

EQUALITY

COMMITMENT

"JUSTICE"

**NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE
BIENNIAL REPORT 2008 AND 2009**

SERVICE! **COURAGE
OPPORTUNITY**

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MISSION STATEMENT

The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice is a Newark-based urban research and advocacy organization dedicated to the advancement of New Jersey's urban areas and residents. Established in 1999 by the Alan V. and Amy Lowenstein Foundation, the Institute provides a dynamic and independent voice for change necessary to create just, vibrant and inclusive urban communities throughout New Jersey. We are pleased to have been referred to as a "social justice think and do tank."

It is our strong belief that urban areas of New Jersey hold remarkable potential to act as regionally competitive economic engines while providing resilient, vital and attractive communities to their residents. It is our work to identify, analyze and address the underlying causes of social and economic disparities and to challenge the barriers that constrain cities and their residents from achieving their full potential.

THE PROGRAMS OF THE INSTITUTE ARE CONCENTRATED IN FOUR AREAS:

- 1** Expanding access to economic opportunity for low-income and minority residents of Newark and other urban areas in the state;
- 2** Promoting local, regional and state government that is effective, equitable and accountable to the concerns of urban residents and their communities;
- 3** Ensuring the civil rights and other basic entitlements of minorities and low-income individuals in the state;
- 4** Highlighting the interdependence between urban and suburban areas as a means to produce more effective and sustainable public policies.

The Institute advances this non-partisan agenda through policy-related research and analysis, development and implementation of model programs, advocacy efforts (including litigation when appropriate) and sustained public education.



A LETTER FROM CORNELL BROOKS AND JOHN FARMER

Dear Friends,

Amy and Alan V. Lowenstein, founders of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, in their lifetime together, set forth a legacy that the Institute strives every day to accomplish. Their vision, to challenge and overcome barriers that constrain urban communities and their residents, has shaped the work of this public service institution for the last eleven years. Today we invite you to celebrate with us their legacy and our work.

In little more than a decade, the Institute has begun making Amy and Alan's dream of social justice real. Justice, Equality, Opportunity, Courage, Service and Commitment are the values that represent the aspiration of the Institute's work. These accomplishments are achieved through our three core program areas: Equal Justice, Regional Equity and Equal Opportunity. Each one includes successes that have invariably impacted the lives of urban residents, such as the home repair loan program in areas previously infested by predatory lenders; workforce development initiatives within the green economy, trucking, trades and other blue collar industries; legislative advocacy in the foreclosure and reentry areas; and advocacy efforts to establish institutions and programs that provide alternatives to sentencing and reduce juvenile detention.

The simple meaning of these values may be understood in the stories of the grandmother who received a low interest home repair loan that enabled her to fix a roof to keep the squirrels out, and her family warm; the young man with a 4th grade education and a criminal record for drug use who now has a good job with benefits; a mother with cancer who received critical medical services from our New Careers program; the truant middle schooler who will be encouraged to stay in school by a middle school judge of the youth court, catalyzed by the Institute; and the young man who now dreams of law school, having received job training and educational support through our pre-apprenticeship program.

These social justice stories represent our policy, legal, legislative and programmatic efforts to "make ideals real."

Sincerely,

Cornell William Brooks, Esq.
Executive Director, NJISJ



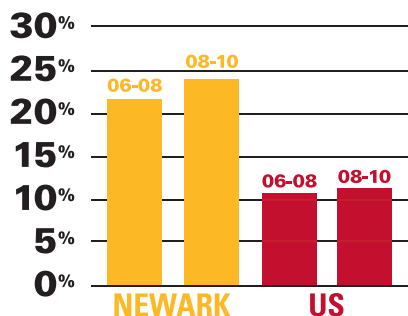
John J. Farmer, Jr., Esq.
President, NJISJ Board of Trustees
Dean, Rutgers Law School



NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE MAKING IDEALS REAL

The period of this report, 2008 – 2009, saw the greatest recession in decades. Thousands of New Jerseyans lost their jobs and those who were employed felt both uncertain about their job security and the economic future of the state as a whole. The recession's toll was hardest on urban populations that were already dealing with dysfunctional education systems, high unemployment, crime and a foreclosure crisis for everyone. In Newark, 24.7 percent of the nearly 300,000 residents lived in poverty – and that was before the recession. As a result of the recession, slashed government budgets translated to drastic reductions in services.

POVERTY RATES



U.S. Census Bureau

Against this backdrop, the work of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice holds even more relevance. Cities, urban neighborhoods and poor families are more vulnerable than ever before. In this report we describe our efforts to develop interventions and to advocate for positive change.

We built coalitions of organizations and established relationships, even among unlikely partners, to mobilize new and creative resources to help communities and families maintain stability during this turbulent time. These partnerships have yielded programs that have placed urban residents in jobs despite the recession and have restored driver's licenses, removing a barrier to employment. These coalitions have also spoken as a collective voice to push for new policies, regulation, and legislation in Trenton, including bills that help to level the playing field for ex-offenders, hailed by *The New York Times* as a model for the nation.

In a relatively short period of time we have become recognized for our ability to bring other organizations, institutions and leaders to the table to have difficult discussions, move the conversation forward and to find solutions. We believe this mix of voices is essential to eliminate barriers to urban advancement and to make the ideal of vibrant, livable urban communities a reality throughout the state.

MAKING IDEALS REAL:

IDEAL: STRONG URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS AND REGIONAL EQUITY

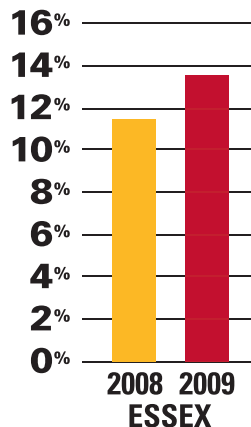
ACTION: LEGISLATION TO PROTECT HOMEOWNERS; NEW FINANCIAL SERVICES AND ORDINANCES TO IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOODS BLOCK BY BLOCK

MITIGATING THE RECESSION'S SHOCKWAVES IN POORER COMMUNITIES

The Institute's Regional Equity Initiative works to ensure that the services and opportunities available to suburban New Jersey residents are also available to those living in cities. The recession had a dramatic negative impact on city dwellers where foreclosure rates were especially high. The Institute was instrumental in crafting legislation to help families protect their homes and protect neighborhoods by addressing the consequences of high concentrations of abandoned and foreclosed properties. While working to reduce the number of predatory loans, we also worked to bring in good financial services and develop affordable loan products, allowing urban homeowners to avoid high-cost credit.

