

The background of the entire page is a black and white photograph of a prison corridor. The corridor has high ceilings, concrete walls, and a tiled floor. In the distance, there are barred windows. Overlaid on this image are large, semi-transparent numbers '2023' in a light gray color. The text 'LAST PRISONER PROJECT' is centered at the top in white, with a green chain-link icon replacing the letter 'O' in 'PRISONER'.

LAST
PRISONER
PROJECT

ANNUAL REPORT

LASTPRISONERPROJECT.ORG

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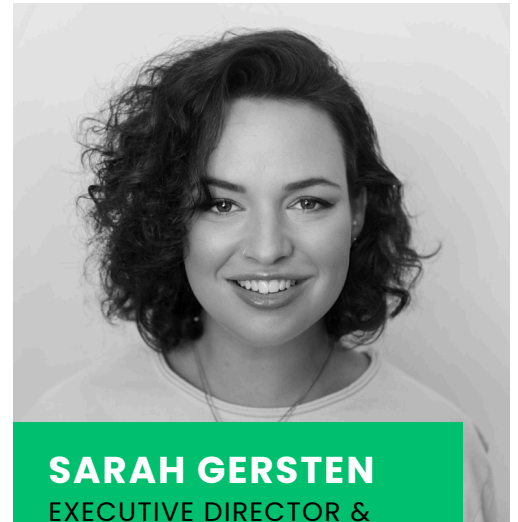
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & BOARD CHAIR

2023 marked Last Prisoner Project's fourth year of operations. This year we continued to scale our core programs, including our Cannabis Justice Initiative, constituent support services, and reentry resources. We hit key milestones like the representation of over 240 individuals through our legal and constituent support programs and the deployment of over \$2.5 million through our reentry and commissary grant funds.

At the same time, we increased resources and staffing for our policy and advocacy programs, knowing that to truly bring an end to cannabis prohibition and to fully repair communities we must invest in front-end systemic solutions. This year, our policy team passed critical legislation enabling individuals who have been criminalized by cannabis prohibition to have their criminal sentences modified and their criminal records cleared.

We also spent 2023 crafting and publishing impactful research and scholarship such as our State of Cannabis Justice Report, which is a first of its kind, in-depth assessment of cannabis justice in all 50 states. Such research is crucial to not only understanding the true scope of the drug war's impacts, but also to encourage lawmakers and executive officials to take the necessary actions to truly redress the unjust consequences of prohibition.

We are on the precipice of the most significant shift in cannabis policy in our nation's history. This is a critical time to ensure that social justice is incorporated into progressive drug reforms, and the work of LPP is more needed than ever. We are immensely proud of all that we have accomplished, and we are encouraged for the future. Thank you to all who enable us to achieve our mission, and know that we will not stop until the last cannabis prisoner is truly free.



SARAH GERSTEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &
GENERAL COUNSEL



STEPHANIE SHEPARD
BOARD CHAIR

OUR 2023 IMPACT

100+

TOTAL NUMBER OF YEARS WE HAVE SAVED OUR CONSTITUENTS FROM SERVING IN PRISON AS A RESULT OF OUR CANNABIS JUSTICE INITIATIVE

160

LPP
CONSTITUENTS
RECEIVED OVER

\$115,000

IN DIRECT FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE THROUGH OUR
COMMISSARY SUPPORT FUND

72

LPP
CONSTITUENTS
RECEIVED OVER

\$350,000

IN DIRECT FINANCIAL
SUPPORT THROUGH OUR
REENTRY GRANT PROGRAM

20,000+

TOTAL NUMBER OF LETTERS OUR SUPPORTERS HAVE WRITTEN TO OUR CONSTITUENTS INCARCERATED FOR CANNABIS THROUGH OUR LETTER WRITING PROGRAM

10

AUTOMATIC RECORD CLEARANCE
AND RESENTENCING BILLS LPP
POLICY TEAM WORKED ON

15,000+

CANNABIS RECORDS
CLEARED AS A RESULT
OF OUR POLICY WORK

240+

CLIENTS IN THE CANNABIS
JUSTICE INITIATIVE SERVED BY

190

CANNABIS JUSTICE INITIATIVE
PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

