



TRANSGENDER
GENDER-VARIANT
& INTERSEX
JUSTICE PROJECT



ANNUAL
REPORT

2014-15





TRANSGENDER GENDER-VARIANT & INTERSEX JUSTICE PROJECT

TGI Justice Project is a group of transgender, gender variant and intersex people—inside and outside of prisons, jails and detention centers—creating a united family in the struggle for survival and freedom. We work in collaboration with others to forge a culture of resistance and resilience to strengthen us for the fight against human rights abuses, imprisonment, police violence, racism, poverty, and societal pressures. We seek to create a world rooted in self-determination, freedom of expression, and gender justice.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EMERITUS
Miss Major Griffin-Gracy

Janetta Johnson, *Executive Director*
Woods Ervin, *Administrative Director*
danni marilyn west, *Development Director*
KellyLou Densmore, Esq., *Staff Attorney*
Tianay Pulphus, *Re-Entry Coordinator*
Peaches Banks, *Leadership Team*
StormMiguel Florez, *Leadership Team*
Malachi Garza, *Leadership Team*
Billy Chen, *Leadership Team*
Paper Buck, *Leadership Team*
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OUR Origins

In 2004, Alexander Lee, Esq initiated TGIJP through a Soros Justice Fellowship (from Open Society Institute), to provide legal services for transgender and gender variant/non-conforming people, primarily in CA prisons, jails and detention centers. In 2005, one of TGIJP's forebears, the Transgender in Prison Committee (TIP), joined TGIJP, becoming the community organizing program Miss Major was hired to direct. Miss Major Griffin-Gracy's leadership drove TGIJP and she became the Executive Director of the organization. In 2010, TGIJP re-oriented toward peer legal advocacy programs, continuing legal work through volunteer supervision from Matt Lutton, Esq.



MISS MAJOR SURROUNDED BY MANY LONG-TERM TGIJP MEMBERS

For a time during these powerful years, the staff was entirely trans people of color, with a majority of the staff being formerly incarcerated trans women of color. In 2014, TGIJP began rebuilding its legal program, and in 2015 we again hired a staff attorney. 2015 also included the formal passing of the torch as Miss Major retired and Janetta Johnson took the lead of TGIJP as Executive Director.

In Loving Memory



A family is never the same after members become ancestors. For TGIJP the sudden loss of Melenie and then Min BobbieJean, was a particularly devastating beginning to 2014. **Melenie Mahinamalamalama Eleneke** joined TGIJP in 2004, and, until her passing in September 2013, she played almost every role in the organization from mail program coordinator to fundraiser to newsletter editor. Melenie was also a fierce advocate for the preservation of the culture, language and spiritual practices of the Hawaiian people, and brought this commitment to all parts of her life.

Minister **BobbieJean Baker** moved to the Bay Area from Memphis, TN in 1992 and worked with trans women overcoming substance abuse and homelessness. In time she became ordained at the City of Refuge United Church of Christ in San Francisco and was the lead singer in the trans group Transcendence Gospel Choir. Although our hearts are heavy with the grief of losing such dear sisters and friends, we are grateful to count ourselves among the lucky recipients of their bright lights, fierce love, and generous spirit. **In your memory we continue the struggle for survival, self-determination, and freedom.**

Letter FROM THE Executive Director

Transgender, Gender Variant and Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP) is unique in what we do, who we serve as well as who is directing the organization. TGIJP is one of very few organizations serving incarcerated TGI people, is one of very few that have a staff that is a majority Black people and a majority trans and gender variant people, is one of very few organizations with an Executive Director who is a Black trans woman, and, importantly, one of very few organizations with a consistent track record from more than a decade of Black trans community organizing and accountability.

Over these recent years of increased visibility and violence, TGIJP's work to build a united family in the struggle for survival and freedom has steadily grown thanks to loving community support and shifts in strategies for foundation funding. Together, we have been able to grow TGIJP's budget in stable and transformative ways. As we stretch into 2016 and beyond, we are excited to continue to work towards creating economic justice in the world at large while providing economic opportunity in house. Through expanding our programs and size we have been able to collaborate for wrap around support services for folks who are re-entering from incarceration. As our growth has continued, we are now able to directly hire community members for leadership development positions or for individually tailored re-entry program positions, especially where useful as part of a parole plan.

