

2025–2026 BEYOND THE BARS FELLOWS



ANDREA KIM
HOMETOWN: ALBANY, NY

Andrea Kim is a Ph.D. candidate in the Sociology and Education program at Teachers College, Columbia University. Drawing on Critical Race Theory, she employs multimodal, ethnographic, and historical methods to examine the intersections of race, carcerality, and U.S. public schooling. She currently serves as an adjunct lecturer at Queens College, a teaching fellow with Cyphers for Justice, and an advisor to a podcasting club with the Reimagining Educational Achievement Coalition of Harlem, where she cultivates youth literacy through creative expression. Before pursuing her doctorate, Andrea worked at the New York City Department of Education in both the early childhood and special education divisions. She holds an M.S.Ed. in Education Policy from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.S. in Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University.



ANJELICA MARIA CAMACHO
HOMETOWN: BRONX, NY

Anjelica M. Camacho is the founder of Orita Meta Resources Inc and the Co-Director of the Ile Ifa Òfún òsá Temple. She is also known as Iya Efuntúnmise Èsùbíyí, a Iya of an African Traditional Religion called IFA Isese and Boriken, Bronx Native.

Iya Èsùbíyí (Ms. Camacho) is a criminologist, Reentry Specialist, published researcher, Harm Reduction Advocate, Community Organizer, Restorative Justice Advocate and Street ethnographer with 15 years experience recruiting hard to reach populations confidentially and anonymously. Ms. Camacho uses her knowledge of the CRJ system to help individuals leave it, avoid it and re-enter society through connecting street involved populations to social programs and resources geared towards stabilizing individuals and communities.

Her life work focuses on changing society's perception of what they consider "criminal," "gangster," "deviant," by providing resources and second chances to those who are off path. She strives to help participants realign with the highest version of themselves so that they can become pro-active members of society and reclaim their ancestral gifts and strengths.



BEE SOLEY

HOMETOWN: FREEPORT, MAINE

Bee is a graduate student at Columbia University's School of Social Work and works at the Brooklyn Defenders Services' Family Defense Services team. She is passionate about carceral justice issues including ending family policing, disrupting the school-to-prison-pipeline, and exploring non-punitive alternatives to incarceration. Bee hosts a weekly support circle for individuals directly impacted by incarceration and is grateful to Kay Pranis, Vivienne Guevara, and the Transformational Prison Project team for training her in restorative justice circle-keeping. She spent this past summer in Boston advocating for An Act to end lifetime parole for juveniles and emerging adults. Prior to moving to NYC to pursue her MSW, Bee was involved in community organizing for a San Francisco-based post-carceral community called The Second Life Project and was one of the founding residents of an intentional community centering those returning home after long-term incarceration.



BLAIR GARNER

HOMETOWN: LONG ISLAND, NY

Blair “Fame” Garner is an entrepreneur, activist, author, public speaker and founder of First Stop Reentry, a non-profit that supports formerly incarcerated people. He is also a vocal advocate for eliminating mass incarceration and excessive sentencing practices, as well as for better education in public schools for all children. He was raised on Long Island.



BRIAN MEEGAN

HOMETOWN: NEW YORK, NY

Brian Meegan is a founding board member of Abolition Inc, a queer liberation collective, where they oversee development and outreach. Brian is also a playwright and they were part of the 2024 cohort of Write It Out! sharing part of their journey as a queer person navigating love, HIV and solitary confinement. They are currently in the process of writing new work for stage, page and screen.



CURTISS WOODRUFF

Curtiss Woodruff is an advocate dedicated to advancing social justice and reentry reform. He has facilitated transformative programs with Exodus Transitional Community and Project Build, focusing on nonviolence, leadership, and personal growth. As an educator with the Sing Sing Prison Museum, Curtiss helps audiences critically engage with the history and impact of incarceration in America. He is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Sociology at Hunter College, where his studies deepen his commitment to understanding and challenging social systems. Curtiss strives to bridge education, lived experience, and community engagement to inspire lasting change.



EDDIE BUCKLEY

Eddie Lee Buckley is a peer educator, community organizer, and reentry/resocialization coach dedicated to empowering men and women as they transition back into their communities.

