



JULIANA STRATTON
OFFICE OF LT. GOVERNOR



The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity (JEO) Initiative

Executive Order 2019-09

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Office of Lieutenant Governor
Juliana Stratton



JEO INITIATIVE

Opening Letter:

As the state continues to emerge from the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the inequities laid bare by the virus' impact have only become clearer and more alarming. Rectifying these inequities will require solutions beyond policing, jails, and prisons; instead, we must reverse the historical disinvestments that have impacted far too many of our communities for decades. The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity (JEO) Initiative, housed in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, plays an important role in this work. Throughout 2023, the JEO team met with numerous organizations and community stakeholders across Illinois. We listened to crime survivors describe how their needs are not, and never have been, met by a justice system strictly focused on punitive measures. We heard leaders in violence-prevention express concerns about equitable access to resources. We convened trauma-informed experts to assess what's working and what's viable in our state to address the healing needs of our communities. We also served on multiple task forces to provide expertise and perspectives reflective of the marginalized communities who are often unrepresented in these spaces.

I'm proud of the steps we have and will continue to take by working for and with communities. The Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program Board has invested more than \$244 million of adult-use cannabis tax revenues into communities most impacted by the war on drugs. By launching the Healing Beyond Harm restorative justice pilot project, we are creating avenues of healing for people who have been harmed, as well as spaces of holistic accountability for those who have caused the harm. Additionally, we have partnered with other state agencies to ensure that people returning to their communities from incarceration have a state identification card (ID). Having an ID card is critical for obtaining a job, housing, medical needs, and other essential elements that directly impact the reentry process' success.

In 2023, our administration was given an opportunity to continue building upon the foundation laid during our first term. I am excited to continue leading the R3 Program in its identification and expansion of unique pathways to invest back into the communities that have been most harmed by mass incarceration. I remain determined to uplift the work that guides our state toward policies aimed at healing from systemic trauma and focused on holistically transforming our current justice system by strengthening reentry in the state. This work is critical so that people reentering communities across Illinois can be active participants in our neighborhoods and our society.

I humbly submit the following report to Governor JB Pritzker. I eagerly look forward to our continued collaboration with partners and communities across the state to build a more just and equitable Illinois.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Juliana Stratton'.

Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton



“Prioritizing trauma-informed and healing-centered efforts that uplift and bring empathy to policy is as important as ever.

Instead of restricting access and feeding the cycle of systemic harm, we will continue to expand opportunities that foster growth and healing for all while amplifying the voices of the marginalized and disenfranchised so they can reach their full potential.

Illinois has remained a beacon of hope during these difficult times, and we’ll continue to champion comprehensive, holistic, and restorative approaches that help every community thrive.”

- Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton

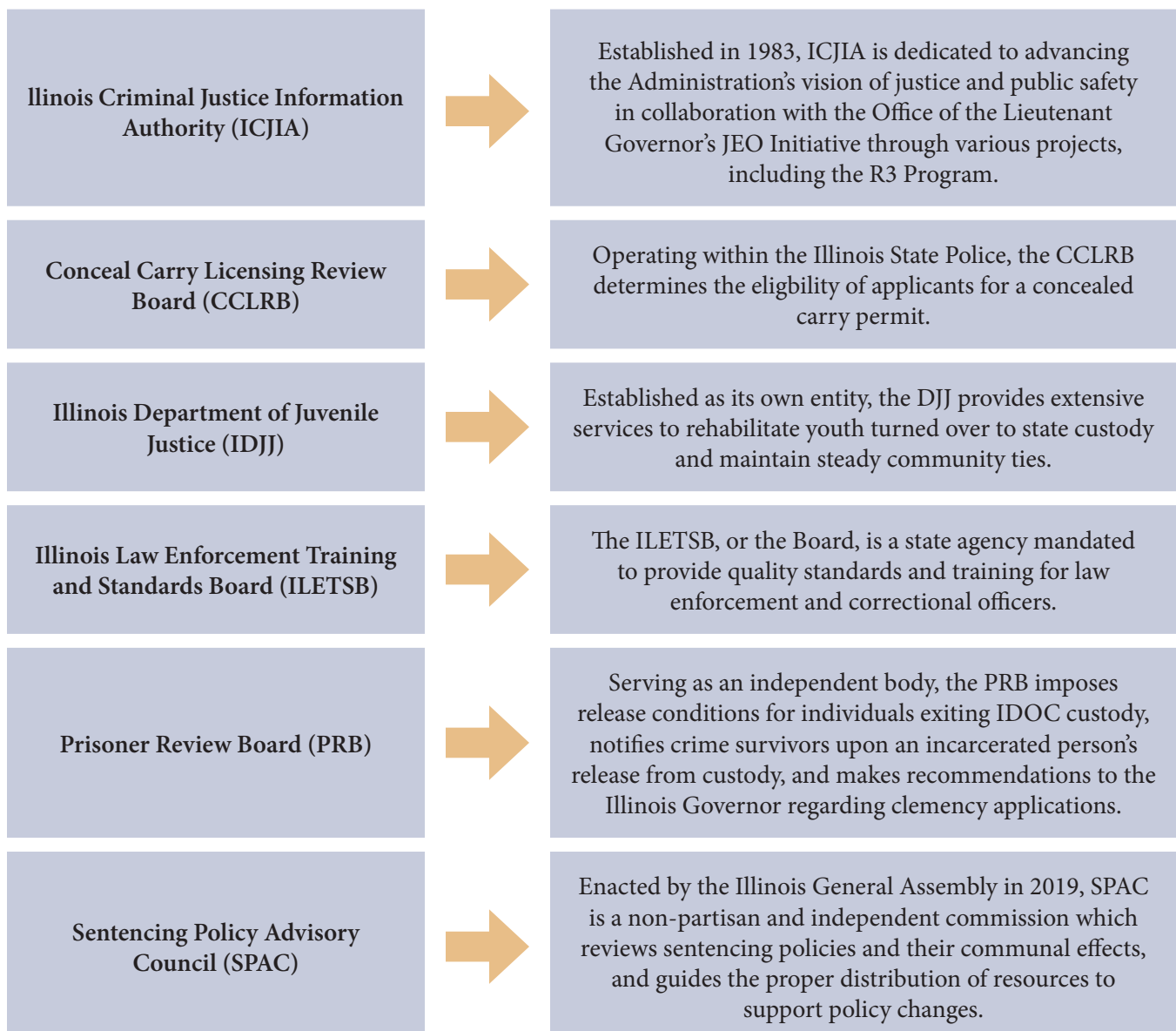


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The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity (JEO) Initiative: An Introduction

Signed by Governor JB Pritzker, Executive Order 2019-09 established the Justice, Equity, and Opportunity (JEO) Initiative on February 11, 2019. Led by the Lieutenant Governor, the JEO Initiative helps fulfill the Administration’s vision of equitable public safety for the State of Illinois through a trauma-informed and healing-focused lens. The JEO Initiative serves as a model for the nation by convening stakeholders and state agencies in a collaborative environment to coordinate a holistic effort to transform the criminal justice system. This effort includes supporting research and pilot programs that will test groundbreaking efforts, promote restorative justice, and provide data analysis to assess program efficiency and guide innovative efforts.

The following agencies operate under the supervision of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and produce projects relevant to the work of the JEO Initiative:





As a first-of-its-kind effort in Illinois, the JEO Initiative serves as a national model for reformative justice efforts by:

- **Creating** a collaborative environment and convening discussions among stakeholders, state agencies, and organizations with which the JEO organizes and bolsters enterprises.
- **Improving** communications across state agencies to ensure a coordinated holistic effort to transform and implement changes to address issues of equity and injustice.
- **Supporting** research and pilot programs that will test groundbreaking efforts to implement healing, trauma-informed, and equitable policies and practices while providing data analysis to assess program efficacy and guide new efforts.
- **Advising** the decision-making process as a means of ensuring the different branches of Illinois' government are working proactively in their attempts to create a fairer and more equitable justice system.

The Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative: Transformative Policies and Practices

GOALS

The JEO Initiative is driven by four principles that guide short-term and long-term efforts:

- **Address** the social determinants of crime and incarceration.
- **Improve** equitable deflection and diversion opportunities from the justice system.
- **Improve** conditions and address the needs of vulnerable populations impacted by historical disinvestments and trauma.
- **Support** positive reentry outcomes to reduce recidivism.

Context and Background for JEO Justice Work

Although our nation is still recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, the JEO Initiative maintains its focus on rectifying harmful practices in exchange for healing-centered and transformative justice efforts. JEO has continued to convene stakeholders, subject-matter experts, and agencies throughout the state to explore viable solutions, points of synergy, and opportunities for collaboration that will improve public safety outcomes for communities across Illinois.



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JEO Initiative Deliverables

The JEO Initiative advanced various deliverables for each of the following goals in 2023:

Goal #1: Address the social determinants of crime and incarceration

The Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program: The Illinois 100th General Assembly passed the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act (CRTA) during the 2019 legislative session. Governor JB Pritzker signed the CRTA into law on June 25, 2019, legalizing adult-use cannabis in Illinois on January 1, 2020. The Act also established the Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program which allocates 25% of adult-use cannabis state tax revenues to address the harm caused to communities by economic disinvestment, violence, and the war on drugs.

On January 13, 2020, a working group of research experts from across Illinois identified areas that are eligible for R3 Program funding based on their rates of gun injuries, child poverty, unemployment, and incarceration. In their final analysis, experts examined data provided by state agencies and the U.S. Census Bureau. The eligible areas amounted to approximately 500 census tracts in Illinois. Of the eligible census tracts, 48% were designated as “high need,” indicating that these census tracts fell in the top quartile of the above indicators.



Program participant receiving a Certificate of Completion from Jobs Partnership Chicago, an R3 grantee.

In collaboration with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), the Lieutenant Governor’s Justice, Equity, and Opportunity (JEO) Initiative oversees the administration of the R3 Program Board and funding aligned with the program. The R3 Program Board, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Stratton, manages the program’s implementation. Board members include ex-officios, elected officials, community-based providers, violence prevention experts, people who live or work in R3 eligible areas, and most importantly, formerly justice-involved individuals.

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Per the statute, funds appropriated for R3 Program grants are required to address at least one of the following priority areas:

Civil Legal Aid	Economic Development	Reentry
Youth Development	Violence Prevention	

On January 21, 2021, the Board voted to award \$31.5 million in grant funding to 80 organizations and their collaborative partners. Funded programs offered evidence-based and innovative restorative practices within the R3 Program priority areas of civil legal aid, economic development, reentry, youth development, and violence prevention. On June 22, 2022, the second round of R3 Program funds provided \$45 million to support 148 agencies focusing on service delivery, as well as community planning and capacity building. Since the first round's dispersal, the Board has approved both cohorts to receive different summer violence prevention funding opportunities and created sustainability for service providers to continue programming for up to three years. In total, the Board has invested more than \$244 million to deliver transformational justice across communities in Illinois.



R3 Program 2023 Fourth Quarter Board Meeting.



