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A CURIAE

F R I E N D O F T H E C O U R T

2023

Annual Report

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INTRODUCTION

A Curiae is a 501(c)3 organization that improves outcomes in the criminal justice system for clients, the court, and public health.

A Curiae (short for Amicus Curiae, Latin for “friend of the court”) supports clients, the court, and community organizations through collaboration and problem-solving. We work at the intersection of the criminal justice system, public health, and community. By taking a comprehensive approach to understanding the needs of and desired outcomes for all stakeholders, A Curiae assists the court in serving clients on supervision with the appropriate services and resources needed to develop and maintain long-term habits of success.

MISSION

Our mission is to provide support for the court and clients on supervision through community partnership, professional skill-building, and problem-solving.

VISION

Our vision is to remove barriers by helping the court and clients achieve goals that will lead to foundational habits of success.

MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

What an incredible year. The launch of A Curiae has been challenging, powerful, and rewarding. Professionals from different industries, stakeholders from the Court, and the community have all expressed interest in our work and are excited about the progress we have made in these few short months. Clients equally have engaged, accepted, and utilized the services we are providing both locally and across the country. Telling people about the mission, vision, and values of A Curiae validated the need for providing these services to the reentry population.

Our Professional Mentorship Initiative remains our most robust program where we are able to distribute laptops to clients working on their professional growth through individualized virtual mentorship. We continue to enhance our relationships with community partners both in the Bay Area and around the country with our Resource Referral Assistance program. Our Financial Assistance Track is able to incentivize behavior change to remove barriers for clients in the community.

Judges, attorneys, officers, coordinators, case managers, academics, doctors, nurses, and many other professionals are recognizing there is an intersection that can make a difference through collaboration in the criminal justice system. In this report, you will learn about the connections and collaborations A Curiae has accomplished in its inaugural year.

A Curiae would not exist without the support of federal judges around the country who believed in our mission and set a standard of excellence to educate and inform their curiosity of collaborative courts. Your willingness to treat complex issues in the justice system from a public health perspective is the motivation to do this work.



“ There is great attention to and passion for impactful change in the criminal justice system from different perspectives, and I am excited for our potential moving forward. Thank you for believing in me and A Curiae.

Wyatt Lim-Tepper
Founder & President

WHAT WE DO

01

Resource Referral Assistance

By building a network of community providers, A Curiae works with clients to understand their social determinants of health, medical and therapeutic history, and previous experiences in treatment to find not just any programming but the correct programming.

02

Professional Mentorship Initiative (PMI)

Our program matches clients to professionals from various tech companies to mentors to work on professional skills, growth, and development. The program began in 2020 and has expanded to 5 districts, helping over 40 clients receive individualized mentorship.

03

Financial Assistance

A Curiae provides support to remove barriers for clients on supervision, covering the cost of items such as government or housing application fees and workplace support. In collaboration with the clients and their officer or court program, we create a plan that incentivizes financial assistance, fulfilling eligible requests after a client has completed their individualized requirements, such as consecutive negative urine analysis tests or beginning a community-based program.

MEASURING PROGRESS

A Curiae worked diligently to provide direct services to the reentry population. With **40 intakes** this year, we touched base with clients to provide support and understand their needs. Working with their officer, A Curiae was able to connect with their respective officers or court contacts to be referred to the appropriate service.



Resource Referral

21

completed requests

4 days

avg time to referral

Professional Mentorship

9

new matches

33

mentor hours



Financial Assistance

6

requests

\$1,575

distributed

STORIES OF CHANGE

Our outreach efforts this year led to a revamped website and increased social media engagement. A Curiae was able to hire a collaborative court graduate to build out our LinkedIn presence and start our blog series, *A Curiae Anecdotes*, which shares the importance of these programs from different perspectives. Graduates, mentors, and stakeholders have contributed to the series, and we hope to expand and develop the series in the coming years.



Stephen Asmus

I am a native of Redding, California, where I was fortunate to be raised by loving parents. As the child of a resilient mother who immigrated from the Philippines, I encountered challenges of navigating my identity in a predominantly Caucasian community. This struggle for acceptance by my peers was a defining aspect of my upbringing. In junior year, I began to skip

classes with increasing regularity and experimented with a variety of drugs to sedate the rejection I was feeling. This led to drug addiction. I distinctly recall the first occasion when I ingested Xanax during a high school lunch break. I later discovered OxyContin which led to heroin use.

