

**ASIAN PRISONER  
SUPPORT COMMITTEE**

***2020 ANNUAL REPORT***

# INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic and economic shutdown posed many unprecedented challenges for APSC—particularly for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated community members. San Quentin State Prison experienced one of the worst outbreaks in the nation, with 88.5% of incarcerated individuals testing positive for COVID-19 and 28 community members dying, including several friends of APSC and the ROOTS community. Among all incarcerated people in CA's state prisons, 49.8% of people tested positive for COVID-19 compared to 10.3% of the entire U.S. population.<sup>1</sup> The formerly incarcerated community has also experienced very high rates of positive COVID-19 cases while living in crowded and unsafe transitional houses with recurring COVID outbreaks.

The goal of this report is to share updates and increase transparency with our supporters and donors. Thanks to your generous support during this critical time, APSC has been able to expand services and find ways to respond to the damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please read the following report to learn about program updates, leadership transitions, 2020 impact highlights, and financial information. Through education, direct services, and organizing for freedom, we honor those who have passed on and all those who are still incarcerated!



*Photo credit: Brooke Anderson. On June 9, 2020, APSC and community partners organized a rally to demand that Governor Newsom and CDCR release people during the COVID-19 outbreak at San Quentin.*

*The mission of the Asian Prisoner Support Committee (APSC) is to provide direct support to Asian and Pacific Islander (API) prisoners and to raise awareness about the growing number of APIs being imprisoned, detained, and deported. APSC was founded in 2002 to provide culturally competent services to the currently and formerly incarcerated Asian and Pacific Islander (API) community.*

---

<sup>1</sup> California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. <https://www.cdcr.ca.gov/covid19/population-status-tracking/>

# PROGRAM UPDATES

## In-Prison Programming

---

All in-person programming in San Quentin and CDCR prisons was put on hiatus due to COVID-19. We are currently in communication with the administration to re-start the ROOTS (Restoring Our Original True Selves) program. In response to the inhumane treatment of incarcerated community members during the pandemic, APSC and partner organizations have held rallies, events, social media actions, educational activities, and more to advocate for the humanitarian releases of incarcerated people in prisons and jails. After a grassroots organizing campaign led by APSC and community partners, Chanthon Bun was released from San Quentin amidst the COVID-19 outbreak and not “direct transferred” to ICE even with an ICE hold. To our knowledge, this was the first time someone with an ICE hold was not direct transferred from CDCR to ICE after serving their sentence.

APSC developed a remote Ethnic Studies-based correspondence program (Lit Club) for incarcerated people at California Institute for Women (CIW) and Central California Women's Facility (CCWF). The APSC Lit Club aims to build relationships between folks inside and outside of prisons. Through studying API history, facilitating book readings, and letter-writing, we hope to expand collective healing for our communities. This program covers 3 modules: (1) Personal Reflection and Narratives, (2) Social Issues and Consciousness, and (3) Solidarity, Healing, and Dreaming. Once the readings are completed, participants exchange their reflections with their reading partner via letter writing.



*Photo credit: Brooke Anderson. Action to prevent direct transfers and demand mass clemency as part of a statewide effort on October 6, 2020.*

# PROGRAM UPDATES

## Other In-Prison Projects

---

- \* Due to a lack of disaggregated and accurate data on incarcerated APIs, APSC conducted the first ever large survey of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated APIs (primarily in California). We collected over 500 surveys that included 48 questions on demographic information, childhood experiences, migration history and immigration status, health and mental health, and challenges in prison. We are partnering with Human Impact Partners (HIP) to analyze and share findings from this survey in August 2021.
- \* Fourteen years after the release of APSC's first anthology, we are proud to present our forthcoming collection of over forty interviews, essays, poetry, and fiction by currently and formerly incarcerated individuals and impacted family members. [ARRIVING: Freedom Writings of Asian and Pacific Islanders](#) weaves together powerful stories of Asian American and Pacific Islanders who are journeying from migration to school to prison to deportation to reentry and beyond. These nuanced voices intimately express the pain, regret, grief, forgiveness, resilience, love, and hope that comes with personal transformation.
- \* In collaboration with Eastwind Books of Berkeley, APSC mails books (free of charge) to incarcerated community members on a limited and first come, first served basis.

