

TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE INITIATIVE @ WILLAMETTE U

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TJI MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Transformative Justice Initiative is to facilitate a paradigm shift within the Oregon criminal legal system from punishment to accountability and from current criminal justice practice to transformative, healing, and community-based alternatives. We believe Oregon has the potential to serve as a national model for the transformation of criminal justice philosophy and practice, and we work to facilitate this shift in the following ways:

- ♦ Supporting the intellectual, artistic, and political expression of people directly impacted by crime and the criminal legal system.
- ♦ Developing transformative programs and policies within Oregon prisons, as alternatives to incarceration, and during reentry.
- ♦ Promoting the prevention of institutional and individual violence through engaged peace-building practices on the WU campus and throughout the State.
- ♦ Recognizing the myriad ways racial, gender, and economic oppression contributes to our current criminal justice practices.

OASIS Event @ WU

Join us **Thursday, February 24th @ 6pm** at Willamette University to learn about the **work of Oregonians Against Slavery and Involuntary Servitude (OASIS)**. The event is hosted by TJI and will include in person and virtual attendance options.

Speakers include Willamette professor and TJI director Melissa Michaux, Oregon State Senator Manning, recently commutated Anthony Pickens, and OASIS directors Niki Kates and Riley Burton. Afterwards, a Q&A will be conducted.

OASIS is a grassroots organization fighting to end modern-day slavery in Oregon. Their guiding beliefs are built from the ideals and founding principles of this nation, and are centered around the belief that every human deserves the rights, recognition and resources necessary to thrive. They believe all people are created equal and every person has the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Therefore no person should ever be subject to any form of slavery or involuntary servitude.

To register for the event, please use this link:

<https://forms.gle/n9G8pZzwhxaKb6Nj9>

To join the Zoom meeting for the event, please use this link:

<https://willametteuniversity.zoom.us/j/93908890659>

OREGONIANS AGAINST SLAVERY AND INVOLUNTARY SERVITUDE

INFORMATIONAL
EVENT + Q&A



Ford 102
February 24th
6:00-7:30pm

Speakers:
Senator Manning
Melissa Michaux
Anthony Pickens
OASIS Founders

Come learn about the exception to the Oregon Constitution that makes slavery legal for those incarcerated-- and the ballot initiative to remove it.

ReGroup

REGROUP is a new twist on the traditional support group model, specifically for people who have recently returned to the community after time spent behind bars. The members of this group help one another celebrate their new freedom, get established in the next chapter of their lives, refocus when life becomes distracting or overwhelming, learn valuable life skills to help ease reentry, and provide a support system for various areas of need. **REGROUP** capitalizes on the valuable lived experiences of the members to help one another from a position of genuine understanding.

The next Regroup meeting will be held at 10am on March 5th at Ike Box (299 Cottage St NE, Salem, OR 97301).

Youth With Incarcerated Parents Project (YIPP)

TJI is excited to announce the launch of the **Youth with Incarcerated Parents Project** (YIPP)! YIPP supports "youth-led organizing" among Oregon youth ages 12-24 who have experienced parental incarceration. The foundation of youth-led organizing is the establishment of affinity groups in which youth participants can share experiences and find moral support in a non-judgmental space. Through regular meetings, workshops, and events, youth participants share their stories, identify patterns in their experiences, learn about the systems that impact them, develop policy platforms that address the challenges they have faced, and launch a campaign focused on the platform issues. Youth-led organizing was developed by organizations working with foster youth and has been found to increase well-being, personal empowerment, and academic success. If you would like more information or know of a youth who might be interested in participating, please contact Nicole Lindahl-Ruiz, YIPP Director, at nlin-

Regroup Members



Dr. Melissa Buis Michaux is Professor of Politics and incoming Chair of the new Politics, Policy, Law and Ethics (PPLE) department at Willamette University. She also contributes to the Women's and Gender Studies Program. Her research and teaching centers on American social policy - especially welfare and health care policy - and on the criminal justice system. For the last three years, she has taught a class on "Restorative Justice" at the Oregon State Penitentiary with 16 Willamette students and 16 prisoners.

