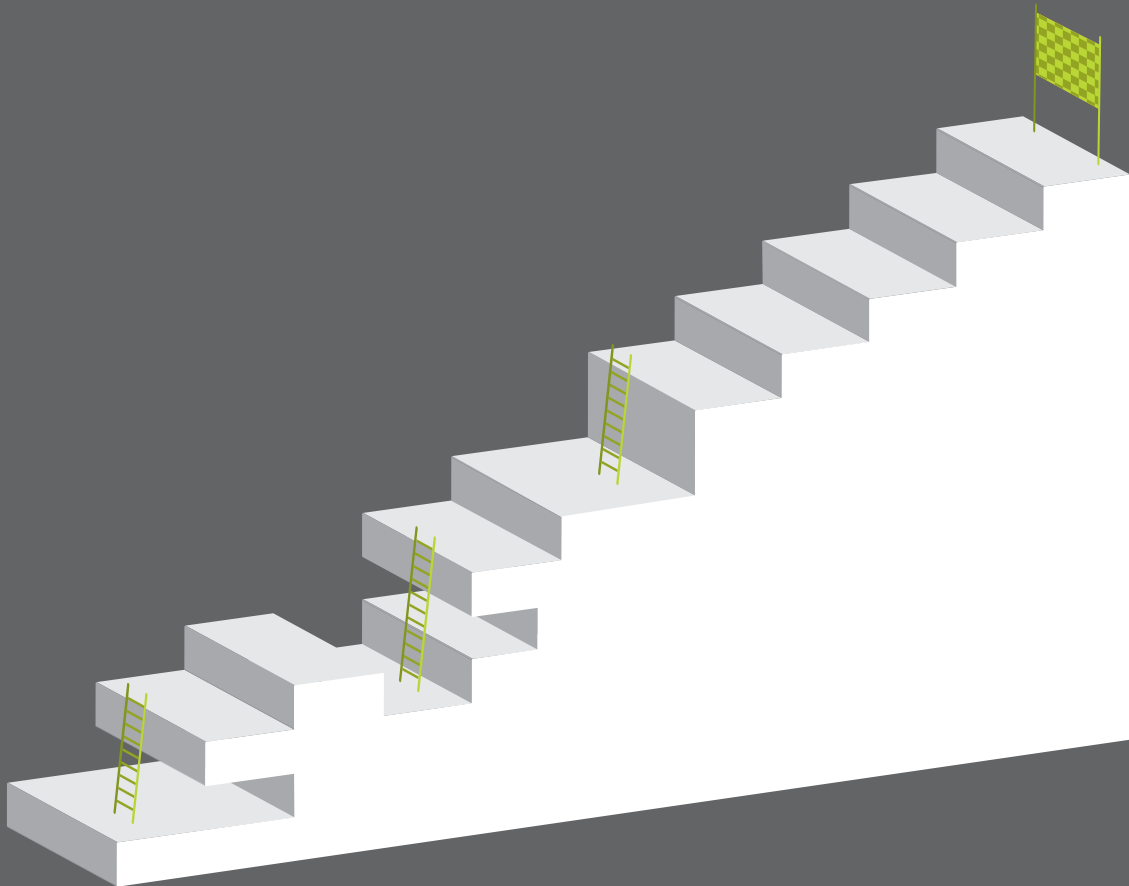


AUDACIOUS THINKING



A WORK IN PROGRESS

STRATEGY AND PERSISTENCE ARE KEY FACTORS TO OUR ONGOING SUCCESSES

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OSI-BALTIMORE SPOTLIGHT

OSI-BALTIMORE WELCOMES JESSIE GREENSPAN

as the new office assistant. Jessie grew up in Santa Fe, NM, and graduated from the University of Colorado-Boulder with a degree in International Affairs. She has worked as an event organizer for a zero-waste catering company; a field organizer for New Era Colorado, a youth oriented civic engagement organization; an intern for the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda; a hotel manager in Zanzibar; and a confectioner and manager for Sweet Revolution, a local organic candy company.

Because of the city's charm and her commitment to community building, Jessie is excited to be a part of OSI and to call Baltimore her new home.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

LEVERS OF CHANGE



BY DIANA MORRIS

Last fall, the Open Society Institute marked 15 years of working in Baltimore, and, at our Big Change Baltimore celebration, we had the chance to thank the many government agencies and private organizations that have partnered with us over the years. Together, we have identified levers of change that have significantly altered the city's terrain: for example, school suspensions are down and high school graduation rates are up, the prison population and recidivism rates are declining, and more people who need addiction treatment have access to it.

