third medication, Vivitrol, blocks the opiate receptors and prevents the patient from getting high. It is also effective at preventing some of the bad outcomes associated with opioid use, though it is newer and has fewer years of research to back it.

For years, correctional administrators, as well as proponents of "abstinence-based" recovery programs, like Narcotics Anonymous, have been reluctant — if not outright hostile — to the idea of using methadone and buprenorphine (also known by its brand name, Suboxone) to treat opioid addiction. Unlike Vivitrol, which is strictly an opioid blocker, methadone and buprenorphine are themselves opioids and can be abused, which fuels suspicion and mistrust.
"They don't see it necessarily as a medical disease that has highly effective treatment," says Michael Bot-
ticelli, former director of National Drug Control Policy for the Obama administration. "If this were any other medical condition, would we see this level of lethargy in terms of implementing what is the standard of care for treatment for a disease?"

At least 20 states now offer one or both medications in most or all of their state prisons, according to new research from Georgetown University and reporting from The Marshall Project — up from about four states in 2017. In 2018, the National Sheriffs' Association published a resource guide arguing that more jails should provide access to buprenorphine and methadone. Hundreds of jails now do so — still a fraction of the nation's 3,000 jails, but up dramatically from about 30 just two years ago. Also in 2018, a federal judge for the first time ordered a sheriff to provide methadone treatment to a man scheduled to serve 60 days in jail, ruling that not to continue the treatment the man had been receiving in the community would likely be discriminatory and cruel. Since then, at least eight additional cases have resulted in prisons or jails providing or expanding access to these medications.

In passing the First Step Act, Congress intended for the federal prison system to keep pace with the approach to addiction treatment that had evolved in the face of the opioid epidemic. The act called for federal officials to expand access to MAT among those awaiting sentencing, people in prison and those living in halfway houses or under probation after release.

In 2019, Hugh Hurwitz, then-acting director of the BOP, submitted a plan to Congress as the act required. In it, Hurwitz described MAT for opioid addiction as "one of the top priorities for this program," and said the bureau was offering Vivitrol. But the report didn't specify how many patients were receiving Vivitrol, and never mentioned either of the other two medications. Four senators wrote a follow-up letter to then-Attorney General William Barr, chastising Hurwitz's vague assurances and demanding to know the agency's plans for expanding access to methadone and buprenorphine. Barr never responded, said Laura Epstein, a staffer for Democratic Sen. Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire, one of the signatories.

The bureau's official silence on methadone and buprenorphine was set against the backdrop of the Department of Justice's "Opioid Initiative," which then-Assistant Attorney General John Gore described in 2017 as a program to ensure that people who get treatment for drug addiction "do not face unnecessary and discriminatory barriers to recovery." Justice officials have threatened to sue at least three correctional agencies because not providing all three medications may violate the constitutional rights of people in prison with documented opioid addiction. Earlier this year, the U.S. Attorney's office in New Jersey wrote to Cumberland County Jail officials that the medications are "the standard of care for treating Opioid Use Disorder, as it is far superior and more efficacious than other possible treatments."

Yet even as the Department of Justice investigated other prison systems for not providing addiction medications, the Bureau of Prisons was doing precisely the same thing.

Melissa Godsey learned this the hard way in 2019, when she went before a federal judge for sen-
tencing. Godsey was living in a Seattle homeless shelter with her children when she pleaded guilty to a credit card and identity fraud scheme she committed while in the throes of heroin addiction. By the time of her sentencing, she had been on Suboxone for about a year, and it had completely transformed her life, she says, freeing her from constant cravings and allowing her to focus on school and parenting. Yet even as the judge handed down a two-year prison sentence, not a single federal prison was providing buprenorphine to people like her who were entering prison already enrolled in a treatment program, according to a federal official in court that day.

In the months before she reported to prison, she tried to taper off it, but she felt the old compulsions creeping in and even contemplated suicide. “If I had withdrawn in prison, I would have reached for anything to make it stop,” she said.

Godsey sued Bureau of Prisons officials, who ultimately agreed to provide her Suboxone during her prison term. It was the third time that year that the bureau agreed to provide addiction medications in response to lawsuits — and the last, as the agency finally began to roll out the MAT program bureau officials had been discussing as far back as 2016.

In the meantime, overdose deaths continued their grim climb, reaching a record 93,000 nationwide last year. It’s not just in the free world, either. Overdose deaths jumped by more than 600% inside prisons and by more than 200% inside jails in the last two decades, according to recent federal data.

Yet since the bureau began its MAT program in 2019, only 821 patients have been treated. The Maine Department of Corrections — which incarcerates 1% as many people as the federal prison system — has provided MAT to about the same number of people in that same time period, according to numbers provided by officials there.

