On April 25, 2023, our beloved founder, Harry Belafonte—affectionately known to us as “Mr. B” departed his earthly home. A true friend and cultural icon who captured the hearts of countless millions throughout his life. Mr. B is one of the world’s most influential activists and entertainers, used his celebrity status to call attention to and activate individuals towards social justice.

The Gathering for Justice embodies Mr. B’s unflinching commitment to justice. In 2005, shocked by the news of a 5-year-old Black girl, Jaiesha Scott, being unjustly handcuffed and arrested in her Florida classroom for being “unruly,” Mr. B founded The Gathering. After dedicating his life to the Civil Rights Movement and celebrating its many accomplishments, the realization of how far we still had to go struck him deeply. That insight motivated him to shape The Gathering for Justice as an intergenerational, intercultural movement.

Rooted in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Principles of Nonviolence, we serve as a bridge connecting the wisdom of our elders and harnessing the energy of our youth to achieve social justice and equity for our communities. The Gathering has evolved into an intergenerational social justice organization that deploys rapid response, nonviolent civil disobedience, leadership training, policy advocacy, and arts and culture to amplify the voice of the social justice movement and drive positive change.

We bring together and foster dialogue between generations of activists, community members, formerly incarcerated individuals, stakeholders, and academics from all communities and cultures. Uniting individuals from different backgrounds with differing beliefs in the commitment to end racial, gender, and other social injustices is an indelible legacy of Mr. B.

As Mr. B once famously said, “Movements don’t die, because struggle doesn’t die.” While he may not be with us physically, we will continue to think of Mr. B—our beloved founder—every day and will continue his work and honor his legacy.

Rest in Power, We Love You Mr. B!
A message from the President and CEO

Dear Community,

It brings me immense joy and pride to present the 2022 Impact Report. The past year has been a transformative one for The Gathering for Justice (The Gathering), bringing us steps closer to realizing our vision of a beloved community. We envision a world where every individual, irrespective of race, gender, creed, religion, or sexual identity, has an equal chance to thrive, free from discrimination and the shadow of unjust incarceration.

Inside this report, you'll get an in-depth look at our accomplishments. Among these achievements is our notable recognition with the Anthem Award for "The Gathering for Harry." This momentous occasion brought together over 200,000 viewers, including Mr. B’s dearest family, esteemed artists, relentless activists, and countless justice-seekers touched by his enduring legacy, all for a virtual SURPRISE celebration. The Anthem Award is a testament to the lasting global impact of organizations, brands, and individuals — and we’re humbled to be acknowledged in this manner.

Another pivotal moment this year was our team’s commitment to rejuvenation and reflection. As we near The Gathering’s 20th anniversary in 2025, we’ve begun our strategic planning with vigor and vision. Our staff retreat, themed "Dream, Align and Transcend," has set the stage for exciting initiatives that I eagerly anticipate sharing with you in the near future.

None of these milestones would be possible without the support of our partners and donors. Your generosity is the lifeblood of our mission, and your belief in our cause fortifies our resolve. In honor of the legacy of our founder, Harry Belafonte, and our collective dream to end child incarceration, I invite you to continue walking alongside us, embracing the promising work that lies ahead.

In gratitude and community,

Carmen Perez-Jordan
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2022 Impact by the Numbers

The Gathering for Justice provided on the ground presentations in Oxnard with 694 high school youth and conducted 59 young people in middle school, exploring race, voting, ethnicity, and cultural history.

The Gathering for Justice brought together nearly 450 attendees during the MLK Freedom and Unity Weekend in Oxnard, CA.

Since our founding, ~50,000 young people received leadership training or participated in other Gathering activities.

The Gathering works in issues that impact communities across the U.S. with California and New York as its power base. It also collaborates with local partners and constituents in AK, AL, DC, DE, FL, IL, MD, MI, NM, OH, PA, TN, VA, and Onondaga Nation.

Digital Social Media Impact

The Gathering for Justice uses digital social media to raise awareness about the issues facing the criminal justice system, to connect with supporters, and to mobilize people to take action.

