

Fall



Impact Update

Criminal justice reform is both a marathon and a sprint.

For the past eight years, Just City has championed a long-term vision for a smaller and more humane justice system. We also fight daily to reduce the impact of contact with that system.

In 2022, we reached significant marathon milestones like bail system reform in Shelby County and other local and state policy changes. Plus, the voters of Shelby County sent a decisive electoral message that has helped our fight for justice.

The daily sprint also persists: We continue to amplify the life-changing possibilities of expungement to those in our community, and Just City's Court Watch program has delivered our first series of Judicial Reports since the pandemic. Our podcast and media outreach continue to influence the conversation about public safety both locally and across the state.

Meaningful reform requires sustained effort while still addressing the everyday needs of people impacted by the criminal legal system.

Our team's work over the past year has been nothing short of remarkable, and we are eager to share it with you. With your support, we will continue to fight — every day — for a future where we all live in a Just City.

In partnership,

Josh Spickler

Executive Director





The new Shelby County bail system has been called one of the fairest in the country.

In response to advocacy by Just City and our partners, Shelby County created a new bail-setting process that will be one of the fairest in the nation. This new system will have a major impact on criminal justice in Memphis and Shelby County, ensuring that constitutional rights are upheld and state law is followed. It will limit some of the harmful effects of wealth-based pre-trial detention.

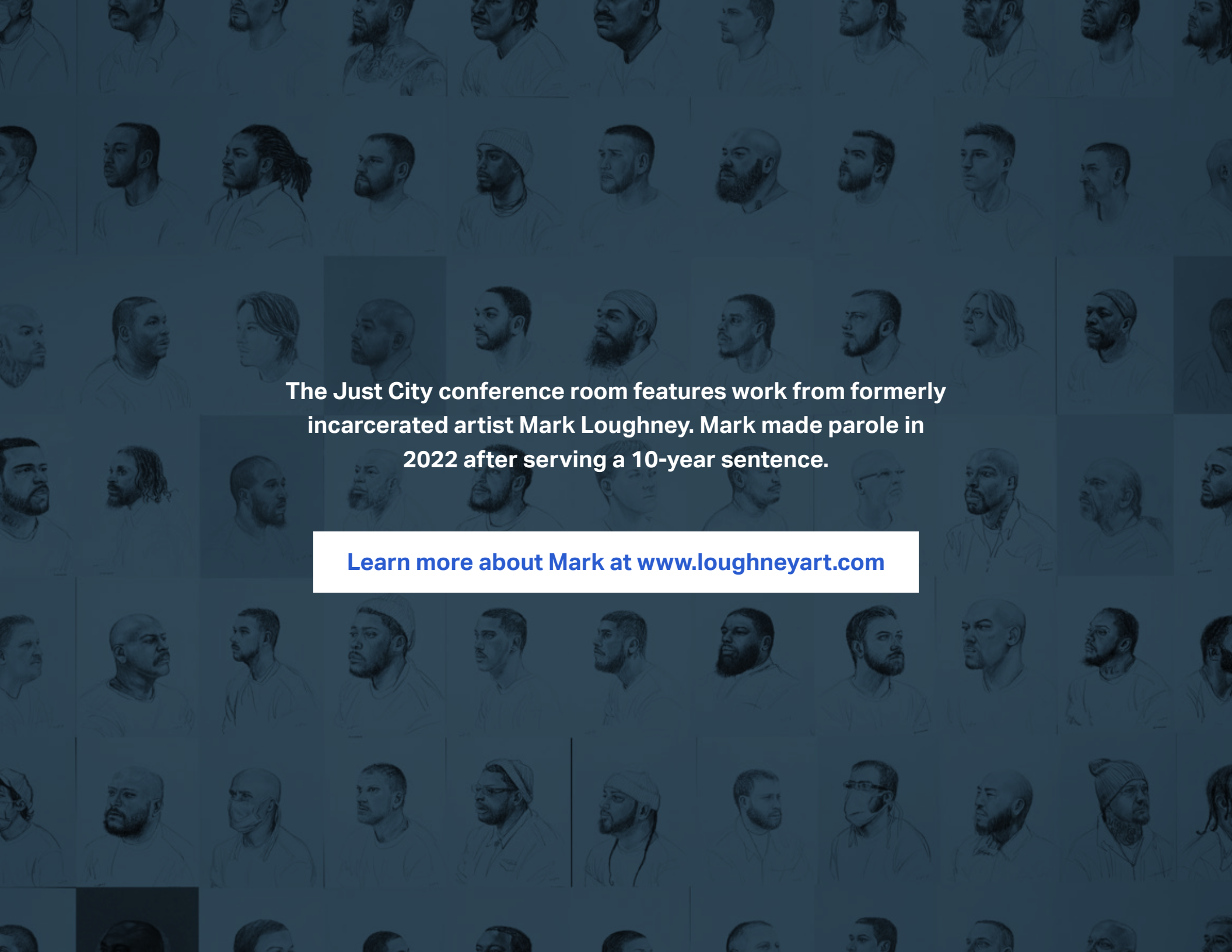
The new Shelby County bail system includes:

- A new bail hearing courtroom
- Individualized bail hearings with counsel within three days of a person's arrest
- Examination of a person's financial circumstances prior to any release decision
- Automated text message court reminders
- Use of money bail only as a last resort

This new pretrial system was not developed overnight. For years, Just City has challenged the idea that a person's wealth should determine their freedom. We have long advocated for bail policies that focus on risk and needs assessment rather than financial means.

The fight continues...

Just City is still working toward eliminating cash bail entirely in Memphis and Shelby County.



The Just City conference room features work from formerly incarcerated artist Mark Loughney. Mark made parole in 2022 after serving a 10-year sentence.

Learn more about Mark at www.loughneyart.com



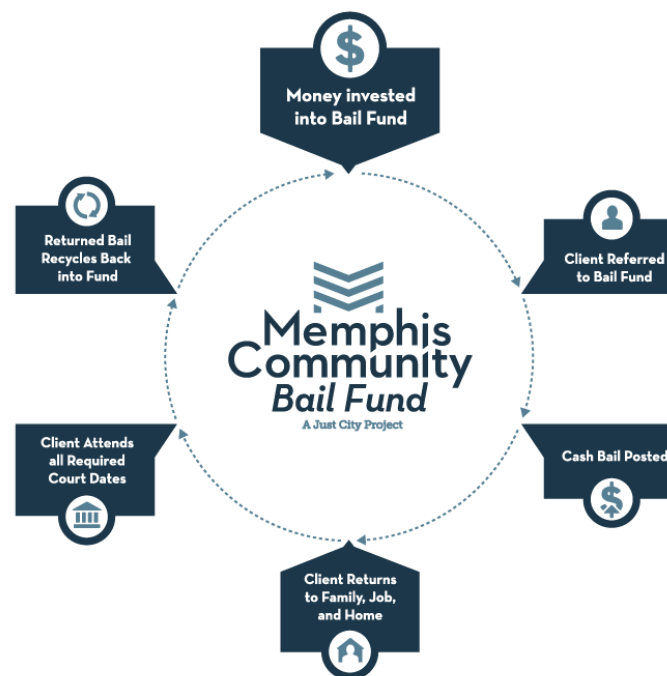
Memphis Community Bail Fund surpasses \$2 million in bail paid.

Last year, Just City's Memphis Community Bail Fund crossed the \$2 million mark. For hundreds of people who cannot afford it, the fund pays bail amounts up to \$5,000 to help keep people out of jail while they await trial.

Why is this important? Pretrial detention can be devastating, and charges for low-level crimes are often dismissed. People can lose their jobs, housing, healthcare, and connections to family when they are held in jail simply because they can't afford bail. The Bail Fund offers a chance for people to return to their jobs and families and actively participate in their own defense.

Did You Know?

A person released on bond is not more likely to commit a crime than someone held in pretrial detention.



The fight continues...

We rely on your support to operate the Memphis Community Bail Fund and advocate for meaningful bail reforms.

