COLLEGE & COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP enables women with criminal convictions to earn their college degrees so that they, their families, and their communities can thrive. We advocate for equity and opportunity for the communities we serve.
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

It has been a momentous year for College & Community Fellowship—it’s left me feeling excited for CCF’s growth, thoughtful about our journey to this point, and fired up for the future of the decarceration movement.

Last July, CCF completed its first formal strategic plan to map out our work through 2019. We reflected on the challenges we’ve faced throughout the years when we lacked adequate funding or needed to create structures to keep CCF running smoothly. Ultimately, our strategic plan shows our commitment to weathering organizational challenges by strengthening our infrastructure and planning for program expansion in the long term. As of June 2018, our strategic goals for expanding our programs and diversifying our revenue stream are well ahead of schedule!

Our progress includes exciting developments that will prove to be major turning points in CCF’s story. This year, we received the largest-ever investment in our work: $2 million over the next three years from the Manhattan DA’s Criminal Justice Investment Initiative, which will allow us to expand our direct services threefold (see p8 for more details)! That funding came on the heels of our first major grant from the City Council: $400,000 to support our local work helping women with criminal convictions earn their college degrees. We’ve also formalized our relationship with the Women’s Prison Association through Mayor de Blasio’s Jails to Jobs Initiative, allowing us to work together to support women coming off of Rikers Island. One of our main strategic plan goals was to increase government support for our services, and one year later we’re proudly partnering with the Manhattan DA, the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice, and City Council to strengthen communities in New York City through higher education.
These new partnerships have strengthen our collaborations in the field: in 2017, CCF joined the Alternatives to Incarceration Coalition, an 18-year-old group of 11 criminal justice agencies working together to ensure that New York City dedicates adequate funding to support individuals at all stages of criminal justice involvement.

Another major goal: expand our national technical assistance program. I am delighted to report that our pilot year of technical assistance in 2016 was so popular, we’ve already renewed foundation funding and begun generating income by contracting with sites to pay for our assistance! We are honored to serve the many communities working to support the successful integration of formerly incarcerated people into society through education and employment opportunities. Check out the THRIVE Technical Assistance (p4) in this report to learn more about the program!

None of this would have been possible without our hardworking Board of Directors and our devoted staff, who work together as a tight-knit team to provide direct services and to keep the organization running smoothly. And of course, our work is driven by the tenacious students and alumnae we serve; we are incredibly lucky to have them in our community.

This year, we’ll focus on strengthening our engagement in advocacy to include more issues that impact the women we serve, and to expand our policy impact to other relevant issues through our partnerships. We’ll begin the launch of our new direct service programs, and serve six sites through the THRIVE technical assistance program.

The momentum of the criminal justice reform movement can’t be stopped. I see College & Community Fellowship the same way I see our students: not as high-risk, but as high-potential. I couldn’t be more excited to see where CCF goes next.

VIVIAN D. NIXON
Executive Director
WHY DO WE DO THIS WORK?

Women are the fastest-growing prison population, and face unique challenges post-release. With the support of reentry programs that prioritize their needs and draw on their strengths, we help formerly incarcerated women reach their full human potential.

The United States incarcerates more people than any other country on the planet: while our country holds only 5% of the global population, our correctional system holds 25% of incarcerated people worldwide. Within this disturbing statistic, women are the fastest-growing prison population. These trends in incarceration are caused by a wide range of societal problems, including poor investment in public education, lack of economic opportunity, violence against women, and more. And once they are caught up in the criminal justice system, many women find it difficult to leave. Because of poor support systems, stigma, and shrinking opportunities within the confines of the justice system, two-thirds (68.1%) of women will be re-arrested within 5 years.

PERCENT INCREASE IN AVG. STATE EXPENDITURES, 1980-2013

*State and Local Expenditures on Education and Corrections, US Dept of Education*
Effective solutions recognize the need for holistic support in reentry. At CCF, we address these trends by focusing on evidence-based reentry practices for women in New York City, along with national advocacy and technical assistance programs that seek equity and opportunity for all people with criminal justice histories. When we examine the correlation between lack of education and high incarceration rates, it’s clear that access to education can drastically increase quality of life for justice-involved women, and can help break the cycle of crime and poverty. Our national programs are all informed by the work we do on the ground with those directly impacted by the justice system. CCF works with students in an individualized capacity to identify their strengths, skills, and desires to set them on a path to success. And because many women impacted by the criminal justice system are primary caretakers of young children, our work has ripple effects across generations.
CCF aligns its work along three mutually reinforcing programming tracks: Direct Services, Technical Assistance, and Policy and Advocacy. Programs in our Direct Services track directly support the college and career aspirations of CCF’s students across the New York City metropolitan area. Programming in the other two tracks is nationwide in scope and impact, and seeks to advance equity and opportunity for the 70 million Americans with criminal justice histories, their families, and their communities. All three tracks inform the evidence-based publications that CCF disseminates to the field of criminal justice reform and to the general public.