In Maine, preliminary data shows a huge reduction in overdose deaths through the MAT program: People were 60% less likely to die of overdose in their first year out of prison if they had participated, said Ryan Thornell, deputy commissioner of Maine’s Department of Corrections. Once the Maine DOC helped the staff reimagine Suboxone differently from “the substance everybody was trying to keep out,” the black market demand inside the state’s prisons plummeted, Thornell said. Disciplinary write-ups for a wide range of incidents — fights, assaults on staff, positive drug tests, even self-harm — are also way down.

BOP Health Services Administrator Jeffrey Burkett provided the bureau’s enrollment numbers via email in response to questions from The Marshall Project, but phone calls and emails to the Bureau’s Public Affairs office to arrange an interview with Burkett or someone else from the agency’s MAT program were not returned.

Less than half of those treated by the BOP have taken buprenorphine or methadone, Burkett said: The majority were on Vivitrol. This medication is favored by corrections but not commonly prescribed in the community, says Dr. Joshua Lee, a New York City physician who has studied the use of MAT in correctional settings.

Vivitrol “does decrease cravings, and that’s good,” says Dr. Josiah Rich, an addiction specialist who cares for patients in the Rhode Island prison system. But the outcomes are better on methadone or buprenorphine, largely because people favor the other two medications and are more apt to seek them out and stay on them when they get home.

Because risk of overdose death is 129 times higher among those just released from prison than among the general population, ensuring that people stay on their meds when they’re released is essential. In Rhode Island, a program to provide all three addiction medications in the state’s prisons and jails reduced overdose deaths among the recently incarcerated by more than 60% in two years.

The Bureau of Prisons is a massive bureaucracy that takes time to change direction. It runs about 200 facilities in 36 states, plus more than 150 half-way houses where tens of thousands of people are released each year to spend the last months of their sentences. Only

---

### Which State Prison Systems Offer Medications for Opioid Use Disorder

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Maternal</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Vivitrol</th>
<th>Did Not Respond</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MN</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NV</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WY</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UT</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KY</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TX</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Only Vivitrol</td>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19 of the contractors who provide drug treatment services to people in halfway houses and on home confinement have staff qualified to provide an injection like Vivitrol and contracts that allow them to do so, according to the Government Accountability Office. The remaining contractors are not required to provide MAT, so unless the provider is willing to renegotiate existing contracts, the bureau has to wait, sometimes years, until it’s time to renew those contracts.

More than 100,000 people are also under supervision after release from prison, watched by probation officers all over the country. “We can do everything right, and it would still be pointless and counterproductive if U.S. Probation doesn’t do what they need to do,” says William Bickart, who retired in 2020 after 30 years as a psychologist at the BOP. “We could get the drugs on board with these guys right up until the last day of confinement, but when they go over to U.S. probation, and if probation doesn’t carry it forward, it doesn’t work.”

The First Step Act made similar demands on the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, which runs the federal probation program, as it did on the federal prison system. MAT is provided “relatively infrequently” to those on federal probation, the director of the office told Congress in his report.

The BOP allocated more than $70 million over the last two years to implement its MAT program, including about $37 million Congress provided to implement the Act, according to the GAO.

An internal BOP memo published in November and obtained by the Marshall Project lays out some early general guidance for medical staff implementing the MAT program. It says that people arriving in prison on already-established treatment plans are now allowed to stay on their medication. Those who want to begin medication once they’re already locked up can go through a process to determine whether they’re eligible, the memo says, though it provides few details about what eligibility looks like beyond a diagnosis of opioid use disorder and a medical screening.

Botticelli, the former drug czar, says blaming the size and complexity of these policy changes at the Bureau of Prisons is a red herring. “The data are unbelievably compelling in terms of the people who are overdosing and dying when they’re leaving jails and prisons, which requires a level of urgency,” he said. “If this were not addiction treatment, would we buy the argument that it’s just a big bureaucracy?”

Many state correctional systems — from the smallest (Delaware, Rhode Island) to the second-largest (California) have implemented MAT programs, treating people held in all or most of their facilities with all three FDA-approved medications.

The internal BOP memo acknowledges that the program is “a cultural shift for the agency at large” and won’t work unless it has full support from all employees.

There are so many moving parts that to get them all in alignment takes a champion at the very top, says Bickart, the former BOP psychologist. “To a large extent, the people at the highest level of the bureau don’t even know these obstacles. This is where we’re stuck. People at the top don’t have the bandwidth for details. When you work for the bureaucracy, you’ve got to try to get their attention.”

Does Banning People With Felonies From Dating Apps Actually Make Anyone Safer?

“It’s using the justice system as a barometer of someone’s worth.”

