

AVENUES FOR JUSTICE 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Providing a Path Forward



ABOUT AVENUES FOR JUSTICE

In a nation that imprisons over a quarter of a million teens each year - with African American youth four times more likely and Hispanic youth 28% more likely to be incarcerated than their white peers - **Avenues for Justice (AFJ)** has provided second chances to thousands of young people, ages 13 to 24, preventing them from being processed through the criminal justice system and stigmatized with a criminal record for the rest of their lives.

Incorporated in 1979, Avenues for Justice (then known as the Andrew Glover Youth Program) was one of the first alternatives to incarceration (ATI) programs for youth in the country. AFJ helped to facilitate the creation of Manhattan's Supreme Court Youth Part where youth are prosecuted and tried separately from adults---a model now used nationwide.

AFJ operates programs for two main groups of Participants:

- 1) "Court-Involved" Participants who are in the criminal justice system; and
- 2) "At-Risk" Participants who are at-risk of involvement with the criminal justice system.

Services for the Court-Involved and At-Risk programs are provided online and onsite at AFJ's two community centers in Harlem and the Lower East Side, and at AFJ's headquarters inside the Manhattan Criminal Courthouse.

Court-Involved Participants receive court advocacy services with intensive case management. All Participants receive HIRE UP services for job readiness and certification, teen empowerment and legal rights, life skills, mental and physical health wellness, academic support and tutoring.

AFJ also provides referrals to third party specialists for all Participants when needed.





OUR IMPACT

370

Participants were served in 2022, exceeding our goal of 330.

94%

Percentage of Participants who avoid reconviction within three years of enrollment at AFJ.

164

Participants attended HIRE UP workshops.

"The impact that AFJ has had on my life cannot be expressed in words. This is why, after 25 years I continue to come back, give back, and share my story."

LUIS
AFJ Alumnus

"I give a lot of credit to be honest to Nelson, my court advocate. He was always there talk to me, calling me, telling me like hey John you got to do this; coaching me like a father. And that's something that you can't get no where else. It's kinda like a family member. Not everyone treats strangers like family. Even though it's his job, he makes it feel more like it's his life. It made me feel special. It made me feel like I wanted to change, like I wanted to do better."

JOHN
AFJ Participant

OUR IMPACT

55

Participants had their case dismissed, reduced, were adjudicated a youthful offender, or were conditionally discharged to AFJ.

281

Digital literacy certifications earned by 50 Participants.

18

Participants received certifications in OSHA-10, Scaffolding Safety-10, and Flaggers trainings.

45

Court-Involved Participants got a job in 2022.

“I rely on AFJ. If I have a kid under 20 who had no criminal involvement in the past, then has appeared with five cases in the last few months, I’ll talk to AFJ and have them talk to the kid and the family to develop a plan. I know AFJ will figure it out – and hold the kid accountable.”

NYC JUDGE

101

Participants Graduated the Program in 2022.