LPP's "PARDONS TO PROGRESS" AND "PEN TO RIGHT HISTORY" CAMPAIGN GARNERED MORE THAN 10,000 LETTERS SENT TO STATE GOVERNORS AND THE PRESIDENT

10,000+

CANNABIS JUSTICE INITIATIVE

The epidemic of mass incarceration in the US is fueled by excessive sentences. For those whose lengthy incarceration is driven by cannabis-related offenses, the injustice is particularly striking. As the United States moves away from the criminalization of cannabis, giving rise to a major new industry, there remains the fundamental injustice inflicted upon those who have suffered criminal convictions and the attendant consequences of those convictions. The Cannabis Justice Initiative (CJI), a partnership between LPP and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL), aims to secure relief for individuals impacted by the War on Drugs, to enable them to reenter society where they remain incarcerated, and to restore rights that have been forfeited as a consequence of those convictions.

In its third year, the Cannabis Justice Initiative increased the number of participating individuals to 242, assigned 69 cases to pro bono attorneys resulting in the filing of 35 motions for compassionate relief (CR), clemency petitions, or other filings. This year, 15 rulings were made on pending motions or petitions submitted by pro bono CJI attorneys. Most notably, CR motions filed by CJI attorneys on behalf of LPP constituents Luke Scarmazzo, Sharu Bey, Kenneth Collins, and Eddie Thornton were granted leading to their early release.

BIDEN EXPANDS FEDERAL CANNABIS PARDONS TO 13,000+

Following President Biden's 2022 executive order to pardon federal simple possession offenses, LPP and attorneys from the CJI worked with the administration and the Office of the Pardon Attorney to expand the scope of the initial pardon grant. On December 22, the President announced the expansion of the pardon proclamation to include offenses committed on federal properties, doubling the number of impacted individuals and bringing the total number of pardons to over 13,000. In 2024, LPP will continue our efforts to secure additional federal clemency grants for our CJI clients, including commutations for federal cannabis offenses.



CONSTITUENT SUPPORT SERVICES

COMMISSARY SUPPORT FUNDS

At Last Prisoner Project, one of our primary objectives is to alleviate the hardships of incarceration for our constituents and their families as we strive to achieve their full freedom. To support this goal, we provide quarterly commissary payments to those imprisoned for cannabis-related offenses. In 2023, we scaled our commissary program, growing it from 125 to 160 constituents, and increasing annual disbursements from \$104,600 to over \$117,000.

LPP LETTER-WRITING PROGRAM

2023 marked the fourth year of our letter-writing campaign, a program that enables our supporters to write to our constituents still unjustly imprisoned for cannabis.

Thanks to our letter-writing drives and passionate supporters, we've now sent over 20,500 letters to our incarcerated constituents since the program's inception.

CONSTITUENT STORYTELLING

Telling our constituents' stories can profoundly influence their lives by highlighting their cases and motivating action. Through our media platforms, thousands of supporters sign petitions, engage with key stakeholders, and inform the public. We also offered constituents platforms to share their stories with audiences at the many events we participated in, including SXSW, National Cannabis Festival, MJBiz, SSDP Lobby Day, United Justice Summit, and more.

+\$117,686

Funds dispersed in 2023 to

160

constituent
commissary
accounts



Sean Scott

SERVING A 5 YEAR SENTENCE

I just wanted to thank everyone on the team and their efforts for making my incarceration a smoother process and helping myself and my family financially through these tough times.



Jeremy Grove

SENTENCED FOR 5 YEARS



Knowing there are people who have never met me out there thinking about me and taking the time to write meant the world to me. I felt like my story was helping change the mindset of people across the country.



REENTRY RESOURCES REBUILD LIVES

+\$359,000

Funds dispersed in 2023 to

72 REENTRY CONSTITUENTS

A portion of LPP's funding goes directly to recently released constituents to assist in their reentry. We also distribute financial resources to the families of our constituents who find themselves in need of financial assistance. In 2023, we bolstered our reentry program with 72 new constituents that received over \$350,000 in grant funding to bring our total disbursements to over \$3.2 million to more than 350 constituent families.