Our experience at TGIJP affirms the truth that confronting the issues impacting currently and formerly incarcerated trans women of color leads to uplifting social justice movements as a whole. As you will see, TGIJP was extremely active in 2014 and 2015 working to build safety and power for the TGI community. While our tactics are varied – from direct services to accountability processes with service providers; from prison and jail visits to membership retreats; from publishing our newsletter Stiletto to coalition building; or from giving interviews, talks, and panels to intergenerational direct action – TGIJP's commitment is to Black trans liberation; to economic and racial justice.

This report offers an overview of our work from the last few years. As we look into the future and continue to grow our programs, like the Melenie Elenke Grassroots Re-Entry Program, we are also exploring potential to launch additional necessary work like securing a California Imprisoned TGI Peoples' Bill of Rights or potentially hosting a Leadership for Liberation School for local TGI leaders from nationally diverse locations.

As the Executive Director, I am honored to move TGIJP into this next phase of our work and to walk in Miss Major's shoes, which remind me daily that the fight for racial and economic justice is not a hobby, its not a job, its our lives. #BlackLivesMatter

Be Safe and Stay Strong,

Janetta Johnson

Janetta Johnson
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2014 VISIBILITY & VIOLENCE

Grief and organized resistance were central themes for our community this year. Our many transitions included big moves with our office space, advances in internal infrastructure and external coalition development. With increases in violence targeting TGI people, throughout the year TGIJP and our members rose up together alongside millions to demand real changes in “business as usual.”



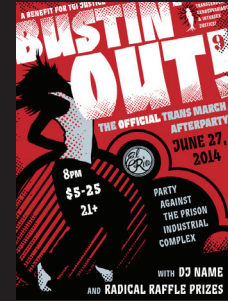
Trans leader CeCe McDonald receives parole after serving time for self-defense from racist, transphobic violence.



In the spring of 2014, TGIJP joined the St. James Infirmary's office space, enabling our return to San Francisco. St. James, a peer-based occupational health and safety clinic for sex workers and their families, shares our commitment to justice and liberation. Our collaborations have created a space that provides wrap-around support for TGI people in their re-entry.



TGIJP hosted “STOP PROFILING & STIGMATIZING TRANS WOMEN: An evening with Monica Jones & Bay Area trans liberation organizers”



TGI's Bustin'Out 9! Party Against the Prison Industrial Complex



SF Pride 2014 Grand Marshals included TGIJP's Executive Director, Miss Major Griffin-Gracy.

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE



TGIJP's 2014 issue of Stiletto is sent to our folks inside and outside of incarceration.



Author and trans activist Janet Mock's memoir, *Redefining Realness*, debuted at Number 19 on New York Times' nonfiction bestsellers list.