The Stand with Megan campaign had a significant social media impact. According to a study by the Pew Research Center, the campaign generated:

1.2B+ Social media interactions

100 Million+ Tweets

100 Million+ People reached on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok

#StandWithMegan

Mission-Aligned Social Media Posts
Rolling Stone
Pitchfork
NPR Music
Billboard
Complex
HipHopDX

TMZ
Buzzfeed
The Shade Room
No Jumper
XXL
HotNewHipHop
Intergenerational Education & Leadership Development

OUR WORK INCLUDES INTERGENERATIONAL MOVEMENT-BUILDING THAT INTEGRATES RAPID RESPONSE, DIRECT ACTIONS AND NONVIOLENT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, EDUCATION AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING TO ACHIEVE RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY FOR OUR COMMUNITIES.

Justice University
Justice University was established in 2014, spurred by the transformative events following the tragic incident involving Eric Garner. It emerged as an urgent response to the needs of the community, providing a series of training sessions that sought to enlighten individuals of all ages who harbored a deep passion for activism across the U.S. At the heart of these trainings is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s philosophy of nonviolence, which serves as a foundation for civic engagement, community organizing and direct action.

Justice League NYC and Justice League CA
A state-based rapid response task force of The Gathering for Justice, Justice League is powered by dedicated volunteer members who organize digital and physical activations with specific and actionable demands. Justice League members are active in helping to elevate the stories that impact our community, supporting changes to NYPD policing tactics, participating in local rallies, supporting key policy and legislative initiatives, and more.

UJC Summit - July 2022
The Gathering collaborated with United Justice Coalition (UJC), a team of movement leaders convened by Roc Nation’s charity, Team Roc, to put together the first-ever UJC Summit. This inaugural social justice convention brought together leaders, experts and advocates who were committed to working together in the spirit of social and racial justice to enact change in the following areas: families impacted by police violence, laws/policies, voter registration, education, civic action, and different spheres of influence, including media, entertainment and technology.

Kingian Nonviolence Training in Oklahoma - October 2022
The Gathering for Justice traveled to Tulsa, OK to train community activists from across Tulsa and Oklahoma City in Kingian nonviolence. The training included ASJ training on Cycles of Organizing. The team also used this opportunity to learn and build with local community leaders and Galaxy Gives.
We Keep Us Safe: State of the People
TGFJ hosted a virtual town hall on policy and legislative solutions for public safety. Moderated by The Gathering for Justice, President & CEO, Carmen Perez-Jordan and Rev. Mark Thompson, panelists included:

- Zakiyah Ansari, Alliance for Quality Education
- Julie Ciccolini, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
- Stanley Fritz, Citizen Action
- Rev. Stephen Green, civil rights activist
- Donna Lieberman, New York Civil Liberties Union
- Linda Sarsour, civil rights activist
- Nick Smith, representing the Office of the NYC Public Advocate
- Stephanie Valencia, co-founder of Poderistas

Global Citizen - October 2022
President and CEO, Carmen Perez-Jordan and Director of Youth Campaigns and Leadership, Luis Hernandez presented to a group of Global Citizen staff members the history and mission of The Gathering for Justice, outlining Kingian Principles and the campaigns and initiatives we have successfully executed.

#MamishLive with Susana Colectva - November 2022
Carmen Perez-Jordan, President and CEO of The Gathering for Justice spoke with Susana on Community of Latina Moms about the ABC’s of Voting and the importance of engaging the community.
Community Engagement

DESPITE THE CHALLENGES OF THE PANDEMIC ENVIRONMENT, AND WANTING TO ENSURE OUR TEAM WAS SAFE, WE WERE ON THE STREETS, ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY AND WORKING TO DRIVE OUR MISSION WITH STRATEGIC DIRECT ACTIONS.