## Reentry

---

In 2020, R2R provided direct support to 102 formerly incarcerated individuals. APSC's ROOTS 2 Reentry (R2R) program provides support to formerly incarcerated APIs and "Others" in Alameda County as they return home and embark on their reentry journey. The program is staffed by formerly incarcerated people with lived life experience and offers peer support, community immersion, and reentry navigation. Among 2020 program participants, only 2% went back to jail or prison for a new crime.

In 2020, APSC distributed \$73,762 in emergency COVID relief aid to 84 formerly incarcerated individuals who were struggling with economic hardships as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals reported that they used the funds for items such

# PROGRAM UPDATES

as: rent, food, legal help, medical expenses, funeral expenses, clothes, electricity bills, school costs, restitution, and other necessities. APSC also distributed supplies such as masks, groceries, and bikes to formerly incarcerated individuals. In response to the multitude of reentry challenges during COVID, APSC provided additional reentry services (peer support, support groups, and navigation assistance) to recipients as needed.

In Fall 2020, APSC launched a new formerly incarcerated internship program that included leadership development and on-the-job training in reentry, anti-deportation campaigns, and communications/storytelling projects. The first 3-person cohort was very successful: two interns are transitioning into permanent staff positions at APSC and one intern is now a full-time Yuri Kochiyama Fellow at a partner organization, Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus. We are continuing to grow our formerly incarcerated leadership program and will welcome a new cohort of formerly incarcerated interns in Fall 2021.

APSC also distributed \$4,800 in housing stipends to people on Probation in Alameda County as part of an Alameda County AB 109 Family Reunification - Housing stipend program.



*APSC Reentry team: Mike Cheng, Maria Legarda, Peejay Ai, and Ke Lam*

## Anti-Deportation

APSC led and supported freedom campaigns for individuals facing deportation, including the following:

- \* Coordinated weekly #FlattenICE actions that resulted in 11 people being released from ICE in the first half of 2020.
- \* Achieved a historic victory in preventing a direct transfer from CDCR to ICE (Chanthon Bun) on July 1, 2020, the first time this has ever happened to our knowledge. On September 11, 2020, Nayeli Arce was also freed directly from CDCR, and not transferred to ICE, after a campaign that APSC supported.

# PROGRAM UPDATES

- \* Continued to advocate for pardons for formerly incarcerated immigrants and refugees. APSC organized a freedom campaign for Bounchan "Boun" Keola, an incarcerated firefighter who was direct transferred from CDCR to ICE detention. Boun was eventually released from ICE and granted a pardon by Governor Newsom in April 2021. Ny Nourn (APSC Council member), Danny Thongsy (APSC volunteer and former intern), and Kao Saelee (APSC supported his freedom campaign) were also granted pardons in 2020 and early 2021.
- \* Organized a benefit concert that raised \$8,448 from 172 donors that went directly to emergency COVID relief aid for deported community members in Cambodia.



*Photo credit: Brooke Anderson. Ny Nourn leads a chant at an action to release and prevent the direct transfer of Chanthon Bun.*

APSC collaborated with Human Impact Partners and Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus on a research brief "[Stop ICE Transfers: Promoting Health, Unifying Families, Healing Communities.](#)" This research brief focuses on the particular ways direct transfers to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) – a system whereby prisons and jails collaborate with ICE to transfer people from jail or prison upon release to immigration detention centers – harm the mental and physical health of refugees, immigrants, and their families.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus, Asian Prisoner Support Committee, and a broad coalition of immigrant and civil rights groups, are leading efforts to pass the VISION Act (AB 937), authored by Assembly member Wendy

# PROGRAM UPDATES

Carrillo. The VISION Act would stop CDCR and local jails from conducting transfers to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for deportation purposes. This would ensure that like any other Californian, an immigrant who is deemed eligible for release from state prison or local jail would not be turned over to ICE, and instead would be able to reunite with their family and community.

