



AUSTIN·TRAVIS COUNTY

**REENTRY
ROUNDTABLE**

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2023**

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ABOUT US

REENTRY ROUNDTABLE

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to be a robust network that champions safe and healthy communities through effective reentry and reintegration of persons with justice system involvement by bringing reentry partners together to increase collaboration, reduce duplication, align efforts and strengthen the capacity of persons with justice system involvement and the reentry programs that serve them.

OUR VISION

Our vision is a connected community that values and supports equity, well-being and upward mobility for persons impacted by the criminal justice system.



The networking and the ability to develop professional skills have been immeasurable.



-Amanda Cassidy-Trejo

OUR 2023 IMPACT

Reentry Roundtable embarked on the first year of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan by laying the foundations in each of the five goal areas.

ADVOCACY

1

Created an alignment strategy with the Behavioral Health & Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (BHCJAC) and participating in the BHCJAC Intercept 4 Reentry workgroup.

PEER NETWORK

2

Convened the Reentry Advocacy Project (RAP) community and facilitated a strategic visioning process to outline goals for the future of our peer network space.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

3

Restructured Reentry Roundtable governance and decision making process to ensure that system-impacted leaders are guiding the direction of our coalition.

CAPACITY BUILDING

4

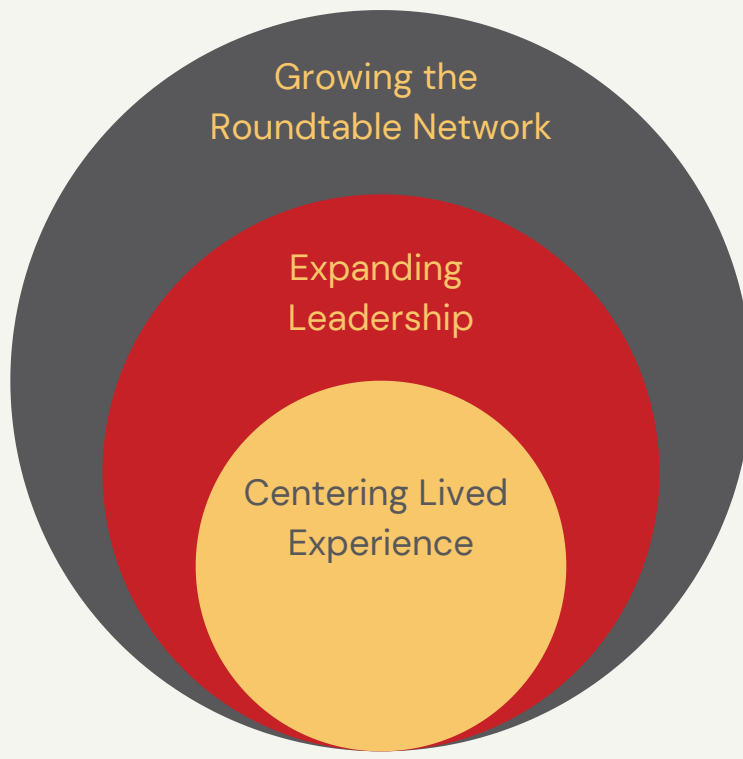
Gathered local reentry service providers to assess their interest in creating a Reentry Community of Practice to share best practices and increase knowledge of local reentry services.

LEADERSHIP & CAREER DEVELOPMENT

5

Learned from local leaders in the reentry advocacy and leadership training community and developed a case statement for a reentry-specific leadership cohort program.

We used these findings to launch a leadership and professional development fund for Reentry Roundtable community members who are directly system-impacted.



Why the Governance Restructure?

The strategic overhaul of the Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable's governance structure reflects a purposeful initiative to fortify the foundation of our organization. Prioritizing leadership accountability aims to fill our leaders with a heightened sense of responsibility and ownership, fostering an environment where decisions seamlessly align with our organizational values. Emphasizing clarity in expectations eliminates doubt surrounding roles and processes, streamlining operations and empowering leaders to execute their responsibilities with precision and confidence. The deliberate integration of a leadership pipeline, focused on individuals with diverse lived experiences, highlights our commitment to inclusivity, ensuring our decision-making body reflects a broad spectrum of perspectives and enriches the quality of our strategic endeavors. This comprehensive approach positions the Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable to adapt, respond, and thrive in an ever-evolving landscape.

OUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

ADVOCACY

FELLOW

SPOTLIGHT



MEET OUR ADVOCACY FELLOW

Meet Barbara, a dynamic leader in Austin with an unwavering passion for positive change in the reentry community. She pioneers innovative programs to reduce reliance on jails, offering alternative paths to rehabilitation. Barbara, the Reentry Roundtable's Advocacy Fellow, collaborates with various organizations, advocating for restorative justice practices and policies. Beyond her impactful work, she treasures family moments and finds solace in writing poetry. Barbara is committed to shaping a more compassionate and just society, empowering individuals to thrive beyond their past mistakes.