DIRECT SERVICES
Academic Support Program
Community activities and one-on-one academic and financial counseling from intake to graduation for women with criminal justice histories.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
Investing in Diverse Potential
THRIVE uses CCF’s evidence-based practices and core procedures to help agencies work with and employ formerly incarcerated individuals.

POLICY & ADVOCACY
Local and National Reform
Advocating for access to higher education inside prison and beyond, and training our students to become advocates themselves.
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

THRIVE: Investing in Diverse Potential

Our THRIVE technical assistance program, now in its second year, is gaining momentum. THRIVE is a training program that uses evidence-based practices and CCF’s core procedures to help agencies strengthen their service delivery to people affected by the criminal justice system. Originally designed for personnel from colleges and universities, parole and probation offices, and community-based organizations, THRIVE trains staff to understand the challenges their clients face post-release, how to inspire their clients to set and reach goals, and how to adjust their programming to maximize effectiveness.

With Associate Director of Technical Assistance Lettisha Boyd at the helm, THRIVE has expanded to include a specialized track for HR departments and hiring managers alongside our original track. Here, we help staff who make employment decisions to understand both the benefits of hiring candidates with criminal justice histories and the discrimination so many of those individuals face when searching for jobs. Then we train staff in how to create an inclusive work culture that’s welcoming to their new employees. Trainees in both tracks also learn about the importance of trauma-informed service delivery, financial literacy, motivational interviewing, and asset-based community development.

If your company or agency is interested in receiving training, contact Lettisha at lboyd@collegeandcommunity.org
We’re expanding our services to transform women’s lives through higher education

CCF’s Academic Support Program is our oldest and largest program, and the core of all our work. Active since 2001, the program has helped students earn 338 degrees (including a PhD and JD) with cohort graduation rates as high as 93% and a recidivism rate under 3% over three years (compared with 29% for New York State women over three years)!

Our on-the-ground work with students here in New York City gives us insight into the real needs and challenges of women with criminal justice histories and informs the way we build our technical assistance and advocacy work.

This year, we’ve been able to do something new: provide emergency funding and other financial supports that eliminate one-time barriers to enrolling in college. Many of our students are working to pay off old debts to schools before they can obtain their transcripts and apply to a new school; now, CCF can help wipe out those old debts. And when a student faces a situation that threatens her ability to continue her studies—such as impending eviction—we can provide financial coaching and support to keep her on track.
DIRECT SERVICES
We’ve received major new recognition and support from New York City government

In 2018, the New York County District Attorney’s Criminal Justice Investment Initiative awarded CCF $2 million over three years to build out our student services! With this funding, CCF will serve more students in our Academic Support Program, reinstate our Peer Mentoring Program to help soon-to-be and newly released women work higher education into their reentry planning, launch a Career Advancement Program to help women with criminal convictions and college degrees find employment reflective of their education level, and provide academic and community support to children of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated parents.

And more great news: With funding from the New York City Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice through its Jails to Jobs initiative, CCF is formally partnering with Women’s Prison Association, one of our city’s oldest nonprofits, to make sure that every woman who comes through our doors can access the resources she needs to thrive.
CCF’S STUDENTS:
Demographic and Educational Highlights, 2017-2018

Based at our headquarters in Northern Manhattan, CCF’s direct services for students are open to women (including all who identify as women) who have been or who soon will be released from incarceration after conviction and who aspire to earn a college degree.

**AGE**

**RACE/ETHNICITY**

**BOROUGH**

- 43% have children under 18
- 11 college graduates in June 2018
- 2.8% recidivism rate over 3 years
- 36 new CCF students in FY18
- 96 women attending community meetings

**COLLEGES ENROLLING THE MOST CCF STUDENTS**

LaGuardia Community College, Hunter College, Lehman College, Bronx Community College, Borough of Manhattan Community College

**CCF STUDENTS’ MOST FREQUENTLY PURSUED MAJOR FIELDS OF STUDY**

Human Services, Liberal Arts, Nursing, and Social Work. CCF students pursued career certifications in Business Administration, Information Technology, Certified Nurse Aid, Case Management, and Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC).