By KERI BLAKINGER

Jason Hernandez got out of prison in 2015 and started making up for lost time. He’d done nearly 18 years on federal drug conspiracy charges, and only escaped life behind bars because then-President Barack Obama granted him clemency. He settled down near Dallas, began volunteering in schools, visited the White House and wrote a book.

Then he decided to start dating, so he downloaded Tinder. He was open about his past, and at first, it was fine. But a couple months ago, he got a notification: “Your account has been banned.”

Although he can’t prove the reason why, he’s been booted
from half a dozen other apps with similar prohibitions tucked into their terms of service: People with felonies — anything from a $10 drug conviction to capital murder — are banned for life. These policies aren’t new, but their enforcement has been haphazard.

That could change. Match Group, which owns Tinder and a host of other dating sites, plans to launch a feature allowing daters to run background checks on potential matches. The company says its efforts are aimed at keeping users safe. But civil rights advocates say the record checks extend an unfair practice of imposing “collateral consequences” long after people have finished their sentences, and will disproportionately affect people of color without actually improving safety.

“Meeting strangers can be risky, and I worry that this approach will mislead people into thinking they’re safe,” said Sarah Lageson, a Rutgers University sociologist who studies the growing use of online criminal records. “It’s using the justice system as a barometer of someone’s worth.”

Match Group wouldn’t say when or why the company created its ban, but a spokeswoman said Match would “continue to develop and evolve” its policies. “We understand and share the concerns raised about the impact our policies have on people who have been incarcerated, many of whom are victims of the inequities of the criminal justice system,” she said.

The practice of banning people from certain rights or activities because of a criminal conviction was once known as civil death. People who were convicted of felonies lost all property and rights before the usual punishment: execution. Now, the collateral consequences of a conviction typically last far longer than any court’s sentence.

In some states, people with felonies cannot serve on juries or buy pepper spray, and can be disqualified from getting an electrician license or fostering kids. Employers often exclude applicants with criminal backgrounds, some schools won’t admit students with felonies and many apartments buildings ban people with misdemeanors.

As someone with a criminal history, these are problems I understand. More than a decade ago, I was arrested in upstate New York with 6 ounces of heroin and sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison. Afterward, I stopped doing drugs, finished college and became a journalist. I am White and grew up in the suburbs, but even for someone with such privilege, collateral consequences are everywhere — and they make it harder to reintegrate into the community. In the past decade, I’ve been turned down for jobs, rejected from volunteering at an animal shelter and told I don’t qualify for more apartments than I can count. When I was looking for a new place during the pandemic, I found that people cared far more about my decade-old drug conviction than about whether I took Covid-19 seriously. Hundreds of apartment listings barred people convicted of felonies, but I only saw one that mentioned pandemic safety.

Whether they’re tucked into terms of service or hidden in unspoken biases, collateral consequences have an outsize impact on communities of color.

“Even though only 8% of the population has a felony record, 33% of Black men have felony records, so any ban on people with felony records disproportionately affects Black communities,” said Amreeta Mathai, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer who’s pushing the rental app Airbnb to stop banning people with “serious” felonies from using the service. (Airbnb did not offer a comment, but referred me to the company’s online policy.)

Most major dating apps ask users to verify that they haven’t been convicted of felonies when they sign up — but that language is easy to miss in the terms of service, and it’s on an honor system. Generally, it only comes up if another user makes a report. The policies don’t provide exceptions for nonviolent crimes, and the ban never expires.

When I started contacting the
companies to ask about their policies, eHarmony said no one had time to comment, while Coffee Meets Bagel and Zoosk didn’t respond. (All three companies ban people convicted of felonies.) Bumble — which does not explicitly ban people with felonies but booted Hernandez anyway — asked to set up a call, then stopped responding. Facebook Dating and Grindr, which don’t have bans, didn’t respond on the record. A representative for Meet Group said that only two of the company’s apps — Skout and GROWLr — have a ban, based on policies it inherited when it acquired those apps. The representative said Meet Group would reconsider that part of the policy.

Match Group came under scrutiny after a 2019 ProPublica investigation found registered sex offenders on the company’s free apps, which include Tinder, Plenty of Fish and OKCupid. That’s because the company only did the pricey background checks needed to enforce the felony ban on its paid site, Match.com.

After implementing new safety measures last year, in March the company announced its investment in Garbo, a nonprofit aiming to create more accessible background checks, focused on preventing dating violence. When Garbo’s app launches later this year, users will be able to pay what the organization describes as a small fee, enter a first name and a phone number and in a few minutes get a stranger’s criminal record, or at least part of it. (A Match Group representative said any money collected will go to Garbo; Match won’t receive any profits.)