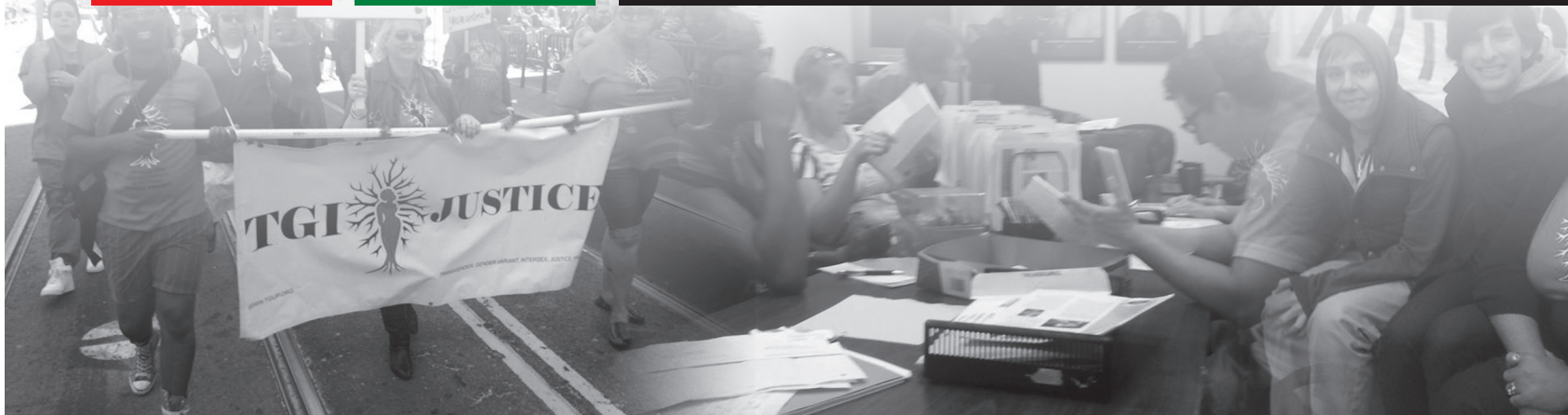
Prisons Are Not Sexy

2014 SF PRIDE's after-party was a prison themed play party called “Prison of Love.” TGIJP initiated an open letter calling for accountability, reading in part: *We are not interested in yucking anyone's yum or shaming anyone who has*

fantasies or fetishes about ideas of this real-life violence. We are not interested in censorship or policing anyone's sex life. We are interested in public space and party themes that get us closer to liberation from systemic and administrative

violence and do not recreate a culture that normalizes or continues our oppression. Our push back is about navigating the legal and extra-legal targeting and criminalization of our communities. Even though the efforts did not

win the requested change to the party theme or a donation to community organizations from funds made at the party, the movement succeeded in building stronger collaborations and in creating a cultural intervention.





In October of 2014, 40 members from TGIJP pulled together for our semi annual retreat. We drove over 75 miles from San Francisco to the Quaker Center in Ben Lomond, CA to spend 5 days in the woods, learning and bonding as a team.

The woods at the Quaker Center welcomed us with towering trees and deep quiet. We set ourselves up in cabins and settled in. Our beloved community member, Gail, was chef for the week, and TGI staff supported her in the kitchen, dishing out

delicious meals in one of the beautiful community lodges we had available to us.

Programming consisted of story sharing, workshops on health and community resources for trans women, and time spent practicing healing and spirituality within community. The story sharing—formally facilitated by Miss Major—had the biggest impact on all of us who participated. Just sitting and sharing with one another what brought us to the space and to

this organization was very powerful—especially given how brave we were with the pieces of ourselves that we shared with one another. We also made sure to take time and write messages of encouragement to our beloved folks inside, who are always on our minds.

While we enjoyed walking through the woods and enjoying the fresh country air, we also had a good time travelling to the sites close by. On a day trip to Santa Cruz we visited the boardwalk

for carnival rides, arcade games, and beach time. Although some rides weren't open, we had a great time just hanging out, playing games, and standing together, toes in the sand, near the ocean.

Thanks to this retreat, we were able to create deeper bonds with each other, which makes it easier to support each other in times of need - which come often. Those bonds also encourage us to fight harder for our sisters, family, and community members, inside and out.

BLACK LIVES MATTER

2014 came to an end with uprisings and protests growing across the country and world, united with a single message: Black Lives Matter. Building behind a knowing that the intervention of Black Lives Matter strategically means ALL Black lives, TGIJP has been active in growing trans leadership and participation in the Black liberation movement. So long as the forces of violence against our people, like racism, police brutality, transmisogyny, economics, gentrification and displacement, continue to intensify, we will continue to have to fight to survive, but we will proudly also continue to fight to win.

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

CORE COLLABORATORS



Solidarity with the People of Ferguson

Excerpt from our statement:

As an organization led by formerly incarcerated Black transgender women, we are certainly no strangers to police profiling, systemic criminalization, and brutality at

the hands of law enforcement. We are with you in heart, spirit, and action as you push back against those in power who would try to kill, harm, degrade, and silence

you. The revolutionary work you are doing in the streets of Ferguson, standing tall in the face of what must be unbearable grief, empowers and emboldens us.



Leaders from TGIJP and El/La Para TransLatinas meet to build relationships and expand organizational connections.



TGIJP begins facilitating monthly groups for TGI people in SF County Jail.



