

# AVENUES FOR JUSTICE 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Justice In Action



**AVENUES**   
**FOR**  **JUSTICE**

Andrew Glover Youth Program

# ABOUT AVENUES FOR JUSTICE

Avenues for Justice (AFJ) is a NYC non-profit organization that has continued to provide free-post arrest support to at-risk young people for over 45 years.

As one of the first Alternative-to-Incarceration (ATI) programs for young people and young adults in the country, AFJ has protected NYC's court-involved and at-risk youth from incarceration, replacing cells with services.

**AFJ provides free on-going court advocacy along with their HIRE UP online and onsite enrichment programs for workforce training, education, mental health and mentoring to over 600 young people, ages 13-24, each year.**

**On average, 92% of AFJ's court-involved Participants avoid reconviction within three years of enrollment** into the program, making our ATI program one of the most successful, cost-effective models in the US.

Services for program Participants 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 while all Participants receive HIRE UP services for job readiness and certification, youth empowerment and legal rights, life skills, mental and physical health wellness, academic support, tutoring, and more.

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

## 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, often referred to by school, family, community members, or other court-involved youth.





# 2025 IMPACT

## 692

Participants were served in 2025, an AFJ record, exceeding our goal of 500.

## 92%

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

## 561

Participants attended HIRE Up workshops.

“AFJ has helped by keeping me focused, giving me guidance when I needed it, and connecting me with support that’s pushing me toward a better future.”

**URIAH**  
AFJ Alumnus

“AFJ taught me that there is a way to live and a way not to live. They opened up opportunities for me that I didn’t even know were available to me. As the sole provider for my young daughter, I didn’t know that I had it in me to work a legit job. AFJ showed me what is possible for me and my family through hard work.”

**AARON**  
AFJ Participant

# 2025 IMPACT

## 193

Participants had a favorable court outcome (case dismissed, reduced, were adjudicated as a youthful offender, or were conditionally discharged to AFJ) in 2025.

## 276

Digital literacy certifications earned by 61 Participants in 2025.

## 66

Certifications in OSHA-10, Scaffolding Safety-10, Flaggers, CPR, Security and Food Handlers trainings in 2025.

## 83

Court-Involved Participants obtained a job/internship in 2025.

“AFJ’s HIRE Up program sets the standard for community-based support for at-risk youth by ensuring that young people not only avoid future incarceration, but also develop the skills they need to enter the workforce and build a successful future for themselves. This is a proven, effective model that creates opportunity, opens doors, and helps our neighborhoods stay safe. I am proud to have secured funding to expand this program and will continue fighting for federal funds for outstanding programs like this one around the City.”

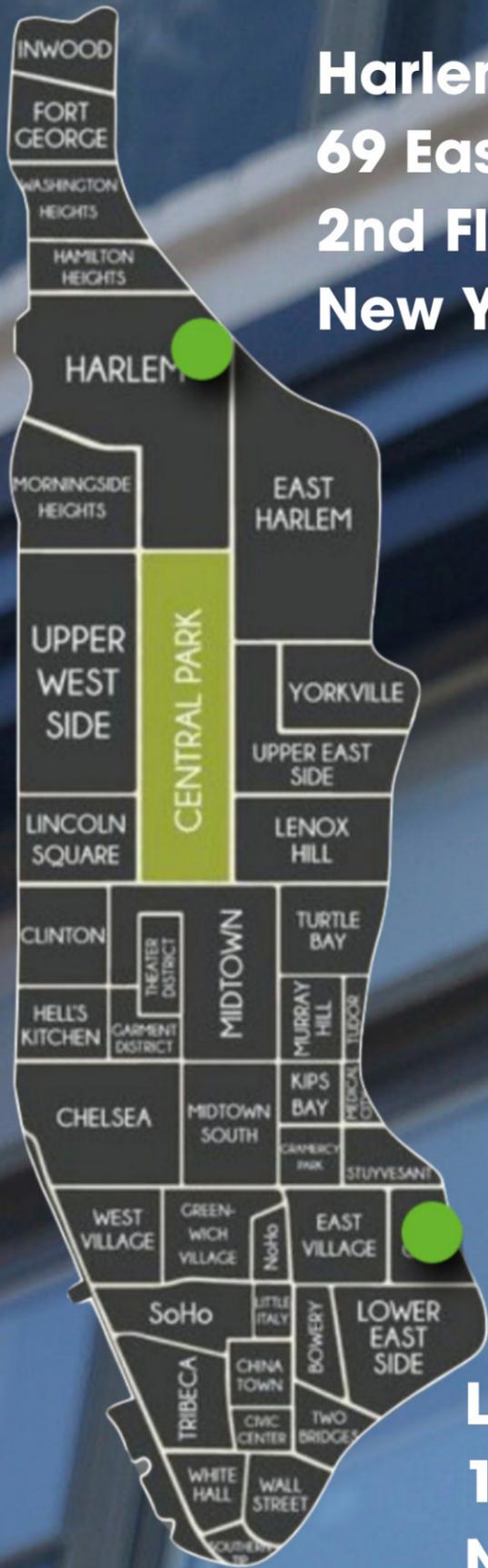
**CONGRESSMAN DANIEL GOLDMAN (DISTRICT 10)**