“We realized that the opportunity to build an equitable background check existed with the focus on reporting violence,” founder Kathryn Kosmides said. “We make the effort to filter out drug possession, loitering, things like that.”

But Garbo will also provide access to arrests and cases that never resulted in convictions. Pointing out that many abusers aren’t convicted as often as they’re accused, Kosmides said those records will help people make more informed decisions. Someday she hopes to expand the service to vet passengers on ride-share apps like Uber and Lyft.

Legal experts say that relying on arrests and dismissed cases undermines the presumption of innocence and won’t necessarily improve safety. And they note that while some dating app users may feel safer if people who committed certain crimes are filtered out of an app, prior convictions may not be an indication of danger.

The felony bans also have not stopped complaints of sexual violence linked to dating apps. A recent ProPublica investigation based on interviews with more than 50 current and former dating company employees found that they lacked clear policies to prevent and respond to alleged assaults.

“You could have someone with an old drug conviction, and how is it keeping anyone safer to ban them?” said Jenny Roberts, a law professor at American University who studies collateral consequences. “But a current drug user in a nice neighborhood that police aren’t policing, they’re allowed on that website. It creates a false sense of security.”

Instead, experts said improved dating app safety could come from better identity verification practices. And helping people who are seeking long-term relationships could make everyone safer.

“The things that make us safer are things like having a stable family, getting married, being able to buy a house — participating in all these social institutions that have been around for a long time helps make sure the crime rate doesn’t go up,” said Lageson, the Rutgers sociologist. “So if you’re worried about public safety, the best thing you can do is bring people into relationships.”

Though Hernandez, the former prisoner, can’t prove that he got booted because of his felony, he says it was the only way his account violated the terms of service. “How can you hold something against me that I did in 1993?”

He’s hoping that the companies will reconsider their policies. But for now, he’s doing his online dating on Facebook.
The **PeePs**

The state legislature considers the “Clean Slate” bill that would erase criminal records after a determined period of time.

That’s the first thing you think of when you hear about a clean record?

We gettin guns!!!

A lot of people will try you out there!

Guns?

Sean’s girl said she saw a video on Insta-Jams...

Whatever. Some lady walked up and smoked another lady. Cold-blooded! You gotta be ready for that!

That’s not right.

They shouldn’t let any crazy people with felonies have guns.

Growing up me and my pop would use them to hunt, not shoot up our hood like Pedro here.

rch

You remember that guy who thought he shot a burglar in his closet and it turned out to be his daughter?!

Was that on Bookface?

And he was a responsible gun owner, imagine what Pedro would do with some guns!

AY, you know what....??
I think Aaron’s right.

Not you too!

Listen to the next generation!

My older brother got killed by a stray bullet coming home from the store.

It was some dude who was out on parole trying to settle a beef! dudes like that shouldn’t have no guns.

What about those guys who plotted to kidnap the governor in Michigan? Or the ones at the capitol on January 6th? A lotta them had legal guns, bro!

How you know all that and don’t know what facebook is called?

I’m sorry you lost your family, young buck.

Thanks, but somebody tell me how things get better if people who broke the law can legally own guns again?

People are reckless and petty. Even people in here beef about a pinch of drugs or getting swindled out of some coffee.

But me and you? We’re good people, a record don’t change that. Shouldn’t we be able to protect our families?

Well said OG, you could put that on Twitter.

Okay, so you gonna know that’s wrong.
Complete the crossword below by closely reading

ACROSS
4 Every prisoner has access to a free ______ that holds downloaded music, movies, games and fee-based "secure messaging." (2 words)
6 The District of Columbia has no state-based prison system of its own, meaning residents convicted of felonies are sent to _______ _______. (2 words)
7 ...experts said improved dating app safety could come from better _______ _______. (2 words)
9 The number of _____ in prison has grown over 700% from 1980 to 2019 according to The Sen _______ _______. (2 words)
10 Arthur likened hardened incarcerated men to the _______ ____. (2 words)
11 The nonprofit legal defense organization that regularly works with high-profile figures to draw attention to prisoners' pleas. (3 words)
12 In fact, my only real _______ for the job was that I had passed my GED test two years earlier. (1 word)
13 What is one medication that is part of "MAT" that is an effective treatment for opioid addiction? (1 word)
14 The scientific process through which wind can wear down a mountain. (1 word)
15 What activity did G. King practice for emotional release? (1 word)
16 The document signed by an incarcerated person stating that Rodney Reed is innocent because the victim's fiancé, Jimmy Fennell, confessed that he killed the victim. (1 word)
17 The practice of counting incarcerated people in the places where they are held, not in the communities where they are from. (2 words)
18 MAT (3 words; 1 hyphen)
19 "Oh, Mother of Mine," a short documentary and photography project by Anna Rawls, explores the _______ _______ of incarcerating mothers. (2 words)
20 Prior to the current prepaid phone system in NYS, you could only make _______ _______ to contact loved ones. (2 words)
21 What is the other medication that is part of "MAT" that is an effective treatment for opioid addiction? (1 word)