2015 #TURNUP4TRANSPEOPLE

2015 was a year of militant engagement towards trans justice. Our work to change the institutional systems that create the system of beliefs behind interpersonal transphobia and racism, took many different forms, but steadily reminded us that direct action gets the goods. Whether the action was our members inside of prisons filing a written complain (or 602) against a violation or was a blockade of traffic or a building, TGIJP worked earnestly to meet our goals of safety and economic justice.



TAJA's Coalition was formed in response to the murder of local trans community member Taja Gabrielle DeJesus.

TGIJP has been deeply involved in creating and leading the Trans Activists for Justice & Accountability Coalition. TAJA's Coalition initially held #Trans-LiberationTuesday, a coordinated

political action by hundreds of people, in SF on 2/10/15 and has since grown to a staff of 2 people and a 115k budget. Our mission is to stop the genocide of trans women of color.



Stiletto Spring 2015 Release Party.



TGIJP received National Lawyers Guild Bay Area Chapter's **Partners In Liberation Award**, due to our collaborative efforts fighting for transgender rights.



Bustin' Out! 2015 was themed around #BlackTransLivesMatter.

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE



The original platform of TAJA's Coalition urged non-TGI people's intervention in anti-TGI violence; safety, housing and economic justice; as well as No New SF Jail/an end to criminalization of our community.



TGIJP attended the **National Trans Anti-Violence Convening**, hosted by the Transgender Law Center, concurrent with the INCITE! Color of Violence 4 conference in Chicago, IL.



Hosted **Sistahs Doin' It For Ourselves: Leadership Retreat** 25 members for 4 days/3 nights



Yard sale in SF to raise funds for Melenie Elenke Grassroots Re-Entry Program.



Collaborated with CCWP to co-present with incarcerated trans leaders at **Chowchilla Prison Health Fair** (CCWF).





THE MOVEMENT FOR BLACK LIVES

Hundreds of Black freedom fighters came together for the **Movement for Black Lives Convening in Cleveland, OH**. TGIJP initiated and ran fundraising and logistical support for a Black trans cohort and pre-gathering of 18 leaders from across the country, primarily from TGIJP, Audre Lorde Project and BreakOut.



Initiated by BreakOut, **#TMoR**, a national day of action was led locally by TGIJP and TAJA's Coalition. **#HereToStay** "Denying Shelter and Dignity to Black Trans

Women is a Weapon in the War on Black People" was our local message, as we, with the help of the Black Out Collective and our community, strategically escalated our engagements with Episcopal Community Services, demanding and winning:

the hiring of trans people so the staff better represents the community being served; establishment of a trans inclusion council to review complaints of anti-trans prejudice; work towards ending anti-trans culture; and expansion of safe access to shelter housing.



Despite stalls in our work for a safer housing policy for TGI people in SF county jail, TGIJP separately fought for and celebrates, the **#NoNewJail** victory vote, confirming that SF Supervisors will reject the jail (re)build plan.

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

As an intervention in the increase in murders of trans women and to draw attention to the ongoing war against Black people, particularly targeting Black trans people, **#BlackTransLiberationTuesday** was a national day of action to stop the murders and to create space to *Put the T Back In The Black Family Dynamic*. Led by TGIJP, over 200 people rallied in SF, including, as requested, many Black non-TGI allies.



TGIJP received the "Pay It No Mind" award at Decade of Black&Pink Boston, Massachusetts



Hundreds gathered for a retirement celebration of Executive Director, Miss Major. To support her retirement directly: bit.ly/1UWXZlg



Major! The much-anticipated new documentary film on the life and times of Miss Major, premiered as part of the SF Transgender Film Festival.



Stiletto Fall 2015 issue is released and sent out to more than 1,250 readers on the inside



HOW WE DO What We Do

From our work in local and national leadership in the Black Lives Matter movement, to the advocacy and support to our TGI siblings organizing for safety and self determination from inside of prisons, jails and detention centers; from our work *Putting the T Back in the Black Family Dynamic*, to helping form TAJA's Coalition and eventually winning No New Jail (aka no expanded jail) in San Francisco, TGIJP seeks to build safety and power for TGI people.

