

WE SHOW UP



ACLU Maryland

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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ACLU Maryland
We Show up

*“Where you see
wrong or inequality
or injustice, speak
out, because this is
your country
This is your
democracy.
Make it. Protect it.
Pass it on.”*

*Thurgood Marshall, Former Associate Justice
of the Supreme Court of the United States*



Dana Vickers Shelley



Corey Stottlemeyer

ANNUAL REPORT: Content by Meredith Curtis Goode, Jenny Trust, Craig Lee, Shaqué Ingram, Amy Cruice, Gina Elleby, and Rosemary Ardman. Design by Nicole McCann.

Documents and information filed under the Maryland Charitable Organizations Solicitation Act may be obtained from the Maryland Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401.

More than ninety years later, the ACLU of Maryland continues to show up – and evolve – on our journey for race equity that began at our founding. We ask ourselves, and each other, each day:

What can we all do now to make things truly different? To achieve systemic change that overcomes white supremacy? To ensure we are not faced with the same racist inhumanity after another 90 years in Maryland?

We need change, which is why we developed a four-year strategic plan that has as its centerpiece a fundamentally different way of working. Coalitions are growing across the state – including with equal vigor in Western Maryland & the Eastern Shore – that center the leadership and experience of Marylanders directly impacted by state systems that perpetuate injustice. The ACLU of Maryland is committed to centering and investing in this work and together making a deep and lasting impact.

It's working.

This year, led by residents on the Eastern Shore, we changed Federalsburg's election system and paved the way for the election of the first Black officials in the town's 200-year history. Along with partners, we passed the *Child Interrogation Protection Act*, which provides age-appropriate due process protections for children being interrogated by police, both to

protect their rights and against false confessions. Together with community groups across the state, we are working to ensure that Baltimore City and Maryland's 23 counties have a strong, community-led Police Accountability Board. And so much more.

Thank you for showing up as members of our community. We are proud to count on you among our friends, allies, and supporters as we pull out all the stops for 2024. It is hard to overstate the challenges ahead. We face well-organized, better-funded opponents whose efforts are cynical, effective, and grease the skids for democratic decline, if not outright authoritarianism.

But we aren't just trying to stem a backward slide of our rights. **We are showing up for a vision of something greater: A Maryland where we can exercise our rights so that the law values and uplifts our humanity.** Please sign up online to become a member and join us at activities across the state!

With gratitude and in solidarity,



Dana Vickers Shelley

Executive Director
ACLU of Maryland



Corey Stottlemyer

President, Board of Directors
ACLU of Maryland

COVER: *ACLU of Maryland Public Policy Director Yanet Amanuel, Senior Staff Attorney Sonia Kumar, and Executive Director Dana Vickers Shelley join Senator Jill Carter, several Maryland advocates who have returned home from incarceration and their loved ones, and many others in support of the Maryland Second Look Act (SB 123/ HB 724) at a hearing in Annapolis. Photo Credit: Willie Flowers.*



Our goal is to have a public education system where all students can learn, thrive, and are prepared to effectively engage in the social, political, and economic life of their community.

The right to education is protected in Maryland’s constitution. That’s why the ACLU of Maryland advocates to secure equitable and adequate public-school funding, ensure that facilities are conducive to learning, and provide a positive school climate where children can thrive. Families in Baltimore City Public Schools, with the support of the ACLU and our legal partners, are in court seeking accountability from the State Board of Education for its chronic and continued failure to provide constitutionally adequate educational opportunities to all students.

Together with Antiracism for Maryland Schools, we successfully advocated to create a definition and comprehensive training protocol for the nebulous “cultural competency” requirement in the state’s Blueprint Comprehensive Implementation Plan. And together with Community WELL, we are advocating for transformative policies and culturally responsive practices to ensure that schools are better equipped to serve English Language Learners in Maryland.

We have also partnered with the national ACLU to file amicus briefs in two important cases. The first argues in support of the U.S. Naval Academy’s consideration of race in admissions to help promote racial fairness in Naval officer ranks. The second is in support of Montgomery County Public Schools to ensure that its English curriculum is LGBTQ+-inclusive.

LEFT: Student advocates with the No Boundaries Youth Coalition, ACLU of Maryland Senior Public Policy Advocate Frank Patinella, and plaintiff Shawanda Clark-McCray gather outside of the Baltimore City courthouse after a hearing for *Bradford v. Maryland State Board of Education*. Photo credit: Nicole McCann.

government accountability

Our goal is to make government accountable by maximizing transparency, establishing limits on governmental power, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms, particularly where there is the greatest opportunity for abuse of power.