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In response to feedback received from statewide grass-roots community-based organizations within the 1st and 2nd round applicants, ICJIA launched the Institute 2 Innovate (i2i) Capacity Building Program. The program's primary objective is to strengthen the infrastructure, enhance sustainability, and address the capacity needs of these organizations. By doing so, i2i endeavors to support grassroots organizations in maximizing their effectiveness, efficiency, and long-term impact on the communities they serve.



ICJIA Executive Director Delrice Adams along with i2i 1st Cohort graduates

At the core of the i2i Program is a commitment to address the historical disinvestment that has plagued grassroots organizations in Illinois. These organizations, often the lifeblood of their communities, have faced capacity challenges that render them vulnerable and at risk of dissolution. In recognition of this, i2i has been carefully designed to promote equity, fairness, and opportunity in every grant program administered by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA).

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In 2023, ICJIA and JEO Initiative staff visited the following R3 Program second round grantees:

Heaven's View Community Development Corporation

Heaven's View Christian Fellowship in Chicago is a faith-based program that provides mentoring, job-readiness, and life skills training for system-impacted people. The program helps participants rewrite personal narratives and create lasting change through economic development and job placement assistance.

A Knock At Midnight, NFP

A Knock At Midnight, located in Chicago's West Side, empowers individuals, enhances life skills, and builds stronger communities through IT training, conflict resolution, and job placement sessions to help young people and their families. A Knock At Midnight collaborates with schools, non-profits, and community organizations to provide essential services and education.

Proviso-Leyden Council for Community Action, Inc.

Proviso-Leyden Council for Community Action (PLCCA) provides families across Proviso and Leyden Townships, Chicago's Near West Side, and Lynwood, as well as Chicago Heights, with education, training, and support services. Their collaborative partnerships provide daycare, after-school programs, housing, mental health, and utility bill support.

College Mentoring Experience

College Mentoring Experience in Chicago provides resources to help youth enter and graduate college through college tours, scholarships, tutoring, and mentorship. College Mentoring Experience partners with community and educational institutions, mentors, and volunteers to ensure participating students are prepared to not only get accepted into college, but to succeed in higher education.

Friends of the Children – Chicago

Friends of Children in Chicago provides youth with an innovative mentorship program, beginning at age four and ending at their high school graduation. Friends of the Children unlocks limitless potential in youth through collaborative relationships built on trust, empathy, and effective communication. Mentoring is also available for families and continues even if they move to another part of Illinois.

Gardeneers

Gardeneers enables young people in urban communities to connect with the land. Programming, such as tending to school gardens and farms, teaches students the importance of agriculture, the food ecosystem, and the environmental impact on the community. Gardening gives youth a unique experience and knowledge about growing fresh nutrient-dense food.



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Options for Youth

Options for Youth focuses on providing educational services and programs for young people. They typically offer alternative education options, such as credit recovery, dropout prevention, and flexible learning environments to help students succeed.

Bridge to Freedom

Bridge to Freedom is a faith-based residential reentry program that offers services such as mentoring, job training readiness and mentoring, physical and mental health care, substance abuse recovery, as well as education and vocational training. Bridge to Freedom has created partnerships with local businesses, non-profits, hospitals, and ministries to provide every resident who steps through their doors with the resources they need.

BUILD, Inc.

Build, Inc. is one of Chicago's leading organizations focused on developing young people. BUILD's new facility, located in Chicago's Austin community, serves as a safe space for youth. The building includes art and music studios, meditation rooms, a fitness center, and a community garden.

Howard Area Community Center

Howard Area Community Center provides essential resources to low-income individuals and families in Rogers Park and surrounding areas. Services range from job placement and educational assistance to clinical support and housing. Howard Area Community Center is committed to helping its clients become active, engaged community members.

A Just Harvest

A Just Harvest aims to fight poverty and hunger in Rogers Park and the greater Chicago area. A Just Harvest leveraged R3 Program funding to start a food pantry and build a community garden. The agency also provides free nutrient-dense meals daily.

Transforming Reentry Services

Transforming Reentry Services helps formerly system-impacted residents in Chicago's South and West sides. The agency offers programs such as social and economic recovery services, which aid in obtaining identification cards, securing housing, and gaining employment. Founded by Black women and other justice-impacted individuals, Transforming Reentry Services empowers people and rebuilds communities.

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GRO Community

GRO Community is a specialized mental health service provider for trauma-impacted boys and men in Black and Brown communities. This organization offers social engagement, classes in anger management and violence prevention, and housing for participants.

Girls Inc. of Chicago

Girls Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering young girls through various programs and services. They focus on fostering leadership skills, promoting academic success, and encouraging healthy lifestyles. Programs often cover areas such as STEM education, confidence-building, and career development to equip girls with the tools needed for a successful future. Services may include mentorship, workshops, and community outreach initiatives to positively impact the lives of girls in the region.

Centro Romero

Centro Romero is a community-based non-profit organization in Chicago, Illinois, that has historically focused on serving immigrant and refugee communities. They provide various services, including educational programs, legal assistance, social services, and community support. Centro Romero aims to empower individuals and families through education and advocacy, especially those facing challenges related to immigration.

Lifeshouse Recovery Organization

Lifeshouse Recovery Organization provides services to men with a special focus on veterans. Programming includes physical and mental health care, housing and life skills training, substance abuse treatment, job training, and placement.

J&P Consulting Group LLC

J&P Consulting uses R3 Program funding to support the vision and dreams of entrepreneurs across Illinois. The grantee's Pathway to Ownership (PTO) program offers start-up, emerging, and struggling entrepreneurs a place to receive guidance, network with peers, and interact with expert coaches.