TGIJP fights for liberation from systemic violence and oppression, for prison abolition, and for racial and economic justice. Specifically, TGI Justice Project operates with the medium term goals of: decreasing the overall number of TGI people in prisons, jails or detention centers; reducing recidivism of TGI people; and ending the criminalization of TGI people. Our immediate goals include easing re-entry and existence through defending and supporting TGI peoples' basic needs, like housing access; advancing cultural transformation that values contributions against patriarchy by women of trans experience; and increasing TGI peoples' leadership in social justice movements.

OUR Activites

 <p>Weekly Mail Night with Incarcerated TGI People</p>	 <p>Legal Clinic, Legal Aid, and Legal Advocacy</p>	 <p>Near Wrap-Around Re-Entry Support and Service Navigation</p>	 <p>Stiletto Newsletter Published Bi-Annually with Member Created Content</p>	 <p>Constituent-Led Political Protests, Events and Campaigns</p>
 <p>Combat Criminalization of TGI People, Including Halting Jail Construction Plans</p>	 <p>Offer Speaking Engagements for Training and Political Education</p>	 <p>Sistahs Doin' It For Ourselves Retreat</p>	 <p>Monthly Support Groups for TGI People in SF County Jail</p>	 <p>Statewide Visitation Program Building TGI Leaders Inside and Outside of Incarceration</p>
 <p>Local, Regional and National Leadership Development</p>	 <p>Local, Regional, and National Coalition Building Including Movement Building Convenings</p>	 <p>Direct Action Trainings, Consultation, and Development</p>	 <p>Advocate for PREA Compliant SF Jail Housing and Program Access for TGI People</p>	 <p>Creative Interventions with Interpersonal Harrassment and Systemic Violence</p>

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Ms. Eva Alexander



Ms. Eva successfully completed our first 3-month Leadership Development Cohort as part of the Melenie Eleneke Grassroots Re-entry Program. She urges TGIJP supporters to remember that: #BlackLivesMatter means that #BlackTransLivesMatter

