

**The March for Justice** is an undertaken by the Alliance of Families for Justice (AFJ) to bring to the attention of the New York State Legislative body, Governor and the general public human rights abuses in NYS prisons and jails. Below are some of the prominent key issues the organization is following:

- Raise the Age of Criminal Responsibility
- Family Visitation to Prisons
- Meaningful reform of the use of solitary confinement
- Close Attica, Rikers, and Beyond
- Meaningful reform of parole
- Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act (DVSJA) Campaign

The March will start in Harlem the end of August culminating with a major press conference in Albany on September 13, 2017 the anniversary of the **1971 Attica uprising and massacre**\*. A core team of marcher will complete the entire route joined daily by others who want to contribute their efforts to this March as a demonstration of support for the cause. There are numerous prisons, jails and colleges located along the Hudson River between NYC and Albany which provide excellent sites for teach-ins/ rallies and or press conferences that will be planned for each day of the March and will influence the final route.

The expected participants in this March are students, faith leaders, organized labor, social workers, lawyers and paralegals, teachers, service providers, policy makers, formerly incarcerated people, academics, athletes, elected officials, community organizers, health professionals, celebrities, activists and researchers who can make themselves available to join the Marchers for part of the route. In addition we will encourage artistic display for the cause. We are looking to local community members to march along part of the route and provide support in the form of hosting a teach-in, providing publicity, helping to organize attendees, supplying food, beverages, lodging, transportation, etc.

Soffiyah Elijah the Executive Director and founder of AFJ envisioned this volunteer-fueled organization and March for Justice as an effort to build communities to address the Criminal Justice issues in New York State. This is after a powerful career as an accomplished advocate, attorney, scholar and educator. The following is representative of the positions she held prior to this: Executive Director of the Correctional Association of New York; Deputy Director and a clinical instructor at the Criminal Justice Institute at Harvard Law School; a member of the faculty and Director and supervising attorney of the Defender Clinic at the City University of New York School of Law; supervising attorney at the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, as well as has practiced criminal and family law in New York City for more than 35 years. . She has dedicated her life to human rights and social activism and is recognized national and international authority on human rights issues. She realizes a movement is only as strong as what we can collectively accomplish together.

AFJ founded in September 2016 is a growing organization that is comprised of family members impacted by the prison system, individuals with criminal records, people that work within the criminal justice system (lawyers and social workers) and individuals that have concern with our current criminal justice system. All members share a dedication to end human rights violations inside prisons and jails and re building communities among families impacted by the era of mass incarceration. The organization enjoys the guidance and governance of board members whose personal lives brought them to experience the Criminal Justice system and have a strong desire to see change.

\* On September 13, 1971 a four-day rebellion of over 1200 inmates at the Attica State Correctional Facility in bucolic upstate New York ended most horrifically after Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordered almost 600 state troopers to storm the prison.