Ladies of Virtue

Ladies of Virtue's program integrates culture, one-on-one and group mentoring, leadership development, and mental health support. Ladies of Virtue (LOV) has mentored over 400 young ladies throughout Chicago's South and West sides. Under the leadership of founder Jamila Trimuel, the young ladies of LOV continue to conceive, believe, and achieve greatness.

Tri-County Peoria Urban League

Tri-County Peoria Urban League improves educational, social, and economic opportunities for individuals in McLean, Peoria, Tazewell, and Woodford counties. Through economic development, Tri-County Peoria Urban League offers workforce programs on forklift operation, food handling, and GED programs to help individuals strengthen their skills to become productive in society.



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Jonathon and Nikki Romain, founders of Artists ReEnvisioning Tomorrow (Art), Inc., an R3 grantee, sharing about their mission, values, and objectives for bettering their community and helping the local youth step into their power.

Violence Prevention: The state’s financial investment in violence prevention programs is crucial for reducing violence, particularly during the summer months. Many community-based programs typically focus on education, community engagement, conflict resolution, restorative justice practices, trauma awareness and resolution, mentorship programs, youth development, and job training. By promoting positive relationships and offering constructive outlets for young people, government-funded violence prevention programs aim to significantly reduce violence and contribute to safer communities during the summer and beyond.

The Pritzker-Stratton administration has already committed \$250 million to violence prevention funding regulated by Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS). In 2022, DHS committed \$143 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding that will be distributed through the end of FY24. This funding will be distributed to 184 grant awards via 14 Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs).

In March 2023, DHS released NOFOs focusing on violence prevention, youth intervention, and trauma-informed behavioral health services. DHS’s 2023 violence prevention funding has been focused on communities where violence has increased, areas with few grantees from previous funding rounds, and increasing capacity for organizations outside of Chicago.

Similarly to DHS, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) also committed monetary assistance to amplify violence prevention efforts. ICJIA allocated \$289 million in violence prevention funds to be distributed to grantees across the state. This funding is channeled through their various programs, such as American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Community-Based Violence Intervention and Prevention, Bullying Prevention, R3 Program, and Safe from the Start.

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Charitable Trust Stabilization Fund – Office of the Treasurer: The Charitable Trust Stabilization Fund is a statewide program that provides non-profit organizations with annual budgets of \$1 million or less grant funding through the Office of the Treasurer. Funding for the programs comes from the filing fees that non-profits pay to incorporate with the State of Illinois. The Charitable Trust Stabilization Fund accepts grants in three focus areas: food, housing, and workforce and economic development.

The State Treasurer’s Office and an 11-member committee assists with the management and guidelines of the Fund and provides Treasurer Frerichs with grant recommendations. The 11-member committee consists of appointees from state government agencies and six private citizens. Ariana Correa, Policy Manager of the JEO Initiative, has served on the Charitable Trust Stabilization Board as Lieutenant Governor Stratton’s designee since June 3, 2021.

Name	City	Area	Grant Amount
A Just Harvest	Chicago	Food	\$20,000
Barb Food Mart	DeKalb	Food	\$20,000
Career & Networking Center	Naperville	Workforce Development	\$14,000
Congo Square Theatre	Chicago	Workforce Development	\$20,000
Disability Lead	Chicago	Workforce Development	\$20,000
Junior Achievement of Central Illinois	East Peoria	Workforce Development	\$20,000
Latino Union of Chicago	Chicago	Workforce Development	\$20,000
Plant Chicago	Chicago	Food	\$19,116
United Way of Whiteside County	Rock Falls	Food	\$9,125
VNA Community Services	Galesburg	Food	\$20,000

The Charitable Trust Stabilization Committee approved grant awards for ten organizations with programs in the areas of food and workforce and economic development totaling \$182,241 during the Spring 2023 grant cycle.

An additional ten organizations will be awarded grant funding to provide programming in the areas of housing and economic and workforce development for the Fall 2023 grant cycle.



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TRAUMA-INFORMED ILLINOIS EFFORTS:

Trauma-Informed Healing-Centered Task Force — In 2023, JEO continued to engage with the Trauma Informed Ad-Hoc working group (composed of subject-matter experts and stakeholders) to advance Illinois' efforts in adopting a more holistic approach. The active individuals in the evolution of this work include partners from agencies such as the Illinois Justice Project, Illinois ACE's Response Collaborative, Center for Childhood Resilience, Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition, and the Illinois State Board of Education, as well as state policy makers and advocates.

Through regular meetings, this group of public and private partners has remained consistent in sharing research and strategic methods to make Illinois a trauma-informed leader and model. This group subsequently developed legislative language for Senate Bill 646 which created the *Task Force for a Healing-Centered Illinois Act*, which will be chaired by Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton. This legislation officially passed on August 11, 2023, and becomes effective on January 1st, 2024.

One of the primary objectives of the Trauma-Informed Healing-Centered Task Force is to create and promote alignment among trauma-informed and healing-focused efforts across Illinois. The Task Force will be guided by various principles, all of which will facilitate universal engagement, coordination of existing projects, identification of growth areas relating to inter-generational trauma and its impact, and the re-structuring of how trauma-informed principles are applied to the policymaking process. The Task Force will prioritize the construction and recommendation of a thorough blueprint to move Illinois towards becoming a healing-centered state.

The Ad-Hoc working group has proven to be instrumental in laying the groundwork and providing the necessary resources for the Task Force to successfully carry on this transformative and holistic work.



Lt. Governor Stratton in conversation with a Chicago Police officer.