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Ms. Peaches Banks



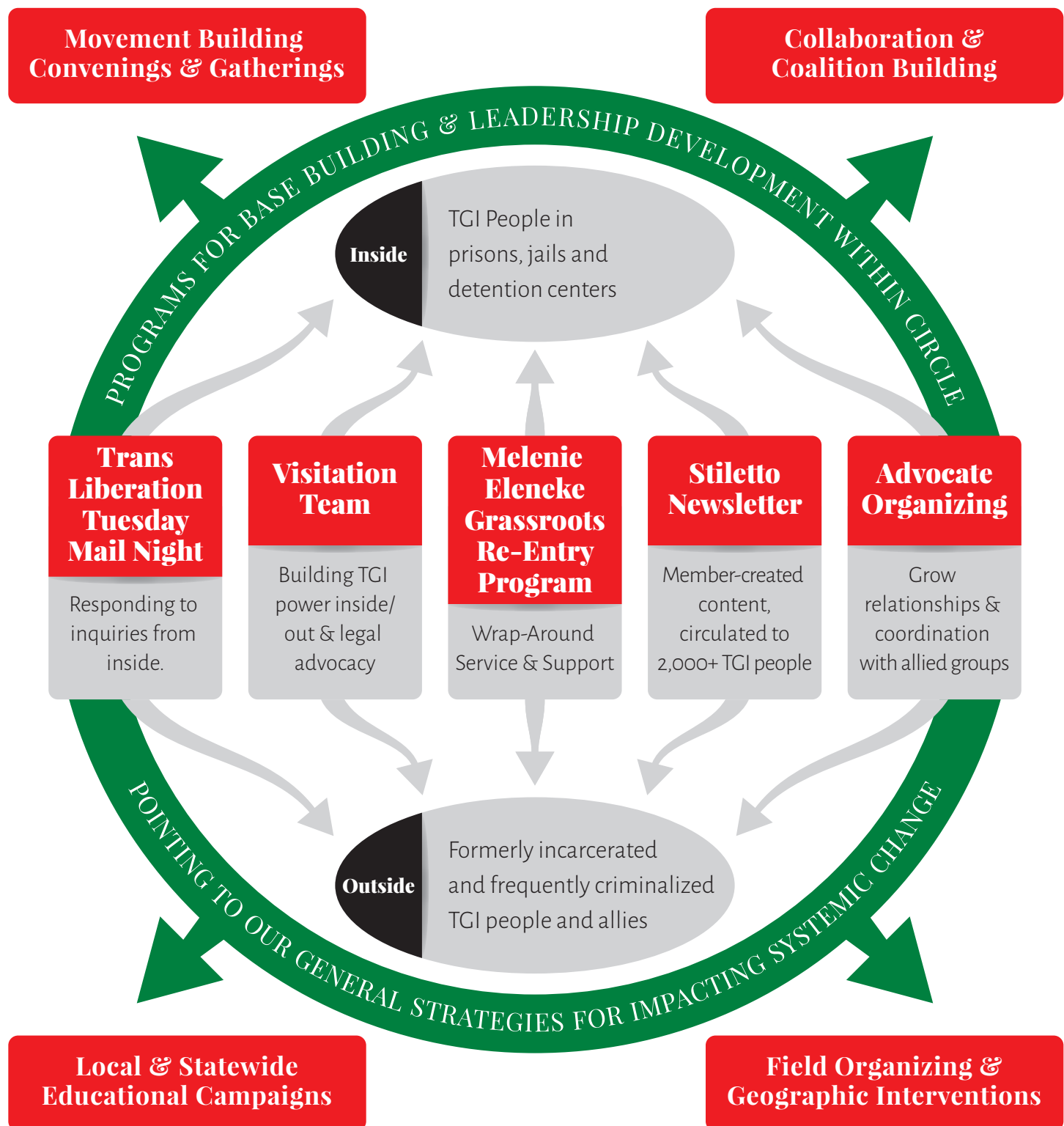
Ms. Peaches serves on TGIJP's Leadership Team. The oldest of three siblings, Peaches attended public school in her home state of Florida. She furthered her education at Turner Job Corps and while attending Albany State University where she was a vocal major in spiritual gospel. Here she developed a passion for music. She sings mezzo-soprano to a tenor octave.

She is the parent of one daughter, Marquita Daniels and the grandparent of three beautiful grandchildren: Amaru, Zaria, and little Miss Bella. She's a devoted woman of prayer and her family. She is partner to Mr. Christopher Riley who is very supportive and loves her very much.

Ms. Peaches is a prison abolitionist, activist, facilitator, social justice advocate, and Prayer Minister of Healing. She is well known throughout the Bay Area and throughout the United States for her vocal ability and range. Peaches believes that Black Trans Lives Matter and that we are here for a divine purpose and reason. Being two-spirited she continues the fight of Justice through Faith and action with a heart of compassion.

OUR Program Structure

TGI Justice Project's interconnected **key programs focus on movement building** and are led by and for currently and formerly incarcerated TGI people. TGIJP works to build power within our community, facilitate solidarity with our community, and expand collaborations that will win safety, justice and freedom for all of us.



LEGAL Corner

TGIJP's Legal Program focuses on supporting TGI people inside of prisons who are struggling against the prison system by fighting for their rights and the TGI community's rights while behind bars. The legal program also overlaps with TGIJP's Grassroots Re-Entry Program in supporting TGI people coming home by providing direct legal services and connecting members with legal services offered around the Bay Area.

Since May 2015, TGIJP's legal program has worked in direct collaboration with 50 TGIJP members, primarily trans women of color, in providing legal support and advocacy (26 TGI people inside of prison and 24 people on the outside, 10 trans men and gender non-conforming people and 40 trans women and gender non-conforming people). In addition to our

history of hosting legal fellows and interns, TGIJP has recently developed a team of 15 volunteers to do legal visits and in its first six months we visited with 12 trans people in 3 institutions. Our advocacy and visitation work correlates with our on-going mail night program, where beyond answering requests for general information, we answer legal questions and provide legal support.