## 257

Participants completed the Program in 2025.



**Harlem Community Center**  
**69 East 130th Street**  
**2nd Floor**  
**New York, NY 10037**



# AFJ Community Center Locations

**Lower East Side Center**  
**100 Avenue B**  
**New York, NY 10009**

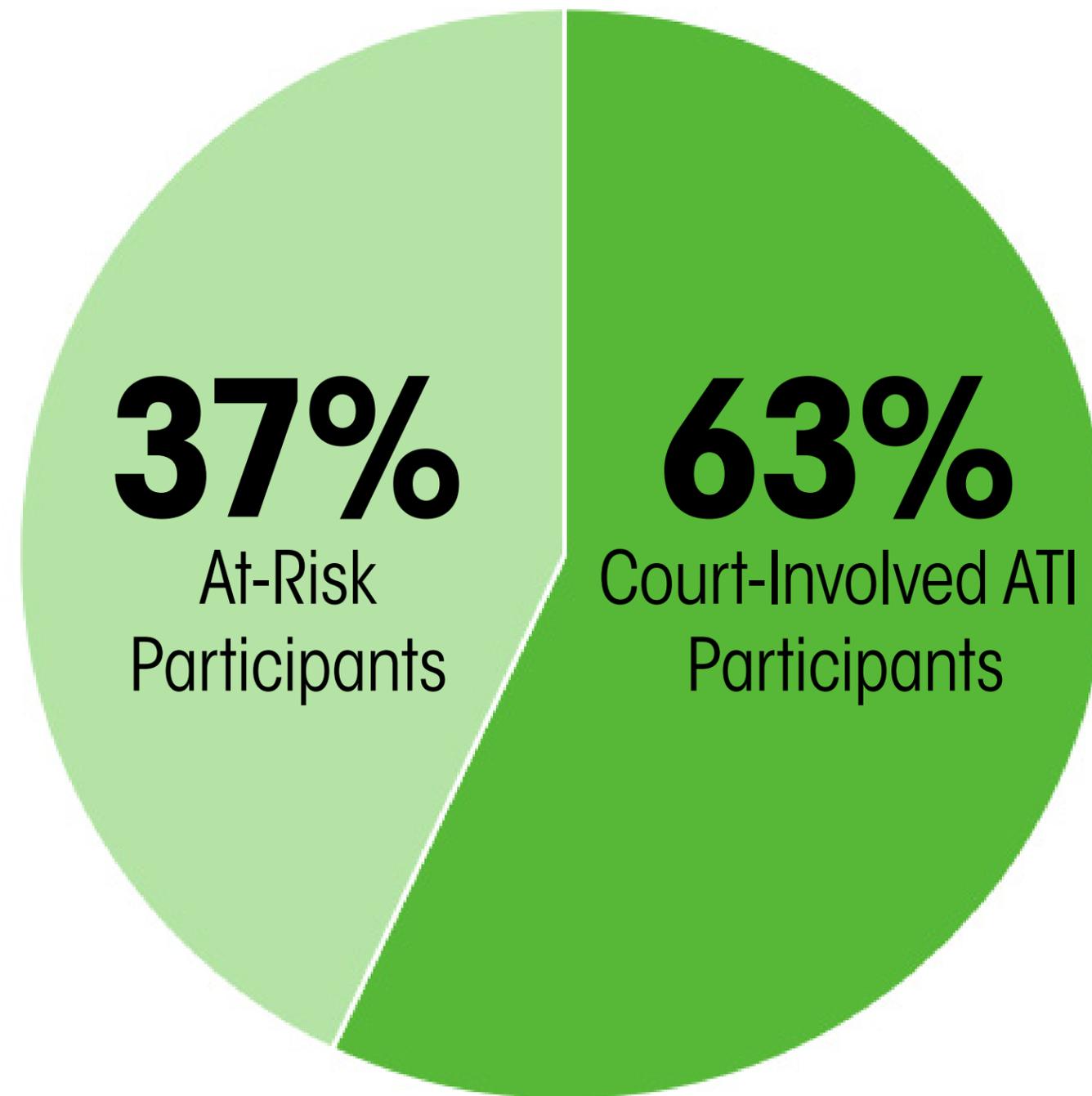


# OUR PARTICIPANTS

In 2025, AFJ served 692 ATI court-involved and at-risk Participants, ages 13 - 24, from across the city. These 692 young people participated in one of AFJ's two program areas:

433 (63%) were court-involved Participants enrolled in AFJ's intensive ATI program;

259 (37%) were at-risk Participants who participated in AFJ's crime prevention programs at our community centers;



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



# OUR PARTICIPANTS

**ATI PARTICIPANTS:** AFJ's signature long-term ATI Participants who are court-involved and typically between the ages 18-24. Services include court appearances, school visits, regular counseling, curfews, mandatory check-in at centers, and monitoring of individualized services.

**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. The program targets youth up to the age of 18. Diversion Participants receive the same services as other AFJ Participants but generally have a 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 2025, AFJ served 371 ATI court-involved youth, ages 13 - 24 from across the city. These 371 Participants can be broken down into three categories:

142 (33%) were ATI court-involved Participants who did not spend time incarcerated or in the short-term diversion program;

247 (57%) 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;