## Advocacy and Coalitions (partial list) —————

- \* Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality (AACRE)
- \* California Alliance for Youth and Community Justice (CAYCJ)
- \* Coalition Helping Achieve Racial and Gender Equity (AAPI CHARGE)
- \* Justice Reinvestment Coalition of Alameda County
- \* Pardon and Commutation Coalition
- \* Seed Change Coalition
- \* Transformative In-Prison Workgroup
- \* VISION Act (AB 937) Coalition Core Member



*APSC staff and community at a rally in support of VISION Act (AB 937) in Sacramento on May 27, 2020.*

# TEAM

## Leadership Updates

---

After over two years of transition planning, we are excited to announce that Ny Nourn will be joining APSC as a Co-Director! She will begin in October 2021 to undergo training and transition to the full-time Co-Director position in February 2022. Ny will join Nate Tan as the two Co-Directors to lead APSC for years to come.

Ny Nourn was incarcerated for 15 ½ years, criminalized for actions committed by an abusive partner. Upon her release from state prison, Ny was immediately detained by ICE, where she faced deportation to Cambodia. But after 6 months of advocacy from community groups across California, in November of 2017, Ny walked out of ICE detention. Recently in June of 2020, Ny was granted a full and unconditional pardon preventing her deportation to Cambodia. Before joining APSC, Ny worked as a Community Advocate and Yuri Kochiyama Fellow at Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus (ALC) and as a volunteer with Survived and Punished and member of the California Coalition for Women Prisoners.

Ben Wang will step down from his Co-Director position by January 2022. After 16 years at APSC (five years in a Co-Director role), Ben is ready to pass on the torch to new leadership but will always stay closely connected to APSC's work, vision, and community.



*Nate, Ny, and Ben inside the new office.*



# TEAM

## Current Staff

---

**PEEJAY AI**  
*Community Advocate*

**MARIA LEGARDA**  
*Reentry Intern*

**MIKE CHENG**  
*Reentry Manager*

**HIEN NGUYEN**  
*Program Coordinator*

**JOHN LAM**  
*Program Coordinator*

**NATE TAN**  
*Co-Director*

**KE LAM**  
*Program and Facilities Manager*

**BEN WANG**  
*Co-Director (will transition out by January 2022)*

## Council Members

---

**KASI CHAKRAVARTULA**  
*Health care worker*

**ANOOP PRASAD**  
*Asian Americans Advancing Justice -  
Asian Law Caucus*

**CHARLES JOSEPH**  
*Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity*

**MONNA WONG**  
*The Management Center*

**NY NOURN**  
*Survived & Punished (will transition out of  
Council by October 2021)*

**EDDY ZHENG**  
*New Breath Foundation*

The APSC Council makes strategic decisions for the organization (budget, strategic planning, hiring/firing of Co-Directors, program priorities, etc.) The Council is composed of community leaders with lived experience with incarceration/deportation and expertise in immigration law, health care, non-profit management, leadership development, violence prevention, LGBTQ and gender justice, narrative change strategies, and more.

APSC is fiscally sponsored by Chinese for Affirmative Action and part of the Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality (AACRE) network. APSC's organizational structure can be viewed [here](#).