OUR PARTICIPANTS

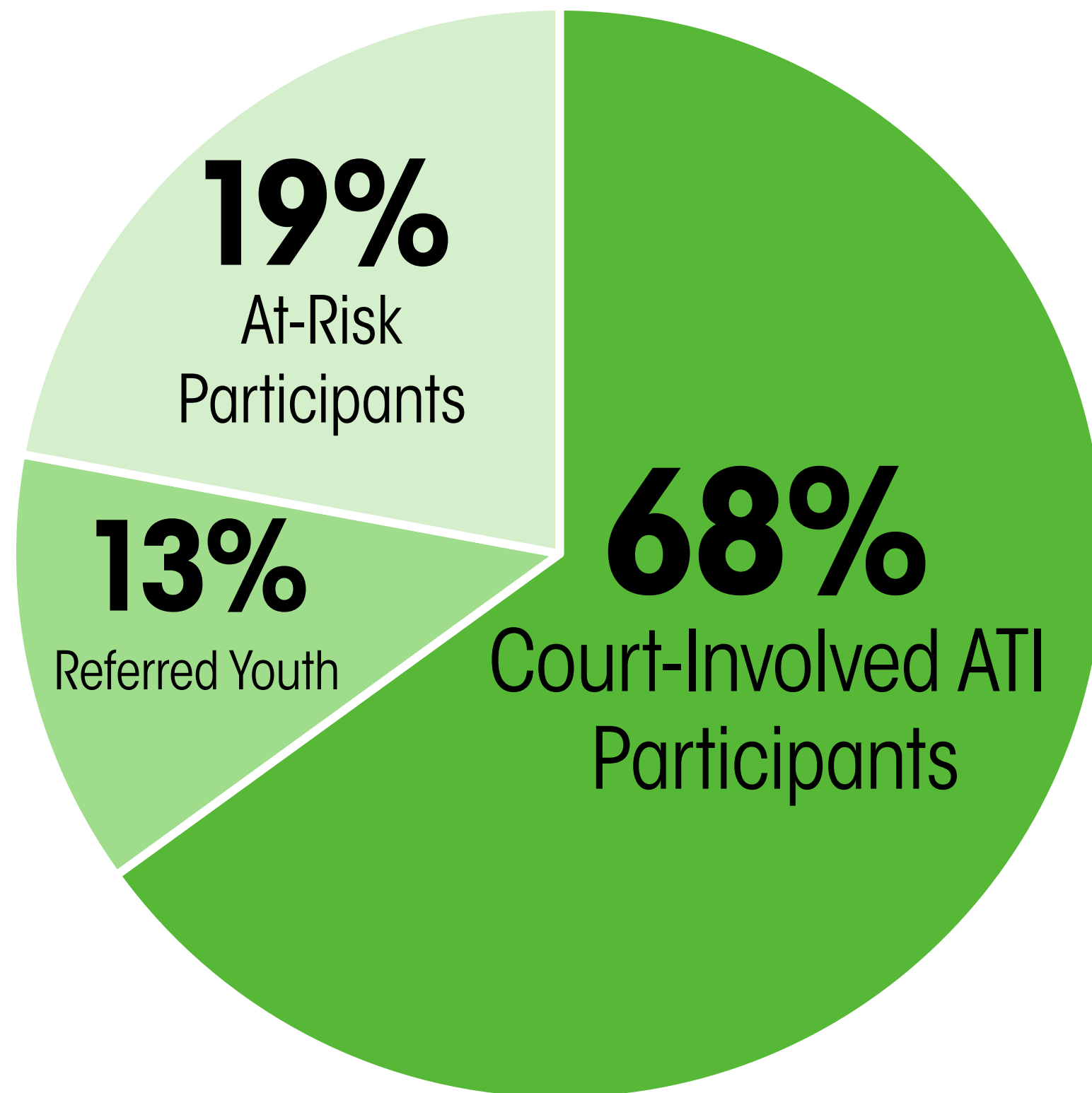
In 2022, AFJ served 386 ATI court-involved and at-risk youth, ages 13 - 24, from across the city. These 386 young people participated in one of AFJ's three program areas:

262 (68%) were court-involved Participants enrolled in AFJ's intensive ATI program;

72 (19%) were at-risk youth who participated in AFJ's crime prevention programs at our community centers;

52 (13%) were at-risk youth who received referrals through our community centers and court advocates.

[FOR MORE CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS CLICK HERE!](#)





OUR PARTICIPANTS

ATI PARTICIPANTS: AFJ's signature long-term ATI Participants who are court-involved. Services include court appearances, school visits, regular counseling, curfews, mandatory check-in at centers, and monitoring of individualized services (e.g., substance abuse programming, support services at community centers, and other mandated activities). If participants are

DIVERSION PROGRAM: Toward the end of 2020, AFJ began working with young people in the New York City Law Department's Family Court "Diversion" program. Young people assigned to the Family Court Diversion program are mandated to community-based Alternative to Incarceration (ATI) organizations, such as AFJ, for a specific number of sessions or workshops---typically 4 to 16. Diversion youth must also complete their mandate within a 60-day period. The program targets youth up to the age of 18. Diversion Participants receive the same services as other AFJ Participants but generally have a much shorter stay.

RE-ENTRY PARTICIPANTS: Starting in 2020, AFJ began to track court-involved young people who spend time in jails and prisons. These participants have all spent at least one night in jail.

In 2022, AFJ served 262 ATI court-involved 13 - 24 from across the city. These 262 youth participated can be broken down into three categories:

161 (61%) were ATI court-involved Participants who did not spend time incarcerated or in the short-term diversion program;

86 (33%) were youth in Diversion Family Court who are offered the opportunity to have their case dismissed by the court if they comply with a short AFJ mandate;

15 (6%) were re-entry Participants who were referred to AFJ after spending a period of time incarcerated.

EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

EFFECTIVE ATI: Needed now more than ever.

Avenues for Justice's long history of success proves that providing support, skills and stability is far more effective at turning lives around than incarceration. Our organizational strength derives from seeing young people not as data points, but as people with real stories to tell about the importance of second chances—especially when empowered with the right services:

INSTITUTIONAL TRUST: With our headquarters based inside the Manhattan Criminal Courthouse, AFJ is well known in the NYC criminal justice system. Judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation officers, and court resource coordinators know we are reliable and effective. They refer Participants to us and we engage with them on juvenile justice reform;

INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLANS: Our Court Advocates create Individual Action Plans designed to address immediate and long-term needs and help Participants strive for personal and professional success. Our Participants are accountable to us and the court. If a Participant deviates from their individual plan, we will report it to the court while developing solutions to get them back on track. This helps the Participant cultivate a sense of personal responsibility and helps us maintain the court's trust.

GUIDING FAMILIES: AFJ addresses the needs of our Participants' families and supports them through emergencies which can place them in a crisis and derail the Participant's progress. We have seen that providing services to stabilize a Participant's home life can help the Participant successfully complete the program.

COMPLETING COURT REQUIREMENTS: AFJ provides free court advocacy until a Participant satisfies the court's requirements and receives a favorable disposition of their case. This could be a dismissal, pro-bation and/or a plea to a reduced charge or reduced sentencing without incarceration.

In some cases, records are sealed and the Participant receives Youthful Offender Status. Success is when, in addition to a favorable court outcome, our Participants complete the HIRE UP Program, graduate from school, go on to trade school or higher education, and/or enter gainful employment.

LOW RECIDIVISM: We track Participant recidivism rates for three-years and six-years from program enrollment. In 2021, AFJ initiated Participant and Alumni feedback surveys to document long term outcomes measured by non-criminal history and quality of life metrics supplemented by personal accounts.



2022 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

AFJ’s annual budgets have remained just above \$2 million. We keep our overhead low: **84% of the AFJ budget goes directly to support program.**

FOUNDATIONS GRANTS, CONTRIBUTIONS, & OTHERS	65%	\$1,424,453
INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	7%	\$151,294
SPECIAL EVENTS (NET)	14%	\$302,546
GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS & GRANTS	13%	\$297,100
INVESTMENT INCOME	1%	\$26,697
TOTAL REVENUE & PUBLIC SUPPORT	100%	\$2,202,090

[CLICK HERE FOR AFJ’S FINANCIAL STATEMENTS](#)

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

\$6,300

The annual cost to put one young person through AFJ with a full year of our wraparound services.

VS.

\$900,000

The annual cost to New York taxpayers to incarcerate one young person. (NYS Office of Children & Family Services)



EDUCATION

RECONNECTING WITH SCHOOL: Court advocates help Participants re-enroll in school, and meet frequently with school administrators and teachers to ensure that Participants are succeeding at their studies and are on track to graduation.

TUTORING: AFJ maintains a bank of 60 volunteers, including tutors, who assist Participants online and onsite at our two community centers with academics, homework assignments, and high-school equivalency studies.

CORPORATE-LED WORKSHOPS: Avenues for Justice relies on Corporate Partners to lead our HIRE UP educational workshops. In 2021 and 2022, Goldman Sachs provided sessions for STEM training in science, technology, engineering, math and on STEM-related careers.

ADVANCING TO COLLEGE: When youth successfully obtain a diploma, Avenues for Justice works with them to enter college full or part-time. Assistance includes college visits, SAT-prep and help with applications and financial aid, as well as tutoring.





HIRE UP: EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

In 2022, AFJ's HIRE UP program included a wide roster of job training and certification, educational support, teen empowerment and legal rights workshops, life skills and civics training, and mental and physical health wellness programs, both online and onsite at the Harlem and Lower East Side community centers.

Our research shows that our Participants need assistance to obtain long term employment--particularly in industries outside of retail and hospitality, which tend to have higher turnover rates and lack stability. It is for this very reason that AFJ tailored a unique approach to job readiness beyond the traditional resume and cover letter workshops. The goal of our HIRE UP program to make Participants more marketable and to successfully complete the program with professional hard and soft skills.