DOWN
1 But civil rights advocates say the record checks extend an unfair practice of imposing "________ _______" long after people have finished their sentences, and will disproportionately affect people of color without actually improving safety. (2 words)
2 The _______ _______ offers a comprehensive and geographically granular look at the U.S. population by attempting to collect information about where everyone lives as of April 1. (2 words)
3 If we all had the option to use a phone app, the _______ _______ would plunge. (3 words)
5 The _______ _______ through which wind can wear down a mountain. (1 word)
8 According to the 2020 Decennial Census, how many people are incarcerated in the U.S.? (2 words)
11 The nonprofit legal defense organization that regularly works with high-profile figures to draw attention to prisoners' pleas. (3 words)
12 In fact, my only real _______ for the job was that I had passed my GED test two years earlier. (1 word)
13 What is one medication that is part of "MAT" that is an effective treatment for opioid addiction? (1 word)
No Flexxx Zone Fruit Salad

Let’s say you want to serve a family of four. I would use:

- 12 bananas
- 8 apples
- 12 sugar-free Kool-Aid packages from commissary
- 2 whole bags of granola at the very least

My topping would be two handfuls of M&Ms

Smashed Cookie Cake

I was bored so I wanted to make a cake. I got vanilla cookies and graham crackers and I scooped out the vanilla filling of the cookies for my frosting. I took the cookies and crackers and I crushed them into real fine pieces. I added a little bit of water or milk to make the dough. I put one layer of dough made of graham crackers on top. I put a layer of cookie dough and another layer of crackers. I took the vanilla filling from the cookies and mixed it with a little bit of butter marshmallow fluff and made the frosting for the cake. I put it on top and it was very good.

HONEY BUN SAMICH

What you need is:

- 2 Honey Buns (you can substitute with any of your favorite danishes or pastries)
- Peanut butter
- 1 Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups
- 1 Hostess Ding Dongs
- (or any of your favorite or facility supplied cream-filled desserts)
- 1 Snickers (again, your favorite candy bar can be used in its place. I just list the ingredients that I have found to best complement the "samich":))
- 1 Grandma’s Cookie as an added layer is optional.

Cut open the Honey Bun. Apply a generous amount of peanut butter to the side with the frosting, but leave the Honey Bun in the wrapper. Set the Ding Dongs top down next to each other on top of the Honey Bun. Next place the Reese's Peanut Butter Cups on top of the previous item. Followed by the Snickers. Peanut-butter up the other Honey Bun, bear claw, cherry cream cheese danish, whathaveyou... Flip that over peanut butter side down and smash to your own desired preference and there you have your very own 10 or so dollar "samich" of diabetic coma goodness lol!
No Bake Doughnut Holes

1 Maria cookie (or other cracker-like cookie, such as animal crackers)
2 Honey Buns

Step 1: Crush Maria cookies into dust. Leave as few chunks as possible.
Step 2: Dice Honey Buns into ½ inch squares.
Step 3: Mix crushed Marias and diced Honey Buns in a sturdy bag (like a trash bag.)
Step 4: Knead bag until the mixture becomes like dough. Note: a small amount of water will help the mixture become more doughy, but too much ruins it. A little goes a long way. Only add water at the end of the mixing/kneading and only add it as needed.
Step 5: Pinch off a small amount of dough and roll it between your hands to make a ball. Repeat until all of your dough is in balls. (It should make about 20.)
Step 6 (optional): Dust the balls in sugar.
Step 7: Let stand several hours to solidify, then eat!

Ramen Rice

Mix rice and ramen together dry. Put the mixture in the microwave with a li'l butter, take it out and mix it every 30 seconds for a total of three minutes, or until you notice that the rice and ramen are a golden brown color. Then add eight ounces of water, (this is for one soup & ½ bag rice) and mix well. Add your preferred spices — I like to add garlic, onion and maybe some of the season packet that comes with the soup. Once well mixed, return back to the microwave and cook for an additional three minutes, stirring once. Remove and cover with a lid for five to eight minutes so that the rice absorbs any remaining water. Eat or mix with your favorite fish and meat. It's perfectly flavorful fried rice!