44 (10%) 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 headquarters inside the Manhattan Criminal Courthouse. Judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation officers, and court resource coordinators view AFJ as a reliable and effective referral source.

**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.

**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.

**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, probation and/or a plea to a reduced charge or reduced sentencing without incarceration.

**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.



# 2025 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

AFJ maintains an annual budget just below \$3.5 million. We keep our overhead low: **81% of the AFJ budget goes directly to support program.**

FOUNDATIONS GRANTS, CONTRIBUTIONS, & OTHERS	<b>67%</b>	<b>\$1,446,784</b>
INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS	<b>9%</b>	<b>\$304,344</b>
SPECIAL EVENTS (NET)	<b>7%</b>	<b>\$157,617</b>
GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS & GRANTS	<b>13%</b>	<b>\$304,344</b>
INVESTMENT INCOME	<b>6%</b>	<b>\$129,084</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE &amp; PUBLIC SUPPORT</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$2,241,152</b>

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

## RETURN ON INVESTMENT

**\$8,900**

**\$500,000**

**VS.**

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

The annual cost to New York taxpayers to incarcerate one young person.  
(Source: NYC Comptroller)



# 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 graduate.

**TUTORING:** Currently, Avenues for Justice maintains a bank of 60 volunteers, including academic tutors and an ESL Instructor, who help AFJ Participants with schoolwork, exams, and admissions forms to complete high school and advance to college.

