



FREEDOM WORK

October 2023



OUR HISTORY

25 Years of Freedom Work



Susan Burton

Ms. Burton is born to Flora Burnell Hughes and Herman Burton in Aliso Village, a housing project in East Los Angeles.



Childhood

Ms. Burton loved school and placed top in her class spelling bee contest. Throughout her childhood, Ms. Burton was assaulted by those she trusted.



Incarceration

Ms. Burton is sent to Juvenile Hall at the age of 13. The judge grants probation. She is assaulted and gives birth to her daughter at the age of 14.

1998

A New Way of Life

Ms. Burton obtains gainful employment and dreams of bringing reentry services to her community of South Los Angeles. With the help of her nephew Lamont, Ms. Burton purchases her first home and establishes A New Way of Life Reentry Project.



Help

Ms. Burton learns that the criminal justice complex is a tale of two systems: second chances for those who are wealthy and white; mass incarceration and collateral consequences for everyone else. With the help of her brother Melvin, Ms. Burton is able to access reentry services through the Santa Monica-based Claire Foundation.



Criminal (In)Justice

Ms. Burton is enmeshed in the criminal (in) justice system for the next two decades. Everytime hope appears, tragedy strikes. She receives no support, and is continually reincarcerated.

2003

All of Us or None

Ms. Burton realizes that the forces working against her are those that laid the foundations of our nation: capitalism, racism, sexism, and more. She co-founds All of Us or None, a grassroots civil rights organization.

2006

WOJO

Ms. Burton looks to train the current and next generation of abolitionists. She establishes Women Organizing for Justice & Opportunity Leadership Lab—a six-month leadership program for formerly incarcerated women.

2007

Reentry Legal Clinic

Ms. Burton seeks to combat the collateral consequences of mass incarceration. She establishes ANWOL's Reentry Legal Clinic with the support of UCLA School of Law's Critical Race Studies program.

2017

Becoming Ms. Burton

Ms. Burton publishes *Becoming Ms. Burton*. This powerful memoir is widely praised and wins an NAACP Image Award. The book is distributed across prisons in the United States, so as to inspire incarcerated women.

2013

JOTFF

Ms. Burton establishes the annual Justice on Trial Film Festival after speaking with Michelle Alexander about the need to spotlight works exposing the injustices and exploring possible solutions to mass incarceration.

2010

CNN Hero

Ms. Burton is recognized as a Top 10 CNN Hero. This award brings increased national and international visibility to ANWOL.

2018

SAFE Housing Network

Ms. Burton establishes the Sisterhood Alliance for Freedom and Equality (SAFE) Housing Network after visiting 64 prisons and jails in 26 states and three countries. The SAFE Housing Network provides rigorous training and supports justice-impacted members in their replication of ANWOL's successful reentry philosophy and model.

2021

25 Years of Freedom Work!

Ms. Burton passes the torch to co-directors Pamela Marshall and Michael Towler in 2021. As of 2023, ANWOL has provided housing to over 1,600 women and children, reunited over 400 parents with their children, provided pro bono legal services to over 4,000 individuals, and provided leadership training to over 200 women. Tens of thousands more have been empowered through our advocacy efforts.

2023

Welcome.

Dear Friends of A New Way of Life,

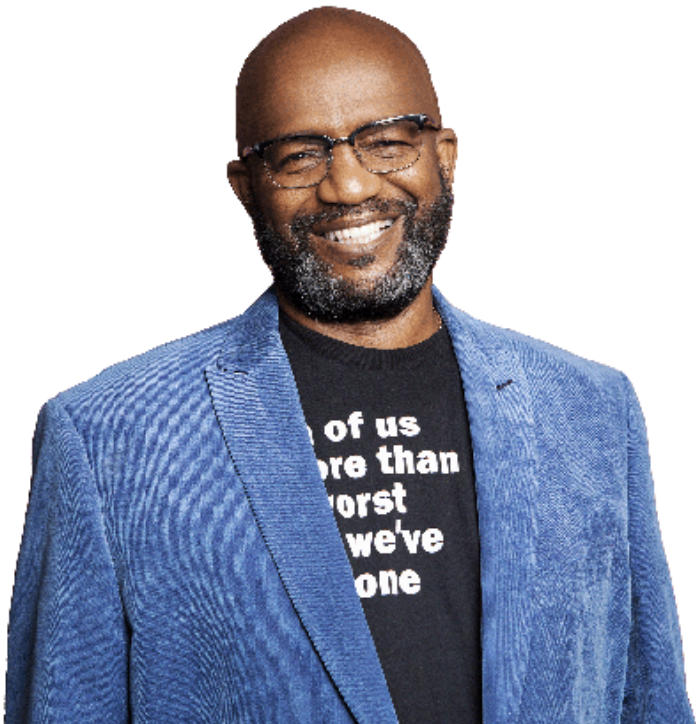
A New Way of Life has helped thousands of women, men, and children, and systems-impacted communities across the country, and even the globe. More than 1,600 women and children provided with safe housing; more than 4,000 individuals provided with pro bono legal services; supporting more than 30 organizations across four countries through our Sisterhood Alliance for Freedom & Equality (SAFE) Housing Network. Those numbers and that collective impact matters, but so too do the individuals’ stories.