Unveiling My Journey: Turning Fear into Hope

In the canvas of my emotions, anger emerged as a shield, masking the true essence of my underlying fear. Through these verses, I've come to realize that anger is a response to fear, a powerful defense mechanism we use to create distance from others.

As I share this poem, I want you to know that you're not alone if you're grappling with these emotions. We all face fears that seem insurmountable, but within them lies an opportunity for growth and transformation.

The three fears I've uncovered are universal, touching the core of our vulnerabilities. The 'Fear of Life' triggers the fight-or-flight response, a survival instinct that reminds us of our strength to protect ourselves and our loved ones.

The 'Fear of Place' speaks to the anxiety of losing our space in relationships, family, or work. It's a reminder that we're not alone in feeling this way, and together, we can navigate these challenges.

Lastly, the 'Fear of Face,' tied to pride, shows how we use anger to shield ourselves from appearing weak. It's a common struggle, but recognizing it is the first step toward breaking free.

This isn't just my story; it's a shared narrative of overcoming fear. I want to encourage you to prioritize self-care in your life. Take a moment to breathe, to reflect, and to remind yourself that you are resilient. By embracing self-care, we offset the power of fear and prevent it from immobilizing us.

You're not alone in this journey, and hope is a powerful force. As we dismantle the shield of anger, let's replace it with the strength of hope, supporting each other and ourselves on the path to healing and overcoming fear. Remember, self-care is not a luxury; it's a necessity on the road to resilience and renewal.

Poetry CORNER

In the depths of emotion, a truth has been unfurled,
Anger, a cloak, shielding a vulnerable world.

Fussing and fighting, a facade so rough,
Concealing the scars of life's horrific stuff.

Anger, a complex emotion, one not to be ignored
Three fears beneath, a revelation to explore.

Firstly, 'Fear of Life,' when danger draws near,
Fists and knives threaten, that's that fight or flight fear.
Primal instincts awaken, defending your child or self,
A survival reflex, like an urgent plea for help.

Next, there's this thing referred to as 'Fear of Place'
That's when you think someone will take up your space
Maybe in a relationship, with a parent, or on your new job

When fear says "There's someone better and you're about to be robbed".

Lastly, 'Fear of Face,' translated: That's our pride,

When challenged, bad decisions seem to push our common sense aside

We think if we give them reprieve someone else might try
Before appearing vulnerable we would much rather die

Yes fear is at the base of all that pain

The Exposure, The Judgement, The Misery, The Shame
But anger kicks in as our go-to defense mechanism

To dissuade against the humiliation and criticism

Yet, be not deceived by anger's false might,

Violence and intimidation, will lead to a much bigger fight.

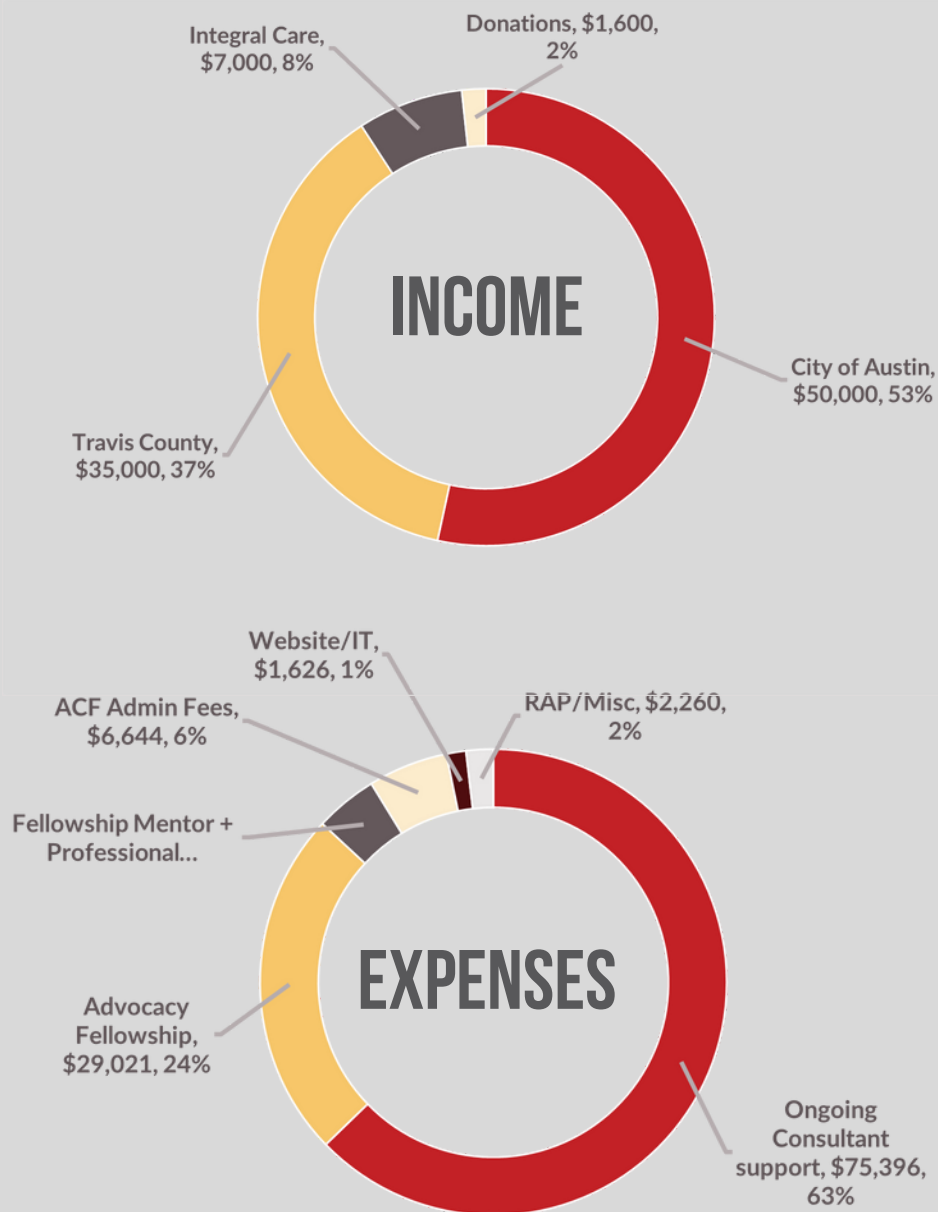
Remember strength is found in vulnerability's embrace,