Moms for Melissa - April 2022
Melissa Lucio is an innocent woman who was facing the death penalty for a crime she did not commit. In collaboration with Innocence Project and others, The Gathering for Justice created the PSA, "Moms For Melissa" featuring mothers like Carmen Perez-Jordan, Yandy Smith-Harris, Edie Falco, The Gathering's COO Dannese Mapanda, exonerees who faced the same unjust charges as Melissa Lucio, and more. On April 25, 2022, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals issued a stay of execution for Ms. Lucio and ordered the 138th Judicial District Court of Cameron County to consider new evidence of her innocence. Ms. Lucio's attorneys are now working to present this evidence to the trial court in the hopes of winning a new trial.

Bans Off Our Bodies - May 2022
In response to the leaked Supreme Court documents regarding abortion rights, The Gathering and Justice League NYC were one of many partners who came together for the Bans Off Our Bodies March, anchored by Planned Parenthood. President and CEO, Carmen Perez-Jordan was the Marshaling Captain for the mobilization and marched in the front line behind the green march banner.

Boycott Black Murder Father’s Day March - June 2022 w/ Until Freedom
The Gathering staff and Justice League NYC members joined Mysonne Linen and Until Freedom, as well as our violence interrupter partners in the Crisis Management System, for a march through the Bronx on Father’s Day.

Police Accountability - June 2022
The Gathering worked with multiple community members in their fight for justice, including Daniel Prude, Akbar Rogers, Jaykie, and Sean Monterrosa. We too continued our fight for the family of Eric Garner and others.

The Latinx Police Accountability Network (LPAN)
The Latinx Police Accountability Network (LPAN) Initiative began initial planning to focused on the critical need for a Latine Data Collaborative to create a framework for a database that collects the race/ethnicity of victims of police violence; start a national communications campaign highlighting the ongoing impact of intergenerational trauma shaped by police violence within Latine communities; and the need for philanthropy to be a more significant player in helping to stop racialized, police brutality within the Latine community (and all communities of color).
NYC Gun Violence Awareness Movement March - June 2022
In recognition of Gun Violence Awareness Month, a broad coalition of gun violence and violence prevention partners, including Life Camp, Inc., GMACC, and ManUp, convened in Brooklyn for a morning march to City Hall steps. At City Hall, Councilwoman Nantasha Williams hosted a press conference during which Mayor Adams announced A.T. Mitchell, founder of ManUp, Inc., as NYC’s new Gun Violence Czar. This awareness month concluded with the “Guns Down, Gloves Up” Softball Game for violence prevention workers from across NYC, including the Mayor’s Gun Violence Czar, A.T. Mitchell.

Roc Nation – Made In America Festival - September 2022
The Gathering for Justice had the honor to be among the community organizations highlighted inside the Cause Village hub for social action at the Made In America festival. The Jay-Z-curated festival was held at Ben Franklin Parkway and showcased 30-plus performances, including headliners Tyler, the Creator and Bad Bunny. The Gathering team met with hundreds of people to talk about our work and highlight our campaigns and programs advocating for racial equity. Data shows the total number of social actions was greater than 25,000, with The Gathering accounting for more than 500 interactions.

#Justice4KCK Rally - November 2022
Carmen Perez-Jordan, President and CEO of The Gathering traveled to Kansas City, Kansas working with Team Roc to drive awareness and shed light on a petition seeking records from the Kansas City, Kansas Police Department to unearth a history of officer misconduct. The rally focused on Lamont McIntyre and his mother who alleged in a lawsuit that former Police Detective Roger Golubski framed Lamont for a double homicide in 1994.

Megan Thee Stallion - December 2022
The Gathering partnered with multiple women’s and anti-violence organizations in Los Angeles including TimeDone, a program of Alliance for Safety and Justice, Take Charge, Inc., 2nd Call and more, to support Megan Thee Stallion in solidarity at the courthouse as she recalled the tragic events in Hollywood on July 12, 2020.
Youth Movement

OUR WORK INCLUDES INTERGENERATIONAL MOVEMENT-BUILDING THAT INTEGRATES RAPID RESPONSE, DIRECT ACTIONS AND NONVIOLENT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, EDUCATION AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING TO ACHIEVE RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY FOR OUR COMMUNITIES.