It has been our distinct pleasure to witness and be a part of the individual and collective success of so many of the communities we serve. We have had the distinct pleasure of celebrating the reunification of a family, the pursuit of higher education, the obtainment of gainful employment, the journey of sobriety, the celebration of a birthday, the relief of expungement, the serenity of walking into a safe, clean home, and so much more. We joined A New Way of Life in 2010 (Michael) and 2011 (Pamela) respectively, and during that time we have laughed and celebrated our victories and cried and regrouped to confront our losses alongside and with our residents, clients, supporters, and staff.

Today, we invite you to see just a glimpse of what we experience every day. The 23 profiles we have collected for you here are just a snippet of the stories and journeys we have had the privilege of being a part for more than a decade. Join us as we spotlight these 23 individuals and celebrate the impact of our work and theirs as well.

Best wishes,

Pamela Marshall & Michael Towler (Co-Directors)



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To learn more about A New Way of Life Reentry Project, please contact: info@anewwayoflife.org.



ALLICIA PHILLIPS

2022

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Housing Department

What Allicia is Currently Doing:
Court Watcher

“A New Way of Life is a program that has many benefits and resources that would help any individual who exits out of the prison walls excel and integrate back into society. I am a living testimony.”



DR. BAZ DREISINGER

2021

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Justice on Trial Film Festival

What Dr. Dreisinger is Currently Doing:
Executive Director (Incarceration Nations
Network) & Founder (Prison-to-College
Pipeline)

“People cannot support what they cannot see. The Justice on Trial Film Festival lets communities see what abolition looks like, using film as the powerful medium of change that it is.”



BETHANY LITTLE

2018

A New Way of Life's Impact:
SAFE Housing Network

What Bethany is Currently Doing:
**Founder & Executive Director (WIN
Recovery)**

“The Safe Housing Network has not only given shelter to the women it serves but has also sheltered my own soul with a profound sense of purpose. Seeing these brave women rebuild their lives under the Network's care has shown me the incredible resilience of the human spirit.”



BOBBIE BUTTS

2016

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Women Organizing for Justice &
Opportunity

What Bobbie is Currently Doing:
Assistant Director of the FREE Project
(Starting Over Inc.)

“A New Way of Life has helped me understand that I have a voice and I do matter today.”



CHERYL WARD

2013

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Women Organizing for Justice &
Opportunity

What Cheryl is Currently Doing:
Housing Benefits Coordinator (ANWOL)

“ANWOL has impacted my life in a grand fashion. I have been allowed to walk in freedom following the path ANWOL has paved the way for us who have returned home. One cannot reentry alone.”



EVIE PONDER 2022

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Family Reunification & Housing
Departments

What Evie is Currently Doing:
Administrative Assistant (ANWOL)

“A New Way of Life is not a program to me, it's my family, my home and support. I would not have been able to become the person that I am today without them. I am grateful and I have so much love for everyone at ANWOL.”



KASHMIR MITCHELL

2022

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Workforce Development &
Education

What Kashmir is Currently Doing:
Art Handler

“I wouldn't be where I am at if it wasn't for ANWOL. Because of ANWOL, I'm making money that I never would have thought I would be making.”



KIMBERLY “KD” DUNNE 2021

A New Way of Life’s Impact:
Advocacy Department

What Kimberly is Currently Doing:
Co-National Organizer (Formerly
Incarcerated, Convicted People &
Families Movement)

“Working with ANWOL brought the best side out of me and that was my leadership. They knew I had a passion for this work and showed me how to advocate.”



KAYANA TYSON

2023

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Advocacy Department

What Kayana is Currently Doing:
Civic Engagement Organizer (ANWOL)

“As I continue my journey with A New Way of Life, I remain committed to making a positive impact on people's lives and contributing to positive change.”



LaTanya Reed

2020

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Family Reunification & Housing
Departments

What LaTanya is Currently Doing:
Housing Coordinator (ANWOL)

“ANWOL has impacted my life in so many ways from learning how to be brave and also being a productive person in society.”