TGIJP is also developing a national network of attorneys who are trans friendly and who stand in solidarity with trans liberation practices to support TGI people both inside and out of incarceration. In the Bay Area, TGIJP is working to build infrastructure to provide coordinated and amplified legal support for our people inside. To enable this we helped create a regular convening of California Coalition for Women Prisoners,

the Transgender Law Center, Justice Now, the National Lawyers Guild, and the Prison Law Office. As part of this collaboration, we are developing a medical advocacy team – a team of medical providers who can inform our advocacy and advance peer-to-peer professional relationship building and tactical exchanges with “corrections” gatekeepers towards more accountable medical practices.

TGIJP's Legal Program is tackling a large and specialized area of law and legal issues with very limited resources. We are grateful for the knowledge shared with our organization by current and formerly incarcerated people, lawyers, legal workers and activists who are working in solidarity with TGIJP and our members to address the legal needs of our community.

TGIJP IN THE Media



“No to Prison Industrial Complex: San Francisco’s Trans Community Responds to Brutal Murders”

FEBRUARY 25, 2015

<http://tinyurl.com/hhr3xa3>

BAY AREA REPORTER

JANUARY 14, 2016

“Care not cages: Fighting for trans women’s dignity and freedom”

<http://tinyurl.com/gn7waxl>

EAST BAY EXPRESS

NOVEMBER 20, 2013

“Transphobia: Violence and discrimination against transgender people are rampant—even in the liberal East Bay.”

<http://tinyurl.com/m2nysny>



RH Reality Check
Reproductive and Sexual Health and Justice News, Analysis and Commentary

MAY 12, 2015

“Sentenced to Abuse: Trans People in Prison Suffer Rape, Coercion, Denial of Medical Treatment”

<http://tinyurl.com/jkp3ke8>



ALJAZEERA AMERICA

MAY 14, 2014

“Transgender inmate takes on Georgia prison system amid Manning transfer”

<http://tinyurl.com/zjwffcu>

WEEKLY

JULY 22, 2015

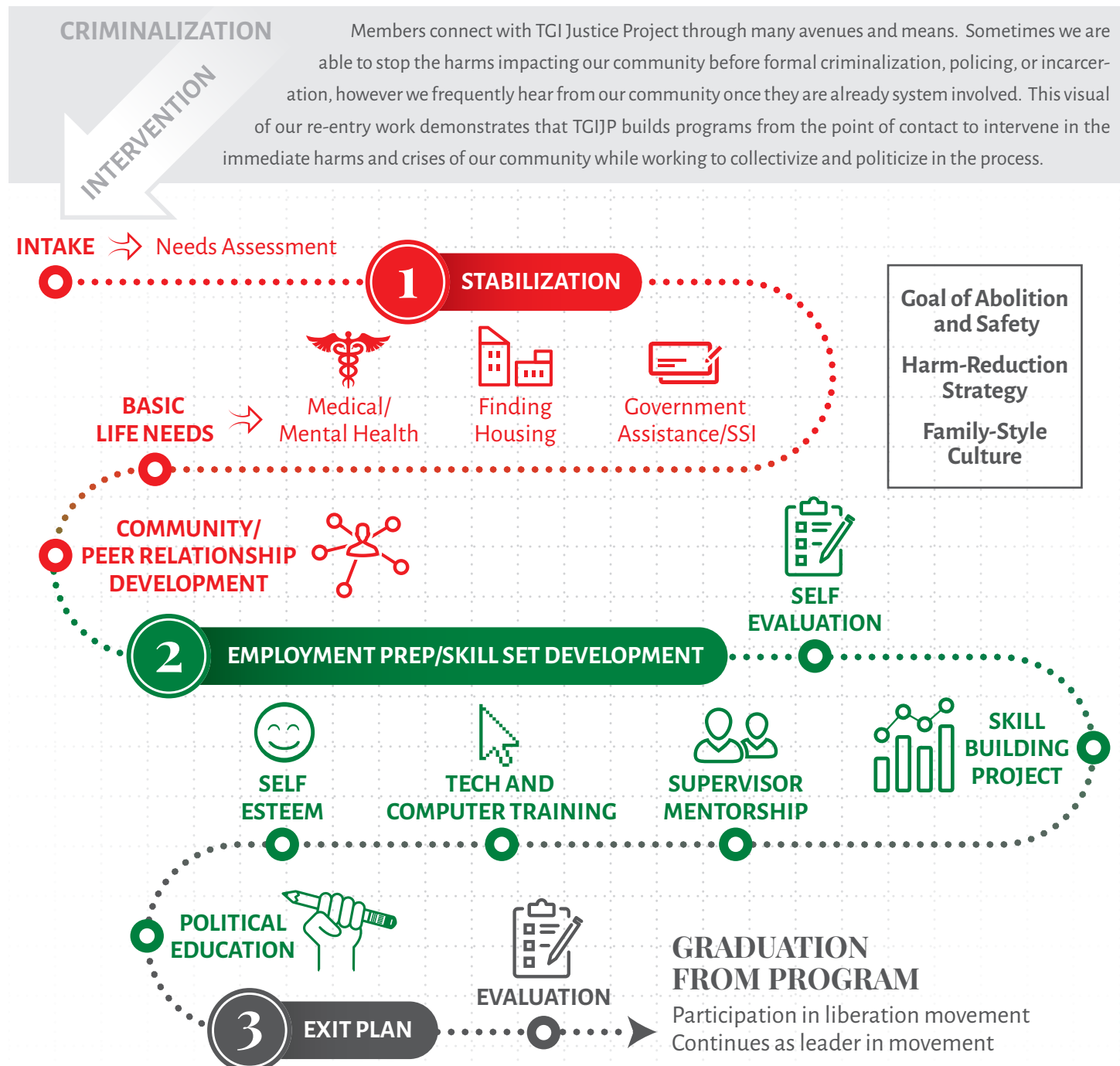
“Miss Major: The Bay Area’s Trans Formative Matriarch”