Figuring out which lever to pull and, equally important, building community determination and strength to pull that lever, take time. That is why we are particularly grateful for the long-term commitment that a growing number of community members—business people, government officials and ordinary citizens—are making to partner with us. **FLEXIBLE, INFORMED STRATEGIES ARE KEY, BUT SO IS PERSISTENCE.**

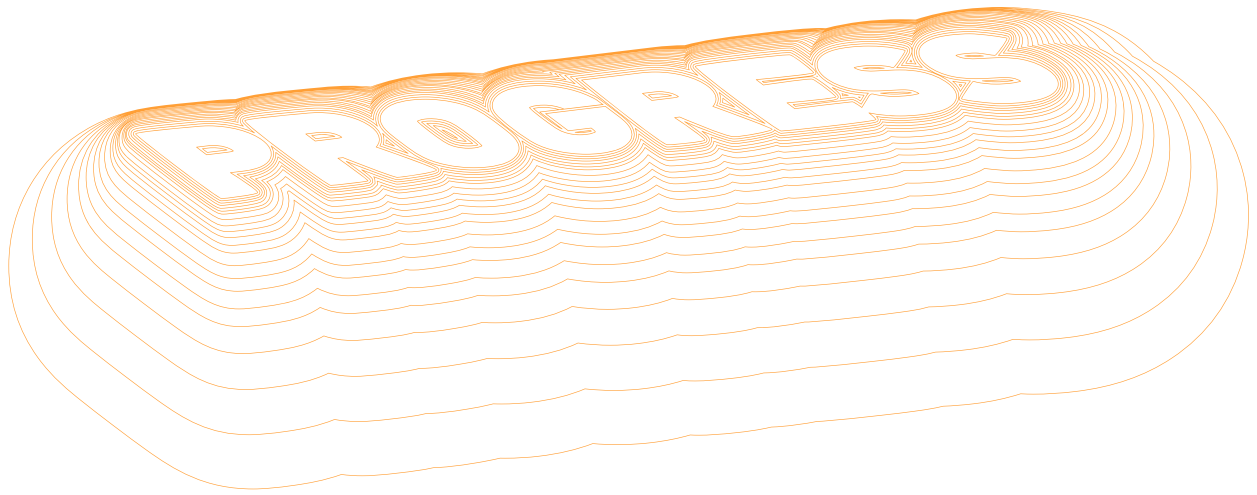
We have chosen big, audacious goals—focusing on problems made more complicated by Baltimore's concentrated poverty, deep segregation, and high levels of incarceration and untreated addiction. It requires a sustained effort to build the relationships necessary to tap and have confidence in each other's expertise, develop the capacity to

WE HAVE CHOSEN BIG, AUDACIOUS GOALS

collect and use data to measure progress, and communicate persuasively about a common good that challenges accepted beliefs and practices.

AND, NOW WE ARE SEEING THE RESULTS.





As the article in this issue of *Audacious Ideas* describes, our nine years of collective effort to reform ineffective and discriminatory school discipline policies have resulted in the adoption of regulations by the Maryland State Board of Education that require the state's schools to reduce the number and disproportionality of suspensions and expulsions.

**TO OUR DELIGHT, BALTIMORE CITY SCHOOLS—WHERE WE FIRST CONCEN-
TRATED OUR EFFORTS—IS RECOGNIZED
NATIONALLY FOR ITS WORK TO MAKE
SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES FAIR AND
EFFECTIVE.** Indeed, through complemen-
tary work of our Open Society colleagues
at the federal level, Attorney General
Eric Holder and Secretary of Education

CHANGE IN BALTIMORE'S TERRAIN HAS NOT TAKEN PLACE OVERNIGHT , OR SIMPLY.

Arne Duncan recently issued national guidelines to reduce suspensions and disparities in discipline practices—and, given Baltimore's demonstrated commitment to discipline reform, they made the announcement at one of our high schools.

Our persistence has resulted in an effective partnership with the Baltimore school district, a shared vision of increasing students' learning time by reducing suspensions, building their social and behavioral skills, and adopting

common-sense techniques to deal with misbehavior. Our next step—helping Maryland's school districts implement the discipline regulations—will involve training principals and teachers to offer alternatives to suspension, thereby increasing school attendance and achievement.

**CHANGING BELIEFS AND PRACTICES
IN THE CLASSROOM WILL NOT OCCUR
OVERNIGHT, DESPITE GOOD INTEN-
TIONS.** Our role as a foundation is to

encourage early adopters, make research on the deleterious effects of suspension well known, help districts to address concerns of parents and teachers, and provide resources to train school staff in alternative practices.