FORECLOSURE RATES PER 1,000 OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING

The Reinvestment Fund: Mortgage Foreclosure Filings in New Jersey (2008)



NEW JERSEY MORTGAGE STABILIZATION RELIEF ACT

After enjoying a decade of prosperity, the American housing market burst, sending shockwaves around the globe. The meltdown, along with the credit crisis, had a cascading effect on the economy. Venerable banks were brought to their knees, and homeowners and renters struggled to keep their homes from being foreclosed.

Cities, where subprime mortgages spread like a virus, were hit the hardest. With little access to affordable and appropriate mainstream credit, residents were suddenly given substantial loan offers by subprime lenders with complex and confusing terms. These loans, which may have been initially affordable, included rate resets, balloon payments and other provisions that made them suddenly unaffordable. The recession compounded the problem. When the bubble burst, homeowners struggled to make their payments on the default interest rates, triggering the foreclosure crisis. In 2006, more than half of the loans originated in Newark were subprime, compared to the state average of 26 percent. Essex County has also consistently had the highest rates of delinquency and foreclosure compared to the rest of the state. The federal government's Home Affordable Modification Program has barely made a dent in addressing the foreclosure crisis. Although the program is intended to help three to four million homeowners avoid foreclosure, it had only resulted in 170,000 modifications as of late 2009.

"Arielle Cohen is part of a new task force addressing the growing crisis of foreclosed homes in Newark, such as the one behind her on South 11th Street"
- Star-Ledger

*Addressing foreclosure on-the-ground,
NJISJ staff help to document and remove
mortgage scam "Easy Credit" advertisements*



The Institute has concentrated on arresting predatory lending practices since 2001. It has co-sponsored a national conference on the issue, commissioned seminal research and eventually helped to establish a coalition of diverse organizations including NJ Citizen Action, the Mortgage Bankers Association, the American Association of Retired People and others who worked together to pass the Home Ownership Security Act (HOSA) in 2002. At the time, this was the nation's strongest anti-predatory lending law, extending liability for review of high-cost mortgages to secondary market purchasers. Building on its history of work in predatory lending, the Institute co-founded the Newark/Essex Foreclosure Task Force and sought legislation to create incentives for loan servicers to modify delinquent loans to prevent foreclosures, maintain home values and stabilize neighborhoods.

Together with NJ Citizen Action, the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey and others, the Institute worked to pass the New Jersey Mortgage Stabilization Relief Act, which in 2009 was signed into law. The Act included a number of the measures proposed by the Institute, including a court mediation program with counseling to avert foreclosures, incentives for loan modification and support for community stabilization efforts.

MORTGAGE RELIEF STABILIZATION ACT

- Provides up to \$25,000 in a second-mortgage loan for an owner-occupied dwelling, including a condominium or town house, a single-family detached home or a multi-family structure with up to three units.
- Requires a creditor in a foreclosure action to notify the clerk of the municipality in which the property is located within ten business days of initiating a foreclosure proceeding.
- Any creditor with a residential foreclosure proceeding before a Superior Court will be required to provide the clerk of the municipality in which the property is located a listing of all residential properties in the town where creditor has a foreclosure action pending.

PRESERVING AND RESTORING HOMES IN EAST ORANGE

- bank loan program brings overdue relief to urban homeowners

In the City of East Orange, homeowners like Joyce Brodie are renovating their homes, thanks to a program that offers affordable, long-term loans. In parts of Newark and East Orange, for example, there may be as few as one bank branch for every 10,000 individuals, whereas suburban towns may have as many as 16 bank branches per 10,000 individuals. The absence of banking institutions in many poorer cities makes residents vulnerable to predatory lenders eager to step into this market vacuum to finance home repairs or maintenance.

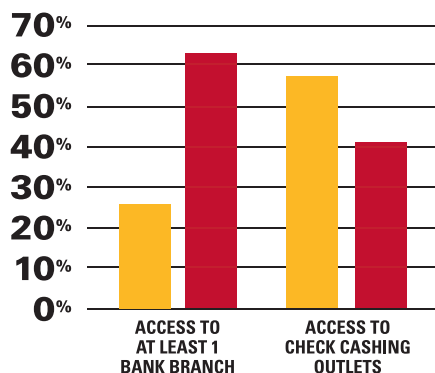
The Institute sought to fill this void by partnering with the City of East Orange and Hudson City Savings Bank to develop an affordable 30-year home repair loan for residents previously targeted by predatory lenders. The bank offered one of its existing products, while the city drew up a list of approved and qualified contractors. The city also designed a project cost estimation program to ensure the work would be completed in a timely fashion.

Then East Orange reached out to residents such as Ms. Brodie. After reading about the details in a letter sent by the mayor, Ms. Brodie successfully applied for a loan allowing her to finance repairs and renovations. In the future, we hope to increase the size of the program in East Orange and expand it to other cities.

The program has enjoyed repayment rates that mirror the performance of the bank's portfolio as a whole, even during the worst recession in decades.

*ACCESS TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
IN ESSEX COUNTY. 2006.
New Jersey Institute for Social Justice*

ACCESS TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS URBAN/SUBURBAN



"I want to say how extremely beneficial this program is," Ms. Brodie said. "I am very satisfied with the outcome of the projects. The payment schedule to the contractor was excellent, along with the city's approval of work before payment would be made. I am looking forward to the next program that will allow home owners to keep the City of East Orange a positive place to live."



LEGAL PROGRAM

The Institute's roots run deep in the legal community, with its founder, Alan V. Lowenstein, a renowned attorney who had a deep commitment to making the world a just place. The Institute has worked to expand its legal program to litigate, research and advocate for reform measures. It has already blazed trails, having assisted in the effort to establish the first pro bono legal assistance program for offenders. The Institute continues to propose progressive programs.

JUVENILE DETENTION ALTERNATIVES INITIATIVE (JDAI)

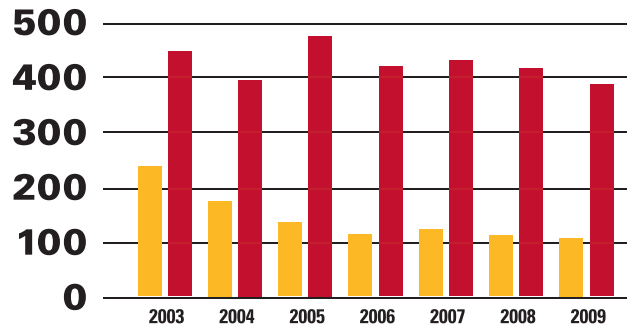
The Institute remains committed to finding different forms of remediation for juveniles statewide and in Essex County. Studies have shown that unnecessary juvenile detention has a negative impact on their lives. Research has demonstrated that detention is a greater indicator of poor life outcomes than any other factor, including gang involvement. JDAI ensures that detention is used only if it is needed to protect public safety or guarantee a court appearance.