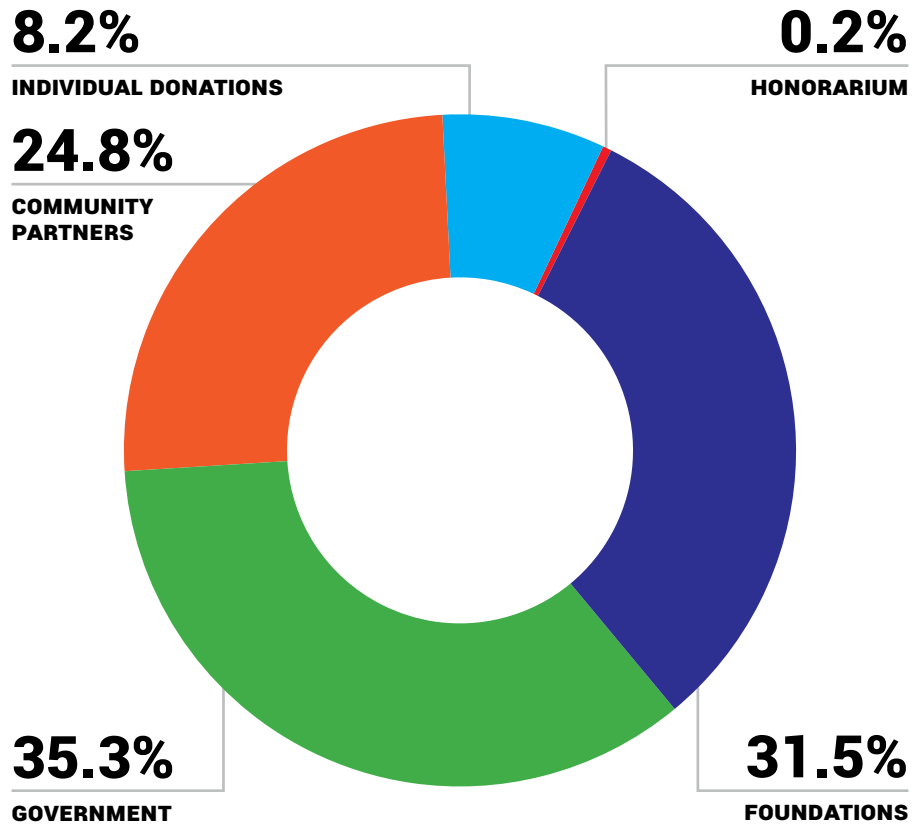
# FINANCIALS

## 2020 Line-Item Actuals

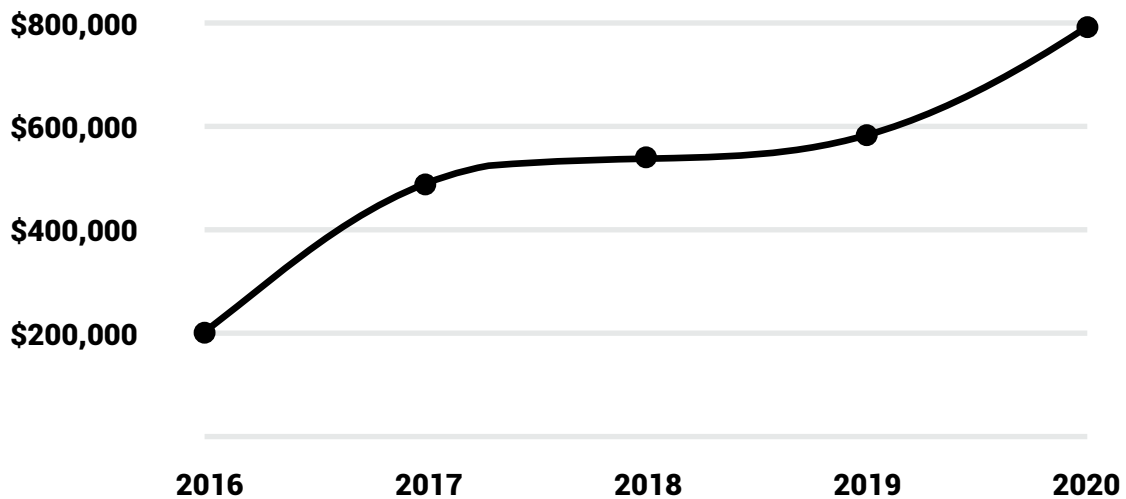
<b>REVENUE</b>	
Foundations	293,341
<i>Community Initiatives, Devata Giving Circle, National Education Association, New Breath Foundation, Nielsen Foundation, The California Endowment, The California Wellness Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation Program Support</i>	
Government Contracts	328,674
<i>Alameda County Innovations in Reentry, Alameda County AB 109 Family Reunification</i>	
Community Partners / Subgrants	230,980
<i>APEN, Asian Health Services, CAYCJ, EBALDC, Human Impact Partners, Immigrant Legal Resource Center, Just Cities, Rubicon, SEARAC, Social Impact Fund, Vera Institute of Justice</i>	
Individual Donations	75,882
Honoraria / Merchandise	1,779
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>930,656</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Salaries	453,280
Fringe Benefits	112,164
Personnel Subtotal	565,444
<i>Consultants</i>	
	15,930
<i>Stipends (reentry participants, interns, concrete services)</i>	
	25,746
<i>Office and Program Supplies</i>	
	10,611
<i>Copying and Printing</i>	
	2,448
<i>Interpretation and Translation</i>	
	146
<i>Rental and Facilities</i>	
	3,901
<i>Housing Stipends</i>	
	4,800
<i>Travel</i>	
	2,100
<i>Dues, Donations, and Fees (includes COVID relief aid)</i>	
	77,263
<i>Food and Catering</i>	
	2,329
<i>Subcontractors</i>	
	4,000
Nonpersonnel Subtotal	149,275
<b>TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS</b>	<b>714,719</b>
<i>General and Administrative and Fiscal Sponsor Fee</i>	
	71,472
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>786,191</b>
<b>CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	<b>144,465</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	<b>361,690</b>