Whether increasing school attendance and achievement through discipline reform or reducing prison populations (see article on the Unger case), persistence is critical to our collective success. We do not follow a straight—or well-lit—path. We encounter stubborn obstacles. We take the time to research national trends and approaches elsewhere, taking advantage of our national Open Society office to braid national and local strategies to increase our impact. We work painstakingly to encourage others to join us in this deliberate effort to change our environment and expectations, building new structures and abandoning others. In the process, we strive to be better listeners and more skilled at calling out the racial, income and other disparities that shape our experiences and beliefs. **KNOWING THAT WE CANNOT REACH ANY OF THESE BIG GOALS WITHOUT PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS, WE WORK HARD TO GAIN CONSENSUS ON EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES AND COMMITMENTS TO USING DATA TO CHECK PROGRESS AND SHAPE REVISION.**

WE ANTICIPATE BIG AND LASTING CHANGE.

Change in Baltimore's terrain has not taken place overnight, or simply. But, it is taking hold. Living here, often siloed by class, race and avocation, we may not have noticed the contours of opportunity and achievement that newly characterize our city.

BUT, TAKE A LOOK.

IMPORTANT CHANGES HAVE TAKEN ROOT. They justify a surge of optimism—and your and our continued persistence to push barriers aside and continue to create wide pathways to opportunity and justice. 🌱

INSIGHTS

THE RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL: UNGER v. STATE



BY MONIQUE DIXON

DIRECTOR, CRIMINAL
AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

Overwhelmed by the bulging federal prison population, the U.S. Department of Justice recently announced that it would accept clemency petitions from prisoners serving life sentences for low-level, nonviolent drug offenses.

These petitions could lead to the release of hundreds of predominantly African American and Latino prisoners who were imprisoned as a result of excessive and discriminatory drug sentencing laws. This is a commendable step.

In Maryland, state officials are willing to release prisoners who were convicted of violent offenses to correct an injustice that happened years ago. The following case illustrates this point.

In 1979, J. Brown (not his real name), a 31-year old African American man, was tried for robbery and murder in Baltimore City. He was allegedly the “get-away” driver for a home invasion during which one of the residents was killed. **THE QUESTIONABLE CASE AGAINST HIM RESULTED IN TWO HUNG**

JURIES. FINALLY, THE THIRD JURY CONVICTED HIM, BUT ONLY AFTER THE JUDGE GAVE JURY INSTRUCTIONS NOW DEEMED UNLAWFUL. He received a life sentence with the possibility of parole.

During his incarceration, J. Brown took advantage of educational and job training

opportunities. He was even recommended for parole, but remained incarcerated because Maryland’s governors refused to release a lifer. Two years ago, Maryland’s highest court decided that the jury instructions given in criminal trials prior to 1980 were unconstitutional. These instructions allowed jurors to reject

fundamental principles, such as the constitutional requirement that a criminal defendant be considered innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. Believing that the flawed instructions created unfair trials, the Maryland Court of Appeals in *Unger v. State* ruled that people convicted in those criminal cases—over 200 prisoners—are entitled to new trials.

Since May 2013, with legal help from the University of Maryland School of Law's Clinical Program and the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, more than 50 people serving life sentences, including J. Brown, have been released from prison. Realizing the challenges they would face in retrying such cases, state's attorneys across Maryland agreed to release these prisoners under strict conditions, including supervised probation and enrollment in re-entry programs to help them find housing and employment. Social workers, supported by funding from the Open Society Institute-Baltimore, began developing home plans with prisoners—most of them senior citizens—while they were incarcerated. And, re-entry organizations, such as the Living Classrooms Foundation and the Jericho Re-entry Program provided job training and connected them to health benefits.

OSI-Baltimore is supporting this work for several reasons. **FIRST, PEOPLE ACCUSED OF CRIMES HAVE A CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL, WHICH INCLUDES THE PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE AND THE**

UNJUST

PROSECUTOR'S BURDEN TO PROVE GUILT BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT.

Had jurors received proper jury instructions, some may have not been convicted. Additionally, a disproportionate number of the prisoners entitled to new trials are African Americans who were tried by all-white juries, suggesting that unconstitutional racial discrimination occurred during jury selection.

SECONDLY, OSI WANTS TO CHALLENGE THE ASSUMPTION THAT PEOPLE CONVICTED OF VIOLENT CRIMES AND RELEASED FROM PRISON WILL COMMIT SIMILAR CRIMES. A U.S. Department of Justice report analyzed more than 200,000 prisoners from 15 states, including Maryland, and found that

BUT AS A LAWYER, I ALSO KNOW WE MUST CORRECT ERRORS AND MAINTAIN A CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM WE CAN BE PROUD OF—ONE WHERE THE PEOPLE INVOLVED RECEIVE JUSTICE AND SECOND CHANCES.

only 1.2% of prisoners convicted of murder and 2.5% of those convicted of rape were rearrested for similar offenses within three years of their release. And research shows that people age 50 or older are less likely to reoffend, giving prosecutors and judges more confidence to release or grant new trials for prisoners incarcerated for decades as most pose no public safety risk.