2022 OUTCOMES DASHBOARD



6%

**OF AFJ PARTICIPANTS WERE RECONVICTED OF A CRIME
WITHIN THREE YEARS OF ENROLLMENT IN OUR PROGRAM**

VS.

76%

**OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS WHO WERE RECONVICTED
AFTER THREE YEARS OF RELEASE.**

6%

76%

■ AFJ Participants ■ Juvenile Offenders Post-Release



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OUR TEAM

AFJ's Chair is African American, our Executive Director is Hispanic, the management team is 100% African American, and 78% of our Program Staff are African American and Hispanic. By having a diverse team, AFJ is able to address the individual and systemic issues that our Participants face, and support them with second chances.

ANGEL RODRIGUEZ, CO-FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ELIZABETH FREDERICK, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

GAMAL WILLIS, DIRECTOR OF COURT ADVOCACY & OUTREACH

NELSON VALENTINE, SENIOR COURT ADVOCATE

ELSIE FLORES, COURT ADVOCATE

BRIAN STANLEY, COURT ADVOCATE

NORA MITCHELL, COURT ADVOCATE

SHANTEL BROOKS, COURT ADVOCATE

TIFFANY QUELIX, COURT ADVOCATE

SAMANTHA FIKILINI, PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

WESTON MUENCH, COMMUNICATIONS & DATA SPECIALIST

EDISON TABORDA, FACILITIES COORDINATOR

DAVID MOSLEY, ACCOUNTANT & BOOKKEEPER

MALEKA LAWRENCE, DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT



PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIAL

ANA, Adjudicated Youthful Offender in 2021: The positive energy. Whether you had a bad day at work, school, home, you come here and it's a whole different vibe. Someway, somehow, you're going to forget why you were even mad. Coming here, there's joy, love and positivity.

PARENT TESTIMONIAL

DOLORES: I'm so thankful for having you AFJ since day one and I'm very thankful for everybody that has extended their hands for me and My family in the times of need. I'm trying to educate myself and my kids to help my family and help others as well. You guys are going to get tired of me saying thank you!!!!

ALUMNUS TESTIMONIAL

JULES FEBRE, GRADUATED 1997; Yoga Instructor, Berlin: The intervention that AFJ provides may be one of the best ways to find a resolution, to bring a life back into a a clear perspective, to navigate to calmer waters. The the clear and decisive action taken by AFJ along with my family is what allowed me to really see the scale to which my life choices were impacting me in a negative and potentially enduring way. I am grateful for the work I was able to do at AFJ and credit them impacting my ability to be in the place I am today happy and healthy even in stormy waters.

VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIAL

NINA: The Lower East Side Community Center really means so much to me. It felt as much like a home to me, as much as it does for the kids. There is nothing like face to face time at the center. I am so incredibly impressed and proud to have seen AFJ deal with the last year head on and continue to create a space and community for these kids.

DONOR TESTIMONIAL

JUDITH M LUKIN, Long-time Supporter: I knew Bob Siegel just after he founded the (AFJ). For a while I worked for Angel Rodriguez, and helped raise funds for this organization. The two most important factors that make this valiant effort a success are (1) the staff are available to the young people around the clock (24/7) and (2) judges in the courts are willing to take the huge risk of placing a criminally charged young person with (AFJ), rather than to incarcerate, because they trust (AFJ).

If we had more programs this attentive and immediately responsive to the needs of our young people and their families, there would be significantly less need for jails and prisons, less need to incarcerate and stigmatize, and finally, we would understand what it takes to move public attitudes from punishment to providing care.

SUPPORT AFJ TODAY!

Contribute to Avenues For Justice and support one of the nation's most cost effective, successful crime-fighting programs.

Help hundreds of young people get their second chance each year in Harlem, Lower EastSide, and throughout Manhattan.

Donate online:

www.avenuesforjustice.org

Donate by mail:

Avenues For Justice
100 Centre St, Room 1541
New York, NY 10013

Please make your contribution payable to Avenues For Justice.

Contact us at:

Avenues For Justice

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info@avenuesforjustice.org

Photos by Marty Umans & Andrew Tivon

RESOURCES

Our Program

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LES COMMUNITY CENTER

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HARLEM COMMUNITY CENTER

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