RUDI GAMMO

Rudi's story began in 2018 when he was arrested and sentenced to 5.5 years in prison for operating a city-sanctioned medical dispensary in Detroit, Michigan. He allowed caregivers to cultivate medical cannabis on his property, a practice that was legal under Michigan's cannabis laws. However, despite the state legalizing adult-use cannabis the same year, he was arrested.

Last Prisoner Project ran the #FreeRudiGammo advocacy campaign that included a rally in Michigan. We supported him while incarcerated by providing a family grant to support his wife and three kids. Upon his release, we provided a reentry grant and Rudi now works in construction while figuring out how he can impact other families separated by a victimless cannabis offense.



CAREY STYNES

LPP constituent Carey Stynes was arrested in Tennessee for conspiracy to distribute marijuana and sentenced to 66 months (5.5 years) in prison. Carey was released and began rebuilding his life with the help of an LPP reentry grant. He continued his education, became a certified plumber, and opened his own plumbing business in San Francisco.

"The funds helped my family and I so much and gave me the opportunity to grow the company. It means the world to have a program like LPP advocating for people who were unjustly sentenced to prison for marijuana," said Carey.



ALEX & FREDERICK CAMPBELL

In 2009, the Campbell family was torn apart when brothers Alex and Frederick were arrested for conspiracy to distribute cannabis. Alex was sentenced to 15 years and Frederick was sentenced to 16. They served 12 and 13 years, respectively. Both brothers received LPP reentry grants to help offset the financial burden of their incarceration.

Alex stated: "I would like to thank [LPP supporters] with the utmost sincerity and gratitude. That grant came through when I was going through a dark time and it eased some of the worry that I had and entirely changed the dark mood I had been in."

ADVOCACY & AWARENESS

FREE ROBERT DEALS

LPP constituent Robert Deals has served 12 years of an 18-year sentence for cannabis-related offenses—and we need your help to bring him home. Robert served his country for 11 years in the Air Force before being arrested in 2010. He suffers from PTSD and is desperate to be home and reunited with his loved ones. While he remains incarcerated, his daughter Alicia has opened a dispensary with a social equity license in Arizona and is using her platform to advocate for her father's release. We are calling on the Pardon Board and Governor Hobbs to end this hypocrisy and grant him clemency.



The punishment does not fit my crime. I have come across a lot of guys with violent offenses, so how can they have less time than me, and I was only caught with some pot.

— ANTONIO WYATT

LPP ADVOCACY PROGRAM (KA)

”

It's time to stand for true justice and demand change. My divine opportunity is to bridge the gap between those who have fundamentally suffered and those who have benefited on the basis of cannabis.

— ALICIA DEALS

DAUGHTER OF ROBERT DEALS



FREE ANTONIO WYATT

Antonio Wyatt is currently serving an over 11-year sentence after being convicted on a first-time cannabis offense in the State of Kansas. That is why we launched the #FreeAntonioWyatt advocacy campaign to generate public pressure on the Kansas Prisoner Review Board and Governor Laura Kelly to grant Antonio clemency so he can return home.

LPP's Donte West and Kyle Page, who were both previously incarcerated for cannabis with Antonio, are now fighting for his release. Additionally, commissary funding, letters of support from key stakeholders, and reentry planning support have been provided during his incarceration.

ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS



PARDONS TO PROGRESS

We amplified President Biden's call on governors to grant cannabis pardons and pushed for governors to turn #PardonstoProgress by using their full clemency power to issue commutations to release our constituents. Through this campaign, celebrity advocates encouraged the public to take action by sending a letter to the governor in their state urging them to take cannabis clemency action. Together, supporters have sent over 10,000 letters to governors.

50 YEARS AND A WAKE UP

After 50 years of mass cannabis incarceration—and over 25 million cannabis arrests—the War on Drugs continues to inflict unnecessary harm all because of victimless cannabis offenses. That's why we joined the #50YearsandAWakeUp campaign to urge politicians that the time has come to end the hypocrisy of mass incarceration. As part of the campaign, LPP Board Member Mutulu "M-1" Olugbala participated in a panel on hip-hop's role in the fight for criminal justice.