FINALLY, RELEASING AGING PRISONERS WHO POSE NO RISK COULD SAVE STATE DOLLARS. In Maryland, it costs about \$38,000 annually to incarcerate a person and even more to care for an aging prisoner with medical conditions. Many of the prisoners who have been released by the *Unger* decision are 60 or older, in failing health and not a threat to public safety. With support, these aging prisoners can safely return to communities and become contributing Maryland residents.

In this work, we must remember the surviving family members of victims who lost their lives. As someone related to people who lost or almost lost their lives to violence, I know the harm done well. But as a lawyer, I also know we must correct errors and maintain a criminal justice system we can be proud of—one where the people involved receive justice and second chances.





THE RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL:

COMING HOME

JEFFREY KERSEY

When Jeffrey Kersey went to prison in 1973, he was 23 years old. Forty years later, this past June, Kersey was released. He is now 63. Much has changed in the world since Kersey was convicted of murder in an armed robbery that went bad. But even more has changed in Kersey.

“When I came in, I was a bad character, very bad,” he says now, from his home in Frederick. “I was very, very violent for most of my life. And then I had a drug addiction. I started using drugs in 1967.”

TODAY, KERSEY IS SOBER, CLEAN AND MORE MATURE. Prison was tough. Four decades have gone by. But Kersey is determined not to waste his sobriety and his hard-fought maturity on regrets.

“I don’t want to start feeling sorry for myself. I made a lot of mistakes. I made those choices and I have to live with my life the way it is because of those choices,” he said. “Do I regret that I was involved



"I BELIEVE EVERY LIVING SOUL HAS THE CAPACITY TO CHANGE," HE SAYS. "EVERY INDIVIDUAL CAN DO IT. YOU JUST HAVE TO HAVE COURAGE."

"When you come from where I come from, as far down as I come from—I was really low-down—it's hard to overcome those things. When you can look in the mirror and say, 'You are messed up,' you can start to change. If you don't have courage and say what's wrong and put in the hard work to make those changes, you'll never make them."

Kersey started working on bettering himself about 10 years into his sentence. He made a list of things he needed to change, from things as seemingly minute as his wardrobe to as important as his education level.

"THE MAIN REASON I WAS SO BAD IS BECAUSE I WAS SO UNEDUCATED," HE ADMITS NOW. "I WAS NOT A SMART PERSON. I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE DECISIONS."

In prison, Kersey earned his GED, an associate's degree, learned computer skills and worked to get his bachelor's degree. He's 12 credits short, but plans to go back to school to finish his degree in social work.

Kersey also worked in the prison furniture plant, avoided watching television and read instead. He planned fundraisers for groups he read about in the newspaper who were doing good things to help recently-released prisoners. After some time, he knew he needed to change the crowd around him, who only knew him by his street name and his old mentality.

So he asked to be moved to a different prison. Moving away from a place where he was well known came with its own dangers; in prison, having a reputation—and a posse—can offer protection.

IN PRISON, KERSEY EARNED HIS GED, AN ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE, LEARNED COMPUTER SKILLS AND WORKED TO GET HIS BACHELOR'S DEGREE.

BUT KERSEY SAID HE WANTED A DIFFERENT LIFE, BETTER THAN THE ONE THAT LANDED HIM IN PRISON IN THE FIRST PLACE. So he made the tough decision—one in a string of good decisions—to go to the Maryland Correctional Institution in Hagerstown, where no one knew who he was. There he served the rest of his time until his release this year.

"I believe every living soul has the capacity to change," he says. "Every individual can do it. **YOU JUST HAVE TO HAVE COURAGE.**"

in things that victimized a lot of people? Yes, I regret that. I don't like the fact that I made the mistakes I did. But I have to try to live my life and go on."

With the help of organizations such as AmeriCorps, Living Classrooms Foundation and the University of Maryland School of Social Work, Kersey is better able to live a stable, successful life.

HE HAS A JOB, AN APARTMENT AND JUST BOUGHT A CAR. HE USES HIS OWN LIFE EXPERIENCES TO GUIDE HIS WORK AS A CASE MANAGER AND MEDIATOR AT COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVE MEDIATION (CALM).



THE RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL:

BEGINNING ANew

KAREEM HASAN

Kareem Hasan was a different person when he went to prison 37 years ago. As a teenager, Karl Brown (Hasan's given name) was an example to other young people of how *not* to behave.