Justice Collective: Community Conversations with the LG — Before Governor JB Pritzker and Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton took office in 2019, the transition team convened a group of approximately 50 individuals from various backgrounds to gain insight into what the administration’s justice reform priorities should be in the upcoming years. One of the group’s recommendations was the formation of the Justice, Equity, and Opportunity Initiative.

As the Lieutenant Governor began a new term, the JEO decided to re-assemble this group of stakeholders for the following objectives:

- **Update stakeholders on the JEO’s work** — In the last four years, the JEO has accomplished a great deal of progress and we wanted to highlight our continued growth.
- **Receive feedback/suggestions** — We felt the need to create an environment in which stakeholders could openly share their thoughts and opinions regarding what the JEO should prioritize during the next four years.
- **Build and maintain strategic relationships with stakeholders** — Through this meeting, we strengthened important relationships with stakeholders from across the state.
- **Raise visibility of JEO’s work** – This opportunity allowed us to make the community and residents of Illinois aware of our past and ongoing efforts to make our state more just and equitable.



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Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton excited to share dialogue, interact with the community, and celebrate the ongoing work at BUILD, Inc., during the first-ever Justice Collective: Community Conversations with the LG.

The *Justice Collective: Community Conversations with the LG (JCCC)*, was introduced to serve as a series of ongoing conversations between stakeholders and the community. In-person Justice Collective convenings will take place throughout the state to employ insightful discussion, expand awareness, and encourage the exchange of ideas for further transformation within Illinois.

The first convening in the series took place on October 19, 2023. The Lieutenant Governor served as both the moderator and a participant. Special guests included Chicago's Deputy Mayor of Community Safety Garien Gatewood, Chief Executive Officer of BUILD Adam Alonso, and Office of the Lieutenant Governor Deputy Chief of Staff and JEO's Director Yaacov Delaney. Additional guests included Restorative Justice Practitioner and Senior Manager of Community Partnerships within the Peace and Justice Center at BUILD, Edwina Hamilton, who opened the space in a warm and powerful manner, and BUILD Young Adult Program Participant Marcel Lee, who closed the event with a spoken word poetry performance.



BUILD Young Adult Program Participant, Marcel Lee performing spoken word poetry to conclude the first Justice Collective convening in the Community Conversations with the LG series.

The Justice Collective Convening was hosted at Broader Urban Involvement & Leadership Development (BUILD), Inc., a 2023 R3 grantee based in Chicago's Austin area. BUILD is an esteemed organization that focuses on gang intervention, violence prevention, and youth development. Since 1969, BUILD has worked to save lives and mentor young people who live in Chicago's most challenging neighborhoods. Their mission is to inspire hope and offer opportunities so that youths facing systemic obstacles can achieve positive futures. Their comprehensive services reach over 3,000 youths a year, helping them build hope, resilience, and a path to a promising future.

The theme of the conversation was centered around what makes communities healthy. While Lieutenant Governor Stratton uplifted the JEO's current work (including the Healing Beyond Harm Restorative Justice Pilot Program, the Restore, Reinvest and Renew (R3) Program, and the importance of centering the healing needs of community members in ongoing Transformative Justice efforts), Deputy Mayor Gatewood, CEO Alonso, and JEO Director Delaney spoke on their personal and professional collaborations to make their respective communities safer through trauma-informed and healing-centered work.



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Members and advocates from the community take a moment to converse with Lieutenant Governor Stratton.

The Justice Collective convening included an array of partners consisting of representatives from advocacy organizations, service providers, government agencies, educational institutions, and other stakeholders relevant to the JEO Initiative's work.

With over 100 attendees, the conversation sparked connection, expression, and a to-be-continued stream of dialogue. Those in attendance were given public comment slips to share their thoughts on collaborative efforts to elevate and maintain the health of our communities, and any other suggestions for promoting safer environments for Illinois' residents. These comments will be helpful in constructing the framework for future convenings.



Speakers, participants, and attendees of the Justice Collective: Community Conversations with the LG event listen attentively to Marcel Lee as he brings the conversation to a close with a powerful poem.

The October Justice Collective Convening is only the beginning of intentional conversations between community members, advocates, and elected officials as we cohesively advance Illinois through dialogue, compassion, and action.



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CEO at BUILD, Adam Alonso and Lieutenant Governor Stratton allow their inner child to roam free.

Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force — The Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force is a statewide effort that seeks to proactively help immigrant communities across the state. Led by the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), the 27-member Task Force focuses on COVID-19’s impact, access to services, disbursement of funds, state practices by Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the disparities immigrant communities experience which lead to incarceration and educational, financial, and housing insecurity.

Goal #2: Improve equitable deflection and diversion opportunities from the justice system

Serving on Illinois Mental Health Task Force: The Illinois Mental Health Task Force’s efforts engaged several hundred advocates and partners to develop an Action Plan Report released for public review in January 2023. The JEO Initiative continues to engage in the Task Force’s developments and advancement of the Action Plan Report.

The Task Force determined it has achieved the following goals which it set.

1. To form strong partnerships that drive cross-system collaboration to develop data-informed strategies and solutions at the intersections of mental health, substance use, the courts, and our communities.
2. To share information regularly and widely among partners which promotes the creation of innovative and evidence-based solutions and strategies to address the mental health and substance use struggles we are facing in our communities and our state.
3. To assess, identify, and efficiently utilize available resources, including funding, for the strategies and solutions necessary for meaningful change in our response to persons with mental illness and co-occurring disorders.