**GRADUATIONS**

In 2018, CCF students earned
- 4 associate’s degrees
- 4 bachelor’s degrees
- 3 master’s degrees
ALUMNA SPOTLIGHT

JOLIE

Jolie* first heard about College & Community Fellowship in 2008. Although Jolie had begun her degree in 1987, the struggles she faced prevented her from going back to school after her release from prison. Between a seemingly never-ending sentencing and probation timeline, and the challenges of raising a child with a disability alone, Jolie felt discouraged from continuing her education and moving beyond her conviction. “I couldn’t overcome the guilt about my crime. I just felt like ‘I’m a criminal and no one will accept me even if I do go back to school and earn a degree.’”

But in 2015, Jolie’s daughter was struggling in college. While Jolie tried to offer advice, her daughter just responded “You don’t know what it’s like- you haven’t been in school in years!” At that moment, Jolie decided to throw her hat back in the ring. “I knew that at some point, I’d have to face this,” Jolie remembers. “I said: I’m going to finish my degree and then become a paralegal.”

Jolie’s first meeting with the CCF recruitment coordinator, Jackie, was a turning point. “Jackie was so bubbly and encouraging and I just knew this was right. Something clicked. I felt fearless.” By September 2015—just three months after she first came to CCF—Jolie was enrolled in a Bachelor’s program at Baruch College to finish the Human Resources Management degree she’d begun in 1987. “The information I got at CCF’s meetings was information I couldn’t get anywhere else. I started taking better care of myself and networking with the students and alumnae.” Through one life-changing meeting at CCF, Jolie found the resources she needed to get her Certificate of Rehabilitation, which demonstrates to potential employers that the applicant has worked hard to overcome their criminal justice history and lifts bars from certain employment licenses.

At the same time, Jolie’s daughter saw how hard her mother was working—getting all As and Bs in college. Attending school at the same time, Jolie and her daughter kept each other on track toward graduation and bonded over what they had in common. In June 2018, Jolie’s daughter will graduate with her Associate’s degree and is going on to earn a Bachelor’s.

“CCF gave me a network that made me feel so capable. You don’t understand what that sisterhood means to me,” Jolie says. She completed her Bachelor’s in 2017, and in September 2018 will begin earning her career certificate in Paralegal Studies. “For anyone who is thinking about going to CCF: don’t wait. There is never going to be a perfect shiny time to start, but if you take advantage of CCF’s resources it’s really a gold mine. Education is the key to almost everything. Don’t wait!”

*Jolie’s name has been changed to protect her privacy.
POLICY & ADVOCACY

We’re advocating in our own communities and pushing for change on a federal level

RESTORING EDUCATION AND LEARNING ACT (REAL ACT)

In 1994, the Violent Crime and Law Enforcement Act revoked Pell grant eligibility for incarcerated students. Without adequate funding, college-in-prison programs disappeared almost overnight. (In New York State, only four out of 70 college-in-prison programs survived.)

Since 2008, CCF has advocated to reinstate Pell grant eligibility for incarcerated students. We have seen firsthand how transformative education can be, but the research proves it too: a study by the RAND Corporation showed that people who participated in educational programs while incarcerated were 43% less likely to return to prison.

This year, CCF worked with Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI) to reintroduce the REAL Act to Congress. If passed, the REAL Act will permanently restore Pell grant eligibility to incarcerated students nationwide!
POLICY & ADVOCACY

Grassroots Organizing and Advocacy

“There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”
Audre Lorde

CCF has already helped hundreds of women earn their college degrees, and we know that higher education is more important than ever for our community. But CCF’s women also know that the issue of higher education is an integral part of the whole spectrum of issues related to mass incarceration, and that we must broaden the scope of our advocacy if justice is to prevail.

Therefore, in 2018 CCF will launch a new advocacy training program for women impacted by incarceration. We’ll cover issues-based education, storytelling skills, and advocacy skills to equip our women with the know-how and confidence to participate in the social justice campaigns that mean the most to them.

Our women know that mass incarceration is inextricably tied to issues like affordable housing, access to healthcare, LGBTQ rights, domestic violence, and more. So we’ll welcome organizational partners to introduce our trainees to various opportunities for engagement. From there, we’ll facilitate our trainees’ participation in specific advocacy campaigns. At the same time, we’ll make sure that we continue working on the higher-education campaigns that are so necessary for our community.