<http://tinyurl.com/qzj6534>

MELENIE ELENEKE

Grassroots Re-Entry Program

Every person has a unique recipe for successful re-entry, and at TGIJP we create space to equip our community with the skills and support they need to cook up the next phase of their lives. The programs namesake, Melenie Elenke showed the world how to love, welcome home, work with and fight for trans women. Mahalo Melenie!



Thank You TO OUR Supporters

Individual Solidarity

Thank you to every single individual who gave TGIJP some of their money, licked an envelope, hosted an event, donated their stocks, told their friends, lined up a panel or speaking event, came out to an action or event, cooked at a retreat, thank you for all of the support! In addition to each organization listed below, TGI Justice Project is sustained by the collective efforts of many people. For fear of leaving anyone out, we leave this note of appreciation for each individual person who has contributed to TGI Justice Project. Thank you!

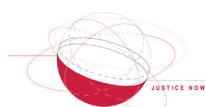
Foundation Support

Arcus Foundation
Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice
Burt Family Foundation
City and County of San Francisco
Criminal Justice Initiative (CJI)
Elton John AIDS Foundation
Funding Queerly Giving Circle
The Harnisch Foundation

Horizons Foundation
Morningstar Foundation
Northern California War Tax
Resistance/People's Life Fund
Our Fund
Praxis International, Inc
Tatiana von Furstenberg and The Diller -
von Furstenberg Family Foundation
Trans Justice Funding Project

Tikkun Olam Foundation
Urgent Action Fund
for Women's Human Rights
Women's Foundation - Race, Gender
and Human Rights Giving Circle
van Löben Sels/RembeRock Foundation
Victor and Lorraine Honig Fund -
Common Counsel Foundation

Organization Alliances



AK Press
Aids Legal Referral Panel
Asian & Pacific Islander
Wellness Center
bklyn boi hood
BlackOut Collective
BlackTransMedia
Chica Catering

Crash Pad Series
Design Action Collective
Drug Policy Alliance
Flying Over the Walls
Forward Together
Fresh Meat Productions
Get Equal

Lisa Marie Alatorre Consulting
Magic Makers
National Center for
Lesbian Rights
PM Press
Peacock Rebellion
QWOCMAP
Saltwater Consulting

Ships In The Night
Trans Justice Funding Project
Transformative Justice
Law Project
Wild Fancy Design
Winzday Events
YKB Stories of South
Asian Women