When we began the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative, Essex County had an average of 240 children per night in its custody. The average has now dropped by more than half, to under 100 per night, and has been as low as 83 overnight. Children have been productively engaged in local community programs, after school activities, service work and academic remediation. Tracking data shows no negative effect on court appearances or behavior threatening public safety.

AVERAGE DAILY POPULATION IN DETENTION

ESSEX COUNTY

ALL JDAI SITES (including all counties)



JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM - *change sentencing for juveniles*

Treating children as adults may be unjust. Some studies have shown that children are incapable of understanding the consequences of their actions because the brain does not fully develop until the age of 20. With support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Institute completed a seminal report on New Jersey's waiver law, which allows children's cases to be passed on to adult criminal courts. This research was conducted through an innovative partnership involving the Institute, and the Public Catalyst Consulting Group, a diverse and interdisciplinary group of volunteers (lawyers, healthcare professionals) from Yale University who contributed countless hours to develop this comprehensive research.

The paper recommends reconsideration of the following:

- The age (now 14 for some alleged offenses) at which children can be eligible for waiver;
- Who should make the decision, prosecutors or judges;
- The alleged offenses for which one can be eligible for waiver;
- Whether waiver has achieved its intended purpose of making the community safer by reducing recidivism.

COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER: *a win-win solution*

Courts are clogged with cases of low level offenders. The process of hearings, sentencing and sending these individuals to jail is costly and may lead to worse consequences over time. A better solution is the Community Justice Center. These “problem solving courts” are a success story in the criminal justice system. They have drastically reduced recidivism rates, saved taxpayer dollars and prompted defendants to lead more productive lives. New Jersey’s first Community Justice Center is now open, following years of planning among the Institute’s legal staff, the Center for Court Innovation and Newark Municipal Court.



*Law students from NYU Law School spent spring break at NJISJ doing research on important policy questions identified by the NJISJ legal team. **From left**, Lauren Hume, Lellsie Barton, Ian Herbert, Mayor Cory Booker, David Lin, Admin. Assistant Tim Collazzi, and former intern, Megan Cunningham.*

TAKING GUNS OFF THE STREETS

In 2007, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, along with Newark Police, broke an illegal ring that unleashed 60 guns on the streets of Newark. One of those guns was used to kill a single mother of two in March 2005. As a means of reducing the number of handguns on city streets, Jersey City enacted an ordinance limiting the number of handgun purchases to one within a 30-day period. Although New Jersey has strict gun laws that make it illegal for straw purchases in the state, residents are traveling to nearby and bordering states to buy and import guns into the state. The National Rifle Association challenged the law immediately in court, and the Institute joined Jersey City in defending its ordinance by filing an amicus curiae brief. The case was rendered moot in August 2009 when a state law with the same restrictions as the Institute-supported Jersey City ordinance was signed.

SUPREME COURT RULING - *treatment instead of prison yields lower recidivism*

John G. Meyer, 25, had a tortured history of drug addiction when he was indicted in Warren County for shoplifting and drug possession in 2004. He pled guilty and applied for Drug Court. The state objected and fought until the case reached the state's highest court. The Institute was pleased to join Lowenstein Sandler, in filing an amicus curiae in State v. Meyer. The New Jersey Supreme Court, relying on the Institute's reasoning, ruled in 2007 that criminal defendants sentenced to probation may be referred to the state's Drug Court program. Research shows that using intensive, often residential treatment rather than prison, can have a strong impact on lowering the recidivism rate. The National Institute of Justice conducted a 10-year study of drug courts in Portland and found that Drug Courts may lower recidivism rates between 17 to 26%. In 2005, the U.S. Government Accountability Office analyzed 23 programs and concluded those who participated in a drug treatment program were less likely to be re-arrested.

MAKING IDEALS REAL:

IDEAL: MORE AND BETTER JOBS FOR URBAN DWELLERS

ACTION: FIND, PREPARE AND CONNECT URBAN WORKERS TO GROWING INDUSTRIES

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY - *opening pathways to employment*

The need for jobs is universally regarded as a top priority among public officials, advocacy groups and community residents. Finding jobs in a healthy economy is challenging for low-skilled workers as it is, but it is even more so in an economy that is in a deep recession. The Institute continues to serve as a pipeline between urban residents, job training and full-time jobs in growing industries.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING DIVISION - *newly created division offers a comprehensive approach to employment*

The Institute analyzed the success of two of its nationally recognized demonstration programs, Newark/Essex Construction Careers Consortium (construction pre-apprenticeship training) and the New Careers Project (work readiness training for ex-offenders) – both of which have been successful at landing jobs for low-income, low-skilled, hard-to-employ urban residents. Recognizing the overlap in the individuals served by the two programs, the Institute created a single consolidated platform with an expanded variety of targeted training, services and other resources to connect participants to work.

This effort bridges the gap between those who face obstacles finding jobs and employers. By meeting with entry-level employees, the Institute offers support to clients and an opportunity roadmap. Participants undergo an extensive screening and intake process to determine the best route to take towards permanent employment. Case managers focus on identifying barriers – education, health, financial – that stand in the way of achieving goals. Institute legal staff develops strategies that address legal barriers to employment, all to assist clients to reach their employment goals. This additional support in the form of mentoring, meeting with peers in similar situations, and wraparound case management, helps clients navigate twists and turns of their job search.