"I didn't listen. I didn't pay nobody no mind," says Brown, who changed his name in prison after becoming a Muslim. "I thought I knew everything. That's what led me to prison."

At 17, Hasan was charged with first degree murder. He was given a sentence of life with the possibility of parole and,

although Hasan was recommended for parole at least twice during his near-40-year stay, strict "life means life" policies kept him behind bars until May 21, 2013.

HE IS NOW 55 YEARS OLD AND IS LEARNING TO ADJUST TO A NEW WORLD THAT HAS SPROUTED UP AROUND HIM OVER THE COURSE OF HIS SENTENCE.

"My niece is 13 years old. She's helping me with my cell phone," Hasan says, with a chuckle. "When I went into prison we still had rotary phones. Now I come out and they've got computer phones."

But new technology is one of the few things that Hasan finds to laugh about, when considering nearly four decades



"MY MAIN MESSAGE FOR THEM IS TO BE PATIENT AND LET THINGS WORK THEMSELVES OUT, NO MATTER WHAT IT IS THEY'RE GOING THROUGH."

We made mistakes and now we have to be productive members of society. We still owe something to society for what we did."

RENEW

Hasan is candid when he says that he wasn't truly remorseful about his role in a man's death until 1979, three years into his prison sentence, when his own father died.

"It helped me understand that losing a family member is something hard," he says. "It took that for me to see what I've done to hurt somebody else's family. I'm definitely sorry—and I'm remorseful. I pray every day that God will forgive. And if there was anything I could do for [the victim's] family so they could see I'm a better person, I want to do it. I was wrong. But showing them that I'm a changed man is better than telling them."

To be sure, Hasan has regrets. He never married or had children, and he likely won't have them now.

BUT HE HAS FOUND SOME PEACE.

Hasan's mother died in December 2013, seven months after his release.

"WHEN I GOT OUT, THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT ALL HER CHILDREN WERE TOGETHER IN 37 YEARS," SAYS HASAN, THE YOUNGEST OF SEVEN SIBLINGS. "SHE SAW ME COME OUT OF PRISON, SHE SAW ME GET A JOB, SHE SAW ME GET MY DRIVER'S PERMIT AND SHE SAW ME DOING POSITIVE THINGS. I'M SO GRATEFUL FOR THAT."

He's also grateful for the assistance he received at the Living Classrooms Foundation—from support groups to computer lab access to job placement assistance. He's grateful, mostly, that people didn't give up on him.

"I WAS 17 YEARS OLD AND I REALIZE WHAT I'VE DONE. BUT I HOPE THAT PEOPLE WILL JUDGE ME AS I AM NOW."

"Being young, sometimes you don't realize the seriousness or the severity of the situation you're in until it's too late," Hasan says. "I was 17 years old and I realize what I've done. But I hope that people will judge me as I am now." ☼

spent in prison. When he isn't working at a city wastewater treatment plant or spending time with family, Hasan takes time to impress upon other at-risk young men or those recently-released from prison the seriousness of what he did and what his responsibility is now.

"My main message for them is to be patient and let things work themselves out, no matter what it is they're going through," he says. "I tell them to remember, if you try to force things that's when things go wrong. That's what I did.

INSIGHTS

A LESSON ON ZERO-TOLERANCE



BY JANE SUNDIUS
DIRECTOR, EDUCATION
AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

A remarkable, positive change is coming to schools in Baltimore and across Maryland. Schools and districts are making a critical shift from inflexible, punitive and unfair school discipline practices and towards commonsense practices that nurture children, teach them appropriate behaviors and include consequences for misbehavior that help students learn—and stay in school.

THIS IS A LONG-OVERDUE MOVEMENT FROM “ZERO-TOLERANCE” DISCIPLINE POLICIES THAT LED TO HARSH PUNISHMENTS FOR EVEN MINOR INFRACTIONS, OFTEN OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS OR EXPULSIONS. These misguided approaches doubled the suspension rate for students over the last three decades and fell most heavily on African American boys and students with disabilities.

With many partners, OSI-Baltimore worked for many years to get those policies changed in Baltimore City. Local success led to work with the state. And in January, the Maryland State Board of Education passed new disciplinary regulations aimed at ending unfair discipline policies statewide.

WITH THIS GROUNDBREAKING MOVE, MARYLAND BECOMES ONE OF THE FIRST STATES TO REVAMP ITS SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES.

The change in Maryland came on the heels of another groundbreaking announcement as U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Attorney General Eric Holder released extraordinary new recommendations on school discipline policies. This guidance makes clear that schools must ensure that discipline policies are fairly administered and that they rely more on teacher training and behavioral support for students and less on suspensions and expulsions.