LILY GONZALEZ

2016

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Advocacy Department & Testi-fi

What Lily is Currently Doing:
Program Director (CSUN Project
Rebound)

“Susan Burton has been important to Project Rebound and showing how formerly incarcerated people are building other worlds. She is modeling that for us.”



MARTA LOPEZ-GARCIA

2004

A New Way of Life's Impact:
External (Community Coalition
Exoffender Task Force)

What Marta is Currently Doing:
Professor Emerita of Gender &
Women's Studies and Chicana/o Studies
Departments (CSUN) & ANWOL Board
of Directors

“Meeting Susan Burton, along with
Marilyn Montenegro, Kim Carter,
Monica Stel changed my life and
research field. Because of these women,
I am an abolitionist.”



MIHAL ROSE ANSIK 2016

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Family Reunification & Women
Organizing for Justice & Opportunity

What Mihal is Currently Doing:
Staff Attorney
(UnCommon Law)

“At A New Way of Life, I collaborated with and followed the leadership of mothers mobilizing to keep families together through WOJO. I feel honored to experience the joy of seeing people reunite with their loved ones after coming home.”



MYESHA JOHNSON

2017

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Administration Department

What Myesha is Currently Doing:
Administrative Assistant (ANWOL)

“Working alongside Ms. Burton has inspired me to help others in my community.”



ROBBIE HALL

2021

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Workforce Development & Education

What Robbie is Currently Doing:
CPR Aide & Advocate (LA Rise)

“ANWOL helped me process my reentry into society. I had no knowledge of what society was, but ANWOL took me in as family.”



ROBERTA BROOKS

2020

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Housing Department

What Roberta is Currently Doing:
Housing Coordinator (ANWOL)

“ANWOL taught me my independence and how to become a woman. I’m grateful to be able to work here and help the women that are similar to me.”



SELENA LOPEZ

2017

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Family Reunification & Susan Burton

What Selena is Currently Doing:
Outreach Coordinator (Project Rebound
Long Beach)

“ANWOL has helped me grow into the woman, mother, wife, and scholar I am now. The program helped me heal and recognize that I am valuable and deserve to be happy.”



STEPHANIE JEFFCOAT 2019

**A New Way of Life's Impact:
Advocacy Department (All Of Us Or
None)**

**What Stephanie is Currently Doing:
Founder (Families Inspiring Reentry &
Reunification 4 Everyone)**

“My experience at A New Way of Life was instrumental in shaping my path. It provided me with the platform to evolve and emerge as the leader I’ve become today.”



SWANIKETA BROWN

2022

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Family Reunification

What Swaniketa is Currently Doing:
Project Administrative Assistant

“If it weren't for the generous, angelic services of ANWOL, I don't know where I would be. I have an amazing team supporting me in the fight to get my children back.”



TERESA NJOROGE

2021

A New Way of Life's Impact:
SAFE House Network

What Teresa is Currently Doing:
CEO & Founder (Clean Start Africa)

“Our association with A New Way of Life Reentry Project has proven to be the lifeline we never knew we needed. It’s more than a partnership; it’s a family, a network of hearts and hands dedicated to lighting the way for those seeking redemption, reintegration, and a fresh start.”



TONIE WILLIS

2020

A New Way of Life's Impact:
SAFE House Network

What Tonie is Currently Doing:
Founder and Executive (Ardella's House)

“It’s been a blessing to be a part of this organization. Ms. Burton has given me the tools and the courage to do what needs to be done.”



YARA OCHOA

2020

A New Way of Life's Impact:
Family Reunification & Susan Burton

What Yara is Currently Doing:
18 Month Program Participant
(Homeboy Industries)

“Anytime I reached out for help, they’ve been there. As long as I wanted to do something good, they were there for me.”



BENNITA WHITE

My name is Bennita O. White. I was Susan Burton's first resident back in 1998. Back then, I had been arrested for drugs. The judge wanted to give me 25 years to life, but fortunately my attorney told the judge that a lady named Susan Burton had just opened a sober living home and asked if I could go there instead. The judge granted the request, but said if I did not complete the program I would be sentenced for 25 years. I called Susan, begging her to come get me, after I had already been in jail for two weeks. Even though I was the only one, Susan ran a very structured house (other residents would come later). Susan and A New Way of Life taught me how to live again, which is something I had lost leading up to my arrest. Susan did not sugar coat my struggles but she was always kind yet firm. Today, I am 24 years sober. Susan showed us how to live life, and because of her love for incarcerated women, she and A New Way of Life are a blessing for all that have seemingly lost their way and yet not their hope for a better life.