TCE Youth Wellness Summit - September 2022
The Gathering for Justice was invited by The California Endowment to present the Youth Wellness Summit in Los Angeles, CA. The Gathering invited youth and young organizers to bring their suggestions and solutions to “addressing the youth mental health crisis”. Alongside influencers, top executives and the U.S. Surgeon General, youth unpacked big ideas and dissected the impact of social determinants of health on youth wellness and healing.

Youth Presentations in Oxnard - November 2022
In November, President and CEO, Carmen Perez-Jordan conducted several presentations in Oxnard, California with students in elementary, junior high, high school and community organizations to help build the beloved community that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. talked about while inspiring the younger generation to get involved. She share her experience working in the criminal justice system and how growing up in Oxnard prepared her to be a leader in racial justice.

Youth Policy Roundtable - November 2022
We began the process to launch our Youth Policy Roundtable (YPR) - the first entirely youth-led intersectional policy platform, and received 55 applications and conducted interviews with 30 youth. These young leaders are directly impacted by intersecting systems of oppression.

Toy Drive and Food Distribution - December 2022
The Gathering team provided new toys and distributed food to a large group of residents in Stockton on December 18, providing the opportunity for families to have a joyful holiday.
Art, Joy & Healing

WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD EMBODIED BY MR. BELAFONTE'S LEGACY—A WORLD FREE OF RACISM AND VIOLENCE, WHERE EVERYONE IS CARED FOR, YOUTH ARE THRIVING, AND JOY ABOUNDS.

“I Believe” - March 2022
In honor of The Gathering’s founder’s legacy of merging art and activism, the single “I Believe” was released on Mr. Belafonte’s 95th birthday on March 1, 2022. Artists who are part of TGFJ’s two state-based task forces, Justice League NYC and CA, collaborated on an inspirational single uplifting the call to stop the practice of child incarceration, a call Harry Belafonte first put out in 2005.

Summer Solstice Celebration - June 2022
The Gathering brought a delegation from Stockton to an indigenous Summer Solstice ceremony and celebration in South Dakota. The purpose was to expose them to cultural heritage and practices that ground us in healing and spirituality.

Guns Down, Gloves Up - June 2022
This first annual Guns Down, Gloves Up softball game provided those on the front lines serving our cities most impacted communities, a space for joy at the end of Gun Violence Awareness Month (GVAM). The game included artists, activists, faith leaders, community organizers and violence interrupters in a family fun (and moderately competitive) game including members of Life Camp, Youth Over Guns, and elected officials. Confirmed participants include NYC’s new Anti Gun Violence Czar A.T. Mitchell, newly-elected City Councilmember from the ‘Hood Caucus’ Nantasha Williams, leading violence interrupter Erica Ford of Life Camp, Citizen Action of NY political director Stanley Fritz.

Radical Readz
Radical Readz is one of our most popular programs, which was inspired by Mr. Belafonte’s idea for a “radical book club.” Throughout the year, TGFJ highlights select books that focus on a critical theory or a story impacting our communities.

March 2022 — You Sound Like a White Girl: The Case for Rejecting Assimilation by Julissa Arce
Julissa Arce’s newest book takes an unflinching look at the cost of success for immigrants in the U.S. This book challenges the idea of American exceptionalism with equal parts passion, fury, intimacy, and ignored history.

September 2022 — Bad Mexicans: Race, Empire & Revolution in the Borderlands by Kelly Lytle Hernández
Aired on Instagram Live, Kelly Lytle Hernández joins TGFJ to explore the intersections of race and indigeneity, colonization and resistance movements.

October 2022 — I’m Not Broken by Jesse Leon
Jesse Leon’s memoir presents a powerful, raw chronicle of survival that morphs into a moving story about mentorship, strength, familial love, self-transformation, the power of education, and the importance of self-acceptance.
OUT NOW EVERYWHERE

APPLE MUSIC | SPOTIFY | TIDAL | AMAZON MUSIC | PANDORA

LISTEN NOW
Policy & Advocacy

WE ARE WORKING TO REIMAGINE PUBLIC SAFETY BY ADVOCATING FOR POLICIES THAT PROMOTE YOUTH JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT, POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM.