**CORPORATE-LED WORKSHOPS:** Launched in September 2020, corporate partners facilitate job readiness and financial literacy training with mock interviews; resume writing; basics of budgeting, bank and credit accounts; dress for success; and mentoring. The program includes guest speakers who are successful in unconventional careers and job structures (work for hire, freelance, project based work) to expand the idea of a career. Partners since the launch include JPMorgan Chase, City National Bank, Goldman Sachs, New York Junior League, Rothschild & Co, UBER Technologies and BlackRock.

**ADVANCING TO COLLEGE:** When Participants successfully obtain a diploma, Avenues for Justice works with them to enter college and/or a trade school. Assistance includes college visits, SAT-prep and assistance with applications and financial aid.





# HIRE UP: EMPLOYMENT TRAINING

In 2025, 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 is to make Participants more marketable and to successfully complete the program with professional hard and soft skills.

# HIRE UP: EMPLOYMENT TRAINING (CONT.)

**CERTIFICATIONS:** With the success of our certification programming in 2025, AFJ continues to offer OSHA Safety Education and Training program, along with the Flagger and Scaffold User Training, and Security Training quarterly; alternating between centers.

Our CPR certifications will also be offered twice per year through our partnership with the New York Junior League (NYJL). Along with our certifications, AFJ continues to champion continued education through our mandatory Digital Literacy requirement for all our Participants. In an increasingly digital world, AFJ is determined to provide our Participants with the skills and tools needed to navigate technology for professional advancement.



## 2025 CERTIFICATIONS

**276**  
Digital Literacy

**4**  
Security

**34**  
Flaggers &  
Scaffolding

**19**  
OSHA-30

**2**  
Food Handlers



# PAID INTERNSHIPS

In addition to expanding our HIRE Up workforce readiness trainings, Avenues for Justice piloted a paid internship program, funded by AFJ, that paired Participants who passed the interview process with a local business that fit their personality and career goals. Each internship lasted for 8 weeks and a total of 125 hours paid at \$17 an hour.

Between our spring and fall cohorts, we had 31 interns complete their internship at over 20 different local businesses, majority BIPOC-owned, in industries such as event production, hospitality, food and beverage, security, technology, and fitness.

Since program launch in 2023, 90 different Participants have completed 120 total internships.

# RECIDIVISM



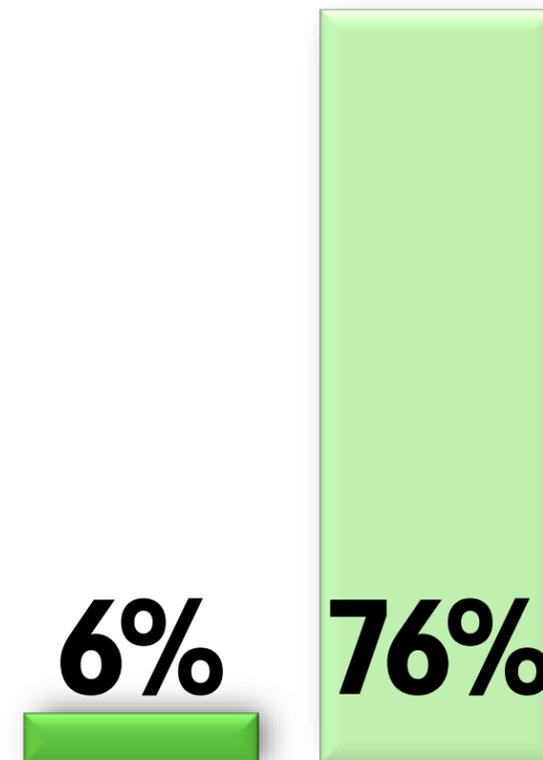
**Only 6%**

**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.**



■ AFJ Participants ■ Juvenile Offenders Post-Release



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# OUR SUPPORTERS

## AVENUES FOR JUSTICE, INC. SUPPORTERS: 2023 TO 2026



### #STARTSMALL

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FOUNDATION FOR THE CAROLINAS  
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GOOGLE MATCHING GIFTS  
HACHETTE BOOK GROUP  
HEAD FAMILY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION  
HEARST FOUNDATIONS  
HISPANIC FEDERATION  
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ISLAND CAPITAL GROUP  
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SILLS FAMILY FOUNDATION  
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STARBUCKS FOUNDATION  
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TD CHARITABLE FOUNDATION  
THOMPSON FAMILY FOUNDATION  
TRINITY CHURCH WALL STREET  
VISA  
WELLMET PHILANTHROPY  
WILSON SONSINI GOODRICH & ROSATI FOUNDATION  
ZELL FAMILY FOUNDATION

# OUR TEAM

Avenues for Justice's Executive Director is African American, 85% of our Staff are African American and Hispanic, with three of our Court Advocates being credible messengers who have experienced the criminal justice system.