"I am very grateful Just City made my bond, and I'm grateful they helped me to be with my family."

— BAIL FUND CLIENT



Court Watch continues to demand accountability.

We believe the justice system shouldn't operate behind closed doors. That's why Just City created the Court Watch Program: to regularly monitor courtroom proceedings and make our findings public. Led by Yonée Gibson, the program mobilizes volunteer observers who watch and record courtroom activities. Their presence isn't just about observation — it's about ensuring every judicial proceeding is fair, transparent, and respectful.

Following a pause due to the global pandemic, 2022 marked the release of our first Court Watch Judicial Report since 2019. Yonée created a new rubric for observers, which illuminates crucial metrics including the objectivity of judges, the sensitivity with which cases are handled, accessibility, and more.

Our Court Watch rubric measures:

- Timeliness
- Judicial neutrality
- Assignment of public defenders
- Observed levels of dignity and sensitivity
- Hearing accessibility
- Court Watch observer access

A court system should be reflective of the community it serves. The Court Watch Program is that mirror. By empowering citizens to be the eyes and ears of courtrooms, we're bringing transparency and accountability to the courts. Our observers aren't just passive onlookers, they are custodians of justice.

The fight continues...

You can be a Court Watch volunteer and help us keep the courts accountable. Visit justcity.org/courtwatch to learn more and sign up.



Yonée Gibson

Program Manager &
Student Coordinator



Daily Sprint



Just City continues to fight for new expungement improvements.

Among several new expungement laws, Just City also supported a bill that makes it possible for survivors of human trafficking to have their criminal history sealed if the convictions were the result of being trafficked. When it became law in 2019, it provided a pathway for survivors to reclaim their lives and pursue economic opportunities.

In 2022, Ashley Peterson, who leads our Clean Slate efforts, worked to secure the first expungement of this kind in the state, helping a human trafficking survivor finally clear their record. Victories like these are why Just City continues to fight for Clean Slate policies that benefit all Tennesseans.