The Conviction Alternatives Program (CAP) has been a transformative, enlightening, and empowering experience in my life. This program offered me a chance to not only acknowledge and learn from my mistakes but also to make better choices and engage in productive behavior. As a result of my successful completion of the CAP program, I have acquired vital life skills that have positively impacted my overall well-being. The program instilled in me a newfound sense of purpose, determination, and resilience, allowing me to reintegrate into society as a productive and responsible individual. I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity to participate in this life-changing program.

STORIES OF CHANGE



Anthony Arasa

Today, I stand as a proud and present dad, with a heart full of gratitude for the second chance that was given to me. I knew from the day I was accepted into the program that this was a second opportunity of life, that sustaining sobriety ultimately depends on my commitment. The federal court system provided a structured and supportive environment to assist me in my recovery. The accountability motivated me to stay on track with my recovery and life goals. The CAP team made me feel supported and comfortable. I completed an 18-month program in 12 months, maintaining a clean record on drug tests. I completed my sentence. As I embraced the values of responsibility and accountability, it profoundly impacted my journey as a father and my role in the community.



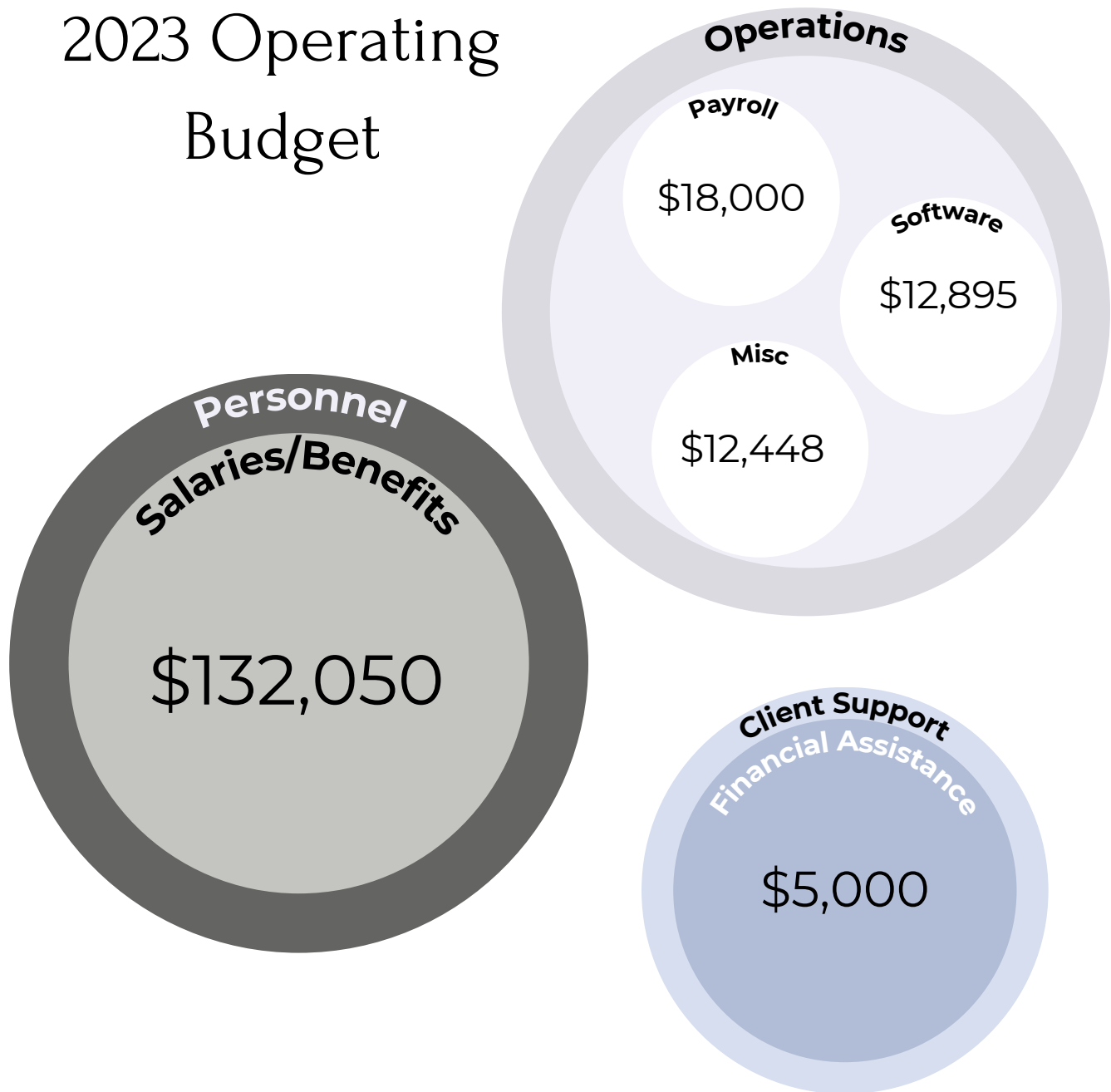
Sachin Sharma

Based on my background, work experience, and interests, I applied and was selected to be a mentor. I had the opportunity to mentor 3 individuals, each at a different stage of reentry to the workforce and each with different goals - from building skills in public speaking to becoming more organized. As we completed each of the individual programs, I found that ,being as human as possible is what worked. The mentees were being vulnerable by letting me in on their lives. We built trusting relationships and safe spaces so that we could have meaningful conversations. Not only did I provide my ideas from a mentor standpoint, but I also learned quite a bit from the mentees. That is what made my experience in this program so rewarding.

Financials

We are a small but growing non-profit with an annual operating budget of less than \$200,000 for the 2023 and 2024 fiscal years. Below you will find our primary categories of expenditures.

2023 Operating Budget



CONSULTING & EDUCATION

A Curiae was invited to speak on various platforms and events throughout the country to discuss its approach to improving outcomes with the reentry population. Below, you will see a list of events with collaborators doing incredible work in the reentry and collaborative court spaces.

Speaking Engagements

- [Kickin It Off the Grid Podcast](#) | March 2023
- All Rise Conference, Federal Practitioners: Federal Judicial Center Session | Houston, TX | June 2023