March 2022 — Protect Youth Now” COVID DJJ Actions
The Gathering for Justice was a key driver of a multi-pronged strategy to reduce youth incarceration during the worst COVID outbreak in California’s youth justice facilities since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020.

February 2022 — Youth Represent
The Gathering partnered with Youth Represent to advance legislation to reduce youth incarceration, being heralded as “the next Raise The Age”.

February 2022 — Communities Not Cages Campaign
The Gathering for Justice partnered on the Communities Not Cages Campaign. All three bill were picked up by sponsors:
- Eliminate Mandatory Minimums (S.7871 - Myrie / A.9166 - Meeks)
- Second Look (S.7872 - Salazar / A.8894 - Walker)
- Earned Time Act (S.7873 - Cooney / A.8462A - Kelles)

March 2022 — Clean Slate Virtual Advocacy Day
The Gathering for Justice is a partner in the statewide coalition to pass the Clean Slate NY Act. The Act would automatically clear a New Yorker’s conviction record once they become eligible, ending the lifetime of perpetual punishment that excludes many from basic opportunities like stable jobs, licenses to practice trades, and safe, secure housing. Clean Slate NY is about strengthening our communities by ensuring that New Yorkers can be full and fair participants in economic and civic life.

June 2022 — #CloseRikers Rapid Response Rally
In response to the ongoing deaths of people being held on Rikers Island – 12 as June 2022 – and the ongoing humanitarian crisis inside the jail complex, The Gathering and Justice League NYC joined partners for a #CLOSERikers rally at Foley Square and short march to City Hall.
June 2022 — March Against Gun Violence
After the racist act of mass violence at a Buffalo grocery store, followed by the Uvalde Elementary School shooting, young people in New York city organized a mass mobilization during Gun Violence Awareness Month. Co-organized by March for Our Lives and Youth Over Guns, our Director of Youth Campaigns and Leadership, Luis Hernandez, was one of the core organizers for this march, which gathered at Cadman Plaza in Brooklyn, crossed the Brooklyn Bridge and ended at Zuccotti Park.

July 2022 — Right 2 Remain Silent
The Gathering for Justice, Bronx Connect, and Legal Aid Society partnered on a policy advocacy push to end police interrogations of youth without a parent, guardian or lawyer present. Two decades after the Central Park Five finally became the Exonerated Five, New York law is still failing to protect the rights of children when police seek to interrogate them.
Supporters

Throughout 2022, The Gathering for Justice fervently collaborated with a diverse array of supporters and funders, tirelessly driving our mission forward. This monumental effort would not have been achievable without the commitment of our partners, the generosity of our supporters, and the resilience of our community.

FOUNDATIONS
California Wellness Foundation
Grantmakers for Girls of Color
New York Community Trust
The California Endowment
The Center at Sierra Health Foundation (Elevate Youth)

PARTNERS
Channel Islands High School
City Core
City of Oxnard
Clean Slate
Innocence Project
McCune Foundation
New Deal for Youth with CLASP
Oxnard PAL
Pacifica High School
#Right2RemainSilent
Rio Mesa High School
Roc Nation
Take Charge, Inc.
TimeDone
United Justice Coalition
Until Freedom
2nd Call
10X10 Philanthropy

CORPORATIONS
Louboutin
Sony
Zoom Cares

GOVERNMENT
California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) / CalVIP (California Violence Intervention and Prevention)
California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls
Board of Directors

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President and CEO
The Gathering for Justice

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Writer and Human Rights Activist

Jamira Burley
Human Rights Activist and Strategist

Khephra Burns
Author, Fiction Writer and Scriptwriter

Ebro Darden
Media Executive and Radio Personality

Ira J. Gilbert
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How you can support!

Stay up to date about our programming and events:
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Make a generous, tax-deductible donation today.

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