Through mentoring, workshops, and hands-on support, Eddie helps individuals understand the role they have played in contributing to the challenges facing their neighborhoods, while guiding them toward accountability, healing, and personal transformation.

His work centers on helping people confront and heal from trauma, take responsibility for their actions, and develop the tools needed to become positive, engaged community leaders and role models. Eddie's approach blends compassion with honesty, meeting people where they are while inspiring them to rise to who they can become.



ELLA HENRY

HOMETOWN: BOISE, IDAHO

Ella Henry is a Mexican Samoan young woman, passionate about grassroots organizing and community building. She is an undergraduate student at Columbia University studying Race

and Ethnicity Studies and Comparative Literature. Her professional experiences include working for the ACLU of Idaho as an Immigrant Rights Intern and working at the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence. On campus, she is an organizer for the Advocacy Initiative of the Housing Equity Project, a coordinator for The 116th Initiative—a mutual aid collective, Co-President of the Buddhist Association, and a member of The Remedy Project—a youth and impacted-led movement dedicated to disrupting violence within the U.S. prison system. Ella is interested in doing work at the intersection of restorative justice, immigrants' rights, and the criminal/legal system. She is committed to social justice advocacy through amplifying the voices of minoritized populations, learning from the lived experiences of others, and utilizing decolonial practices and ways of knowing to inform her work.



FARHAN AHMED

HOMETOWN: PUNJAB, INDIA

Farhan Ahmed is committed to promoting health equity for justice-impacted communities, using evidence-based approaches to shape meaningful policy change. Alongside his work in public health, he writes about the climate crisis, exploring real-world, sustainable solutions that can help build a more resilient and hopeful future.



JEFFREY VASQUEZ

HOMETOWN: LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK

Jeffrey Vasquez is a sociology student at Columbia University whose work examines how education, housing, and carceral systems intersect to criminalize marginalized youth and families. Grounded in a disability justice framework, he focuses on how punitive school and housing policies compound barriers for youth and families navigating multiple systems of oppression. Drawing from both academic inquiry and lived experience, Jeffrey approaches his work with a commitment to transformation, healing, and equity. He envisions care-based, community-rooted alternatives that center and uplift youth and families impacted by punitive systems. Through the Beyond the Bars Fellowship, he hopes to strengthen his healing justice praxis and his ability to bridge policy, advocacy, and community impact.



KYLE RICHARDSON

HOMETOWN: HARLEM, NY

Kyle Richardson is a loving, compassionate, and insightful human being whose personal growth fuels his commitment to social advocacy. He is gradually learning to personify the change he wants to see in the world. He holds both a BA in Social Studies from Bard College and an MPS in Urban Ministry and Leadership from New York Theological Seminary. His hobbies include reading, writing, and taking long walks. Ultimately, he is passionate about educating people on the dangers of tobacco use and promoting public health awareness.



LAVAR THOMAS



PETER ANEKWE

Peter Anekwe, a man of Nigerian descent. The only son of two hard working parents, who lost his way in life, but like a rabbit chased from a hole has returned in stellar form. Immensely active in the Brooklyn community and elsewhere. Using his activism as a means to pay back to the community that he took from. Proving that you can teach an old dog new tricks!



RASHIDA RICKETTS

HOMETOWN: WINSLOW, NEW JERSEY

Rashida Ricketts is the Founder and Creative Director of Graves to Gardens Podcast, a show committed to creating a sanctuary for those that are systems impacted through conversations that give the storyteller agency over their own narrative. Graves to Gardens Podcast is a platform that shares stories of those that are engaging in artistic practices in an effort to reimagine a world beyond the need for prisons that ultimately leads to restoration and healing. In 2019 she earned her MA in Fashion Studies from Parsons, The New School where she completed her thesis “In My Jumpsuit: An Analysis of the Embodied Experience of Women In Prison Clothing”. When granted the opportunity, she expanded upon this research serving as co-curated for “Clothing Inside: Addressing American Prisons” during New York Fashion Week. Her work has been covered by the Council for Fashion Designers of America (CFDA), The Fashion and Race Database and has been published in academic journals.