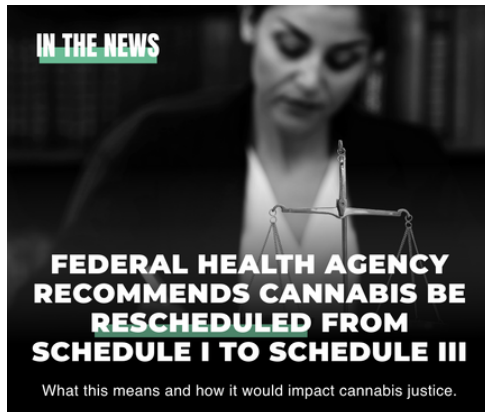


PEN TO RIGHT HISTORY

All it takes is a signature from President Biden or a U.S. Governor to free the thousands of unjust cannabis prisoners. The 'Pen to Right History' is a pen with which family and friends of those incarcerated have both written their stories and urged politicians to release their loved ones. The pen is being symbolically passed to the President and governors to sign clemency orders and "right" this long unaddressed wrong. The campaign launched with a docu-style film chronicling the story of Richeda Ashmeade, a law student and poet who was just twelve years old when her father, Richardo Ashmeade, was sentenced to 22 years in prison on cannabis charges. Richeda's story has encouraged thousands to send letters to President Biden to demand her father's freedom and the release of every cannabis prisoner.

FEDERAL POLICY REFORM

HHS Recommends to Reschedule Cannabis to Schedule III



Following President Biden's 2022 executive order, HHS officially recommended that cannabis be moved from Schedule I to Schedule III under federal law. This move would represent the most significant shift in federal drug policy since the inception of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). Yet this move is still the first step in a long journey towards true cannabis justice. LPP will continue to work with the administration and the various agencies involved to push for cannabis to be fully removed from the CSA, end criminal penalties for cannabis prospectively, and to ensure that retroactive relief is also being provided to individuals charged with federal cannabis offenses.

Marijuana Opportunity, Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act

The Marijuana Opportunity, Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act—a comprehensive bill that prioritizes legalization as well as justice reform and social equity—was refiled for a third time. If passed, it would deschedule cannabis by removing it from the Controlled Substances Act, create a process for expungements for nonviolent federal cannabis convictions, and ensure that no individual would be denied federal benefits based solely on the use or possession of cannabis or a past juvenile conviction for a cannabis offense.

**FIGHT
INJUSTICE.
DEMAND
MORE.**

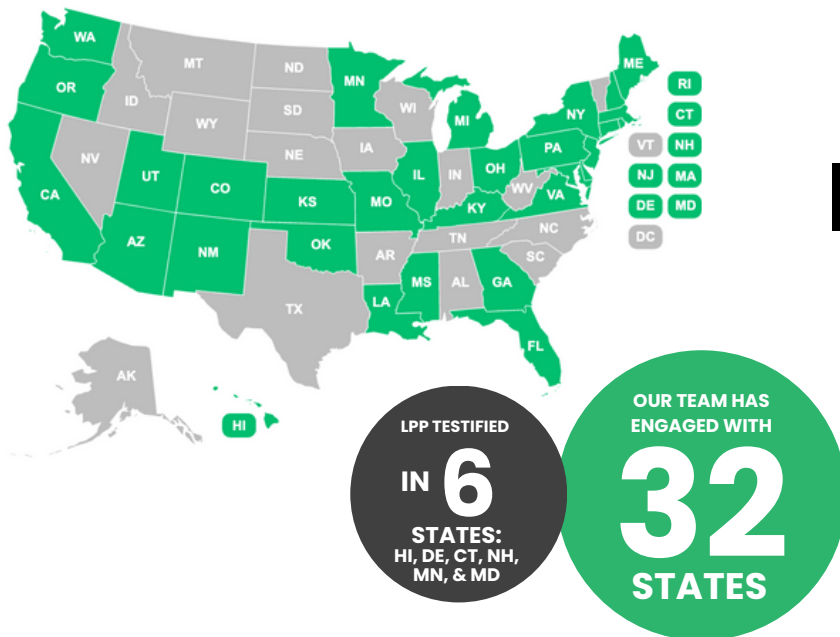


Harnessing Opportunities by Pursuing Expungement (HOPE) Act

The Harnessing Opportunities by Pursuing Expungement (HOPE) Act is a bipartisan bill that aims to help states with expunging cannabis offenses by reducing the financial and administrative burden of such efforts through federal grants. We are proud to endorse the HOPE Act and are grateful to Rep. Joyce and Rep. Ocasio-Cortez for re-introducing this bill. We look forward to continuing to work with their offices to get it passed.