Chip and Cracker Fish Patties

I make fish cakes with chips and crackers. My first step is to crush the chips. Then I add a half row of crushed crackers into the bag and shake them. Separately, I put two fish in a bowl (it can be any kind) and mix them with mayonnaise and seasoning. I microwave the fish for like two minutes, and then pour the fish into the bag with the crushed chips and crackers. I make it into a big dough ball and then I break off little bits at a time, shaping them into patties. I put them on a plastic bag, and microwave for two or three minutes on each side.

Ramen Fish Pocket

I created what I call a "fish pocket." It's like a hot pocket but it's made with fish. The ingredients are as follows:
1 ramen noodle package
1 mackerel
½ bag of two kinds of chips (I prefer Flamin' Hot Cheetos and jalapeño cheetos…)
2 tablespoons of mayo
Chopped jalapeños
3 tablespoons of jalapeño squeeze cheese

Mix all ingredients into a bowl with the mackerel until thick and well blended. Open a ramen noodle package (it has to be opened on the side that has a part or slash on the noodle). Put the noodles in boiling hot water, covering it for 1.5 minutes, or until the noodles are soft but not fully cooked. Then pour water out. You will see the split in the noodle has opened up to create a pouch/pocket-like hole. Spoon the mixture in the pocket until full and mash down with spork as far as you can until it's stuffed. Press down on the opening with the bag closed to lock the ingredients inside and then close the split. Let it stand for three to five minutes before you open and eat longways.
Honey Bun Sausage

from Montana

You need:
2 Honey Buns
Peanut butter and jelly Sausage

Cut the sausage long ways, put it on a plastic bowl lid, place it on top of a hot pot of boiling water, and cook it. Take those two sausages you cooked and make a honey bun sausage sandwich. Bomb!

Jolly Pops

from Massachusetts

Heat up some Jolly Ranchers in some sick call cups from the medical cart. Put some Lemonheads in the middle and break a couple of Q-tips and stick them into the cups so when they cool down you have lollipops.

Chip Flavor Ramen Pizza

from Arkansas

I use soup crackers and potatoes for the crust. Put that in a chip bag, add water and mix. Smooth it out until it's flat. Let it sit and swell up for about an hour. Cut the bag and spread pasta sauce on the entire crust.

Take a cheese squeeze and put it in a coffee cup. Add hot water to it and stir it up until it's runny. Pour that over the pasta sauce and then pour chili with beans over that. Cut up a summer sausage and sprinkle it on top. Add a cut-up pickle and crush up some chips. Sprinkle over the whole pizza. Finally, take a ranch squeeze and design it over the pizza the same way you'd do a toaster strudel. Add jalapeños if you like.

Jeremy’s Lasagna

from New York

Most incarcerated individuals know that when it comes to food it may not always look pretty, but the taste is what matters. With limited ability to cook, this dish is seasoned to taste as if you were home.

I make this “Food Hack” with only items that are sold here at the jail. However, some of the items can be substituted based on availability. For example:

- T-shirt bags: Growing up around Chinatown in NYC, I've learned how to cook in a bag so that I do not mess up my hot pot. Shirt bags are given to us from the state shop after ordering clothes, but some also use old Jack Mack pouches after cleaning out the fish smell.

- Ziti noodles: Instead of ziti noodles, elbows can be used or rigatoni noodles. Whatever pasta is available works.

Other seasonings are sometimes used but are not always sold here at Clinton, such as curry powder and soul seasoning.

Single serving:

¾ ground beef
½ pound of ziti noodles
1 cup of crushed tomatoes
½ bag of mozzarella
3 spoons of cream cheese
2 shakes of Mrs. Dash seasoning
½ onion
½ spoon of fresh garlic

1. Mince the fresh garlic and onions and place them in a T-shirt bag along with two hamburger patties. Place the bag inside a hot pot after the water has boiled.

2. If you have multiple bags, continue the same practice as above, placing the crushed tomatoes in a bag, then sit it in water until the crushed tomatoes are nice and hot.

3. The ground beef should be brown when done. Without the oil and water that was released while being cooked in the hot pot, place the ground beef with the onions and garlic into a bowl, topping the mixture with the heated crushed tomatoes.

4. Place ½ pound of ziti noodles straight into the hot pot, and mix every few minutes so they do not stick to each other or the hot pot. If you’d like, add a spoonful of oil into the water.

5. At different sides of the bowl, place a spoon full of cream cheese (3x). Season the mixture with two shakes of Mrs. Dash. After the noodles are soft enough to eat, drain the water from the noodles. As you place them into the bowl, layer with mozzarella cheese after every couple of noodles.