Ashley Peterson

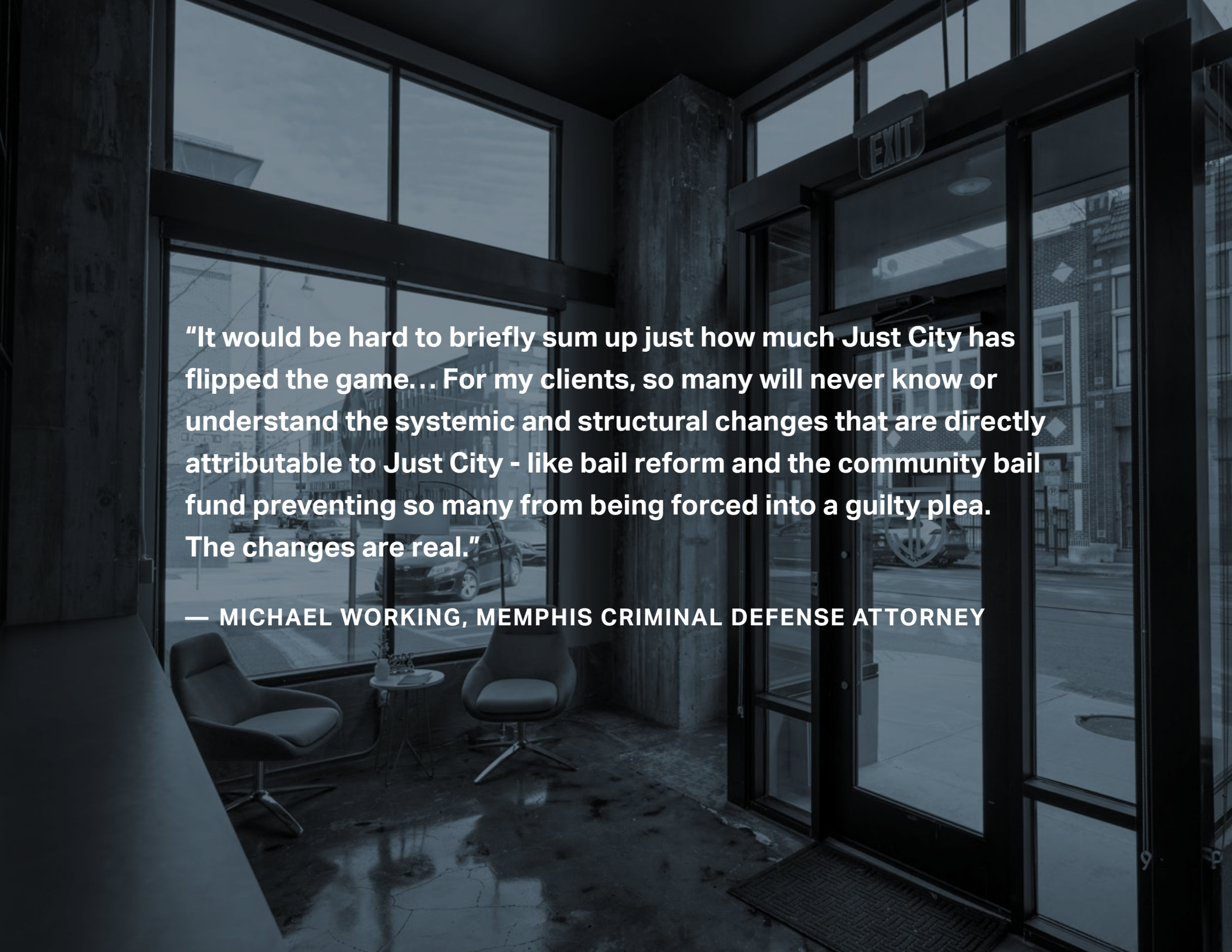
Program Manager

The fight continues...

Even though we have significantly expanded expungement access, there's more to be done. We're still fighting to eliminate fees completely, reduce the waiting period, and increase the number of eligible offenses.



Marathon Milestone



"It would be hard to briefly sum up just how much Just City has flipped the game... For my clients, so many will never know or understand the systemic and structural changes that are directly attributable to Just City - like bail reform and the community bail fund preventing so many from being forced into a guilty plea. The changes are real."

— MICHAEL WORKING, MEMPHIS CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY

Clean Slate campaign spreads awareness.

Making expungements more accessible isn't enough — we also have to make the process more visible so more people know that a clean slate is available to them. To that end, we launched CleanSlateMemphis.com to help people understand whether their record qualifies for expungement.

We spread the word through a traditional media campaign that put highly visible messaging in targeted ZIP codes identified by our own data. This included billboards, bus boards, and direct mailers that drove people to the website to check their eligibility for expungement.



750+

Since 2015, the Clean Slate Fund has helped more than 750 people expunge a debilitating criminal record.

The fight continues...

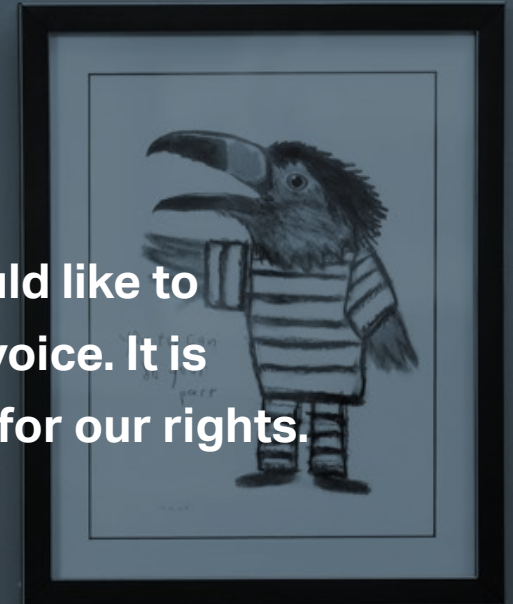
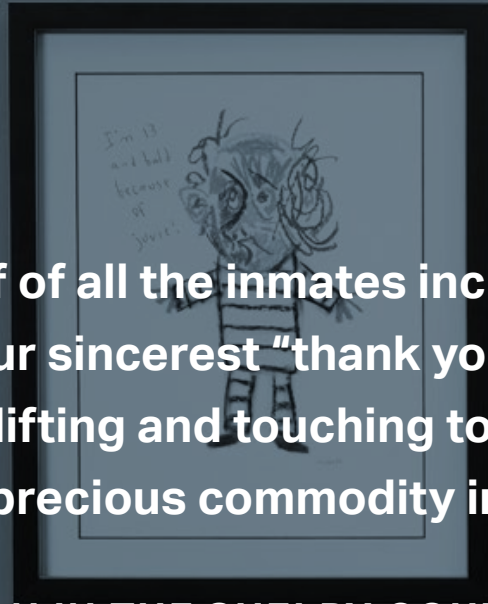
Our Clean Slate program helps people understand the expungement process, but it is still overly complex. We're working with local officials to update and simplify the application and filing system, while also working with the legislature to make some expungements automatic.