STATE POLICY REFORM

In 2023, LPP's policy team had a busy year working to pass legislation enabling individuals who have been criminalized by cannabis prohibition to have their criminal sentences modified and their criminal records cleared. The policy team provided recommendations to legislators in HI, DE, MN, OH, ME, NH, and MD on how to effectively provide retroactive relief for those criminalized during prohibition once adult-use cannabis has been legalized. LPP also worked in states that have already legalized adult-use cannabis (i.e. CT, CA, NJ, VA and NM) to provide feedback on how those states can address critical gaps in their record clearance and resentencing processes for those with cannabis convictions.



- Connecticut HB 6787
- Minnesota HF 100
- New Mexico HB 314
- New Jersey S4154
- Hawai'i HCR 51
- California AB 1706
- Virginia SB 391
- New Hampshire HB 639
- Delaware HB 1 and HB 2
- Maryland - SB 88

CONNECTICUT

After Gov. Lamont cleared 44,000 records earlier in the year, LPP helped introduce HB 6787, a cannabis resentencing bill that would've created a process for automatic sentence modification of all eligible convictions. While it did not pass, it did contribute to the Chief State's Attorney dropping over 1,500 pending charges from being prosecuted.

HAWAII

Building off our task force recommendations the prior year, LPP was included in HCR 51, which urged Governor Green to create a cannabis clemency program. Our work with the legislature around resentencing and expungement has also led to a cannabis record clearing bill which we are hopeful will pass in 2024.

MINNESOTA

HF 100 legalized cannabis and provided Minnesotans with some of the broadest state-initiated record sealing and resentencing relief in the country. LPP provided feedback and technical policy assistance to ensure justice is implemented transparently. So far, over 57,000 cannabis records have been cleared and releases are soon to come.

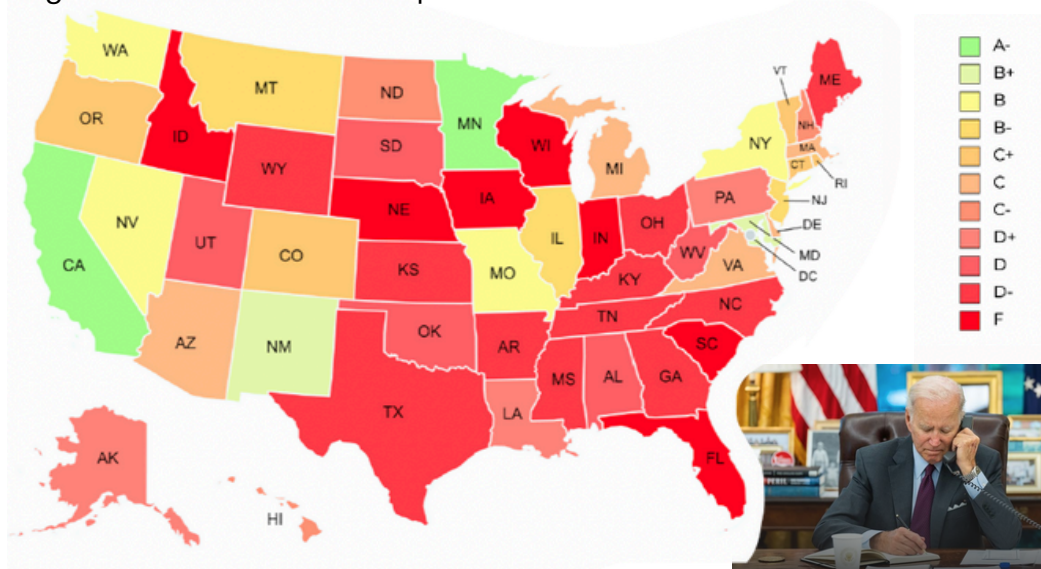
CALIFORNIA

After it passed in 2022, AB 1706 started to seal eligible cannabis records in California. To ensure transparency, LPP has continued to provide oversight and implementation support. Our efforts have led to over 15,000 individuals having their records sealed.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