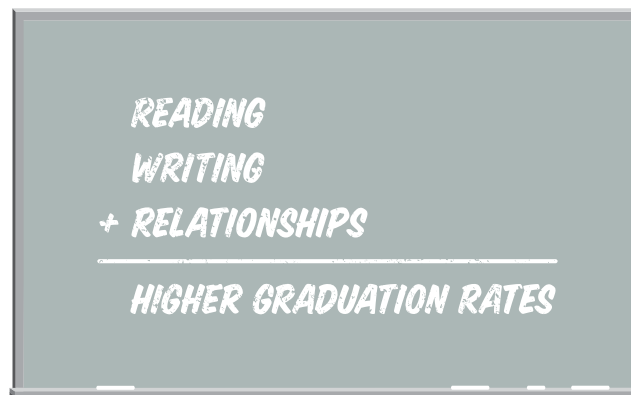
WE AT OSI-BALTIMORE HAVE BEEN ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE IN THIS AREA FOR YEARS.

We knew from compelling research that zero-tolerance policies and overuse of suspensions do not improve student behavior or school safety and climate. Instead, these rigid policies lead to student disengagement, higher dropout rates and, ultimately, to negative social and economic consequences.

It was particularly troubling that such policies lead to disproportionately high rates of suspension for African American youth, males and students with disabilities. Worse still, they increase the chances that these students become involved in the juvenile justice system.

In 2003-04, suspensions in Baltimore City Public Schools exceeded 26,000. This extraordinarily high number galvanized OSI-Baltimore to begin its near decade-long effort.

We began a campaign to educate the schools and community about the overuse of suspensions and the need to change Baltimore's discipline policies. We worked with school officials and parent, teacher and advocacy organizations to help the school system rewrite its discipline policy. A new Code of Conduct was adopted in 2008 that limited the use of suspensions and provided alternatives, such as after-school detention, anger management or conflict resolution sessions, as well as a wider range of graduated consequences for all infractions. **SUSPENSIONS DROPPED BY NEARLY TWO-THIRDS, FALLING TO 8,600 BY 2013.**



IN 2003-4, SUSPENSIONS IN BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS EXCEEDED 26,000.

Additionally, dropout rates for African American boys fell by 49 percent and graduation rates for that group increased from one in two to two in three.

We then began providing support to the Maryland State Department of Education, working with its board and our partners. When the board completed its examination of discipline practices statewide, we supported their effort to show districts that nonviolent transgressions are teachable opportunities, not suspendable ones, and to revamp practices so that suspensions, when they are necessary, are handed out fairly.

not allow dangerous students to stay in school. Students who are violent or bring weapons to school will still receive appropriate punishment—typically suspension or expulsion. But to handle more minor transgressions, there are many options. Over the next year, OSI-

Baltimore will support trainings and programs needed to ensure schools are supportive and safe.

School should educate students about reading, math and technology, and also about getting along with others, disagreeing productively and learning from mistakes. The evidence simply does not support the use of suspensions as a behavioral teaching tool. Suspensions interrupt a student's education, fail to show students why the behavior is not acceptable and don't teach more appropriate behavior.

WE AT OSI-BALTIMORE HAVE BEEN ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE IN THIS AREA FOR YEARS.

And we shared facts about how zero-tolerance practices fall most heavily on African American and Latino students, which make this a key civil rights issue as well.

Fair and reasonable discipline policies will help Maryland students of all backgrounds. And despite critics' assertions, the new state and national guidance will

When we punish students by kicking them out of school for nonviolent infractions, we've lost the opportunity to instruct them. But when discipline practices change, students' outcomes change—for the better.

AND THAT IS SOMETHING FOR US ALL TO CHEER ABOUT. ☺

PROFILE

TAKING THE NEXT STEPS TO SUSTAINABILITY

How do you take a good idea and make it grow to its full potential? And how, in this time of diminishing resources, can you make a grassroots project into a sustainable program?

