

VOTE'S MISSION:

VOICE OF THE EX-OFFENDER (VOTE) is an organization dedicated to building the political power of people most impacted by the criminal justice system, especially formerly incarcerated persons (FIPs,) their families and loved ones. Through leadership development, community education and voter mobilization, VOTE will ensure that our constituents are at the center of transforming the criminal justice system.

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**YOU CAN ALSO JOIN US
ON FACEBOOK!**

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Dear Friends of V.O.T.E.,

As we come to the end of 2010, we would like to take this moment to thank everyone for your love and support. We are truly grateful and lucky to have the support of so many people both locally and nationally. It is because of this powerful network of friends that V.O.T.E. has grown and achieved all of the victories of the past 6 years.

I would like to take this moment to share with you our joys and the challenges we faced this year. It has been a long road to improve the criminal justice system in New Orleans and to help transform the lives of our Formerly Incarcerated Persons community. Understanding that our journey to reform the system is not a straight path, we made the most of our opportunities this year. Our work continues to expand and reach out to new people, building a wider audience and educating a larger public about the importance of restoring FIPs full citizenship and valuing their contributions and potential in our communities.

Amongst many successes, there were two key priorities that we were able to check off our list. First, was the establishment of the Independent Police Monitor's Office and the second, was ensuring the voices of our community are heard at all levels of government. Specifically, our strong presence in City Council chambers enabled us to achieve many reforms on this level. I also spoke to state officials in the legislature and in the judiciary as a first hand witness of how policies intended to bring justice actually accomplish the very opposite. 2010 has been a good year for V.O.T.E., however our work faces further challenge as the Sheriff's proposal for a new facility more than doubles the current number of jail beds.

As we enter 2011, we hope you will enjoy reading about our 2010 victories and our exciting new project for 2011 in this issue. As always, we rely on your support both financially and as our word of mouth public relations team.

It's not too late to make an end of the year contribution to V.O.T.E. Please know that we appreciate and continue to value your faith in us and in our work.

We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Norris Henderson
Executive Director, V.O.T.E.

2010 Year End Review

OUR VICTORIES IN 2010



VOTE opened 2010 by completing our **first ever** Voter Education and Mobilization Campaign for the Municipal elections in February. **This resulted in:** The creation and dissemination of our **10 Point Platform** for Criminal Justice Reform and

CIVIC

our director, **Norris Henderson serving on the Mayor's Task Force** to select a new Superintendent for the NOPD.

In the Spring, VOTE engaged in community outreach and education around the **2010 US Census** for our community to be counted! Our efforts reached hundreds of households the Census Bureau was most likely to lose in their count.

POLICY

Successfully discouraged City Council from legislating policies that would deny access to City contracts for FIPs.



18 VOTE members attended the **US Social Forum** this June where they strengthened their leadership skills and built personal connections to the greater national and global social justice movement.

LEADERSHIP

Our **Paralegal Training Class** has begun this month with over 15 highly motivated students. You can watch an inspiring 3 minute video where the students and instructors describe the class at www.vote-nola.org.



While our successes remained strong and constant throughout the year, it was also met with new challenges. **Most recently**, the Sheriff proposed a plan to build a new jail increasing the bed count from 3,200 to 5,800. VOTE and its coalition partners organized a media campaign to fight this plan. With nearly 300 supporters, we created and purchased a full-page ad in the Times-Picayune to educate the general public on the cost deficit of using taxpayer's dollars to build more jail beds.

*Help us win our next big challenge
against the Sheriff's proposal.*

Check Out Our Ad!

New in 2011!

We are very excited to launch our innovative new program called the **Campaign to End Employment Discrimination (CEED)**. CEED will create both the immediate support for FIPs and the long-term strategy to empower FIPs and restore our community's health and prosperity. As part of launching CEED, we have begun to create entrepreneurship opportunities for FIPs in partnership with Resurrection After Exoneration (R.A.E.) with the start of a silk screening shop. We plan to increase these opportunities and fully implement CEED through 2013.

IS THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS BUILDING AN EVEN BIGGER PUBLIC SAFETY FAILURE?

The Orleans Parish Sheriff wants to build a 5,800-bed jail to replace the present 3,500-bed jail. More than three quarters of the people in the Orleans Parish Prison (OPP) are being held for minor, non-violent offenses; jailing more people for minor, non-violent offenses does not protect the public or make our city safe.

We consistently have one of the highest rates of violent crime and murder in the nation, despite incarcerating more people per capita than any other city in the U.S.

Other cities have built smaller jails while reducing violent crime. Why can't we?

FAR TOO BIG

If our jail were consistent with the national average, we would have 850 prisoners, not 5,800 prisoners.

Jefferson Parish has 443,000 people; its jail has 900 people. Orleans Parish has 331,000 people; Orleans Parish Prison has 3,500 people...

If our neighbors can spend their money more effectively, why can't we?

WE NEED A SMALLER JAIL.