The ACLU of Maryland and our partners in the Maryland Coalition for Justice and Police Accountability have intervened in a lawsuit brought by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) that challenges Anton's Law. Named after 19-year-old Anton Black, who was killed by police in Greensboro, MD, Anton's Law allows victims of police brutality to know about misconduct via a Maryland Public Information Act request. We are seeing the Montgomery County FOP lawsuit dangerously emboldening law enforcement in other counties, like Baltimore County, to try to thwart transparency to the public, too.

And across Maryland, we have worked with local partners to organize against efforts to block community participation and ban people who are formerly incarcerated from serving on a local Police Accountability Board (PAB). We have advocated for adequate budgets, resources, and oversight powers for PABs. Now, at the state level, we are advocating with our partners to give these Police Accountability Boards proper oversight powers, such as investigatory subpoena and discipline powers, to hold police accountable.

RIGHT: ACLU of Maryland Senior Staff Attorney David Rocah speaks along with leaders from the Maryland Coalition for Justice Police Accountability, the Silver Spring Justice Coalition, and Vanderbilt Law School at a press conference outside of the Montgomery County Circuit Court before a court hearing related to the Fraternal Order of Police's challenge to *Anton's Law*. Photo credit: Nehemiah Bester.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

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¡MÁS LOVE LOVE LOVE!

Our goal is to ensure all Marylanders are empowered to fully participate in society regardless of citizenship or legal status.

Our neighbors are our neighbors regardless of their legal status. The ACLU of Maryland is working to eliminate partnerships with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in local county jurisdictions; to create access to public or private services that allow for full participation in society; and to hinder ICE's ability to detain and remove Marylanders.

In a high-profile action that responded to Frederick County Sheriff Charles Jenkins' federal indictment on criminal charges, misuse of office, and poor civil rights record, we joined with the national ACLU to file an administrative complaint to request an investigation by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties into the propriety of continuing the 287(g) agreement between ICE and the Frederick County Sheriff's Office. The complaint is part of determined, years-long advocacy we are doing with the local coalition RISE to oppose the Frederick Sheriff's Office for racial profiling and violating the rights of immigrant residents, including our courageous plaintiff Sara Medrano and other RISE members.

LEFT: Members of the RISE Coalition gather in a circle during a retreat to show their commitment to serve, elevate and empower the immigrant community in Western Maryland. Photo credit: Sebastian Brown.

Our goal is to make sure Marylanders can think and speak freely without indiscriminate surveillance and with equitable access to the public square.

The ACLU of Maryland recently joined the national ACLU in speaking out against efforts to stifle free speech and association on college campuses, urging universities to reject calls to investigate, disband, or penalize pro-Palestinian student groups for exercising their free speech rights. Here in Maryland, we spoke out in firm support of CASA and their fundamental First Amendment rights, after the Montgomery County Senate Delegation threatened to withdraw government funding from CASA based on their protected political speech in a statement they released in support of the Palestinian people. We are also advising and working with students at colleges and secondary schools to push back against censorship of Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and South Asian voices related to Gaza.

Last summer, we also published another hugely popular Know Your Rights (KYR) resource – this one focused on the rights of LGBTQ+ students in Maryland. Released in the weeks leading up to the new school year, this latest KYR publication details rights related to gender, dress codes, self-expression, and more. We have also conducted several KYR trainings, expanding our existing free KYR curriculum and training to every region in the state.

RIGHT: The ACLU of Maryland released statements in support of the First Amendment rights of CASA as well as teachers in Montgomery County who are represented by CAIR. Dana Vickers Shelley, Executive Director of the ACLU of Maryland, also testified in Annapolis against legislation that would remove CAIR from the state Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention. Dana was joined there by ACLU of Maryland Engagement and Mobilization Director Sergio España and Public Policy Director Yanet Amanuel. Photo credit: Provided by Sergio España.

The ACLU of Maryland firmly supports CASA and their fundamental **First Amendment** right to issue statements of public concern in the public forum.

[READ OUR STATEMENT](#)



"The ACLU of Maryland commends and supports CAIR's effort to protect the First Amendment rights of teachers in Montgomery County."

Nick Taichi Steiner
Senior Staff Attorney

ACLU Maryland





legal justice system

Our goal is to realize an equitable system that prioritizes community-centered approaches to public safety and ends our primary reliance on incarceration.