Goal #3: Improve conditions and address the needs of vulnerable populations in correctional facilities

John Howard Association (JHA) Prison Monitoring — JEO has continued to convene and collaborate with the John Howard Association (JHA) and the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) around best practices for monitoring the conditions of IDOC facilities. During this past year, JHA has conducted over 20 prison monitoring visits, observing conditions inside correctional facilities, speaking with people who are incarcerated and corrections administrators and staff, and collecting and analyzing data. JHA shares concerns raised on visits with IDOC leadership and makes findings and recommendations public to increase the transparency of the correctional system.

During 2022, and throughout 2023, JHA conducted the Measures of Prison Quality of Life (MQPL) survey in all IDOC correctional facilities, as well as the Staff Quality of Life (SQL) survey, which was available to staff online. These surveys are tools developed at the University of Cambridge and used to better understand prison climate and culture and shed light on relationships and the impact of people who live and work inside prisons. To date, JHA has received around 12,000 responses, including several thousand pages of handwritten comments, and is still receiving and analyzing surveys. JHA has partnered with Loyola University to create a data dashboard with the surveys' results that will be released in early 2024 – we are excited to share information in this interactive way! Understanding how people who are in prison perceive and experience their incarceration is important to ensure we make changes that will improve the wellbeing, safety, and outcomes for everyone. CGL Companies (CGL) is one of the largest, most comprehensive criminal justice consulting firms in the nation. The CGL report, which provided a physical plant assessment of the entire state prison system, has been useful in educating stakeholders and the public on the age, decrepitude, and conditions inside some of the IDOC facilities.



After addressing their commencement at Stateville Correctional Center, Lieutenant Governor Stratton joins over 20 students who earned and graduated with their master's degrees in Restorative Arts from North Park Seminary.



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The Illinois House of Representatives Restorative Justice Committee –The Illinois Restorative Justice (RJ) Committee is a standing committee of the Illinois House of Representatives, chaired by Illinois State Representative Kelly Cassidy. This RJ committee convenes for the purpose of gaining clarity on how restorative justice policy and practices are implemented and impacting communities throughout the state.

Research has shown that an array of dehumanizing labels continue to follow people and stigmatize them long after their initial interaction with the criminal legal system, with some stigmas prevailing throughout their lifetime.

In May 2023, the JEO Initiative provided subject-matter expertise to this legislative Committee about how JEO intentionally infuses some RJ principles into the application of JEO’s mission. One of the items JEO expounded on was the importance of humanizing language when talking about or referring to people who have been impacted by the criminal legal system. JEO also shared about the RJ mechanisms woven within the Healing Beyond Harm pilot to provide healing processes for crime survivors and people who caused harm. JEO intentionally serves as a bridge where gaps are most prevalent to ensure that state systems will treat historically marginalized people as human beings, which in turn helps foster the necessary healing from trauma that has systemically harmed communities throughout the state.



Team JEO provided expert testimony at the Illinois House of Representatives Restorative Justice Committee Hearing at the Illinois State Capitol.



Goal #4: Support positive reentry outcomes to reduce recidivism

State ID Program — With the passage of HB3345, Illinois law now requires the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) to obtain the required vital documents for people in custody to receive a State Identification (ID) card prior to release.

The initial launching of a State ID pilot during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, when many state departments were closed to the public, proved to fill an essential gap in the reentry process. JEO continues to collaborate with the partners of this program to ensure people who are being released from IDOC custody will receive a State Identification card.

Joseph Moore shared a portion of his reentry experience with JEO: “Although I wasn’t at risk of homelessness, having an official State ID upon my release afforded me the opportunity to forgo many of the obstacles that await returning citizens who either don’t have an official ID or the requisite documents to obtain one. But being that I participated in IDOC’s State ID program and received an official Illinois State ID upon my release from prison, I was able to immediately participate in reentry programs that equipped me with some of the skills that are prerequisites for success. Without having an official State ID upon my release, I wouldn’t have been able to take immediate advantage of opportunities that have aligned me for an apprenticeship with Restore Justice.”

Lt. Governor Stratton continuously states that “people should never be defined by the mistakes they’ve made and providing resources means people can return to their communities healthy and whole.”

Statistics show that at least 95% of people in custody will be eventually released. JEO’s goal to support positive reentry outcomes and reduce recidivism, via the State ID program, is a common-sense approach to addressing public safety.

Joseph Moore’s story should not be the exception. He is one of thousands of individuals who have benefitted from having equitable access to a State ID card prior to being released from custody. By providing this essential resource to help meet basic needs, we are empowering productive residents within our communities.

Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice – 21st Century Transformation Model:

The JEO Initiative continues to work with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice (IDJJ) to advance the transformation committee’s recommendations. Also, as IDJJ continues to transform what it looks like for youth to be in custody, one of the methods employed to remove barriers is to ensure youths will be provided access to a State ID card upon release from custody. IDJJ has partnered with the Secretary of State (SOS) to expand the State ID program services to ensure youths being released to Aftercare have access to a State ID card.

Healing Beyond Harm Restorative Justice Pilot Program — As the Healing Beyond Harm (HBH) pilot program is implemented and actualized, JEO will continue to collaborate with its partners to develop an advisory council that reflects the voices of crime survivors.

The HBH Restorative Justice Pilot aims to set a new precedent in Illinois by centering this program around the needs of crime survivors and providing an opportunity to focus on the social, emotional, and mental well-being of all impacted parties.

In February of 2023, JEO partnered with community-based organization Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation, one of the Chicagoland area leaders in Restorative Justice practices, and People’s Liberty Project, a holistic reentry support group for people impacted by the criminal legal system. This convening allowed for a restorative justice process that brought a group of women who had lost their child(ren) to violence together in a facilitated dialogue with a group of men who were once convicted of causing harm/violence.