ENVIRONMENTAL JOB TRAINING PROGRAM

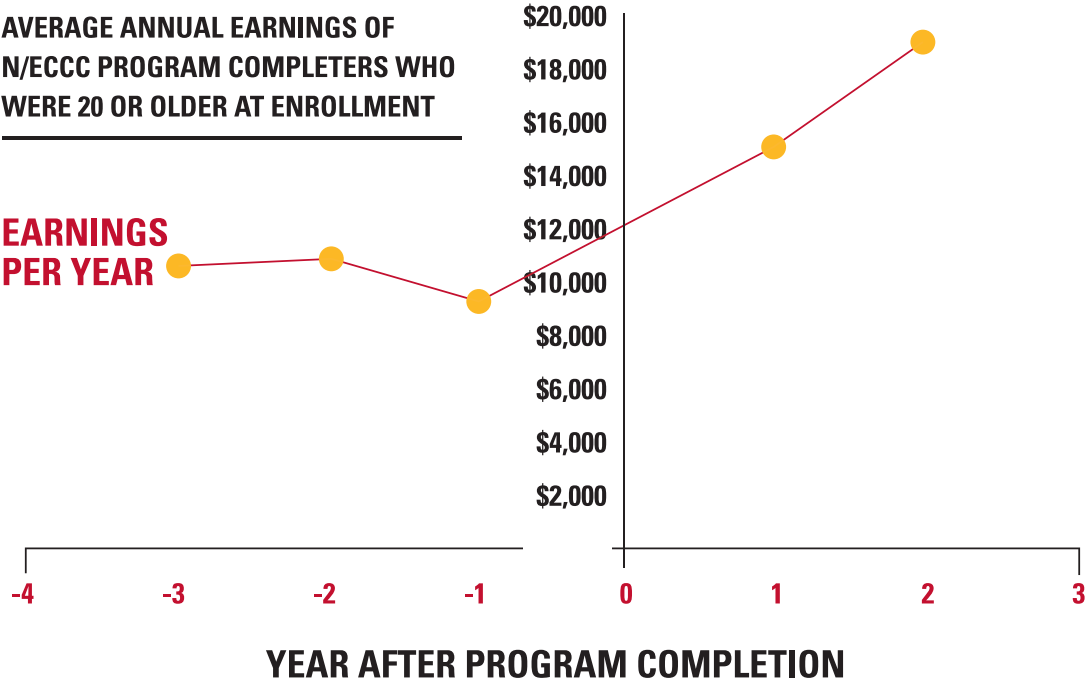
In 2009, the Institute expanded its training platform into the green, environmental remediation field. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded the Institute a \$200,000 grant to train Newark residents for jobs in the environmental sector. Newark's industrial past has left roughly 700 acres of brownfields in the city. The sites range from small parcels in residential neighborhoods to industrial tracts that are as large as 30 acres. These vacant lots pose potential health risks and the deteriorating buildings are contaminated with asbestos, lead paint and other harmful substances. The Institute's Brownfields Remediation Program ensures that local residents will be at the forefront of the higher wage workforce that will be needed to safely clean up properties that have hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants. The program will provide residents of communities impacted by brownfields with the skills, training and recognized credentials to land jobs in assessing and remediating tracts of contaminated land. These credentials will include highly marketable licenses in asbestos and lead remediation as well as other industry-driven certifications. This will provide an important pathway into employment with family-supporting wages for low-skilled residents.



NEWARK/ESSEX CONSTRUCTION CAREERS CONSORTIUM (N/ECCC)

Over the period 2008 – 2009, the Institute placed 26 graduates of its construction training program as apprentices in the construction trades unions and a number of people became journeymen and journeymen. As a result, they will receive family health and other benefits along with regularly scheduled wage increases. The Newark/Essex Construction Careers Consortium has demonstrated its positive impact on participants preparing for apprenticeships in one of Essex County's 17 building trades unions. According to an independent study by the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University, participants who have completed the 10-week academic training program have seen their earnings increase by 100 percent after two years.

N/ECCC participants are low-income men and women of color who reside in the greater Newark area. More than half of them have been previously unemployed and more than 12 percent incarcerated.



“Go with an open mind.”

**-Michelle Boone
Steamfitters Apprentice**

“Women are more likely
to enter and advance in the skilled trades
when they have **female role models.**

**By entering the trades you can help
yourself and future generations.”**

**-Michelle Boone
Steamfitters Apprentice**

Women who work in the skilled trades
earn 20-30% more
than women working “pink collar” jobs.

-Wider Opportunities for Women

“Work 4 Women Exploring High-Wage Nontraditional Career Options”



SIGNS OF REBOUND IN COMMERCIAL TRUCKING

Several years ago, the Institute and the Newark Alliance, a nonprofit consortium of leading Newark corporations, universities and foundations, identified commercial trucking as a growing industry in need of trained and licensed drivers. Together with the support of the Newark Alliance, the Institute launched a program to connect Newark residents to higher wage commercial trucking jobs at Port Newark. The drastic downturn in the economy had a chilling effect on the volume of goods moving in and out of Port Newark/Elizabeth. Although the recession has slowed these efforts, there are signs that trade is picking up again with our first participant hired since the beginning of the recession. As the economy rebounds more fully, the Institute, the Newark Alliance and the area One Stop Career Centers continue to work together to ensure that urban commercial driver's license holders are prepared to take up these jobs.

WORK FOR RETURNING EX-OFFENDERS - *getting back to work and back on their feet*

The Institute played an important role in shaping the historic federal investment in the City of Newark's Prisoner Reentry Initiative. Newark was one of the few cities in the country to receive a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor for its prisoner reentry program. That grant was matched by more than \$2 million from local, state and other philanthropic sources.

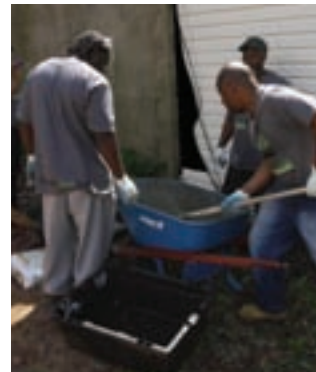
The Institute's focus on ex-offenders was more vital than ever with unemployment at staggering levels and double the state average in urban areas. The program consists of careful screening and workplace preparation, temporary work and case management services, including addressing health issues.

This year, we entered a partnership with the Greater Newark Conservancy to provide ex-offenders eight weeks of paid work experience to help reacquaint them with the workplace. Clients learn cutting edge techniques to reclaim and rehabilitate abandoned and derelict properties throughout Newark, converting blighted lots into green spaces, gardens and community education centers.

Since the initiation of the program, nearly 100 clients obtained full-time, unsubsidized permanent jobs. The Institute has also forged several important partnerships to address health needs, legal issues and family matters to help graduates succeed.

Partnership with Greater Newark Conservancy

Clients learning cutting edge techniques to reclaim and rehabilitate abandoned and derelict properties



NEW CAREERS - *successfully climbing the first rungs on the corporate career ladder*

S, 26, had just returned home after completing a six-year prison term. With a sixth-grade education and no work history or skills, he had a tough time landing an interview, much less a job. He turned to the Institute's New Careers program, where he participated in an intensive job readiness program. A counselor assessed his situation, taking into account his criminal background, living situation and a legal situation in civil court, to determine his job readiness.

First, S. was placed in a transitional job at a local printing company to observe his workplace behavior, productivity and job preparedness. He performed well. The Institute, along with the New Jersey Attorney General's office and the Newark Alliance, worked with Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield to consider employment opportunities that could offer an individual a second chance.

Horizon agreed to interview three candidates for an entry level position. They were impressed with S. and offered him the job. He performed so well that after six months he was promoted to a new, higher-paying position.