As Maryland moved to legalize marijuana, we worked to ensure that legalization would not only address past harms, but also prevent future disparities. We successfully advocated to prohibit police from conducting warrantless stops and searches of a person or their car solely based on the alleged smell of marijuana. We also worked to create the Community Repair and Reinvestment Fund, which will channel tax revenue from the sale of recreational marijuana into communities most harmed by the “war on drugs.”

For nearly a decade, the ACLU of Maryland has partnered with people serving parole-eligible life sentences and their loved ones to end Maryland’s de facto abolition of parole. A core vehicle for change has been directly representing people serving parole-eligible life sentences in court proceedings where there is no right to counsel and developing the Maryland Parole Partnership to organize pro bono legal assistance. We are finally seeing people serving parole-eligible life sentences starting to return to our communities through parole and the courts.

Many of the Marylanders we have helped to access parole are now actively contributing to our communities, working, strengthening their families, and advocating for social justice. They represent the broader community of life-sentenced individuals who could be contributing to make our communities safer, stronger, and more just – many of whom are actively being considered for parole or other release for the first time in decades.

LEFT: Bobby Stewart, a leader with the Maryland Parole Project and returning Marylander after 42 years of incarceration, and ACLU of Maryland Senior Staff Attorney Sonia Kumar share a happy moment outside his home. Photo credit: Nicole McCann.

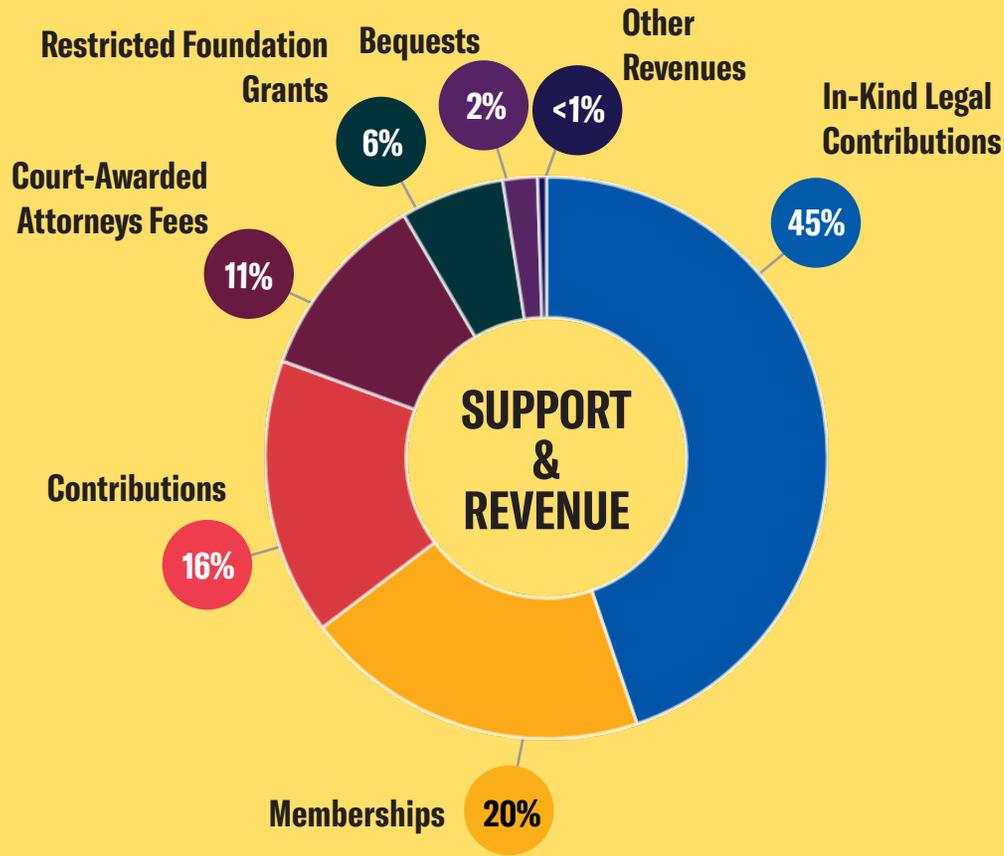
Our goal is to have an election infrastructure that guarantees universal suffrage and robust access to the ballot.