Daily Sprint

“On behalf of all the inmates including myself, I would like to express our sincerest “thank yous” for giving us a voice. It is indeed uplifting and touching to know people care for our rights. Hope is a precious commodity in here.”

— A PERSON IN THE SHELBY COUNTY JAIL





Key funding enables transformative action.

2022 was a pivotal year for Just City, highlighted by direct support from Arnold Ventures and continued support from the National Football League. These partnerships are about more than funding; they also affirm and amplify our work in addition to the financial stability they provide.

Backing from Arnold Ventures has allowed us to address the barriers presented by fines and fees. Outstanding court debt keeps people from accessing expungement, driver licenses, and voting rights. We're determined to break these chains, giving people renewed hope for a future in which they can again be full members of our community.

Continuing support from the NFL has allowed us to build on our data capability and launch the Public Data Accountability Project in the aftermath of Tyre Nichols' tragic killing. This initiative harnesses public data to promote transparency in policing and the court system. Ryan Carroll, who has experience as a data scientist, data engineer, and software engineer, has built and deployed the tools that allow us to offer this data to the community.



Ryan Carroll

Data Scientist

The fight continues...

These donations are critical to our work, but they are also highly focused. We depend on support from our own community to carry on our work.

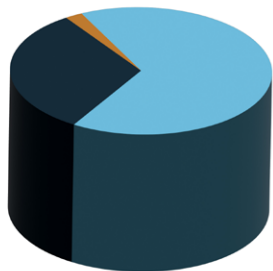
A group of people are seated around a long wooden table in a meeting room. They are looking at laptops and talking. The room has large windows on the left showing a street with cars and a building. On the right wall, there is a grid of many small portraits of diverse people. A white text box is overlaid on the image.

The milestones in this report are not possible without regular support from the public. Donate today to join the fight.

www.justcity.org/give

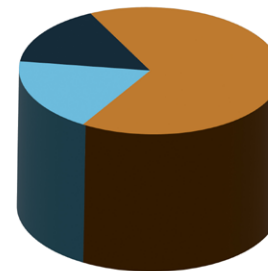
2022 Financial Report

2022 Total Operating Funds Raised \$901,688



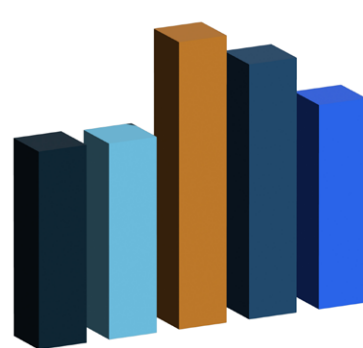
- From People: \$594,612
- From Foundations: \$302,936
- From Businesses: \$3,629

2022 Total Expenses \$1,010,070



- Programs: \$666,646
- General Operations: \$191,913
- Fundraising: \$151,511

Funds Raised Annually



- 2018: \$871,218
- 2019: \$863,086
- 2020: \$1,266,074
- 2021: \$1,124,543
- 2022: \$901,688



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MEMPHIS

justcity.org