In 2010 S's life outside of work also started to fall into place, thanks to New Careers. He recently obtained a driver's license and is in the process of opening a checking account at a local credit union. He is enrolled in a GED prep class at Essex County College, a stipulation that was included in his employment at Horizon. He also meets regularly with his New Careers case manager for advice and counsel.

In 2010, we hope to engage other corporate employers to offer a second chance to women and men returning home from prison.

"We are proud to partner with the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice given their statewide and national reputation for excellence in workforce development. Our first employee recruited through this program was well prepared by their team and is doing great work for us. The Institute helped us to offer a deserving young man a second chance."

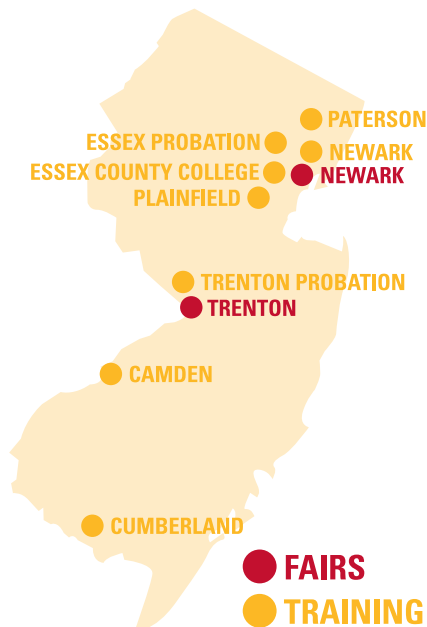
- Bill Marino, President, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield

LICENSE RESTORATION PROGRAM - *expansion to other counties*

Not having a driver's license is one of the most common obstacles that stands in the way of urban residents successfully landing a job. The Institute discovered that a large number of licenses had been suspended for non-driving-related reasons. To address this problem, the Institute has hosted a series of license restoration fairs across the state in partnership with local community groups, advocates, the judiciary and the Motor Vehicle Commission, based on its training manual, "Getting Back on the Road." More than 300 people were served at a single License Reinstatement Fair in Newark and more than 500 service providers statewide have been trained to help clients.

The innovative License Reinstatement Program is a pilot program operated in collaboration among the Essex County Vicinage, the Institute and the Newark Workforce Investment Board. In 2009, we provided technical assistance to Passaic County, which is using Essex County as a model as it crafts its own program to restore driving privileges.

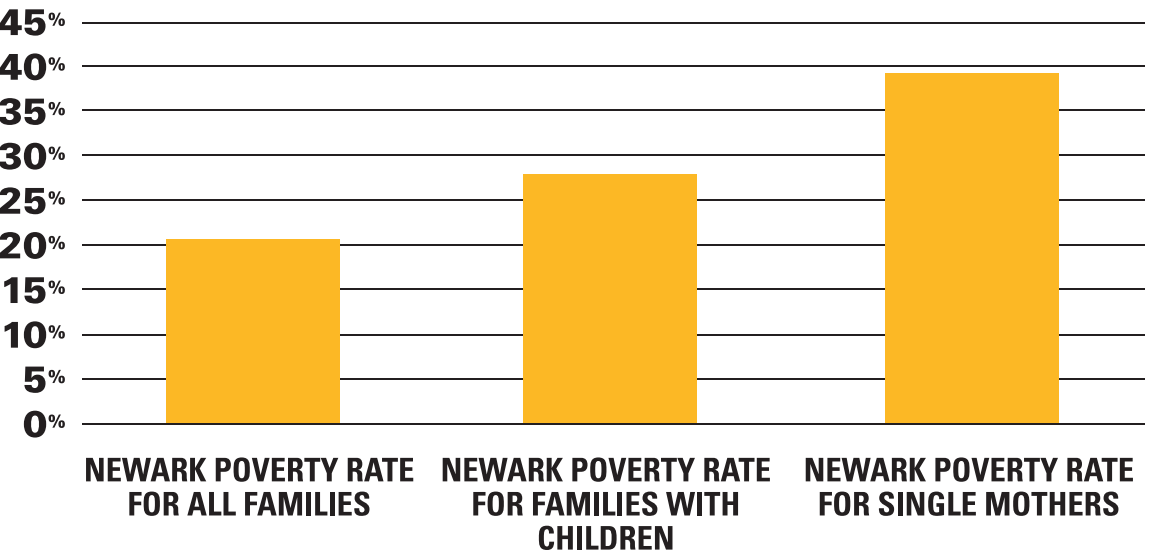
LICENSE RESTORATION PROGRAM FAIRS AND TRAININGS



VULNERABLE FAMILIES INITIATIVE PLANNING GRANT

Nationally as well as locally, the greatest disparities in income and other indicators of economic well-being are no longer between women and men, but rather between mothers (i.e., caregivers) and others. Urban mothers and young grandmothers caring for grandchildren (of whom there are 50,893 in New Jersey's cities and 33,486 in Newark alone), living in impoverished, resource-poor neighborhoods, face additional structural barriers to advancement. These include: under-performing schools; unhealthy living conditions (including environmental degradation as well as limited food choices); youth involvement in the criminal justice system; concentrated predatory consumer credit practices; and physical isolation away from opportunity. Daily navigation of this terrain generates discernible economic and emotional costs for these families. With support from the Fund for New Jersey, we are conducting a feasibility analysis to determine appropriate program and policy options to connect these women to higher wage, non-traditional work that can support a family and offer a brighter future, while also addressing the difficulties of living in poor neighborhoods.

NEWARK POVERTY RATE



MAKING IDEALS REAL:

**IDEAL: CREATING A FAIRER PLAYING FIELD FOR
WOMEN AND MEN RETURNING HOME FROM PRISON**

**ACTION: MODEL FOR THE NATION LEGISLATION
HISTORIC LOCAL PROGRAM**

EQUAL JUSTICE - *balancing the scales of justice for all*

The Institute has taken a multi-faceted approach in pursuing equal treatment under the law for residents in urban communities. Treating all citizens equally under the law is fundamental for a healthy and civil society. One of the Institute's earliest initiatives focused on the population of men and women returning to their families and reentering their communities after being released from prison. A historic package of reforms that passed the legislature with support from both sides of the aisle and was signed into law. This victory was the result of more than eight years of ongoing and persistent legal research by the Institute's legal department, advocacy, direct service, and public education.

