

COMMUNITY JUSTICE UNIT

Report to the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice and the NYC Council

JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021

The Community Justice Unit (CJU) shares the Cure Violence (CV) philosophy; that violence can be curtailed with early intervention and community engagement. Our work empowers communities impacted by gun violence to develop proactive strategies to reduce violence through providing holistic legal representation to underserved communities throughout the five boroughs of New York City. In addition to legal counsel, the CJU conducts extensive community outreach, including providing legal clinics and Know Your Rights trainings at 21 Cure Violence/Crisis Management partner locations and the catchment areas they serve.

Current partners include:

- RTG: Release the Grip North
- RTG: Release the Grip South
- S.O.S Bedstuy
- S.O.S Crown Heights
- S.O.S Morrisania
- S.O.S South Bronx
- True2Life
 - Wright St.
- B.R.A.G West Bronx
- B.R.A.G North Bronx
- B.R.A.G North West Bronx
- 696 BuildQueensBridge
- Street Corner Resources, Central Harlem
- S.A.V.E: Stand Against Violence East Harlem
- BIVO: Brownsville In Violence Out
- Life Camp, Inc.
- Man Up! Inc.
 - East NY Sutter
 - East NY Van Siclen
- Operation HOOD
- Rock Safe Streets
- GMACC: Gangstas Making Astronomical Community Changes Inc.
 - Church Ave.
 - Myrtle Ave.

In addition, the CJU will expand its work to include the 8 additional CV/CMS sites being added in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens over the next year.

Future partners:

- 43rd Precinct: Soundview (Bronx)
- 49th Precinct: Morris Park (Bronx)
- 69th Precinct: Canarsie (Brooklyn)
- 70th Precinct: Midwood/Ditmas Park (Brooklyn)
- 103rd Precinct: Hollis/Jamaica (Queens)
- 105th Precinct: Queens Village/Cambria Heights (Queens)
- 114th Precinct: Woodside/Ravenswood Houses (Queens)
- 71st Precinct: Crown Heights/Wingate (Brooklyn)

CURE VIOLENCE

Provide legal services to
Cure Violence sites across
the city

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Citywide community engagement
under a public health model

Program
Participants

Employees of the
Organizations

Community
Members at Large

Partner Area

Rap
Sheet
Clinics

School KYR

Tabling

Marijuana Legalization
Implementation

Community
Debriefings

Gang Database

Partner Area

Project Reset

Project HOPE

Client Community
Advisory Board

Immigration KYR

IMPLEMENTING THE CV MODEL

Interrupting Transmission

MODEL GOALS:

Prevent Retaliations;
Mediate Conflicts;
Keep Conflicts Cool

CJU ROLE:

Provide support to CV partner agencies and participants intermediary role between communities and law enforcement

SERVICES PROVIDED

Safe Surrenders
24/7 Hotliners
"Good Call " Hotline
Emergency Legal Support

Reducing Highest Risk

MODEL GOALS:

Assess Highest Risk;
Change Behavior;
Provide Treatment

CJU ROLE:

Vertical Representation Model;
Connect CV partner agencies, community members and participants to social/legal services

SERVICES PROVIDED

Rap Sheet Clinics
Job Fairs/Employment Training
Clean Slate
Access to Benefits (Housing, Disability, Education, Healthcare)
Case Closed - Record Sealing
Immigration Issues
Court Information/Legal Advice

Changing Community Norms

MODEL GOALS:

Respond to Shootings;
Organize Community;
Spread Positive Norms

CJU ROLE:

Amplify Community Voices;
Challenge policies negatively impacting communities (e.g. MJ reform, gang database)

