

# All About OAR and Why We Need Your Support



As you have undoubtedly seen, there has been a lot of turmoil with federal aid and grant funding. The process has been chaotic: The administration froze all grants through an executive order, injunctions were filed in courts, then the administration rescinded the memo that went out announcing the freeze (but the executive order mandating the freeze remained intact), and then a temporary restraining order was issued by federal judges to block the administration's executive order to stop payments and aid. However, the administration has not fully complied with the judge's order, and many organizations continue to report that their funding remains frozen, or accessing it has been a struggle. Though Congress had previously approved the funding, we are all unclear what will happen next. What we do know is that whatever the outcome of this litigation is, there will likely be profound changes to who and what gets funded going forward. We expect organizations working with those impacted by the criminal legal system and racial justice will get hit hard — organizations like us.

OAR has three multi-year federal grants we rely on to expand our reentry work (pre- and post-release) and to fund our substance use disorder and diversion programs. These programs are necessary to ensure that people can be diverted out of incarceration and return to the community after incarceration to live and thrive, which helps the communities remain safe. Because it seems that necessary public safety programs like ours will be affected, we are bracing for restrictions on or loss of our current federal grants and future federal funding, as well as the potential loss of other funding.

OAR remains committed to continuing our critical work. But to do so, we will need your help. We hope you will continue supporting OAR as we navigate these challenging times. You can make a special donation today and forward this email to others so they can also learn about and support our work.

Wishing you warmth,

-The OAR Collective



# ABOUT OAR



OAR is a community-based nonprofit organization that envisions a safe & thriving community where those impacted by the legal system enjoy equal civil & human rights. Learn more about OAR's mission, vision, and ethical storytelling philosophy from Elizabeth Jones Valderrama, OAR Collective member of 20 years, including the last 10 years as the Executive Director. Note: This video was recorded a few years ago but is still relevant today.

[Click here to watch the video, or click play below.](#)



# UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM CONCEPT

[Click here to watch the video, or click play below.](#)





# OAR'S KEY PROGRAMS

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**Alternative Sentencing and Diversion Program ~1,000 adults and youth**  
In collaboration with Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, OAR offers alternative sentencing options (including community service) and diversion programs. These programs allow 90 youth and 900 adults of all genders yearly to contribute to the community and avoid the lifelong consequences of incarceration. For instance, OAR's Community Service model enables individuals to volunteer in the community as an alternative to serving jail time or allowing them to work off their court costs and fines through volunteering. Volunteering gives individuals a chance to impact the community positively. In partnership with the Vera Institute, the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney of Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, and the Public Defender's Office, OAR's Diversion program aims to increase the number of individuals participating in diversion programs and reduce the reliance on incarceration.

**Reentry Services ~ 500 adults with 300 children**

OAR journeys with individuals of all genders incarcerated at the Arlington County Detention Facility, the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center in the City of Alexandria, and other state prisons and correctional facilities who are preparing to return to the community. Additionally, we journey with individuals recently released from incarceration who return to Arlington County and the Cities of Alexandria and Falls Church. We also connect with their families before and after release, providing a comprehensive range of services. These reentry services are designed to meet each person's unique needs, ensuring they receive the support they need as they return to the community.

**Racial Justice and Liberation**

OAR lifts the voices of people who have experienced racism and other intersecting forms of marginalization and challenges all to become leaders in dismantling injustice and redressing the harm caused by personal racism and systemic racism.

OAR is the only nonprofit in Arlington, Alexandria, and Falls Church that addresses discrimination and racial inequity in the criminal legal system upstream and downstream through direct services.



# MEET ABIGAIL



Abigail\*, a participant in OAR's Diversion program who has made significant strides. Abigail\* encountered challenges securing employment due to her background but remained resolute in pursuing a career in healthcare. With the unwavering support of OAR's Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS), she sharpened her interview skills and secured a job offer. This achievement, a testament to the effectiveness of our program, bolstered her confidence. She was able to secure stable housing using a housing voucher. OAR is thrilled to witness Abigail's\* journey and is steadfast in our commitment to journeying with her at every step.

\*In keeping with OAR's ethical storytelling policy, the participant's name has been changed to protect their privacy. OAR uses people-first and strength-based language and sees participants as experts on themselves and leaders for their own lives and plans. We constantly seek feedback and guidance from participants and pride ourselves on having an ethical storytelling philosophy that respects the dignity and protects the privacy of each person we work with. To protect their privacy, we do not use the actual names, photos, or videos of participants.\*



# CHARLIE'S CORNER



Hi friends!

My name is Charlie, and I am the Ambassador of Happiness at OAR. I love greeting everyone who comes to the OAR Welcome Center and when I visit the detention facilities. My goal is to always greet them with a joyful wag and help them feel welcomed and safe. Be sure to look for my monthly Barks of Wisdom in the enewsletter and follow my adventures on OAR's social media.

[Click Here to Follow Us on Instagram](#)