In 1998, OSI-Baltimore created the Baltimore Community Fellowships Program to identify and support the unsung innovators working in the city's most underserved communities—believing then, as now, that providing these social entrepreneurs with the tools to get their ideas off the ground, **THEIR INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND PROJECTS WOULD IMPROVE THE LIVES OF BALTIMORE'S MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.**

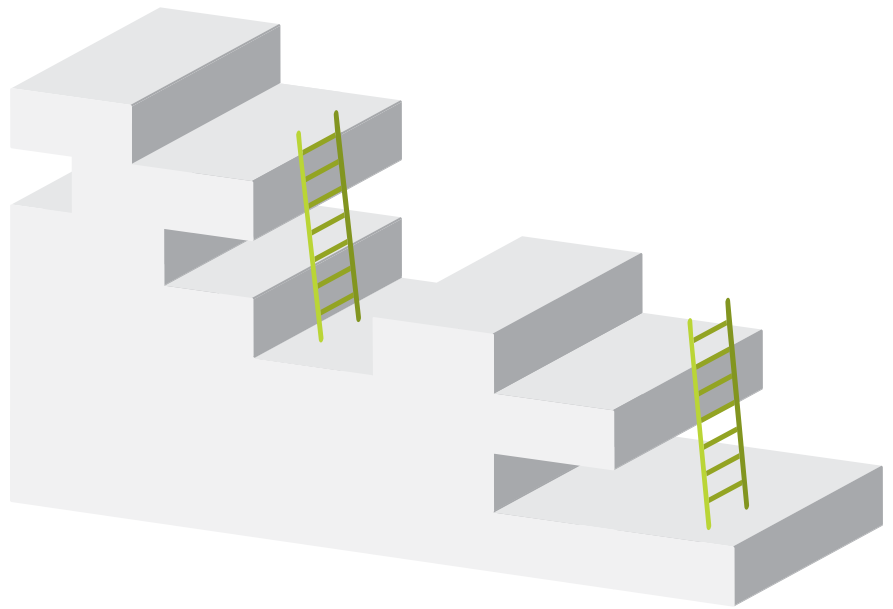
IN 1998, OSI-BALTIMORE CREATED THE BALTIMORE COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIPS PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT THE UNSUNG INNOVATORS WORKING IN THE CITY'S MOST UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES.

But over the last 15 years, a pattern has emerged: Most projects take at least five years to develop and flourish. Many of the alumni fellows who embody the entrepreneurial spirit, need more than just seed money. Often, they need to adopt business principles to advance and sustain their work—and those principles change as an organization grows.

Recently, 11 alumni fellows took part in two OSI-Baltimore-funded

entrepreneurship courses at the University of Baltimore Merrick School of Business. Both classes—"Social Enterprise" and "Design Baltimore Link"—were designed to help fellows either tap into their earned income potential or strengthen their organization's brand and promotional materials, with the idea that they could increase their fundraising and influence through more sophisticated strategies and marketing.

FELLOW **SHANTEL RANDOLPH**
(2007) WAS THE TOP PRIZE
WINNER IN THE DESIGN LINK
COURSE, AND **PATRICE HUTTON**
(2008) TOOK THE HIGHEST
AWARD IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE.



At the end of the courses, participants presented their projects to a jury of experts and were awarded prizes ranging from \$2,000 to \$25,000 for writing smart, creative business plans to support their projects going forward. Fellow Shantel Randolph (2007) was the top prize winner in the Design Link course, and Patrice Hutton (2008) took the highest award in Social Enterprise.





SHANTEL RANDOLPH (LEFT)
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE
MARYLAND FOSTER YOUTH
RESOURCE CENTER

SHALITA O'NEALE (RIGHT)
FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF THE MARYLAND FOSTER YOUTH
RESOURCE CENTER

THEIR INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND PROJECTS WOULD IMPROVE THE LIVES OF BALTIMORE'S MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.

SHANTEL RANDOLPH, who works with young adults who age out of the foster care system, said the Design Link course was invaluable because she and her staff have found it challenging over the years to adequately communicate to funders and the general public just whom they serve and how they serve them.

"How do you convey a message that is simple, but that makes an impact at the same time?"

RANDOLPH SAYS. "WE REALLY NEEDED TO TAKE A LOOK AT OUR MESSAGING AND MAKE IT CRISP, CLEAR AND MORE DISTINCT."

Randolph and a team of professors and designers at UB spent a semester reviewing aspects of the Maryland Foster Youth Resource Center, including its website, logo and even the name of the organization.

Randolph was surprised to learn that her website had unnecessary information that distracted visitors from the most important material. Her logo included a pair of brown-skinned hands reaching upwards, possibly giving the mistaken impression that the nonprofit only served African American youth. And the organization's business-like name conveyed "state agency"—an inaccurate implication—and not much else.

EMPOWER INSPIRE

"The professors really questioned us: Why do you do what you do? Why should I care what you do? Why should this be important to me?" Randolph said. "I thought we were doing a good job of conveying that. But it was really good to have a fresh perspective. It turned out that we had the passion but they had the ability to craft our message in a way that made sense."