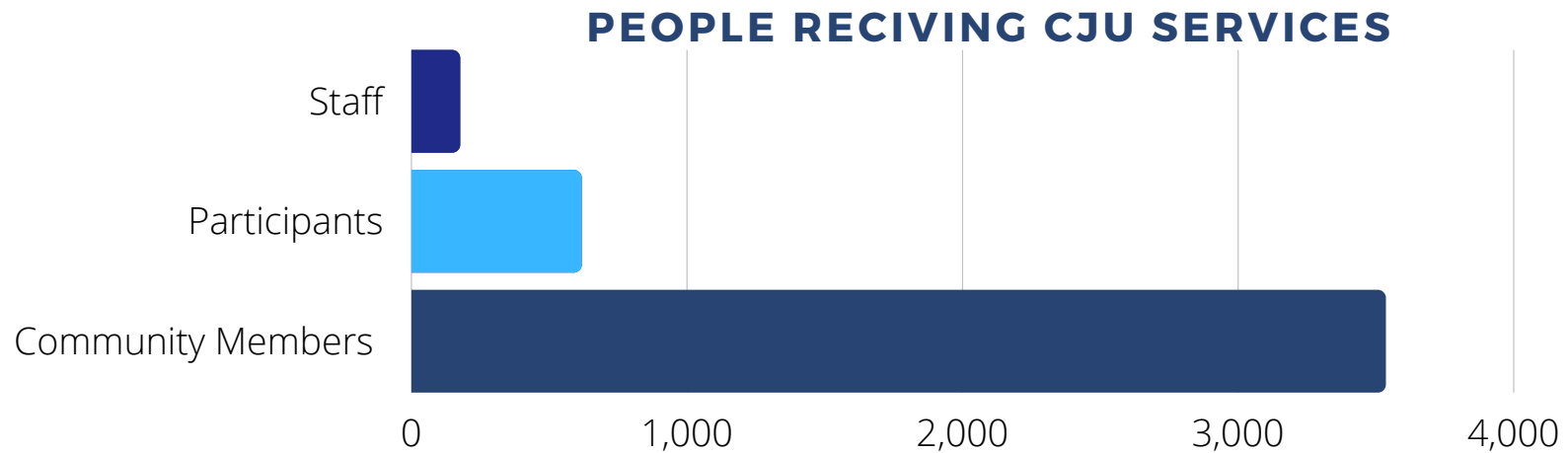
SERVICES PROVIDED

Shooting Responses
Know Your Rights Events
Community Events (Tabling)
Policy Advocacy/Reform
Awareness Campaigns
Pathways to College
Gun Violence Awareness

FROM JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021 THE CJU:

**PROVIDED OVER
4,300 TOTAL
SERVICES**

Including: **2,355** services to **Cure Violence** partner organizations and **1,966** to non-affiliated **community members** throughout New York City.



**HOSTED 50
COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Including but not limited to:

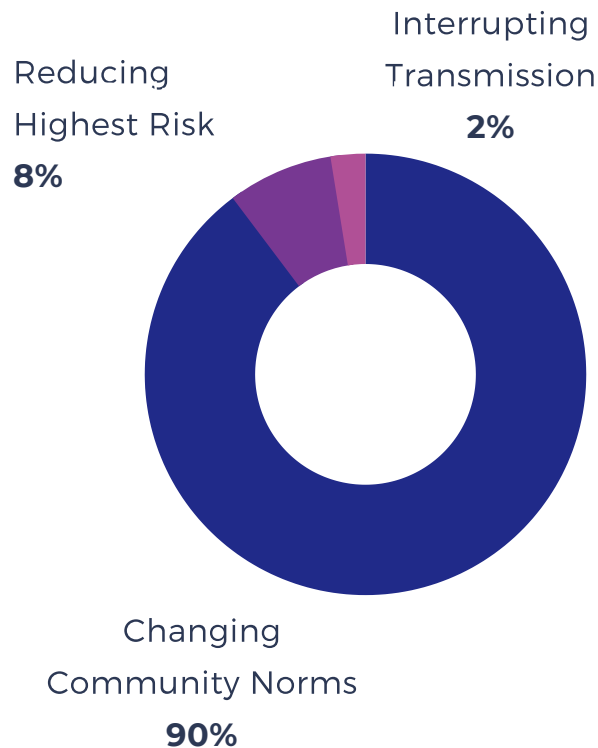
- Know Your Rights trainings
- Legal Clinics
- Gun Awareness Campaigns,
- Gang Database workshops
- Other Virtual Events.