In 2002, the Institute, together with the New Jersey Public Policy Research Institute, sponsored a New Jersey Reentry Roundtable, a year-long series of policy discussions engaging government, business, academia and community to address the complex issues related to prisoner reentry. The resulting summary paper, "Coming Home for Good," offered a blueprint for state and local action on these issues relating to prisoner reentry. In 2004, the Institute assisted in the state's successful application to the National Governor's Reentry Academy, which provided an opportunity to learn and share best practices among member states committed to reform. In 2005, the Institute created a resource guide, "The Essex County Smart Book," a model pre-release manual for individuals nearing completion of incarceration. That same year, the Institute launched the New Careers Project, a direct service program to help ex-offenders find jobs. New Careers was one of the recommendations that emerged from the New Jersey Reentry Roundtable discussions. In addition to its advocacy efforts, further described below, the Institute continued its success with the formation of the Reentry Legal Services Program (ReLeSe) together with the Newark Administration and Seton Hall Law School program. In 2008, The Institute commissioned a critically acclaimed documentary, "Moral Panic," that examines the pervasive penetration of gangs in Newark.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2007	2008 2009	2010
	New Jersey Reentry Roundtable	Coming Home for Good Published	Governor's Reentry Academy	New Careers Launched	Second Chance Campaign Launched	Counting the Costs Hearings Convened	Reentry Legislation Passes!

PILOT PROGRAM OFFERING PRO BONO LEGAL AID TO FORMER PRISONERS BECOMES PERMANENT

After being released from prison many individuals find themselves in legal tangles that can stand in the way of their reuniting with families, paying child support, finding work or securing housing. The Institute collaborated with Mayor Cory Booker's administration, Seton Hall Law School, Volunteers for Justice, Legal Services of New Jersey and the Newark Alliance to identify ways to resolve their civil legal issues.

In 2007, these collaborating organizations launched a pilot program called Newark Reentry Services (ReLeSe), matching ex-offenders with a network of volunteer attorneys who provided pro bono civil legal assistance. The program is the nation's first pro bono civil legal assistance for ex-offenders. In 2009, ReLeSe was spun off as an independent program with a network of 250 trained pro bono attorneys from private practice who have served 1,200 clients to date.



Amy and Alan Lowenstein, founders of NJISJ

Their values are epitomized by the statement, "Social justice should be the underlying goal of all humanity."

TRIUMPH IN TRENTON - *Institute-led coalition helps pass landmark laws that help to give ex-offenders a fresh start*

The Institute celebrated a major legislative victory in January 2010 that exemplified its strengths: its ability to analyze problems on an extended basis, propose solutions, initiate demonstration programs, build coalitions and advocate for reform.

In 2003, the Institute recognized that ex-offenders faced many barriers after they returned home. The Institute researched the myriad of restrictions on employment, housing and access to benefits and convened a year-long series of high-level, statewide roundtable discussions among stakeholders and tested demonstration programs. Long-term attention to hard issues is a hallmark of the Institute's work.

In 2007, the Institute brought together a wide coalition of community-based organizations, criminal justice experts, prominent ministers, former prisoners and advocacy organizations such as the NAACP, the Hispanic Directors Association, Families Against Mandatory Minimum, Legal Services of New Jersey, ACLU-NJ and New Jersey Association on Corrections. The partnership was called the Second Chance Coalition and its mission was to find ways to lift the legal barriers to reentry faced by ex-offenders.

After three years of brainstorming, advocacy and perseverance, the Second Chance Coalition helped pass three critical pieces of legislation that will create a more level playing field for the 14,000 to 16,000 men and women who are released from New Jersey prisons every year.



(Left) Board tally of the vote on the reentry bills **(Middle)** Douglas S. Eakeley, Esq., founding trustee of NJISJ and member of the firm of Lowenstein Sandler, thanks the legislators, Senator Sandra B. Cunningham and Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman for their untiring support of the bills, at an Appreciation Event hosted by Lowenstein Sandler. From left, John J. Farmer, Jr., Esq., President of the NJISJ Board of Trustees, Cornell William Brooks, Esq., Executive Director of NJISJ, Senator Cunningham and Assemblywoman Watson Coleman. **(Right)** View of the statehouse chamber on the night of the vote

From November 2008 to May 2009 Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman and the Second Chance Coalition held eight public hearings around the state, attended by hundreds of citizens to build support and to collect ideas for legislative reform. The result of their efforts was a legislative package of six bills addressing issues ranging from fair access to employment to ensuring that ex-offenders are provided with their essential identity documents as they return home. Three of these bills were passed by the Legislature, with bipartisan support.

The legislation that passed will help inmates both before and after they are released. Under the new laws, any inmate who requests it will be guaranteed access to GED classes, and by 2013 the Department of Corrections must ensure that all inmates, except those deemed developmentally incapable, leave prison reading at a twelfth grade level. Encouraging individual responsibility and family support, the laws also enable all New Jersey residents to apply for food stamps and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits regardless of their criminal history. Finally, under the new laws ex-offenders will not be obligated to pay outstanding fines until 90 days after release, giving them time to get a job or otherwise get back on their feet so they can obtain the necessary resources to make the payments.

"These individuals repay their debt to society by serving time only to return to communities that remain unforgiving to them and their families as they rebuild their lives. The doors for housing, jobs and community opportunities are often closed to individuals who have served time."

- Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-Mercer)

The Second Chance Coalition is the only statewide advocacy group specifically dedicated to changing public policy related to prisoner reentry. The state spends an average of \$39,099 on each inmate. With the reform package, the state could save \$1 million with a one percent reduction in recidivism after one year and \$5.4 million in five years.

There is still more work to do. To encourage work, the Second Chance Coalition will advocate for the passage of three other bills that prohibit employers from discriminating against job applicants on the basis of a criminal record. And expand access to expungement of criminal records. The Coalition will remain vigilant in pursuing these and other policy changes by building on the grass roots effort and mobilization that successfully steered through these three bills which will impact communities throughout New Jersey.

According to the New York Times, these bills represent “a comprehensive package of reforms that would help ex-offenders rejoin society’s mainstream and lower the chances, and costs, of recidivism... providing a new lease on life to thousands of families while offering a model for the rest of the nation.”

The New York Times



Launch of Second Chance Campaign

STRENGTHENING WOMEN AND FAMILIES

This bill lifts the ban on TANF and food stamps for people with felony drug convictions. It ensures that children no longer suffer as a result of the certain convictions of a parent.

REDUCTION OF RECIDIVISM

Identity documents are prerequisite to employment and are expensive, complicated and cumbersome to obtain. This provides returning inmates with photo ID, medical records, rap sheet, accounting of fines owed among other important outcomes.

EDUCATION AND REHABILITATION

Requires inmates to achieve 12th grade literacy on a phased-in basis (this is widely considered a minimum requirement to participate in the 21st Century economy) and requires the Department of Corrections to make GED classes available to all inmates who request them among other provisions.