The ACLU of Maryland believes the democratic process is invigorated through policies that encourage voter participation. That's why we are working to expand voting rights, even as the U.S. Supreme Court chips away at the federal *Voting Rights Act*. Here in our state, we are advocating for a Maryland *Voting Rights Act*. This forward-thinking law would enable our state to confront evolving barriers to participation and to root out longstanding discriminatory practices by creating a civil right of action against voter intimidation and protections for non-English-speaking voters. It would also provide resources to local governments considering changes to election structures and rules and encourage a streamlined and low-cost approach to addressing complaints of voting discrimination.

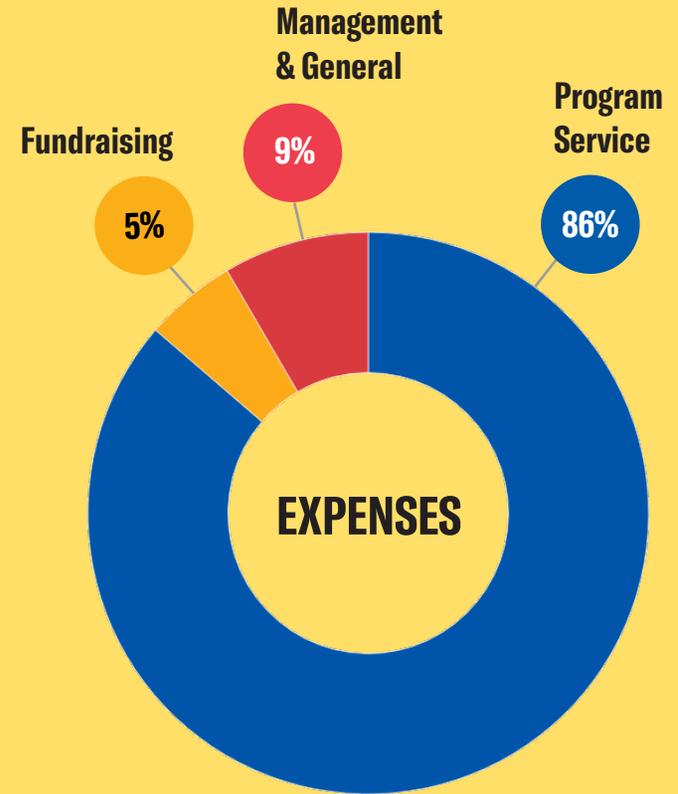
In the courts, we are litigating *Voting Rights Act* lawsuits brought by Black voters who have long been disenfranchised. 2023 saw a historic moment for Federalsburg, a town on Maryland's Eastern Shore, when for the first time in 200 years, Black officials were finally elected to represent their town. On the heels of that victory, Black voters in Wicomico County challenged as racially discriminatory and unlawful the at-large component of the election system for County Council and Board of Education, which dilute the votes of Black residents and limit fair representation.

RIGHT: *Two Black women, Roberta Butler and Darlene Hammond, are sworn in to be the first Black town council members in Federalsburg's 200-year history. Photo credit: Sherone Lewis.*





Membership	\$ 1,502,383
Contributions	1,258,134
Restricted Foundation Grants	455,000
Bequests	155,823
Court-Awarded Attorney Fees	824,366
In-Kind Legal Contributions	3,450,471
Other Revenue	250
Investment loss	(693,089)
Total	\$ 6,953,338



Program Service	\$ 7,776,495
Fundraising	478,755
Management and General	759,131
Total	\$ 9,014,381

The ACLU of Maryland deeply appreciates all our member-donors, who partner with us to bring the promise of liberty and justice to life. Together, we work to empower Marylanders to exercise their rights so that the law values and uplifts their humanity. Thanks to all for your meaningful contributions!

WE BELIEVE IN COMMUNITY-CENTRIC FUNDRAISING

Traditional donor-centered fundraising elevates donors and wealth accumulated through historic and current injustice to hero status, valuing money above all other contributions. This way of fundraising does not align with who the ACLU of Maryland wants to be as an organization. Community-Centric Fundraising (CCF) takes a different approach. CCF is a movement grounded in equity and brings principles of racial, social, and economic justice into our fundraising work. CCF calls for a shift in our mindset.

Some of CCF's 10 principles are:

- Fundraising must be grounded in race, equity, and social justice.
- Individual organizational missions are not as important as the collective community.
- Nonprofits are generous with and mutually supportive of one another.
- All who engage in strengthening the community are equally valued, whether volunteer, staff, donor, or board member.
- Time is valued equally as money.