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Additionally, HBH partner, Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice, developed the Survivor’s Advisory Council (SAC) – a group of individuals who have lived and/or who have professional experience with harm. SAC provides connections to survivor networks, plus guidance and oversight for HBH program development.

As JEO strives to be a state-level leader in fostering healing-centered justice through the HBH program, our goal is to intentionally break systemic patterns that have historically dictated how these two groups of people interact with each other. This is a prevalent factor in unresolved trauma within disinvested communities.



JEO Team participates in a first-of-its kind Restorative Justice Circle convening of crime survivors and men who previously caused harm.



2024 Projected Deliverables

The JEO Initiative will work towards the following non-exhaustive set of deliverables during its fourth year.

Goal #1: Address the social determinants of crime and incarceration

Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program: In collaboration with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA), the JEO Initiative will continue to equitably implement the R3 Program and prepare for the release of the third Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). This will include continued outreach efforts and engaging smaller, grassroots organizations that may need technical assistance to apply for funding. Yaacov Delaney, Director of the JEO Initiative, and Deborah Baker, General Counsel to the Lieutenant Governor, were selected amongst a group of experts appointed to advise ICJIA on the re-mapping of the R3 Program’s eligible areas.

Based on conversations with grassroots organizations interested in applying for state grant funding, there is a high need for informative presentations on how to access training, as well as resources from ICJIA and the R3 Program website. The JEO Initiative will host 12 community conversations relating to statewide funding opportunities at various second-round R3 grantee sites. The events would be in partnership with leadership from the Illinois General Assembly based on the funding region and site proximity. Hosting the convening at an R3 grantee site would allow for relationship-building and networking between potential applicants, collaboratives, previous R3 grantees, and government offices. The following list of R3 Program funding regions would serve as the areas to host the 12 community conversations: Cook – Chicago Southern, Cook – Chicago Western, Cook – Chicago Northern, Cook – Suburban, Collar, Northwest Central, South Central, Central, Northern, Cook – Chicago Northern, Northwest, and Southern.



JEO Team visit the ART, Inc site in Peoria prior to the last quarterly R3 Program Board meeting of 2023.



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Violence Prevention Strategy: The JEO Initiative will continue to engage with ICJIA to equitably advance resources across the state that address reduction in violence.



Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, Director of Northwestern Prison Education Program Director Jennifer Lackey, and Northwestern University Provost Kathleen Hagerty celebrate alongside 16 Northwestern graduates – the first in the nation to receive a bachelor’s degree from a top ten university while incarcerated – after their commencement ceremony at Stateville Correctional Center.



Charitable Trust Stabilization Fund: Ariana Correa, Policy Manager of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor’s JEO Initiative, will continue to engage with the Charitable Trust Stabilization Board, attend quarterly meetings, and recommend qualified applications for grant funding through the Office of the Treasurer.

Advancing Trauma-Informed Illinois Efforts: In partnership with the Ad-Hoc Working Group, the JEO Initiative will be launching the Trauma Informed Healing-Centered Task Force in January 2024.

The JEO Initiative staff will provide support to the Illinois Healing-Centered Task Force as it produces concrete trauma-informed and healing-centered recommendations to the Illinois General Assembly.

Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force: Ariana Correa, Policy Manager of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor’s JEO Initiative, will continue to engage with the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force to proactively support the state’s immigrant communities.

Justice Collective: Community Conversations (JCCC) with the LG: The JEO Initiative will re-convene the Justice Collective (this includes all initial thought partners, agencies, advocates, stakeholders, and community-based organizations) as well as members of the community who wish to become more involved in our holistic, transformative efforts. At least three more convenings will occur in different regions of Illinois during the 2024 fiscal year.

To maintain relationships with the Justice Collective, the JEO Initiative will be collating a quarterly newsletter to keep stakeholders updated, engaged, and informed on the JEO’s ongoing work and accomplishments.



Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton with BUILD CEO Adam Alonso, Deputy Mayor Garien Gatewood, and JEO Executive Director Yaacov Delaney as they partake in the very first convening of the Justice Collective: Community Conversations with the LG series.



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Goal #2: Improve equitable deflection and diversion opportunities from the justice system

JEO will continue to collaborate with the Illinois Supreme Court, the Special Supreme Court Advisory Committee for Justice, and Mental Health Planning (JMHP) and Illinois Mental Health Task Force (IMHTF) to assist with implementation of the Action Plan recommendations and a new statewide effort: Leading Change: Improving Illinois Courts' Response to Mental Illness and Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorders initiative.

The "Leading Change" initiative will continue to build upon achievements of the past by advancing efforts in the present and future through increased engagement from the Bench via the JMHP.

Goal #3: Improve conditions and address the needs of vulnerable populations impacted by historical disinvestment and trauma

John Howard Association (JHA) Prison Monitoring: JHA and our partners at the Loyola University Criminal Justice Center will be releasing a data dashboard, which will offer detailed information and visualizations from the responses to the Measuring the Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) survey JHA conducted in 2022-2023. These results will shine a light on the perceptions and experiences of people in IDOC custody.

In 2024, JHA plans to release several topical policy-based reports. Focus areas include: prison communications, correctional staffing levels, aging in prison, and a review and assessment of reentry programming and assistance available in IDOC. JHA will also publish facility monitoring reports.

JHA will continue to educate stakeholders about the CGL report, which has been called the IDOC facilities master plan, in order to push for the closure of Illinois' oldest, most decrepit and unsafe prisons. This group will also work to create an Office of Independent Correctional Ombuds and Oversight for the adult prison system in Illinois.