# FINANCIALS

## Revenue in 2020

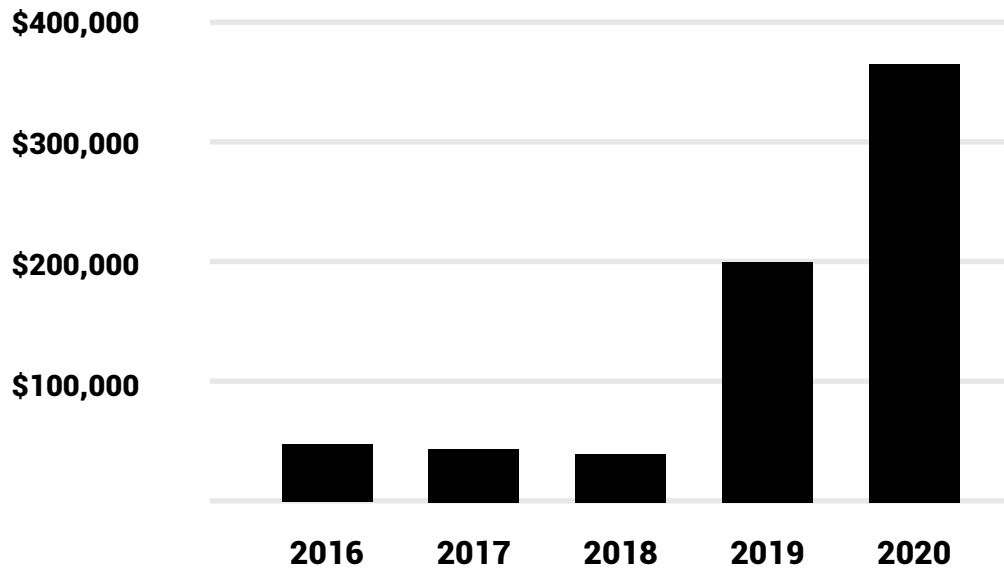


## Annual Expenses (2016-2020)

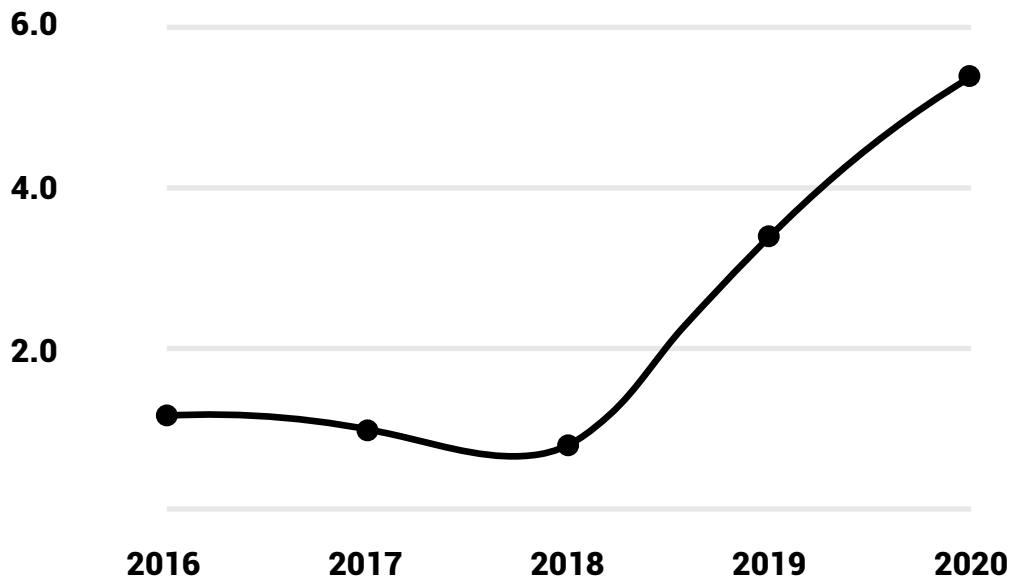


# FINANCIALS

## Unrestricted Net Assets "Reserves" on Dec. 31



## Ratio of Reserves to Average Monthly Expenses



*The Council and Co-Directors set a goal of increasing the organization's unrestricted net assets ("reserves") to at least 3-6 months, which is considered by many non-profit experts to be a key indicator for financial health. Thanks to the success of APSC programs and increased contributions, we are proud to show that our reserves have increased to the 5-month benchmark.*

# IMPACT

In 2020:

---

**102**

formerly incarcerated  
reentry clients served



**ONLY 2%**

of the 102 reentry clients went  
back to jail or prison

---

**DISTRIBUTED**  
**\$73,762**

emergency COVID relief aid  
to 84 formerly incarcerated individuals



**OVER 3,000**

letters, cards, support letters,  
and newsletters  
mailed to incarcerated individuals

---

**OVER 550**

incarcerated and formerly incarcerated  
community members' experiences  
were highlighted in narrative change strategies  
(survey, anthology, media)



**1.6 MILLION**

organic social media  
impressions (with no dedicated  