FAR TOO EXPENSIVE

We spend \$22.39 each day to incarcerate a person in the Orleans Parish jail; we spend an additional \$6 million each year on medical care and staffing costs.

The Department of Justice has determined that conditions in the jail violate federally protected civil rights; the city will have to spend even more money to comply with minimal standards.

Cheaper alternatives exist, such as diversion and treatment programs that are proven more effective and cost less than half the price of a day in jail.

We cannot afford to spend even more of our scarce tax dollars on incarcerating people for minor, non-violent offenses.

WE MUST SPEND LESS MONEY, NOT MORE, ON THE JAIL.

HOW DO YOU WANT THE CITY TO SPEND YOUR MONEY?

Every dollar that it takes to operate the jail comes from taxpayers.

The city spends at least \$24 million a year operating the current facility.

There have been 7 deaths in the jail this year alone. The failure to provide adequate care and safety for prisoners frequently results in lawsuits, financial hardships and emotional loss for the families of those who have died and additional costs to taxpayers; the bigger the jail, the bigger the liability.

WE WANT THE CITY TO SPEND OUR MONEY ON THESE OTHER THINGS...

1345 Dixie Oaks, Lakeview, La. Howard Parris, Fern Hill, Steve Berger, David Fenn, Nancy Freeman, Herb Spitzer, Renee Sullivan, Tom Piazza, Carol Belski, Dennis Felt, new community gardens, teen teachers in local preschool, give schools free resources they need, support green jobs, smogcheck repair at drive in drive up, Bill Kline, Dave Thomas, Louis Diaz, Shelby Roberts, Rosemary, Irene Perry, Kelly O'Brien, Chris Steiner, Janet Ruffalo, Eric O'Connell, Rita Wiley, Melissa Lee, public transportation after school programs for youth, restorative justice diversion programs, education, effective programs for adjudicated and "at-risk" youth, Corbin Spivey-Miller, Jeanne Bernard, Ronald McCoy, James Perry, Marique Kasten, Jerry Hoeffel, Larry Jones, Calvin Johnson, Nisha Brown, Ted Hume, more respectful substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment centers, education, help low income people and people of color deal with law, Wanda Althea Farrell, Pamela Hall, Chae Carleton, Paul Tropico, Bridget Bisher, Barbara Minko, Brad Latta, Sean Robinson, Sarah Moore, Sue Weaver, improving education books, textbooks, critical supplies, student supports, education programs, skills training, mentoring programs, a new public library, Joyce LaRue, Anna Hayes, Carole Gordon, Linda Arbes, Oak Cotton, Lawrence Briggs, Cecily Patten, Matt Suarez, Luther Gray, Charles Wilson, Sheila Bell, job training for youth, schools, housing for the homeless, summer youth employment, NOPS, outreach and support treatment programs for mentally ill, Scott Montoya, Duane Weaver, Ronald Van Dyke, Alyson Collins, Steve O'Leary, Eric Rasmussen, Nancy O'Connell, Del Tuzillo, Emily Raber, Ted Foster, Ursula, Susan, education & learning job programs for adult graduates, alternatives to incarceration, articles on 10th/11th/12th, suicide violence prevention programming, William Gupke, David Covert, Dawn Hayward, Juliana Padgett, Russ McCree, Lydia Neal-Robb, Evon, Daxxon-Faltermann, Betty DiMarco, Dana Kaplan, Kie Nason, improve the education system in New Orleans so there is a quality school for every young person and programs, community mental health services, education, Amy Wolfe, Elizabeth Comming, Rob Dredrick, Colleen Burry, Thera Robinson, Barbara Green, Brenda Price, Winfield, Lee David Lee, Tim Sompelman, Alex Prothrope, two hours of high quality after school care educating our youth, music programs, building a park, public libraries, transformative justice programs, conflict resolution, Senator LaPointe, Cecile Tremblay, Betty Liberty, Michael Aghwanand, Kate Schwartzman, Sarah Dinger, Cindy Wood, Candace Charities, Peter Nakhid, programs for women including HIV prevention, education, re-entry programs, substance abuse and domestic violence programs, rebuild the SP ward, Jordan Hattery, Stephen Hester, Neil Geller, Margaret De Cuir, Rachel Lutz, Hannah Grant, Eva Slavova, Leah Hester, affordable housing for low-income (especially disabled) people, education, NOPS, mental health services, senior transport, James Thompson, Thomas Matthews, Megan Kiser, Christine Schmitt, Sam Panouge, Anika Cohen, WB Hamel, Jared Shale, Lynn Bowker, Holly McClure, Joannea Page, John Thompson, Alyson Rodgers, David Robinson, Ethel Mitchell, emergency shelter for formerly incarcerated LGBT youth, drug treatment programs, arts education for every student, Dan Reed, Dina Bromberg, Gill Tompkins, Ronald McCoy, David Robinson, Marla Kiser, Kelli Hunt, Janet