



Our Stories Matter



Community Resource Initiative

Community Resource Initiative (CRI) envisions a world where everyone has equal access to meaningful judicial resources; where our stories serve as instruments of transformation; and where the human capacity for resilience and growth is honored. It is a vision CRI embodies in its work every day.

CRI is a collectively run nonprofit capital defense investigation office and resource center, founded in 2006. From its beginnings, CRI has upheld that vision of fairness and access by building narratives to challenge the death penalty and other extreme sentences and advocating for the value of human life. Our work has grown year by year, as we collaborate with families and communities impacted by the judicial system to facilitate safety, growth, and resilience. This work is possible because of generous supporters who share our vision. It enables us to respond to the specific needs of our clients' families and communities, and we tailor our programs to address those needs. Now, those needs are greater than ever.



2,500

People are on death row in 2022.

500%

Increase in incarceration in the last 40 years.



2.7M

Children have an incarcerated parent (2020).



MESSAGE FROM ANTHONY

"At CRI, we have witnessed the enormous impact that our work in mitigation, family support, and community involvement has had on lives and policy. So that we can continue to grow our work to serve more people with our unique programs, we need the support of those who share our belief in the power of access to create resilience and connection and the right to justice in the full sense of the word. We ask you to join us as a supporter."

— Anthony Ginez, CRI Mitigation Specialist

CRI's Voice for Justice in the Courts, the Community, and Policy

Telling the Stories that Change Lives

CRI works with legal defense teams to bring the stories of our clients' lives into the courtroom. Under the American Bar Association Guidelines, this process, called mitigation, is a constitutional right. As trained Mitigation Specialists, the CRI team conducts exhaustive investigations into our clients' lives going back three generations. It brings their experiences, their family history, and all they are as human beings to light to form a fuller picture for judicial representatives of circumstances and events that have affected their lives.





Training, Support, and Mentorship

CRI trains and consults with attorneys and investigators. We offer pro-bono consultation and mentorship around issues of mental health, penalty phase investigation, and social histories for sentencing. Our internship programs invite high school and college students to research issues central to our work. CRI interns have organized awareness campaigns on the prison industrial complex, planned fundraisers for local organizations, and interviewed former clients and their families.



Support for Families and Communities

CRI's Family Services program works with children and families of incarcerated people. We identify causes of inequity, instability, and incarceration and design supportive, deliverable programs to counteract these factors. Through this work, CRI supports families to alleviate the trauma of incarceration. CRI staff develop action plans with families struggling to maintain familial bonds and provide crisis intervention responding to specific family needs. This support may come in the form of purchasing clothing, finding housing, and connecting families with outside organizations.

Sharing Joy Through Reading, Music, and the Arts

CRI's programs bring children and their loved ones together through reading programs, and music and art programs that connect children with local artists and musicians to learn and play, to encourage creativity and to discover the healing power of art.

Advocacy & Organizing for Change

CRI believes that public safety is more than jailing and policing. To this end, we work with community coalitions to expand the definition of safety to include social services, investment in community, and abolition of the death penalty.



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FROM CLIENT DOMINGO BECERRA

“CRI and I have been through a lot of highs and challenges together. I was not the easiest client, because at first I did not trust anybody. But they became my mentors. I shaped a lot of who I am now from the things I learned to question. I learned how to become the man I am now with the help of CRI. They not only treat me as a client but as a person, a human being—I never really felt that before and it motivated me. I couldn't really read or write before CRI, let alone do a college course. I became an educated man because of CRI. They helped my legal team to get my sentence reduced. They did not give up on me. There's an adage that a friend is a person who stays in the room when everyone else walks out. CRI has shown that to be true.”

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FROM FAMILY MEMBER BERTHA ARIAS

“I was introduced to Community Resource Initiative when they were investigating the case for a member of our family. CRI was a safe place to go when I had scary questions about the case. They came through for us. They helped us get food, helped my son get books with voice recordings of his dad reading to him, helped get him a math tutor and into summer camp so he could meet new people. They took him on outings to see and talk about art. They worked to get us set up with therapy. CRI's doors are always open for families who are going through rough times. It doesn't matter if you are a low-income family, if you need school uniforms for your child, school supplies, shoes—they are helpful in every aspect. They are always that ear to listen.”

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FROM A CRI SUPPORTER

"I support CRI because of their dedication to humanity. They center the stories that connect us all, and I'm proud to give, year after year. "

— Juliana Jaoudi, Head of Nextdoor Global Enterprise Ad Sales



FROM AN ATTORNEY

"Mitigation investigation is at the heart of representing someone facing the ultimate punishment. As such, the quality of the persons/organization you hire in a capital case can be the difference between life or death for a defendant. I have worked with CRI directly or as a supervisor of cases since 2012. When CRI was a member of our capital case defense team, every client has received a sentence of life or less. I would not work with any other organization when I have a person's life in my hands."

— Diane Lozano, State Public Defender, Wyoming



Become a Part of CRI's Story

In supporting individuals and communities impacted by the criminal legal system, we better the health of our society as a whole. But CRI can't reach out to those who are in need of the greatest assistance without increased philanthropic support. Although our mitigation work is partially funded by the courts, our important family support and programs are not. It is community support through philanthropic investment that keeps CRI responsive to the needs of our clients and their families, centering humanity in an inhumane system.

Philanthropic investment in CRI allows us to:

- Expand our impact in the courts;
- Keep our established programs accessible to families;
- Develop responsive programming for communities as needs arise;
- Advance our community coalition work and advocacy for abolition of the death penalty.

We are currently seeking \$250,000 in new philanthropic investment this year to fund core capacity (our staff, workspace, capital costs, outreach and programs). To widen our reach to serve more clients and their families and the greater community, we have developed a fiscal forecast of \$5 million over the next five years. Your philanthropic investment is critical to sustaining CRI's work into the future. Please consider making a gift online at <https://www.communityresourceinitiative.org/support>. There are many ways to give. For more information on the variety of options for giving, please contact Emma Cott at emma@communityresourceinitiative.org. Thank you!

CRI

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