To fulfill our commitment of centering race equity in all aspects of our work, now and increasingly in the future, we are devoting our time and resources to furthering the Community-Centric Fundraising movement. We look forward to collaborating with all of our many partners to grow this work! Learn more about our fundraising approach at our website: www.aclu-md.org/news

A vertical illustration on the left side of the page shows a diverse group of people's faces and upper bodies. From top to bottom, there is a woman with long dark hair, a woman with short dark hair, a man with a beard and short hair, a man with glasses and a yellow shirt, and a woman with glasses and purple hair. The number '18' is visible in the bottom left corner of the illustration.

What will you give to ensure...

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MEMBERSHIP & A DONATION?

The ACLU of Maryland consists of two sibling entities: the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland and the ACLU Foundation of Maryland.

- The American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland is a 501(c)(4), which means that contributions are not tax-deductible and can be used for political lobbying. Membership contributions always fund the Union.
- The ACLU Foundation of Maryland is a 501(c)(3) charity, which means that contributions are tax-deductible and cannot be used for political lobbying. Gifts to the Foundation fund our litigation, communications, advocacy, and public education efforts in Maryland and across the country.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DONATING TO THE ACLU OF MARYLAND AND THE NATIONAL ACLU?

At the ACLU of Maryland, we work closely with our colleagues at the National ACLU to defend civil liberties in our state and across the country. Gifts to the ACLU of Maryland are shared with the National ACLU, and vice versa.

“WE THE PEOPLE” means all of us?

ONLINE

To make an online membership donation, please go to www.aclu-md.org and click “DONATE” and then “JOIN”.

To make an online Foundation donation, please go to www.aclu-md.org and click “DONATE”.

MAIL

ACLU of Maryland, Attn: Development, 3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Ste. 200, Baltimore, MD 21211

Checks should be made out to either the ACLU Foundation of Maryland (for tax-deductible donations) or the ACLU of Maryland (for membership contributions).

STOCK/SECURITIES

Ask your broker to transfer the securities you wish to donate to the ACLU’s account (#30A121398) at T. Rowe Price (DTC# 0443).

Please email development@aclu-md.org or call us at (410) 889-8550 ext. 153 to inform us so that we can record and properly acknowledge your gift.

BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION

You can name the ACLU as a beneficiary for any of these accounts:

- Retirement accounts
- Life insurance policies
- Bank or brokerage accounts

It’s easy to do, and a will is not required. To designate a gift to the ACLU, simply provide the legal name and taxpayer identification number on your provider’s beneficiary designation form as follows:

American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Maryland, Inc., Tax ID# 23-7209538

HONOR/MEMORY/WILL/TRUST/MORE INFO

In honor or memory, by will or trust, or for more information about additional giving opportunities, the ACLU of Maryland’s Office of Development is happy to provide resources to help you fulfill your philanthropic interests and passions in a way that is consistent with your values.

Contact us by email at development@aclu-md.org or call (410) 889-8550 ext. 153 to start the conversation.



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Yanet Amanuel
Public Policy Director

Rosemary Ardman
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**Corey Stottlemeyer has been
elected Board President
for the 2024 term.*

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David A. Clarke School of Law
Criminal Law Clinic

University of Maryland School of Law
Youth, Education & Justice Clinic

University of Maryland School of Law
Justice for Victims of Crime Clinic

University of Maryland School of Law
Gender Violence Clinic

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ABOVE: ACLU of Maryland full-time staff, pictured from top left to right by row: Alicia Smith, Olivia Spacassi, Dana Vickers Shelley, Deborah Jeon, Amy Cruice, Rosemary Ardman, Sebastian Brown, Frank Patinella, Sonia Kumar, Dara Johnson, Carlos Childs, Yanet Amanuel, Craig Lee, and Shaqué Ingram.



ABOVE: ACLU of Maryland full-time staff, pictured from top left to right by row: Veronica Dunlap, Nehemiah Bester, Meredith Curtis Goode, Nick Taichi Steiner, Sydney Moore, Neydin Milián, Jay Jimenez, Gregory Brown, Lorena Diaz, Nicole McCann, Sergio España, Jared Schablein, Jenny Trust, and David Rocah. See the full team on our website.

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Since 1931, the ACLU of Maryland has been a champion for liberty, justice, and equality.



ACLU Maryland

DONATE ONLINE!

Use your phone camera to hover over the QR code on the left. You will see a prompt to click to open a website. The QR code links to an ACLU of Maryland donation page.

THANK YOU FOR WORKING WITH US!

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