STATE OF CANNABIS JUSTICE REPORT

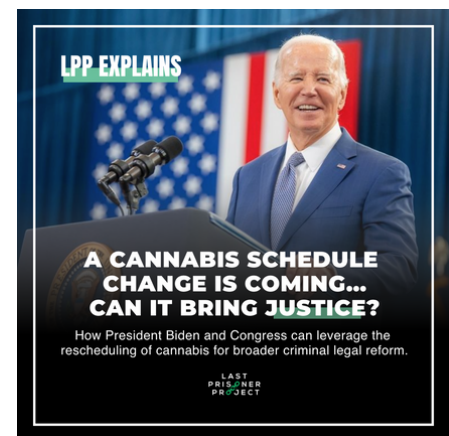
In an effort to better understand the national landscape of cannabis justice and expand our work, LPP's policy team conducted a national assessment of cannabis policy in our newly released State of Cannabis Justice Report. As of 2023, 24 states have legalized cannabis, 24 states have enacted cannabis-specific record clearance laws, and 10 states have enacted cannabis-specific resentencing laws. Unfortunately, these policies are still lagging behind in every single state and the need for improvement is clear.



LEVERAGING RESCHEDULING FOR JUSTICE

Rescheduling cannabis from a Schedule I drug to a Schedule III drug signals the reevaluation of cannabis but not the release of prisoners or relief for those with a criminal record. Full descheduling and removing cannabis from the Controlled Substances Act is the only way to end the majority of cannabis-related criminal sanctions.

This is a moment of progress, but not justice. This is why we at LPP are pushing for more effective strategies for retroactive relief. The question is, how much progress can we achieve if we push for the right reforms? In our memo authored by LPP Executive Director and General Counsel, Sarah Gersten, we explain how President Biden and Congress can leverage the rescheduling of cannabis to create broader criminal legal reform.



OUR SUPPORTERS

We are eternally grateful for each and every one of our supporters that enable us to do this work. Your generosity allows us to achieve our mission to keep fighting until every prisoner of the war on drugs is free. In 2023, we launched the Catalyst for Change program, welcoming LPP supporters to launch fundraisers challenging their friends and family to give back.

Our Partners for Freedom Program is a nationwide group of our most committed and generous partners in our mission to free cannabis prisoners. They believe in our vision that anyone profiting from the legal cannabis industry has a moral imperative to work towards restorative justice.

PARTNERS FOR FREEDOM

Champions

Ascend Wellness
Dutchie
PharmaCann
RAW

Reformers

Apotheca
Cheba Hut
Cowen
Evidence
Farmer and The Felon
GrowHealthy
Happy Valley
Trulieve
Wurk

Advocates

Good Day Farm
KIVA
MJ Packed
Native Roots
Pax
Uncle Ike's

Supporters

Activist
Aroya
Aura Advisors
B Noble
Benzinga
Beyond Hello
Burning Love
Cannabiz Team
Canopy Growth
Dad Grass
Emerald Leaf Organics
Ethos
Eureka
Evidence

Supporters

Aventine Property Group
Gage
Gentleman Smuggler's
Harborside
Hashtag Cannabis
Heir
Her Highness
House of Wise
Jane
K Savage
Kapha Cannabis
King Palm
Last Podcast On The Left
Learn Brands
Leune
Mfused
Nature's Grace and
Wellness
Nova Farms
O.Pen
Open Book Extracts
PayQwick
Pleasantrees
Potency
Redmond Construction
Redwood Cannabis
Seed Talent
Simply Crafted CBD
TerrAscend
THC Alaska
The Reef
Tilt Holdings
Veriheal
Vibes
Vlasic Labs
Wana
ZaZa



Donate to the Last Prisoner Project & Dutchie will **match \$1M**.

[LEARN MORE →](#)

Through our partnership with Dutchie, they have helped raise and match over \$1,000,000 as of 2023 and spread awareness of LPP to hundreds of thousands of customers.



Our Roll It Up For Justice Program is a nationwide campaign encouraging cannabis businesses to educate their customers, raise awareness of our mission, and give them an opportunity to donate to Last Prisoner Project at check out. Small change can make a big impact, and every cent raised through the program gets us closer to the day when every last drug war prisoner is set free.