Dr. Traynn VanderPyl is an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice Sciences at Western Oregon University, Research Director of the Western Restorative Justice and Reentry Center (WRJRC), and Editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Restoration, Rehabilitation, and Reentry (R³)*. Her research focuses on interventions within and legislation concerning juvenile and adult corrections that affect reentry and recidivism, as well as addressing social hostility toward those with justice system involvement. Dr. VanderPyl's earlier experiences as a high school special education teacher and consultant, as well as a foster parent, have contributed to her research and activism regarding disproportionate representations of vulnerable and marginalized populations in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Her work on affecting the outcomes of youth and adults in these systems has led to participation in numerous academic, behavioral, and reintegration programs in both juvenile and adult correctional facilities with a priority on emphasizing the voices of those seldom heard. Dr. VanderPyl has presented on behalf of her research participants and fellow change agents at multiple national and regional criminal justice conferences and published in peer-reviewed journals across various related fields of study.



Sterling Cunio see more on page 4.

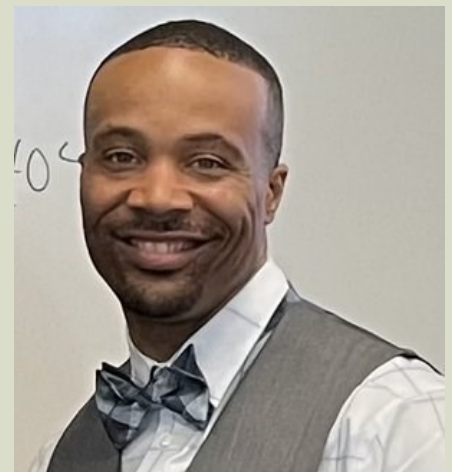
TJI: Practitioner Profiles

Sterling Cunio is a spoken word poet and award winning author that dedicated life to the service of others while inside the Oregon Department of Corrections where he served nearly 28 years before being released for outstanding reformation. Sterling was a founder of the Restorative Justice Program within Oregon State Penitentiary which focused primarily on reducing harms and transforming both the street and prison culture through the use of arts, education, community engagement and conflict resolution. While incarcerated Sterling mentored countless others in positive transformation and supported them in becoming change agents as credible messengers living their amends.



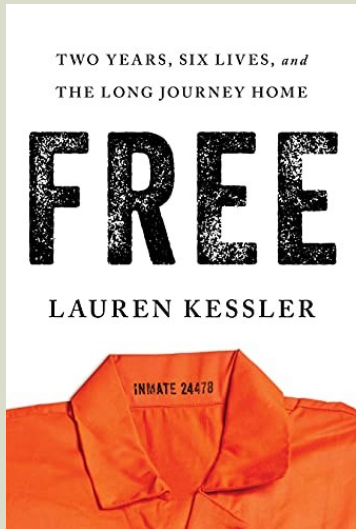
Arnoldo Ruiz works at Latino Network for the Youth Empowerment & Violence Prevention Division as a Program Manager and was formerly incarcerated with the Oregon Department of Corrections for 19 years. Arnoldo oversees 3 culturally specific mentoring programs that provide mentoring services for youth who have been impacted by the criminal justice system. He also serves on the advisory board for the Western Restorative Justice & Reentry Center.

Anthony Pickens is a formerly incarcerated youth offender who was incarcerated at the age of 15. He served 24 years before successfully proving outstanding rehabilitation and reformation and having his sentence commuted by Governor Kate Brown. While incarcerated, Anthony embraced the TJ philosophy and felt obligated to begin to live a life of amends which led him to get involved in and start several groups that challenged the toxic dynamics of prison and street culture. Anthony has been instrumental in efforts to remove slavery from the Oregon Constitution both while incarcerated and since he has been released.



Recommendations

Book



This new book by Lauren Kessler follows six people and their complicated challenges of re-entry after spending years incarcerated.

The book comes out April 19th. Preorder by clicking the link here:
<https://www.amazon.com/Free-Years-Lives-Long-Journey-ebook/dp/B09DTHZL1F>

Podcast



Conversations and storytelling with Restorative Justice Practitioners, Circle Keepers, and others about how they bring Restorative Justice philosophy, practices, and values into their personal and professional lives.

Hosted by Amplify RJ founder David Ryan Barcega Castro-Harris. Produced by Elyse Martin-Smith.