- [Berkeley Judicial Institute Speaker Series with Judge Beeler](#) | August 2023
- Federal Magistrate Judges Association, Zoom for Justice Program, Alternative and Problem Solving Courts | November 2023
- [Off Paper Podcast](#) | December 2023

Trainings & Conferences Attended

- How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Criminal Justice System Responses | Virtual | June 2023
- All Rise 2023 | Houston, TX | June 2023
- Rewriting the Sentence II | Washington, DC | October 2023

Trainings & Conferences Organized

- Northern District of California, Collaborative Courts District Wide Meeting | September 2023
- Federal Judicial Center Quality Improvement Seminar | NDCA | December 2023

Our experts provide quality improvement consulting to support program outcomes and procedures. Whether you have an established collaborative court program or are just beginning, we offer training that ranges from a few hours to six months in length, specifically designed to meet the needs of your particular organization or programs. Contact us today at info@acuriae.org to learn more.

SPEAKER SERIES

A Curiae hosts a quarterly speaker series, bringing in subject matter experts to speak to an audience of collaborative court staff. These engagements are designed to provide training and best practices to implement in how we treat participants addressing trauma, substance use, and criminal thinking errors within the criminal justice system. Thank you to the speakers who volunteered their time to share their knowledge. These engagements are available through our [YouTube page](#) or by request to a weblink.



- Collaboration and Importance of Restorative Justice for Change with Emebet Aklilu, April 2023



- Implementing Restorative Justice from a Prosecutorial Perspective with Jamie Herbert, June 2023
- Coordinating Care in the Treatment Court Setting with John Domantay, September 2023



- From an Officer's Perspective with Jennifer James, Jennifer Hutchings, Katrina Chu, November 2023

Let us organize a webinar speaker series for the court and any interested organizations. We bring in subject matter experts on various topics relating to the reentry population, hosting events designed to educate and encourage conversation about challenges and approaches to improving outcomes for clients. Contact us today at info@acuriae.org to learn more.

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

01

University of San Francisco, School of Nursing and Health Professionals

In addition to continued community and court outreach, there has been great academic partnership with the University of San Francisco, School of Nursing and Health Professionals. The school has expressed interest in collaborating on the intersection of criminal justice and public health through a [featured article](#), developing an outreach video for release in early 2024, and lending expertise through faculty on different issues.