So we should face our fears with courage, and emerge with grace.

“
 The connections I made at RRT helped me transition to my current job, as well as connect with Austin area leaders and providers in the reentry world.
 ”

-- Lori Mellinger

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



Note: The discrepancy between income and expenses in FY23 is due to unanticipated fiscal sponsorship fees and additional expenses related to the Advocacy Fellowship transition, as well as lower than expected funding. The Roundtable Coordinating Committee will take this year's shortfall into consideration when finalizing next year's budget.

LEADERSHIP AND MEMBERS

Thank you to the many organizations and individuals who contributed to the Reentry Roundtable's goals this year.

2023 Executive Committee

Chair

Dr. Charles A. Moody, Jr.
Community Coalition for Health

Vice Chair

Melissa Shearer, LBSW, JD
Travis County Mental Health Public Defender

Immediate Past Chair

Donald J. Tracy
Austin Community College

RAP Representative

Cynthia Simons, RPS, MHPS
Texas Center for Justice & Equity

2023 Planning Council

Sonja Burns

Community Representative

Jennifer Carter

Goodwill Central Texas

David Clauss, LMSW

American YouthWorks

Helen Gaebler, JD

UT School of Law

Juanita Garcia

Travis County Public Defender

Mia Greer, RN, BSN, CLIA

Community Coalition for Health

Darwin Hamilton

Community Representative

Robert Kingham

City of Austin Community Court

Carl F. Hunter II, M.Div

Building Promise USA

Cathy McClaugherty

Travis County Justice & Public Safety

Rodolfo (Rudy) Pérez, Jr.

Travis County Adult Probation

Hank Perret

Community Representative

Kaleigh Phelan

Capital Area Private Defender Service

Paola Silvestre

Indeed

Louella Tate, Ph.D.

Community Representative

Alex Villarreal, LPC

Integral Care



PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- American YouthWorks
- Archer Western Construction
- Austin Community College
- Austin Free Net
- Bastrop County Cares
- Breaking Chains Making Amends
- Building Promise USA
- Capital Area Private Defender Service
- Care Guide Services
- City of Austin Community Court
- City of Austin Equity Office
- City of Austin Housing Department
- Communities Not Cages
- Community Coalition for Health
- CommUnityCare
- CoreCivic Austin Transitional Center
- ECHO
- Empowering Women Out of Prison
- FPC Bryan
- Goodwill Central Texas
- Grassroots Leadership
- Helping Hands Through Connections
- Honest Jobs
- Inclusion and Resilience for Bastrop County
- Indeed
- Integral Care
- Life Anew
- Lioness

- Meadows Mental Health Diversion Institute
- Mission Accomplished
- Muslim Space
- MyFRSH
- On Point Reentry Consortium
- Oxford House
- RecoveryATX
- Santa Maria Hostel
- Skillpoint Alliance
- Socrates Software
- Texas Center for Justice & Equity
- Texas Harm Reduction Alliance
- The Excel Center Highschool for Adults
- The Sentencing Foundation
- Travis County Adult Probation
- Travis County Digital Equity and Justice Project
- Travis County Justice & Public Safety
- Travis County Juvenile Probation Department
- Travis County Mental Health Public Defender
- Travis County Public Defender
- Travis County Sheriff's Office
- TXCROSS
- Unite Us
- United Way for Greater Austin
- Urban Alchemy
- UT School of Law
- Walsh Construction
- Workforce Solutions Capital Area



The RAP monthly meetings have helped me to overcome my anxiety of sharing with others my story. It helps me to hear where others are and learn from them. I enjoy being in community with individuals who understand the diverse concept of incarceration and transitioning back into society.

--Mandi Zapata

WE THANK YOU
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF
THE ROUNDTABLE