SECONDCHANCENJ.ORG

CURRENT SECOND CHANCE CAMPAIGN SIGNATORIES INCLUDE:

ACLU of New Jersey

ACORN

Association for Children
of New Jersey

Coalition of Community
Corrections Providers
of New Jersey

Drug Policy Alliance of
New Jersey

Families Against
Mandatory Minimums

Fund for New Jersey

Goodwill Industries

Second Chance Campaign
of New Jersey

Hispanic Directors
Association of New Jersey

Housing and Community
Development Network of New
Jersey

Hyacinth Foundation

Integrity House

Jubilee Interfaith

Latino Leadership Alliance
of New Jersey

Legal Action Center

Legal Services
of New Jersey

NAACP

National Alliance on
Mental Illness

National Employment
Law Project

National H.I.R.E. Network

New Jersey Association
on Correction

New Jersey Black Issues
Convention

New Jersey Citizen Action

New Jersey Institute
for Social Justice

New Jersey Latino Peace
Officers Association

Prison Radio

New Jersey Policy
Perspective

People's Organization
for Progress

Police Institute

Rutgers Newark School
of Criminal Justice

Thomas Edison
State College

Volunteers of America

Women Who Never Give-up

"MORAL PANIC: MORE HEAT THAN LIGHT" - critically acclaimed Institute documentary provokes action against violence and recidivism

Recognizing the impact of the growing number and size of gangs in Newark and other urban areas, the Institute released a report, *Do No Harm*, which highlights evidence-based strategies that could be used to make gang activity less violent and pervasive. According to a New Jersey State Police report, 43 percent of municipalities reported gang activity in their towns. That is a 10 percent increase from 2004, when the State Police conducted a similar survey. Aggravated assaults, thefts and drugs were the most common crimes committed by gangs, according to the report.

In 2008, the Institute commissioned a documentary film based on the report as a means to offer broader public education on this complicated issue. "Moral Panic: More Heat than Light" debuted in Newark to standing room only crowds offering a frank dialogue about the gang problem in Newark from a multitude of perspectives. It is the first film of its kind to bring together the voices of policy makers, law enforcement, current and former gang members and their families, community-based activists, faith leaders, educators and researchers who explain their own motivations, aspirations and challenges. Young men and women spoke candidly about their yearning for a different life, their frustrations of finding a job, their distrust of law enforcement, the structure a gang provides in their lives and their desire to live.

"Moral Panic"



““Moral Panic” is really compelling and breaks open the gangs and prisoner reentry issues with healing and clarity. It paints a compelling portrait that hopefully will motivate awareness and action.”

Mayor Cory A. Booker

“I was pleasantly surprised at the number of people who attended the showing of “Moral Panic”. It confirms something I have thought for a long time: we have to learn to use technology to reach the people. “Moral Panic” is a great work of art, and it told the truth.”

*Junius Williams, Director
Abbott Leadership Institute*

““Moral Panic” is fantastic – very eye opening in terms of seeing gang members as people/kids (not just gang members). The film’s message of the changes needed to reentry legislation also came through loud and clear.”

*Kelli Martin, Director of Group Sales
Affinia Hotels*

GANG VIOLENCE - *taking the next critical step*

With a planning grant from the Victoria Foundation, the Institute is now analyzing an array of options to begin to address the issue of gang violence. We are considering a program incorporating elements of the CeaseFire model pioneered by Professor David M. Kennedy, who appeared in “Moral Panic.”

The Institute will review best practices across the nation to structure an effort that transparently blends incentives for positive effort and consequences for negative behavior. Under this program, a working group comprised of pastors, coaches, ex-offenders, law enforcement officers, employers, Newark municipal officials and prosecutors would meet regularly with individuals affiliated with gangs to emphasize that authorities are serious about cracking down on illegal gang activity, but are equally dedicated to finding jobs, counseling and alternatives for the gang community. When law enforcement, social service providers and community members join together to engage directly with individuals involved with gangs, violence is reduced.



*Victoria Foundation Trustee Screening of Moral Panic
at Rutgers Law*

DEVELOPMENT

GALA

In both 2008 and 2009, the Institute held our annual gala and recognition dinner at Nanina's in the Park. We are especially grateful to report two successful years, particularly in these difficult economic times. We are thankful to all of our funders, supporters and friends who made time to join us in celebrating our achievements and recognizing the service of our extraordinary honorees.

The Amy and Alan Lowenstein Social Justice Award

The Honorable Dickinson Debevoise – 2008

Dr. Robert Curvin – 2009

The Corporate Leadership Award

The New Jersey Devils Corporation – 2008

The Healthcare Institute of New Jersey – 2009

The Community Builder Award

Volunteer Lawyers for Justice – 2008

Al Koeppe and the Newark Alliance - 2009

David Kerr and Integrity House – 2009

The NJISJ Service Award

Richard Roper - 2008

HUMANITY IN ACTION

The Institute's work is gaining the attention of other advocacy groups domestically and worldwide. In 2009, The Institute was invited to give a policy briefing on urban issues, specifically Newark, to Humanity In Action, an international non-profit aimed at protecting the rights of minority populations by engaging student leaders, promoting the growth and development of young professionals and building a multi-national network of leaders dedicated to their mission. In 2009, over 20 individuals from four countries including Great Britain, the Netherlands and Germany participated in a half-day discussion led by Institute staff covering issues ranging from gangs to urban health care.

HUMANITY IN ACTION

Institute Briefs Humanity in Action



Cornell William Brooks greets HIA Fellow

PUTTKAMMER FELLOW - *building the policy expertise of young professionals*

The Institute is grateful for the opportunity to be the first recipient of a two-year fellowship for Princeton University graduates to work on reentry issues. Our inaugural Charles and Cordelia Puttkammer PACE Center Fellow is David Smart, a 2008 graduate of Princeton majoring in History and minoring in African American Studies. He is also a graduate of Crenshaw High School in Los Angeles. The goal of this fellowship is to begin to build a pipeline of young people familiar with the real barriers that ex-offenders face as they make their way back into society and become familiar with the process of policy reform in order to address these issues at the root. David's work is divided between client service in our Workforce and Training Division and policy analysis. David worked directly on Reentry Reform Legislation that became law. We thank the Puttkammers for their support of this fellow and to Princeton University's PACE Center.



Puttkammer Fellow - Charles W. Puttkammer (second from left), Princeton University Class of 1943, Professor Dr. Cornel West (center), Jim Farrin (just right of Cornel West), and David Smart (Puttkammer Fellow) pose with two Petey Greene volunteers on the Princeton University campus before they embark on a visit to Albert C. Wager Youth Facility, located in Bordentown, NJ. NJISJ Executive Director Cornell William Brooks, Esq. (not pictured) joined the visiting group at the facility and participated in the speaking event featuring Professor West.