SAMANTHA LAWRENCE

Samantha Lawrence is a justice-impacted Afro-Caribbean Licensed Master Social Worker and Doctor of Social Work candidate at Simmons University. She is the founder of The N.E.L. Foundation, a Brooklyn-based nonprofit dedicated to transitional housing, reentry support, and mental health advocacy. Drawing from lived experiences with incarceration and systemic oppression, she centers culturally grounded, trauma-responsive care through her work. Samantha is also the creator of the Tun Sé Collective, a reentry and leadership model inspired by Yoruba traditions of remaking and her Ifá spiritual practice. Her passion for youth, storytelling, and art is also reflected in her creative entrepreneurial work, which connects community, culture, and healing.



SANTANA KAVANAUGH

Santana Kavanaugh is a graduate of NYU Gallatin and a current MPA candidate at NYU Wagner. Her work bridges community organizing, policy research, and advocacy around issues of global abolition and reparative justice. Santana is deeply

passionate about advancing community-centered approaches to justice and examining the criminal legal system through a human rights lens.



SARAH OGUNTOMILADE

Sarah Oguntomilade is an educator, playwright, and poet whose work centers on the complexities of Black girlhood, identity, and liberation. Drawing from her experiences as a child of

Nigerian immigrants, her time facilitating theatre

workshops in Michigan prisons, and her passion for restorative justice, Sarah's writing explores both personal and collective narratives.

Sarah is dedicated to using storytelling as a tool for healing, transformation, and community-building. Whether in the classroom, on stage, or through her platforms [girlhoodbysarah](#) on TikTok, Instagram, and Substack, she is committed to elevating voices that are often overlooked. In the past year, she co-wrote and performed *With Love, From Inside*, a play that toured Michigan, directed for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf, and participated in Broadway Advocacy Coalition's Theater of Change workshop. She is also currently in pursuit of her MFA in Theatre Directing at Columbia University.



SHATEEMA KINARD

Shateema is a public service professional with the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, where she focuses on community engagement and building meaningful connections between institutions and the people they serve. For over a decade, she has created and led volunteer, outreach, and leadership initiatives that center empathy, collaboration, and reform. As a Beyond the Bars Fellow at Columbia University's Center for Justice, she is continuing to grow her work in bridging systems and communities while amplifying voices that deserve to be heard.



SHNAYJAAH JEANTY

HOMETOWN: BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

Shnayjaah Valentine Jeanty is a nationally renowned author, activist, and poet at Columbia University, studying Creative Writing and Human Rights as a QuestBridge Scholar. She was the 2024 National Youth Poet Laureate of the South and has performed at The Kennedy Center, Congress, and other major venues. She is a nationally recognized domestic violence prevention advocate whose work confronts how institutions fail survivors and young people. Her research spans immigration courts, censorship on campuses, and policy gaps affecting vulnerable communities. In Florida, she led a campaign exposing racial disparities in the Bright Futures Scholarship, prompting a formal review by the Board of Education. She is currently writing a poetry-driven memoir while continuing advocacy that centers survivors, students, and immigrant families



SOFIA CASTRO

HOMETOWN: PANAMA CITY, PANAMA

As a Panamanian immigrant from a family shaped by Cuban political dissidence, I've understood criminalization not as an abstract idea but as a lived reality. I graduated this May from the

Sciences Po–Columbia University Dual BA Program with degrees in Psychology and Political Humanities, concentrating in Law. I currently work as a Forensic Social Work Paralegal at New York County Defender Services, where I assist in mitigation and advocacy for clients navigating the criminal legal system. I seek to carry forward my mother's legacy of resilience through this fellowship and throughout my evolving career in social justice.



SENIOR FELLOW: DANIELLE JONES

HOMETOWN: BRONX, NY

Danielle Elizabeth Jones is a Bronx native and proud alumna of Lehman College and Rutgers University, where she earned her Master of Public

Administration with a focus on disrupting and ultimately ending the school-to-prison pipeline. Danielle designs and leads training program development that connects historically marginalized communities to quality jobs with clear pathways to the middle class.

As a Senior Fellow with the Beyond the Bars program at Columbia University's Center for Justice, Danielle continues to advocate for systemic change through policy analysis, community engagement, and leadership development.

A scholar-activist, Danielle is committed to bridging the gap between theory and practice, ensuring that the voices of those most impacted by injustice are central to the solutions.