Why this new approach? Because while today’s social justice campaigns tend to operate in silos that fail to account for the intersectionality of our issues, one thing all these campaigns have in common is their lack of representation of directly impacted women. Only by including these voices—the voices of CCF—can we truly build an inclusive, holistic movement for justice.
2017 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

CCF staff share hugs with new graduates
GRADUATION 2017

In June, 15 CCF students graduated with associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s degrees. Alumna Latoya introduced a new scholarship, to be awarded to the CCF student who always lends a hand. Thanks to Ben Wexler and Zhailon Levingston for accompanying a performance by CCF’s own Theater for Social Change Ensemble.
GALA 2017

In October, CCF held its bi-annual benefit gala at Tribeca 360. Activist/artist Liza Jessie Peterson hosted the evening honoring Maggie Lear (President, Frances Lear Foundation) for her commitment to criminal justice reform, Andrea Levere (President, Prosperity Now) for her crucial work advocating for financial literacy and development, and Columbia University’s Center for Justice for helping drive the criminal justice reform movement. CCF’s Theater for Social Change Ensemble performed.
2017 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

THRIVE CONVENING
Our first cohort of THRIVE sites came together to see CCF’s work in action, meet our students, and share their experiences with our technical assistance training. Our pilot year sites were LaGuardia Community College (Queens, NY), New HOUR for Women and Children (Brentwood, NY), Graduate!Philadelphia in partnership with the Community College of Philadelphia’s Reentry Support Project (Philadelphia, PA), and North Carolina Department of Public Safety (Asheville, NC).

HOLIDAY PARTY
CCF’s year-end celebration featured gifts for all of our students’ children, tons of games led by program staff Angela Diaz and Jacqueline Thompson, and of course a visit from our very own elves.

THE ATLANTIC’S “DRAFTING DEMOCRACY”
Renowned for its century and a half of superb journalism, The Atlantic held its Drafting Democracy event in December 2017 to explore how “to get our democracy back on track.” Alongside former U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara, CCF’s Vivian Nixon offered her perspective.
CAREER EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CEEP) CONVENING
CCF’s CEEP track offers our students access to high-quality career certifications in a growing roster of business- and healthcare-related areas. At CEEP’s 2017 annual convening, panelists from The Estée Lauder Companies, Community Service Society, and The Bronx Defenders helped our students understand their rights and offered advice on employment pathways.

GETTING THE WORD OUT
At CCF, we’re committed to helping the public understand how important our work and our issues really are. This year, Vivian Nixon published a slew of op-eds covering everything from the importance of financial literacy, to the dangers of incarcerating juveniles, to the need for investment in higher education. Special thanks go to CCF’s 2017 Gala honorees Maggie Lear and Andrea Levere for teaming up with Vivian to pen some of these powerful opinion pieces! Check out Vivian’s monthly column in Newsmax to read these op-eds.
Wanda Daniels had already been out of prison for more than ten years when she first discovered College & Community Fellowship. She was already working to earn her Bachelor’s degree in social work from the College of New Rochelle. But as Wanda says, “I’d been searching for a place like CCF for years and never found any other place that helped me like CCF has.”

Wanda’s journey post-release was a difficult one. Coming from South Carolina, Wanda had moved to New York City to be with her sister and didn’t know the area at all. She sought support from other reentry agencies to no avail. “I’d been looking for a place that had other people like me—people who’d been addicted, who’d been to prison—but those programs weren’t interested in hearing our stories. I went to these groups thinking we’d be able to share our traumas but they didn’t allow us to talk about those things. My spirit wasn’t connecting with them.”

In 2010, when Wanda was asked to speak at an event for a professor’s organization, she met CCF’s Academic Counselor. That was when everything changed. “I came to three community meetings and just sat there silently. I was just observing and trying to get comfortable,” Wanda recalls. “But at the end of the fourth meeting I spoke up and told the staff I was worried because I was having trouble with writing essays. I’d made it through two years of school and hadn’t learned to do it.” The program staff immediately told Wanda that they could help and would be able to find her a tutor. Although Wanda had already completed two years of school, the help CCF provided made her feel like she was finally part of a community.