FROM JULY 1, 2020 - JUNE 30, 2021 THE CJU:

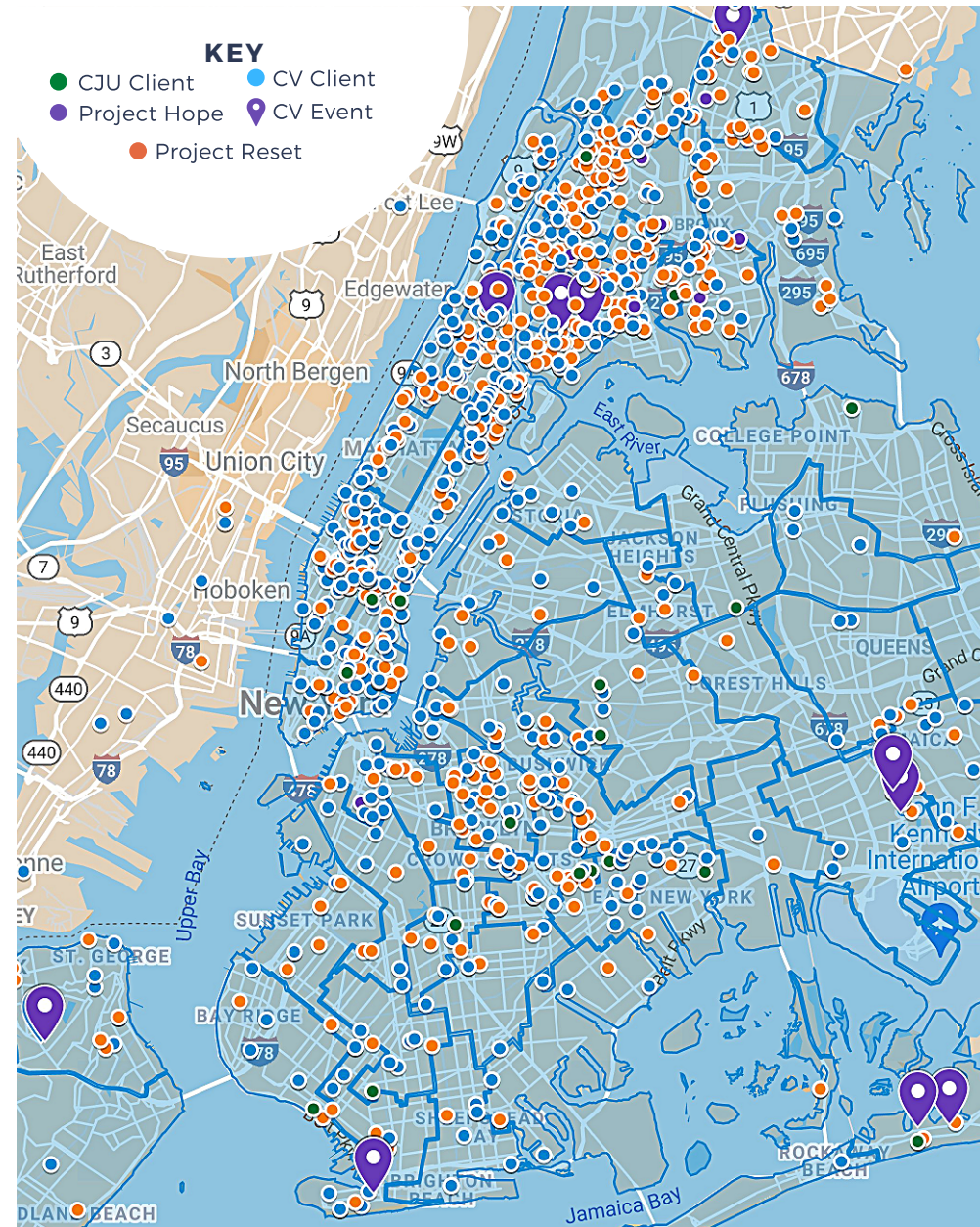
SERVED 370 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