HOT TIP! from Arkansas

“When pork rinds get wet they taste like meat.”
Pedro’s Mac and Cheese

Ingredients:
- Elbow macaroni
- Butter
- Whole oregano
- Garlic powder
- Adobo seasoning
- Mrs. Dash seasoning
- Sugar packets
- Hot sauce

Macaroni:
Salt and boil your water. Put the elbow macaroni inside the water and cook for 15 to 20 minutes. Drain macaroni when done and rinse with cold water for about five seconds. Mix two tablespoons of butter into the macaroni and season with three pinches of oregano, three pinches of garlic powder, three pinches of adobo, and three pinches of Mrs. Dash seasoning.

Cheese to use for mac and cheese:
- 4 Velveeta cheeses
- 1 bag of shredded mozzarella
- 5 slices of American cheese
- 1 bag of grated cheese

Cheese:
In a medium pot, heat (but do not boil) one cup of milk. When milk is hot, add the cheese and stir until creamy. Season your creamy cheese, whole oregano, garlic powder, adobo, Mrs. Dash seasoning and four packets of sugar. Stir well. Add one cup of hot sauce to the creamy cheese. Stir. Add creamy cheese to your macaroni and bake in the oven for 10 to 15 minutes. Enjoy!

Black Chicken Rice and Biscuits

Yellow rice:
Wash two pounds of rice with cold water, then drain. Boil three cups of water in your pot. Season your water with Adobo Sin Pimienta. While boiling the water, wash your black beans and dice one onion. Add the black beans and diced onions to the boiled water, then put the rice inside the boiled water and let it cook for 15 to 20 minutes. When rice is done, let it sit on the side.

Sweet Green Olive Biscuits:
Finely cut up one small pack of olives. In a large pot, combine one cup of flour, ½ cup of complete pancake mix and ½ cup of sugar. Stir the mix with a spoon. Add a little bit of olive juice to your mix, then stir in three pounds of butter and ½ cup of cold water. Your dough should be nice and soft. Put your olives inside your dough and make 15 small balls. Then smash down the balls and bake for 10 to 20 minutes, making sure to turn your biscuits every two minutes until golden brown. When done, let sit for three minutes.

Black chicken:
Finely cut one onion and four cloves of garlic. Butter your hot pan. Combine onions and garlic inside the hot pan until they turn light brown. Put your chicken inside the hot pan. Cook chicken until done. Afterwards, add ½ cup of soy sauce, honey, one pack of mustard, one pack of ketchup and ½ pack of brown sugar. Carefully turn your chicken and let your chicken sauce simmer for 5 to 10 minutes on low heat. When done, let it cool for three minutes. Add juice from half of a lemon to your sauce.

Brianna’s Chicken Wing Dip

Ingredients:
- 2 pouches of commissary shredded chicken
- 2 bottles of Keefe hot sauce
- 1 Philadelphia cream cheese
- 1 brick of sharp cheddar cheese (cut into small cubes)
- 1 bag of mozzarella cheese
- 2 bags of commissary wraps
- Oil
- Salt, to taste
- Ranch salad dressing

Steps:
1. Soften the cream cheese
2. Cook chicken to your liking, season with adobo and garlic powder.
3. Mix in cream cheese until melted.
4. Add ½ of the brick cheese and half of the mozzarella.
5. Mix in hot sauce and ranch to taste (however hot you want it. You can also substitute the hot sauce for BBQ sauce.)
6. Let simmer until mixture thickens.
7. Pour cheese on top (whatever is left) and cover to let cheese melt.
8. Take wraps and cut into triangle pieces.
9. Fry the chips and salt to taste.
10. Scoop chips in the dip and enjoy!
Parenting from Prison

There’s no manual for parenting, especially when you’re incarcerated. Parents* have to find their own ways to raise and care for their children from a distance.

*You don’t have to be a biological parent to raise a child.

Turn the page to share your stories and tips on staying connected to the important children in your life.
Tell us about your relationship with your kid, and what makes it special. How do you stay connected with your child while incarcerated? How have you overcome the difficult moments? What advice do you have for other parents in prison or jail? Share your experiences below:

To see your answers published in the next issue of News Inside, submit your responses to:

News Inside
The Marshall Project
156 West 56th Street, Suite 701
New York, NY 10019
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

In 2020, the city of Washington, D.C., restored the right for incarcerated people to vote. As a long-term incarcerated resident since the year of 1994, participating in that democratic process marked a series of firsts for me. Not only did I vote for the first time, I also ran for public office as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner (ANC) and won. I became the first person in the history of Washington, D.C. to be elected to a public office while incarcerated. I unapologetically ran on the platform to restore the rights and dignity of incarcerated people with an economic bent. I’m proud to acknowledge that The Marshall Project is a place where my inside constituents’ voices are heard and minds are informed. I can remember vividly the impact I felt after reading a particular article in News Inside. Therein the significance of “gate money” or funds issued upon release was highlighted. I was deeply disturbed to discover the paltry amount of funds, and in some cases, the lack thereof, distributed nationwide. Insufficient funds are a lead contributor to recidivism. This revelation prompted me to make raising “gate money” a top priority in my administration.