Ruffalo, Tomlinson, helping people find resources, quality mental health care, creating jobs so that costs will be reduced, Lewis MOFO programs, Maria Ouelly, Tony Borealis, Jr., Christine Song, Jacobus Wilberg, Robert Lopez, Sara Miller, Lillian Ward, Moore, Marla Pater, supporting charity hospitals, systems that will support, nourish and fuel the city of New Orleans, job/care on Canal and S Dauphin, Red Tiesman, Mark Shearman, Ken Foster, William Sobolew, Remy Hoyle, Thomas Lowrey, Andrea Bauer, El Hadda, substance abuse treatment, in Royal and Dauphin, Streets in the Bayou, better pay for public defenders, education, Bianca Royal, Steve Corigan, Douville-Kiser, Michael Tawaroz, Kelly Howell, John Kibuck, David Harris, Martin Song, Lisa Ader, Jane Royal, B in the Bayou, and the coffee shop, library centers, drug and alcohol abuse assistance, job training, Deborah Luder, Patricia Luffe, Megan Freeman, Nova O'Leary, Laurence Pickett, Justice Diamond, Robert Cohen, Corina Diaz, academic enrichment programs and expanded sports programs for youth, information to defender based on their practices, Jennifer Rodrigue, Judith Huggins, Hannely Sader, Richard Bourke, Bryan Patten, Heather Dink, Katrina Marshall, Greg Kiser, housing for the homeless, clean up the Area that is poisoning our kids, schools, parks, books, mental health support, Jane Burdick, Lisa Blalock, Sandra Reed, Yvonne Crawford, Helen Williams, Thelma Brooks, Denise Matthews, Kelp Tuzillo, mental health support, food for homeless people, asking of the city, college programs, mental health, outpatient services, Gregory Stone, Eugene Jones, Karol Bero, Sophie Flanagan, Rylee Tapscott, Colleen Givens, Linda Doh, Megan Faucio, Steven Matthews, iron arts programs after school programs and library programs, keep the New Orleans Museum open, re-entry programs, Rebecca Nason, Robert Smith, Karl Koudub, Oliver Hurland, Alesia D'Amie, Chastain, Pamela Jess Jacobs, John Williams, New Orleans college students/grads for local students in attendance at the new amazing universities in NOLA, Popcorn King, Vanessa Fernandez, Bob Howell, Anne Scott, Thomas Adams, Eric O'Connell, Nick Kemp, mental health services, health community centers, books, drug treatment, NOPS, recycling programs, Houston Adams, Dana Scher, James Vassaloville, Rachel Schuster, Drew Joy, Joe Park, Barbara Hill, traffic lights that work, rehabilitation centers, making seniors plan their property, drug/welder, home in NOLA, Ernest Johnson, Rebecca Kesting, Marcella Butler, Sarah O'Leary, Nicole Guhn, Eva Shearer, Glen Perry, drug court food bank, after school programs, housing for homeless people, senior, charity, hospital, education, Ginny LaRue, Samuel DeLeon, Rebecca Reed, Nancy Stone, Michelle Brock, Adrienne Wheeler, Sarah Smith, improve our streets and recreation department, start a fund for UNO, ESL classes for undocumented immigrants, Rita Landry, Ben Gordon, Reita Thylak, Robert Everett, Paul Tardivel, Ashley Graham, Nikki Thorne, to give the impression of Harriet and Esplanade, after school programs, a new homeless shelter, Dawn Lambert, Monika Gerhart, Julia Yasun, Bridgette Butler, Lauren Luchinger, Phyllis Cassidy, open centers for underserved citizens, community programs, social skills, vocational education, Caroline Harlan, Anne Baxwell, Marlene Dimes, Rosella Galt, David Fenn, Joanne Pizzo, Lisa Miller, Elmore Rogerson, Anne Kiser, Jennifer Hays, David Finger, Nisha Jackson, Elizabeth, Beverly Larissa Jones, Theresa Anna Gilcaud, Malvern Bonatt, Talissa, Laral, Malena, Mord, Evermyot

That's why each of us has contributed \$22.39 — one day's cost of incarceration in the City of New Orleans — to the cost of this ad telling the Mayor and City Council not to build a massive new jail but to build a smaller, safer, right-sized jail.

For more information please call 504-894-8099

TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD CALL MAYOR LANDRIEU AND YOUR CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Mitchell J. Landrieu, Mayor: 504-658-4900
 Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson, At-Large: 658-1070
 Arnie Fielkow, At-Large: 658-1060
 Susan G. Guidry, A: 658-1010

Stacy Head, B: 658-1020
 Kristin Giesleson Palmer, C: 658-1030
 Cynthia Hedge-Morrell, D: 658-1040
 Jon D. Johnson, E: 658-1050

It's not too late to support
V.O.T.E.'s work with a donation.

All donations are tax deductible.

To donate online, go to:

www.vote-nola.org/DONATE

*(Please use our fiscal sponsor, **Innocence Project of New Orleans** to make your donation & remember to designate it to **VOTE!**)*

Or send a check payable to: IPNO

(Innocence Project New Orleans)

and mail it to:

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