- 34 Project HOPE
- 336 Project RESET

SERVICES BY CATEGORY



AREAS WE SERVE



BROOKLYN COMMUNITY FORUM

Over the last few months, the CJU began to organize a Brooklyn Community Forum, where youth in our catchment communities meet on zoom with the CJU and other LAS attorneys from the Brooklyn Criminal Defense Practice to learn about what they do. During this forum they can ask any questions they may have about the Criminal Justice system and talk about what obstacles they overcame to be where they are today. The goal is to create a cross between Career Day and a Know Your Rights session, where community youth can find inspiration and encouragement.

Over the course of the sessions the CJU has hosted so far, a few youth have expressed an interest in becoming lawyers, surgeons, etc. - and the CJU hopes to provide these young people with real life role models who can motivate them.

The Brooklyn Community Forum events connect public defenders with the youth in the communities they serve and are innovative activities that help the CJU, and the Legal Aid Society more broadly, remain engaged with our Cure Violence community partners and their participants during this remote working period.



GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

A Speaker Series Hosted by The Legal Aid Society in partnership with the Crisis Management System/Cure Violence of New York City

MONDAY, JUNE 21ST, 2021 - 5 PM

Watch on Instagram Live @Legalaidnyc

Hear from the public health experts and credible messengers interrupting violence and keeping New York City safe.



Erica Ford & Staff
LifeCamp Inc.

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY
CRIMINAL DEFENSE

GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

A Speaker Series Hosted by The Legal Aid Society in partnership with the Crisis Management System/Cure Violence of New York City

THURSDAY, JUNE 10TH, 2021 - 5 PM

Watch on Instagram Live @Legalaidnyc

Hear from the public health experts and credible messengers interrupting violence and keeping New York City safe.



Rahson Johnson
SOS/NIA



Vanessa Johnson
BIVO



Brother A.T. Mitchell
Man Up, Inc.

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY
CRIMINAL DEFENSE

GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

A Speaker Series Hosted by The Legal Aid Society in partnership with the Crisis Management System/Cure Violence of New York City

TUESDAY, JUNE 8TH, 2021 - 6 PM

Watch on Instagram Live @Legalaidnyc

Hear from the public health experts and credible messengers interrupting violence and keeping New York City safe.



Derrick Latiff
Operation H.O.O.D.



Mike Perry
Tru2Life



Omar Jackson
SAVE

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY
CRIMINAL DEFENSE

GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

A Speaker Series Hosted by The Legal Aid Society in partnership with the Crisis Management System/Cure Violence of New York City

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23rd, 2021 - 6 PM

Watch on Instagram Live @Legalaidnyc

Hear from the public health experts and credible messengers interrupting violence and keeping New York City safe.

With members of B.R.A.G.
(Bronx Rises Against Gun Violence)



Anthony Letterio



David Caba
Director



Joel Richards

THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY
CRIMINAL DEFENSE

This year during the June Gun Violence Awareness Month, the CJU hosted a speaker series in collaboration with our community partners. Believing in the strength and effectiveness of community engagement, members from B.R.A.G., Life Camp, Operation H.O.O.D., True2Life, SAVE, SOS, BIVO, and Man Up joined the CJU team to discuss interrupting violence and keeping NYC safe by inspiring young people to forgo street conflicts and take charge of their lives.

As quoted to the Gothamist in a June article recognizing the CJUs efforts to promote Gun Violence Awareness Month, ***“As we struggle with gun violence, the answer is community engagement and funding for programs, not more NYPD officers,”*** -Nefertiti Ankra-Lashley, a senior staff attorney with the CJU

CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

Over the course of the year, Man Up started a 500x5 Man Challenge. This initiative was created as a way to get at least five hundred people in each borough to combat gun violence in their neighborhoods and to be positive male forces in their respective communities. In support of this great effort, a member of the CJU continues to attend meetings every Wednesday.