Women in Justice: Team JEO will intentionally uplift the voices of women who have been impacted by the criminal legal system, whether it be through personal lived experience, the incarceration of a loved one, or through advocacy. It is important to consider the residual effects these processes have on women, and how we can include them in conversations that relate to the system's impending transformation throughout the state.



Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth participate in a panel with women sharing their personal lived experience with the criminal justice system for the Chicago Incarcerated People's Communication Services (IPCS) Listening Session at the Women's Justice Institute.

(Pictured left to right: Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth, Monserat "Monse" Arreola, Desiree Lumpkin, and Sandra Brown)



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Goal #4: Support positive reentry outcomes to reduce recidivism

State ID Program: JEO Initiative will continue to work in partnership with First Lady MK Pritzker's Office, the Secretary of State, and the Illinois Department of Corrections to identify and address gaps to ensure the continuity of this reentry program.



Lieutenant Governor Stratton meets with the Illinois Housing Development Authority to discuss advancing the Reentry Housing Pilot Program.



Healing Beyond Harm (HBH) – Restorative Justice Pilot: Over the next year, Healing Beyond Harm (HBH) partners aim to expand Project Transformation, Healing, and Accountability through Written Words (Project THAWW) to at least two more IDOC facilities. In achieving this goal, it will be essential to codify a notification process for crime survivors. As persons in correctional custody choose to partake in this program and take steps in repairing harm they caused, the person or party that endured the harm will receive notification of the attempt to engage in a Restorative Conference (harm dialogue).



Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton with Team JEO at BUILD, Inc., an R3 grantee site, after the first Justice Collective Convening.

(Pictured left to right: Ariana Correa, JEO Policy Manager; Juliana Stratton, Illinois Lieutenant Governor; Chelsey Varela, JEO Program Manager; Yaacov Delaney, JEO Director and Office of Lieutenant Governor Deputy Chief of Staff)



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Conclusion

There is no expiration date for reimagining the transformation of our state. As we continue to learn from the wisdom cultivated within communities and among partner advocates, the JEO Initiative will zealously prioritize its commitment to expanding collaborative efforts. We will continue to lead with a healing-centered lens in the construction of more holistically rooted practices and policies across the state. Because our collaborative endeavors are encouraged to evolve, our priorities and major projects are subject to modification and expansion. The intention is that these tools be adequately applied in uplifting the redefined concepts that have justice, equity, and opportunity.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Illinois Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton would like to thank the Justice Collective (all the thought partners, agencies, advocates, stakeholders, and community-based organizations) for playing a vital role in helping make the impactful work of the JEO Initiative a successful reality.

There is still much transformative work to be done. We appreciate the commitment and effort each of you have contributed to making Illinois' communities healthier and safer.

Office of Illinois Governor JB Pritzker	Office of the Illinois Attorney General	Office of the Illinois Secretary of State	Illinois General Assembly
Office of First Lady MK Pritzker	Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority	Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity	Illinois Department of Public Health
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services	Illinois Department of Employment Security	Illinois Department of Corrections	Illinois Department of Human Services
Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice	Illinois Housing Development Authority	Illinois Prisoner Review Board	Illinois State Board of Education
Cook County Public Defender's Office	Cook County Justice Advisory Council	Cook County Sheriff's Office	Cook County State Attorney's Office
Chicago Police Department	Chicago CRED	Emerson Collective	City of Chicago
Jane Addams School of Social Work at UIC	Center of Public Safety and Justice at UIC	Adler University's Institute on Public Safety and Social Justice	Illinois Justice Project
Illinois Prison Project	Illinois ACE's Response Collaborative	Illinois Reentry Council	Restore Justice Illinois
ACLU of Illinois	Women's Justice Institute	Safer Foundation	John Howard Association
Bluhm Legal Clinic, Northwestern University	Illinois Public Health Association	NAMI Chicago	St. Leonard's Ministries
Chicago Beyond	Chicago Urban League	Phalanx Community Services	Cabrini Green Legal Aid

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Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation	Police Benevolent and Protective Association of Illinois	Gun Violence Prevention PAC	University of Chicago Medicine's Trauma Center
Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities	Enlace Chicago	Jobs Partnerships Peoria	Northwestern University's Pritzker School of Law
AFSCME	Marijuana Policy Project (US Cannabis Council)	Lawndale Christian Legal Center	Lemont Police Department
University of Chicago	Chicago Beyond	Champaign County State's Attorney	Center of Negotiation and Mediation at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law
Illinois Higher Education in Prison Task Force	Archdiocese of Chicago	Council on Criminal Justice	Cresco Labs
New Life Community Church Little Village	GRO Community	Chicago Partnership	Illinois Coalition for Higher Ed in Prison
North Park University	Northeastern Illinois University	Prison + Neighborhood Arts Project	DePaul University
Center for Childhood Resilience	Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition	Illinois Whole Child Task Force	ARPA Violence Prevention Intergovernmental Municipal Coordination Group
Justice Advisory Council	Far South Side Chicago Coalition	Illinois Adult Redeploy	Chicago 400
Vera Institute	Second Chance Center, Colorado	Kewanee LSRC Town Hall	Education Justice Project
National League of Councils	The AHIMSA Collective, California	Illinois SPAC Resentencing Task Force	BUILD, Inc.
UCAN Chicago	ConTextos Chicago	National Council on Higher Education in Prison	University of Illinois at Chicago
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence	Office of the Chicago Mayor	TASC, Inc.	David Lynch Foundation

To those who were not listed, we extend our sincere appreciation for your efforts and continued collaboration.

