



# RESTORING OUR COMMUNITIES *BEYOND 11X15*



## ***Because:***

- ... The Wisconsin prison population has more than tripled since 1990;*
- ... Wisconsin spends over \$1.3 billion per year on the Department of Corrections, and a few years ago the Corrections budget passed the University of Wisconsin budget as the destination for taxpayer dollars;*
- ... Wisconsin has the nation's highest rate of incarceration for African American males and for Native American males;*
- ... Over half of all African American men from Milwaukee County in their 30's and early 40's have been or are incarcerated;*
- ... And, because there are proven, cost-effective, safe alternatives.*

## **It is time for ROC Wisconsin, a campaign to:**

- Restore communities that have been harmed by mass incarceration;
  - Restore families to wholeness and health;
  - Restore balance, fiscal discipline and humane priorities to our state's criminal justice system;
  - Restore people to health through increased treatment alternatives to incarceration, decreased use of solitary confinement, better support for those who return from jail or prison;
  - Restore men and women back to the community who do not need to be incarcerated.
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## **The four principle aims of ROC Wisconsin are:**

**For Wisconsin to invest in the programs and strategies that will end the racial and economic disparities that fuel mass incarceration.**

We recognize that the criminal justice system is connected to our educational, housing, health care, transportation and economic systems. The criminal justice system is both a result and a contributor to the systemic racism and economic inequities that attacked most convicted people long before their first arrest. Reform of the criminal justice system is an important part of the broader goal of ending systemic injustice in our state and nation.

**For Wisconsin to reduce its prison population to 11,000, and to reduce the number of people on extended supervision.**

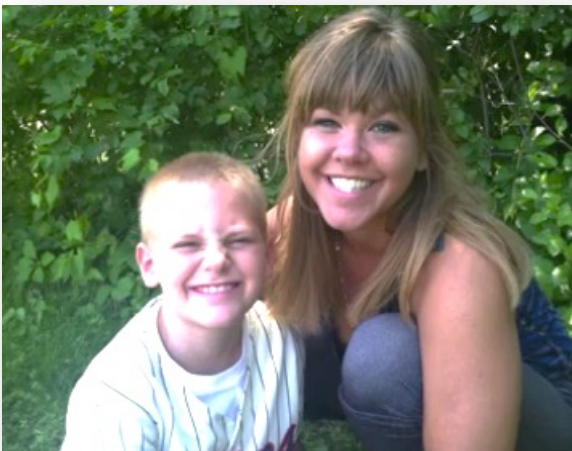
We have challenged Wisconsin to reduce its prison population by half, to 11,000. That goal is achievable, it is in line with the best practices of other states, and it can be accomplished if the people of our state demand that our leaders be smart on crime and strong on justice. At the same time, the number of people on extended supervision must be reduced to reasonable levels.

**For Wisconsinites to view people who have been convicted of a crime as human beings, members of families, and assets to the community.**

Those convicted of a crime are people - not statistics. Every human being is capable of growth and change. Even as we debate the most appropriate way to keep our communities safe and to rehabilitate those who have committed crimes, the ROC Wisconsin campaign is dedicated to lifting up the irrevocable humanity of every person in our state, with no exceptions.

**For formerly incarcerated people to be restored to full participation in our communities, our economy and our civic life.**

ROC Wisconsin seeks policies and laws that provide those who have spent time in jail or prison opportunities to work, to continue their education, to live in decent housing, to regain their full citizenship, and to be free of fear of being sent back to prison if they do not commit a new crime.



**“When you save one life, the ripple effect is saving my son’s life.”**

## Continuing the work of the 11x15 Campaign, ROC Wisconsin promote policies that:

### Keep People Out of Prison

- Increase funding for Treatment Alternatives and Diversions (TAD). A 2012 study showed that by fully funding the state's Treatment Alternatives and Diversions fund, Wisconsin could keep 3,000 people per year out of the state's prisons, and more than 27,000 from ever going to jail.
- Reform Wisconsin's sentencing laws. Inordinately long prison sentences do nothing to enhance safety, they are extremely costly, and they reduce the odds that the offender will be successfully re-integrated back into the community when she/he is released.
- Keep all 17 year-olds in the juvenile system.



*WISDOM's first EXPO Fellowship commissioning.*

### Provide Justice Inside Prison Walls

- Fix Wisconsin's broken parole system. Wisconsin has nearly 3,000 people in its prisons who have long been eligible to be released on parole. They deserve a fair chance to be released, to get on with their lives.
- Greatly reduce the use of solitary confinement. More than 15 days in solitary confinement is torture. It magnifies mental health issues and destroys people. Other states and nations have learned to get by without it, we can too.
- Increase the use of "Compassionate Release." Many of the aging and ill people in our prisons could very safely be released to their families or community facilities for their final days.

### Help People Stay Out of Prison

- End crimeless revocations. The largest number of people entering Wisconsin prisons are actually re-entering prison. About 4,000 prison admissions each year are people who have not been convicted of a new crime.
- Open the doors of opportunity. Through Ban the Box legislation, reform of the CCAP on-line database, changes in rules for public housing, financial aid for college, and more, ROC Wisconsin will work to lift the barriers that keep formerly incarcerated people from successful re-entry.
- Welcome formerly incarcerated people back to the community. ROC Wisconsin and EXPO (EX-Prisoners Organizing) will work to ensure that formerly incarcerated people have a voice in the community and in matters that affect them. They ought to have back their right to vote, and to be heard.

## Get Involved:

There is an opportunity for everyone to be involved in this historic work of restoration, healing and justice. We need people who will plan, research, pray, organize, donate, make phone calls, visit their legislators, attend events to show support, lead task forces, and read mail. Get in touch. Let us know why you care and what role you want to play.

## Stay Informed:

Keep up to speed with our work and the ways you can stay engaged by visiting our newly revamped website specifically for the ROC Wisconsin Campaign.

**[www.rocwisconsin.org](http://www.rocwisconsin.org)**

## Contact Us:

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## About WISDOM

WISDOM is a network of faith-based organizations around the state, working locally and working together to make Wisconsin a more compassionate and fair place for everyone to live. WISDOM's local organizations can be found in Milwaukee (MICAH), Racine (RIC), Kenosha (CUSH), Waukesha County (SOPHIA), Fox Valley (ESTHER), Green Bay area (JOSHUA), Manitowoc (RUTH), North-central Wisconsin (NAOMI), Eau Claire area (JONAH), La Crosse (AMOS), Madison (MOSES) and Beloit (JOB). Most of our members are congregations (from 19 different faith traditions), but all people of good will are welcome to be part of us. Contact us, and we can connect you to the people in your area.

## About EXPO

EXPO (EX-Prisoners Organizing) is comprised of men and women who have experienced incarceration, as well as the loved ones of people in prison. EXPO is part of WISDOM, and has local chapters. EXPO provides leadership training and mutual support for its members. EXPO is at the center of ROC Wisconsin, providing leadership on many of the issues we address.