“No place I’ve ever known is like CCF. They don’t just help you with education—they help you with whatever you need. They gave me school supplies, financial assistance, a laptop, schoolbooks...they always helped me when I needed it,” Wanda says. And for Wanda, who has 12 children and 10 grandchildren, the ability to bring her kids with her to community meetings was priceless. “My kids have been coming to CCF since they were small. CCF is like family.”

Wanda is now completing her Master’s in social work. Her tenacious spirit has driven her to earn her GED, Bachelor’s, and Master’s back to back without stopping. And her care for others who are experiencing hard times extends to all parts of her life: she’s built a career as a substance abuse counselor, but still makes time to help new CCF students feel comfortable. “New students should know they have other people to talk to and know they’re not alone. I’d been searching for a place like CCF for years. I finally found home.”
SUPPORTING CCF

CCF relies on public and private support to carry out our work. You can help too!

- No gift is too small to make an important difference.
- Check whether your employer offers a matching program for employees’ charitable donations—if so, the value of your gift could be multiplied!
- Contribute to our endowment to help keep CCF financially stable.
- Volunteer with CCF: We welcome volunteers who can help our staff with administrative support, policy research, mentoring, and tutoring.
- Hire our alumnae: CCF students and alumnae are confident, educated women eager to build their careers. Talk with us about our qualified candidates!
- Get creative! You can be an ambassador for CCF in many ways. Former CCF employee Nick Smith held a Facebook fundraiser for CCF on his birthday, and our Board members use charity runs to raise money for CCF. Talk with us about what you might do!

facebook.com/collegeandcommunityfellowship  @ccf_ny  @ccf_ny
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Barat Dickman
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Yolanda Johnson-Peterkin
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Anthony Smith
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Angela Diaz, Academic Counselor
Jacqueline Thompson, Recruitment/Intake/Support Coordinator
Wendy Romano, Program Support & Events Coordinator
Lori Rodríguez, Communications Associate
Ivelisse Gilestra, Program & Policy Assistant
## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Statement of financial position at close of Fiscal Year 2017  
Fiscal year July 1 - June 30

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<thead>
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<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<td>Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses</td>
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<td><strong>1,124,919</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,162,523</strong></td>
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**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**  
**1,306,893** | **1,345,003**
### Statement of activities and changes in unrestricted net assets

#### SUPPORT & REVENUE

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<td>Other Income</td>
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#### EXPENSES

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DONORS

$2,000,000+
Criminal Justice Investment Initiative

$500,000- $1,000,000
Ford Foundation

$100,000-$499,999
ECMC Foundation
Laughing Gull Foundation
Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice
New York City Council
NoVo Foundation
Porticus Foundation
Roy & Patricia Disney Family Foundation

$50,000-$999,999
Kohlberg Foundation
New York Women’s Foundation
Van Ameringen Foundation

$25,000-$49,999
AD Philanthropic Fund
Baskin Family Foundation
Communities of Color Nonprofit Stabilization Fund
Norman Lear
Barbara Martinsons
Sills Family Foundation
TOW Foundation

$10,000-$24,999
Christian Cultural Center
David Rockefeller Fund
Liza Eaton*
Harry Joe Brown, Jr. Foundation
Prosperity Now
Same Sky Foundation

$5,000-$9,999
Anthony Smith*
Peter Bakstansky*
David and Minne Berk Foundation
Jacki Kelly*
Judy Family Foundation
Lucius and Eva Eastman Fund
Piper Kerman

$1,000-$4,999
Bard Prison Initiative
David Berger
Irene Branche*
Charlie and Linda Brainard
Susie Davis
Annabel Davis-Goff
Edna Wardlaw Charitable Trust
Linda Genereux
Fiscal Management Associates
Frances Lear Foundation
Laura and Robert Hoguet
Marie Hoguet*
IF Hummingbird Foundation
JustLeadershipUSA
Sue Kaplan
Marble Collegiate Church
Mark E Pollack Foundation
Chauncey Parker
Robert Pellegrino
Norman Pessin
Rosalind and Alfred Berger Foundation
David Solomon
Susan Sturm
Cathy Taub
Vera Institute for Justice
Bridget Williams*

$500-$999
Richard Adelman
Debbie Breckenridge
Brenda Dann-Messier
Financial Clinic
Fortune Society
Gerstein Fisher
Leslie Gimbel
Mindy Goldberg
Coco Neel Hoguet
Hudson Link for Higher Education
Ann Jacobs
Kelsey Keith
Max Kenner
Mikey Kimmelman
Sal LaSpada
Kate Lear
Jane Levitt
Jackie Mann
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