[See a full list of participating dispensaries here.](#)

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIALS

The Last Prisoner Project has achieved a Four-Star Charity designation from Charity Navigator and a Platinum Seal of Transparency Rating on Candid, the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations. These ratings put us in the top 0.1% of charities nationally in terms of transparency.

LPP is able to cover its administrative and development expenses thanks to the generosity of our corporate partners. 100% of individual donations go directly towards our programs which include the Cannabis Justice Initiative and other legal intervention programs, policy and advocacy, as well as our support fund which distributes grants directly to incarcerated constituents and their families.

Platinum
Transparency
2023

Candid.

Charity
Navigator



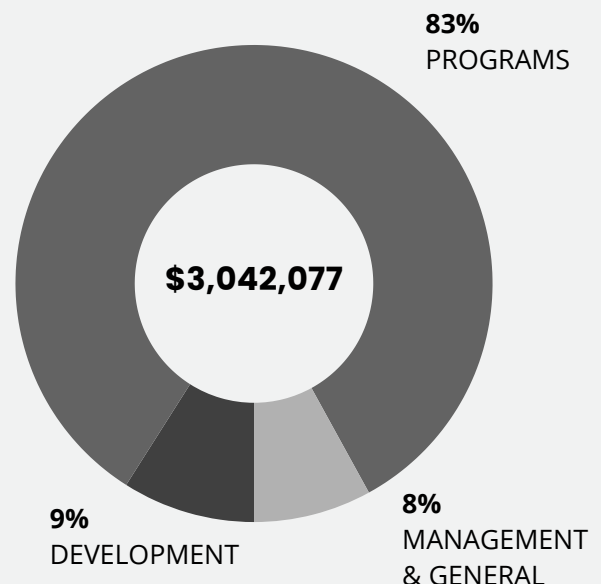
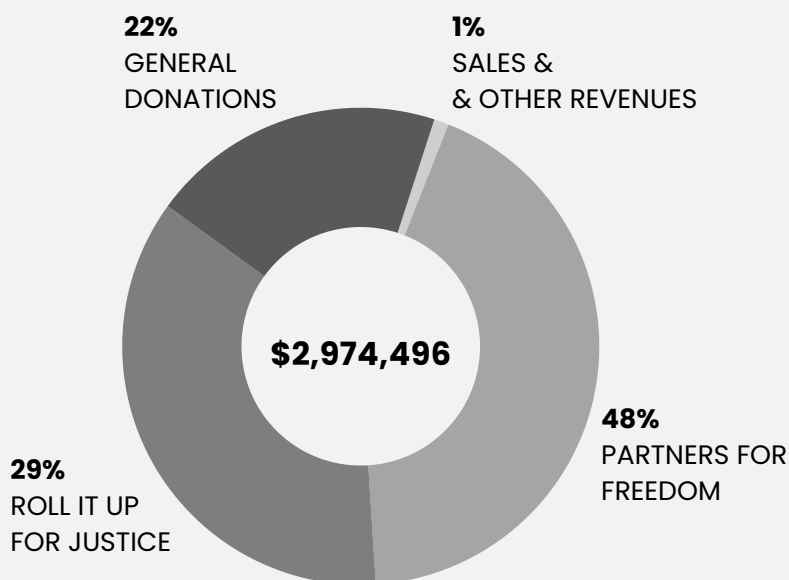
FOUR-STAR

SUPPORT & REVENUE

GENERAL DONATIONS: \$649,886
PARTNERS FOR FREEDOM: \$1,435,328
ROLL IT UP FOR JUSTICE: \$859,678
SALES/OTHER REVENUES: \$29,604
TOTAL: \$2,974,496

EXPENSES

PROGRAMS: \$2,511,538
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL: \$251,365
DEVELOPMENT: \$279,174
TOTAL: \$3,042,077



*Partners for Freedom is our corporate sponsorship program.

Roll It Up For Justice is a program that enables consumers to donate their spare change to LPP at retail stores. Independently audited financials will be posted to our website as they become available.



LAST
PRISONER
PROJECT

1312 17TH STREET SUITE 640 | DENVER, CO 80202

WWW.LASTPRISONERPROJECT.ORG