02

MPH Graduate Student

A Curiae welcomed its first Master's of Public Health student to conduct research, review policy and best practices, and interview stakeholders on program development for the Courts. At the end of the 2023-2024 academic year, there will be a literature review on reentry program evaluations as they can relate to A Curiae and a formula to measure the impact of our direct services on the reentry population.

03

Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities

The Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities looked to collaborate with the University of San Francisco and A Curiae to contribute an essay as part of a collection for a Prison Education symposium to be held in 2024. Collaborating with a client and collaborative court graduate, we generated an essay on "Communal, the need for one another". This essay will be available in 2024.

LOOKING AHEAD

Throughout the year, it has been evident that growth of A Curiae with employees, direct services, and consultation will be the goal for 2024 and beyond. We will look for grant and donation opportunities to fund a position to assist with program development and community relationships. As A Curiae has built a model in the Bay Area, we will look to expand to other courts and districts looking to improve outcomes in the justice system through our direct services, education, and consulting.



LOOKING AHEAD

We will also continue to refine our service objectives, with a goal of serving **40 unique individuals** in 2024. Those clients will continue to receive community-based resource referrals, be matched with professional mentors, and receive financial support as needed. We hope to expand to an additional **5 districts** in the coming year,

Objective	Goal	Impact
Find appropriate community-based organizations that can meet the needs of clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 clients referred • 200 active community resources in directory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased ability to self-address needs • Increased knowledge of resources available
Match industry professionals with clients to support them in their reentry goals with practical professional skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 new matches • 40 hours of professional mentorship across all districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved social cohesion • Increased employment skills
Provide financial support to clients in order to remove barriers to their reentry success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 new requests • \$1,000 distributed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced barriers to successful community engagement
Provide trainings and organizational support to districts across the country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 districts served • 6 trainings delivered • 8 speaking engagements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding and acceptance of alternatives to incarceration

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the stakeholders, organizations, government agencies, and individual donors who work with, collaborate with, and support A Curiae.

Northern District of California, United States District Court

- Judiciary
- United States Probation
- United States Pretrial Services
- United States Attorney's Office
- Federal Public Defenders Office
- Criminal Justice Act Panel
- Clerk's Office

Central District of California, United States District Court

- Conviction and Sentence Alternatives Program (CASA)
- Substance Abuse and Treatment Program (STAR)

District of Columbia, United States District Court

- Reentry Court

University of San Francisco

- School of Nursing and Health Professionals

Federal Judicial Center

Professional Mentorship Initiative Stakeholders

- Michelle Bazu
- Gavin Corn
- Danielle Coleman
- Edward George
- Heather Alpino

BraunHagey & Borden

- Ellen Leonida
- Lauren Chase

Individual Donors

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our Board of Directors and Advisory Board members whose knowledge and input shape A Curiae's approach to problem-solving.

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- Tiffani Dyke
 - Crystal Sheffield
 - Jenee Fortier
 - Sachin Sharma
 - Emebet Aklilu
 - Anthony Castellano
 - Gavin O'Neil
-

A very special thank you to Jenee Fortier, Director of Operations and Grants, who was part of the inception of A Curiae as a board member and has moved to a consultant position within the organization. Her impact on growth, improvement, and adaptation has been essential. Her unique background in court administration, data and technology, and social work has been a foundational piece of A Curiae's success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our volunteers and interns who brought their interest, passion, and skill to advance A Curiae.

- Stephanie Simos
 - Catheryn Grier
 - Eddy Lee
 - Mikayla Aubry
 - Drew Henderson
 - Jill Devine
-

From high school students to graduate students, technical experience to retired probation officers, there was a diverse skillset of A Curiae volunteers in 2023. Projects included researching reentry employment opportunities, updating resource lists, and identifying potential funding sources. Other projects included taking photos of graduates to memorialize their collaborative court graduation and conducting outreach for our direct services to districts around the country.

Thank you to those who volunteered their time to contribute to our blog posts, A Curiae anecdotes, and other contributors.

- Stephen Asmus
 - Sachin Sharma
 - Tram Nguyen
 - Crystal Sheffield
 - Anthony Arasa
 - Emebet Aklilu
 - John Domantay
 - Jamie Herbert
 - Jennifer James
 - Jennifer Hutchings
 - Katrina Chu
-



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