—Joel Caston is believed to be the first incarcerated person to be elected to the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 7F07 election seat that represents the D.C. Jail, the Harriet Tubman Women’s Shelter and a new luxury apartment development. He is also the author of the investment series, Currency Catchers.

Thinking Inside the Box

Give these questions a try after you’ve read the stories in this issue. We’ll include the answers in the next issue.

1. In 2004, The Sentencing Project reported that 84% of parents in federal correctional facilities were housed less than 100 miles from their place of residence at arrest, making visits convenient and inexpensive.

2. T of F. There are fewer people behind bars now than 10 years ago because of huge criminal justice reforms.

3. T or F. You can be a teacher’s aide without having a GED.

4. T or F. More than 1,500 people have been executed in the U.S. since 1977.

5. T or F. As stated in the terms of service of many dating apps, (e.g., Tinder, Match, etc.), people with felonies are banned for life from using these apps.

6. The National Sheriffs’ Association published a resource guide arguing that more jails should provide access to buprenorphine and methadone.

7. NYS DOCCS gives phone access to incarcerated individuals in “general population” through their JPay tablet.

Last Issue’s Answers

1. True. (What Words We Use — and Avoid — When Covering People and Incarceration) 2. False. (What Words We Use — and Avoid — When Covering People and Incarceration) 3. True. (I Was Trained to Call Prisoners a Word They Hated) 4. True. (I Am Not Your ‘Inmate’) 5. False. (Foster Care Agencies Take Millions of Dollars Owed to Kids. Most Children Have No Idea.) 6. False. (Mr. Sitthivong Goes to Washington) 7. True. (“He Died Like an Animal”: Some Police Departments Hogtie People Despite Knowing The Risks)
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 achieve this through award-winning journalism, partnerships with other news outlets and public forums. In all of our work we strive to educate and enlarge the audience of people who care about the state of criminal justice.

SUSAN CHIRA Editor-in-Chief
CARROLL BOGERT President

Editorial
GERALDINE SEALEY Managing Editor
RUTH BALDWIN Editorial Director
ANDREW COHEN Senior Editor
DAVID EADS Data Editor
LESLIE EATON Senior Editor
GHAZALA IRSHAD Copy Chief
GABE ISMAN Director of Technology
ELAN KIDERMAN ULLENDORF Director of Product
TOM MEAGHER Senior Editor
AKIBA SOLOMON Senior Editor
MANUEL TORRES Regional Editor
CARY ASPINWALL Staff Writer
KERI BLAKINGER Staff Writer
ANDREW R. CALDERÓN Data Reporter
MAURICE CHAMMAH Staff Writer
LAKEIDRA CHAVIS Staff Writer
WILBERT L. COOPER Staff Writer
CELINA FANG Senior Multimedia Editor
ANNA FLAGG Senior Data Reporter
ARIEL GOODMAN Tow Fellow
BO-WON KEUM Designer
JAMILES LARTEY Staff Writer
WEIHUA LI Data Reporter
RYAN MURPHY Developer
JOSEPH NEFF Staff Writer
KATIE PARK Developer
WENDY RUDERMAN Staff Writer
ALYSIA SANTO Staff Writer
BETH SCHWARTZAPFEL Staff Writer
CHRISTIE THOMPSON Staff Writer
ABBIE VANSICKLE Staff Writer

DONALD WASHINGTON, JR
Executive Assistant
MARTIN GARCIA News Inside Manager
CHRIS WILSON Development Advisor

Contributing Editor
WESLEY LOWRY

Contributing Writers
DEMETRIUS BUCKLEY Baraga Correctional Facility, Baraga Mich.
JOHN J. LENNON Sullivan Correctional Facility, Fallsburg, N.Y.
ARTHUR LONGWORTH Monroe Correctional Complex, Monroe, Wash.
JERRY METCALF Thumb Correctional Facility, Lapeer, Mich.
JULIA PRESTON
TOM ROBBINS
ANAT RUBIN
RAHSAAN THOMAS San Quentin State Prison, San Quentin, Calif.
GEORGE T. WILKERSON Central Prison, Raleigh, N.C.

The stories in this issue were originally co-published with:
The Guardian (Death Row)
USA Today (Meds Prevent Overdoses)
NBC News (Dating Apps)

Contact
Lawrence Bartley
The Marshall Project
156 West 56th Street, Suite 701
New York, NY 10019
212-803-5200
lbartley@themarshallproject.org
themarshallproject.org