In addition, earlier in the year, the CJU began hosting classes at Brownsville In, Violence Out (BIVO). These classes are aimed at teaching participants and community members about the criminal judicial system and all its workings in New York City and have continued participation from CJU staff.



CJU SERVICES DURING COVID - 19



As with many organizations throughout New York City, the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to create new challenges and demands faced by the communities the CJU serves. Coronavirus infection rates continue to present as higher in Latinx and Black communities and these groups represent the highest demographics in the catchment areas we serve.

Over the last year, the need for immediate resources and services has increased and in response, the CJU has adapted the delivery of its legal services to meet the needs of those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The CJU team created directories for emergency services covering immediate needs, including shelter and food, and longer-term needs such as access to youth programming and a holistic self-care guide for incarcerated people. These resources were shared with the Crisis Management System (CMS).

In addition, recognizing the urgency of remaining engaged across various communities, the CJU has increased its use of remote technology to keep in contact with CMS sites, participants, and community members. Using tools such as Instagram Live and Zoom, the CJU continues to provide virtual Know Your Rights workshops, community forums, and legal intakes for community members that have specific legal issues, while maintaining support and providing clients with COVID-19 resources.

**Legal Aid Society
Community Justice Unit
July to Sept 2020**

Service Area #1 Service Area #2

FY 21

Legal Services	CV Prog Participants	Community & CV Partner	Quarter Total	Year to Date
Level of Assistance				
Advice	15	288	303	303
Brief Services	19	450	469	469
External Referral	0	0	0	0
Internal Referral	0	0	0	0
Representation	15	28	43	43
Quarter Total	49	766	815	
Year to Date	49	766		815
Target	260	900		1160

Sub Case Type				
Benefits			0	0
Civil Rights			0	0
Consumer Law			0	0
Criminal	3	6	9	9
DAP			0	0
Education			0	0
Employment			0	0
Family Law			0	0
Health Law			0	0
Housing Law		15	15	15
Immigration	1		1	1
Prisoner's Rights			0	0
Project HOPE	1		1	1
Project Reset	44	48	92	92
Tax Law			0	0
Other/Miscellaneous		697	697	697
Quarter Total	49	766	815	
Year to Date	49	766		815
Target	260	900		1160

Additional Matters	CV Prog Participants	Community & CV Partner	Quarter Total	Year to Date
# of Cases Referred Out	0	0	0	0
# of Cases Open	49	766	815	815
# of Cases Closed	49	766	815	815
Quarter Total	49	766	815	
Year to Date	49	766		815

Service Area #3

Event Type	Training	Legal Clinic	Other Events	Total
Tabling				0
Advice				0
RAP Sheet				0
Voter Registration				0
Intake/ Office Hours				0
MJU				0
Know Your Rights				0
Law Day				0
Other	2		8	10
Quarter Total	2	0	8	10
Year to Date	2	0	8	10
Target				26

**Legal Aid Society
Community Justice Unit
Oct - Dec 2020**

Service Area #1 Service Area #2

FY 21

Legal Services	CV Prog Participants	Community & CV Partner	Quarter Total	Year to Date
Level of Assistance				
Advice	1	292	293	596
Brief Services	90	939	1029	1498
External Referral	0	0	0	0
Internal Referral	0	0	0	0
Representation	19	43	62	105
Quarter Total	110	1274	1384	
Year to Date	159	2040		2199
Target	260	900		1160

Sub Case Type				
Benefits		5	5	5
Civil Rights			0	0
Consumer Law			0	0
Criminal		3	3	12
DAP			0	0
Education			0	0
Employment		3	3	3
Family Law		1	1	1
Health Law			0	0
Housing Law		3	3	18
Immigration			0	1
Prisoner's Rights			0	0
Project HOPE	10		10	11
Project Reset	52	1	53	145
Tax Law			0	0
Other/Miscellaneous	48	1258	1306	2003
Quarter Total	110	1274	1384	
Year to Date	159	2040		2199
Target	260	900		1160