So Randolph's team redesigned the logo and is reimagining the organization's website. Most importantly, she is changing the name of her nonprofit to "Hope Forward" with a new tagline of **"EMPOWER. INSPIRE. DREAM."**

"We really work with young people to inspire hope in them—hope that they can get a job, move into that new place, get off the streets and move forward with their new life," Randolph said.

WITH HER PRIZE MONEY, RANDOLPH PLANS TO REVAMP THE NONPROFIT'S MARKETING MATERIALS AND STAGE A RE-LAUNCH EVENT, WITH THE GOALS OF REINTRODUCING HER FRESHLY REBRANDED ORGANIZATION AND ATTRACTING NEW FUNDERS.

"WE REALLY WORK WITH
YOUNG PEOPLE TO INSPIRE
HOPE IN THEM."

"HOW DO YOU CONVEY A MESSAGE THAT
IS SIMPLE, BUT THAT MAKES AN IMPACT
AT THE SAME TIME?"



PATRICE HUTTON founded Writers in Baltimore to offer literary development classes to low-income public school students. The program uses volunteers in the undergraduate and graduate writing programs at Johns Hopkins University to provide in-school, after-school and summer creative writing workshops to Baltimore City middle school students.

THE PROGRAM HAS BEEN INCREASINGLY SUCCESSFUL, DRAWING 150 STUDENTS EACH YEAR WHO LEAVE WITH DEMONSTRABLE SKILLS—OFTEN RETURNING THE FOLLOWING YEAR. BUT THE CHALLENGE BECAME, HOW COULD IT BRING IN MONEY?

After taking the Social Enterprise course, Hutton learned that just about any nonprofit can branch out and generate income that can be used to sustain the organization.

"I often heard, 'You need to be selling something,'" Hutton said. "But there's definitely a tension between wanting to do something that serves kids and wanting to do something that makes money. I had to shift my thinking. Initially, making money seemed like I would be robbing those kids of something."

Hutton discovered that similar programs charge schools for their curricula—and that schools do have budgets to purchase them. "I felt better about it when I began to understand that trying to work towards sustainability will be helpful for the life of the program," she says.



The course was extremely helpful to Hutton, whose training is in creative writing, not business. She now recognizes that she can earn income from her writing program by expanding the

curriculum to include poetry—something the schools want—and providing training to teachers that will help them meet new state standards—something the schools need.

AFTER TAKING THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE COURSE, HUTTON LEARNED THAT JUST ABOUT ANY NONPROFIT CAN BRANCH OUT AND GENERATE INCOME THAT CAN BE USED TO SUSTAIN THE ORGANIZATION.



PATRICE HUTTON
(READING FROM BOOK) FOUNDER AND
DIRECTOR OF WRITERS IN BALTIMORE SCHOOLS

"OSI HAS MADE ALL OF OUR DREAMS POSSIBLE, FROM HELPING US GET OFF THE GROUND IN THE FIRST PLACE, TO DEVELOPMENT CONSULTING, TO GIVING US THE TOOLS TO MOVE FORWARD TO BECOME A SELF-SUSTAINING ORGANIZATION."

"Getting to work on a business idea under the direction of a professional instructor and with a group of business students really fleshed out our ideas and gave us a timeline for implementation," Hutton said.

HUTTON WILL USE SOME OF HER \$25,000 AWARD TO EXPAND AND LENGTHEN THE WRITING CURRICULUM—FROM 24 WEEKS TO 36 WEEKS—MAKING THE PROGRAM MORE ATTRACTIVE TO SCHOOLS. Hutton then plans to sell the training of the curriculum and also her services providing the after-school workshops.

"WE'RE STILL FIGURING OUT HOW TO DO THIS, BUT WE ARE MUCH FARTHER NOW THAN WE WERE BEFORE TAKING THIS COURSE," HUTTON SAYS. "OSI has made all of our dreams possible, from helping us get off the ground in the first place, to development consulting, to giving us the tools to move forward to become a self-sustaining organization." ❄️

THERE'S DEFINITELY A TENSION BETWEEN WANTING TO DO SOMETHING THAT SERVES KIDS AND WANTING TO DO SOMETHING THAT MAKES MONEY.





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AUDACIOUS THINKING FOR LASTING CHANGE

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OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE-BALTIMORE focuses on the root causes of three intertwined problems in our city and state: drug addiction, an over-reliance on incarceration, and obstacles that impede youth in succeeding inside and out of the classroom. We also support a growing corps of social entrepreneurs committed to underserved populations in Baltimore. Before we make a single grant, we analyze the root causes of a problem, cull research and examine current practices. Because we aim for lasting sustainable solutions, we engage public and private partners from the start. It is only then, with a clear picture of the problem, that we begin to focus our approach and diligently craft a roadmap for change.