social media staff or consultants)

---

# LOOKING AHEAD

## **BEYOND FOCUSING ON THE LEADERSHIP TRANSITION, APSC LOOKS FORWARD TO MANY EXCITING AND CRITICAL ACTIVITIES OVER THE NEXT YEAR.**

- \* We are excited to have a new office (333 13th St., Oakland, CA) that is at least 10 times the size of our old one-room office.
- \* We will release findings of a survey documenting the needs and experiences of over 500 incarcerated APIs.
- \* We hope to go back to San Quentin and re-start the ROOTS program after the COVID shutdown.
- \* We are getting ready to launch a new formerly incarcerated internship cohort for 2021.
- \* We are organizing care packages and donations for deported community members in Vietnam, Cambodia, China, and the Philippines.

## **MUCH LOVE AND APPRECIATION TO APSC'S DEDICATED MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS, FUNDERS, STAFF, AND ALUMNI FOR HELPING US EVOLVE AND GROW FOR THE PAST 19+ YEARS. TOGETHER WE WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.**



*APSC staff (and two Council Members) inside our new office.*



# Asian Prisoner Support Committee

[asianprisonersupport.com](http://asianprisonersupport.com)

*Design and layout by Trời-Tim Trần and Kenny Mai.  
Published on August 10, 2021.*