Additional Matters	CV Prog Participants	Community & CV Partner	Quarter Total	Year to Date
# of Cases Referred Out			0	0
# of Cases Open	110	1274	1384	2199
# of Cases Closed	110	1274	1384	2199
Quarter Total	110	1274	1384	
Year to Date	159	2040		2199

Service Area #3

Event Type	Training	Legal Clinic	Other Events	Total
Tabling			1	1
Advice				0
RAP Sheet				0
Voter Registration				0
Intake/ Office Hours				0
MJU				0
Know Your Rights				0
Law Day				0
Other			2	2
Quarter Total	0	0	3	3
Year to Date	2	0	11	13
Target				26

**Legal Aid Society
Community Justice Unit
Jan to March 2021**

Service Area #1 Service Area #2

FY 21

Legal Services	CV Prog Participants	Community & CV Partner	Quarter Total	Year to Date
Level of Assistance				
Advice	29	542	571	1167
Brief Services	31	64	95	1593
External Referral	0	0	0	0
Internal Referral	0	1	1	1
Representation	111	2	113	218
Quarter Total	171	609	780	
Year to Date	330	2649		2979
Target	260	900		1160

Sub Case Type				
Benefits			0	5
Civil Rights			0	0
Consumer Law			0	0
Criminal			0	12
DAP			0	0
Education			0	0
Employment		1	1	4
Family Law		1	1	2
Health Law			0	0
Housing Law		4	4	22
Immigration			0	1
Prisoner's Rights			0	0
Project HOPE	2		2	13
Project Reset	105		105	250
Tax Law			0	0
Other/Miscellaneous	64	603	667	2670
Quarter Total	171	609	780	
Year to Date	330	2649		2979
Target	260	900		1160

Additional Matters	CV Prog Participants	Community & CV Partner	Quarter Total	Year to Date
# of Cases Referred Out				
# of Cases Open	171	609	780	2979
# of Cases Closed	171	609	780	2979
Quarter Total	171	609	780	
Year to Date	330	2649		2979

Service Area #3

Event Type	Training	Legal Clinic	Other Events	Total
Tabling				
Advice				
RAP Sheet				
Voter Registration				
Intake/ Office Hours				
MJU				
Know Your Rights	2			2
Law Day				
Other	2		7	9
Quarter Total	4	0	7	11
Year to Date	6	0	18	24
Target				26

Legal Aid Society
Community Justice Unit
April to June 2021

Service Area #1 Service Area #2

FY 21

Legal Services	CV Prog Participants	Community & CV Partner	Quarter Total	Year to Date
Level of Assistance				
Advice	76	827	903	2070
Brief Services	31	298	329	1922
External Referral			0	0
Internal Referral	1	1	2	3
Representation	106	2	108	326
Quarter Total	214	1128	1342	
Year to Date	544	3777		4321
Target	260	900		1160

Sub Case Type				
Benefits			0	5
Civil Rights		1	1	1
Consumer Law			0	0
Criminal	3	3	6	18
DAP			0	0
Education			0	0
Employment		4	4	8
Family Law			0	2
Health Law			0	0
Housing Law			0	22
Immigration			0	1
Prisoner's Rights			0	0
Tax Law			0	13
Other/Miscellaneous	211	1120	1331	1581
Quarter Total	214	1128	1342	
Year to Date	544	3777		4321
Target	260	900		1160

Additional Matters	CV Prog Participants	Community & CV Partner	Quarter Total	Year to Date
# of Cases Referred Out				
# of Cases Open	214	1128	1342	2122
# of Cases Closed	214	1128	1342	2122
Quarter Total	214	1128	1342	
Year to Date	544	3777		4321

Service Area #3

Event Type	Training	Legal Clinic	Other Events	Total
Tabling			6	6
Advice				
RAP Sheet				
Voter Registration				
Intake/ Office Hours				
MJU				
Know Your Rights	3			3
Law Day				
Other			17	17
Quarter Total	3	0	23	26
Year to Date	9	0	41	50
Target				26