SKADDEN FELLOW

Arielle Cohen served as a Skadden Fellow – the most prestigious public interest fellowship for graduating law students, sponsored by the firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom – with the Institute from fall 2007 through fall 2009, and was the only New Jersey Fellow in her cohort. She had previously interned with the Institute (twice), and also wrote her master's paper in conjunction with us. Her work focused on housing-related issues, which took unexpected, tragic turns during her Fellowship owing to the predatory lending crisis and the collapse of the subprime mortgage market – issues with which she was deeply engaged. She is now a staff attorney at the National Consumer Law Center in Boston, the leading consumers' rights legal organization in the country.

NJISJ STAFF



Seated (from left) Craig Levine, Esq., Lois Larkey, Cornell William Brooks, Esq., Ellen Brown, Albert Williams, Rita Simmons **Standing** (from left) Corey Parson, Esq., Nichele Wilson, Ed Gittens, Tim Collozzi, Melissa Collins, Rasheed Jackson, Mariana Giraudo, David Smart, Sarah Hinger, Esq., Dennis Barrett, Esq.

Cornell William Brooks, Esq.

Executive Director

Ellen Brown

Chief Operating Officer

Kelly Dougherty

Director of Administration
and Human Resources

Craig Levine, Esq.

Senior Counsel and Policy Director

Sarah Hinger, Esq.

Staff Attorney

Lois Larkey

Director of Development

Albert Williams

Director of Workforce
Development and Training

Rita Simmons

Executive Assistant for Programs
and Senior Office Manager

Mariana Giraudo

Marcia and John Lowenstein
Community Development Fellow

Nichele Wilson

Case Manager,
New Careers Project

Rasheed Jackson

Employment Specialist,
New Careers Project

David Smart

Puttkammer Fellow,
New Careers Project

Ed Gittens

Employment Specialist,
New Careers Project

Melissa Collins

Program Manager,
New Careers Project

Timothy Collazzi

Administrative Assistant

Dennis Barrett, Esq.

Staff Attorney

Corey Parson, Esq.

Staff Attorney

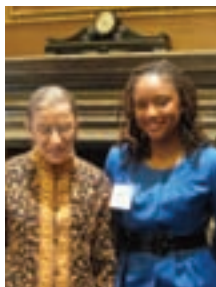
as of June 2010

INSTITUTE INTERN PROGRAM

Interns are a critically important resource to the Institute. Their contributions, provided over a period of one to ten weeks have been essential to both our programs and our policy reform initiatives. For example, interns provided the initial analytical work identified the 300 ways that driver's licenses could be suspended in New Jersey that led to our Driver's License Restoration program and the seminal paper recommending new judicial protocols in juvenile sentencing. In 2008 and 2009, some 15 individuals from 8 universities and colleges representing law, public policy, journalism and other disciplines served at the Institute.

2007

Shena Elrington, Yale Law
Brian Horan, NYU Law
Damon King, Harvard Law
Dan Mahoney, Dartmouth
Naomi Mueller, Rutgers Bloustein School
Brian Quinn, Rutgers Law



Jewel M. Watson - former NJISJ intern, current Rutgers Law student, future NJ Supreme Court clerk, and future Lowenstein Sandler associate. (from left) Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Jewel M. Watson

2008

Mara Codey, Seton Hall
Marcia Del Rios, NYU Law
Jim Long, NYU Law
Elizabeth Losey, Seton Hall Law
Jewel McGowan Watson, Rutgers Law
Sissy Phlegler, NYU Law



2009

Megan Cunningham, NYU Law
Karen Kielczewski, Seton Hall
Susannah Knox, Harvard Law
Jacci Leslie, Communications Intern

***Seated** (from left) Corey Parson, Esq., Craig Levine, Esq., Cornell William Brooks, Esq., Sarah Hinger, Esq., Ellen Brown **Standing** (from left) Irene Hsieh, Lauren Killeen, Hannah Walker, Lucy Joffe, Kyle Smiddie, Dennis Barrett, Esq., Bob Brown, Esq.*

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

September 30, 2009 and 2008

ASSETS

Current Assets	2009	2008
Cash and cash equivalents	1,099,771	805,279
Investment securities	7,189,932	8,008,316
Grants receivable	109,780	152,798
Accounts receivable	1,619	2,985
Prepaid expenses	11,386	10,990
	8,412,488	8,980,368
Property and equipment less accumulated depreciation	50,651	64,601
Other Assets		
Pledges receivable	252,000	456,031
Security deposit	11,643	13,258
	263,643	469,289
	8,726,782	9,514,258

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities		
Account payable & accrued expenses	147,521	21,518
Grants received in advance	493,686	329,072
	641,207	350,590
Net Assets		
Unrestricted		
Undesignated	155,555	466,292
Board designated	7,678,020	8,241,345
Temporarily restricted	252,000	456,031
	8,085,575	9,163,668
	8,726,782	9,514,258

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

September 30, 2009 and 2008

Income	2009	2008
Public Support	266,329	315,571
Grants	922,773	1,015,122
Contracted Services	9,732	-
Investment Income	36,675	(1,693,744)
Other Income	7,897	19,847
Total Income	1,243,406	(343,204)
Functional Expenses		
Program Services		
Equal Justice	797,396	654,773
Economic Opportunity	503,130	729,985
Regional Equity	197,750	128,700
Legal	338,350	302,187
Support Services		
Management & General	277,395	243,425
Fundraising	207,478	241,893
Total Expenses	2,321,499	2,300,963
Increase (decrease) in net assets	(1,078,093)	(2,644,167)
Net Assets - Beginning of the Year	9,163,668	11,807,835
Net Assets - End of the Year	8,085,575	9,163,668

Audited Financial Statements Available Upon Request

WITH DEEP APPRECIATION TO OUR FUNDERS:

Annie E. Casey Foundation

Anonymous

Bodman Foundation

City of Newark

Cummings Memorial Fund

New Jersey Department of Labor

New Jersey Department
of Transportation

Fund for New Jersey

Fund for the City of New York

Healthcare Foundation

Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield
of New Jersey

JEHT Foundation

Jersey City Department
of Employment Training

John and Marcia Lowenstein

JP Morgan Chase

Lowenstein Sandler, PC

Merancas Foundation

New Jersey Bar Foundation

Nicholson Foundation

Office of Faith Based Initiatives

Pace Princeton Fellowship Inc.,
Charles and Cordelia Puttkammer

Port Authority of New York
and New Jersey

Prudential Foundation

Public Welfare Foundation

Skadden Arps Fellowship Program

Via Esperanza Fund

Victoria Foundation



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