Avenues for Justice has twelve full-time and one part-time staff members, supplemented by a bookkeeper, development consultant, and volunteers.

**ELIZABETH FREDERICK**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**GAMAL WILLIS**, CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER

**JALIL ABDURRAHEEM**, COURT ADVOCATE

**LISSETTE AYBAR**, OFFICE MANAGER

**SHANTEL BROOKS**, JOB DEVELOPER

**MESSIAH FERGUSON**, COURT ADVOCATE

**ELSIE FLORES**, COURT ADVOCATE

**MALEKA LAWRENCE**, DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT

**DAVID MOSLEY**, ACCOUNTANT & BOOKKEEPER

**WESTON MUENCH**, COMMUNICATIONS & DATA SPECIALIST

**JULIA PRICE**, COURT ADVOCATE

**STEPHANIE SANTANA**, COURT ADVOCATE

**BRIAN STANLEY**, MANAGER OF COURT ADVOCACY & OUTREACH

**EDISON TABORDA**, FACILITIES COORDINATOR

**NELSON VALENTINE**, SENIOR COURT ADVOCATE



# TESTIMONIALS

*"AFJ helps you become the person you want to be in the future. They offer tutoring, and if you're struggling, they help you get to where you need to be in school through tutoring and the workshops. They've taught me how to avoid going down the wrong path."*

**DONALD, 2025 AFJ Participant**

*"I need access to resources like education, housing, and financial assistance so I would be able to build stability instead of constantly struggling. Mentors and positive role models are important because they can guide me, give advice, and help me avoid mistakes they already learned from. It also takes good jobs and job training, because without income and skills, it is harder to move forward. A strong community and support system family, friends, and Avenue For Justice helps keep me motivated and reminds me I'm not alone."*

**VANESSA, 2025 AFJ Participant**

*"Avenues for Justice changed my life in a major way. From the way that I speak to the way that I dress to the way that I carry myself.*

*I know that I am a role model for a lot of the Participants in Avenues for Justice. That's what I do it for. I do it for them because I want them to know that if I can do it, they can do it.*

**KATHERINE ESTRELLA, 2025 Second Chance Award Recipient**

*"The work of Avenues for Justice is helping to reimagine a criminal justice system beyond bars, making new starts possible for thousands of New Yorkers. Your work delivers hope for those once caught in the grips of the criminal legal system, helping each person touched to achieve their full potential. At Robin Hood, our work is driven by a core value: we believe that where you start out in life should not define where you end up. Every New Yorker deserves a fair shot. Every day, the team at Avenues for Justice epitomizes this value. We are so proud of the partnership we share with you, and the legacy of transformation your work has left of thousands of New Yorkers in need."*

**RICHARD BUERY JR., CEO, Robin Hood Foundation**

*"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**



# 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 East Side, and throughout Manhattan.

**Donate online:**

<https://avenuesforjustice.networkforgood.com/projects/93743-avenues-for-justice>

**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**

100 Centre Street, Room 1541  
New York, NY 10013  
P 212-349-6381  
[info@avenuesforjustice.org](mailto:info@avenuesforjustice.org)

# RESOURCES

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**COURTHOUSE OFFICE**

100 Centre Street, Room 1541  
New York, NY 10013  
(212) 349-6381

**LES COMMUNITY CENTER**

100 Avenue B  
New York, NY 10009  
(212) 505-5130

**HARLEM COMMUNITY CENTER**

69 E 130th Street  
New York, NY 10035  
(212) 281-2202

