

A letter from our Executive Director, Lauren Bonds



I am so proud to share with you some highlights from our work in 2023. We're listening to the needs of those most impacted by police violence and we are RESPONDING. Here are a few ways NPAP has expanded our programs to meet those needs.

We believe that communities should lead the effort to reimagine public safety. NPAP has grown its capacity to provide much-needed legal expertise in service of community-led efforts to reform policing. From giving guidance on crisis intervention teams to supporting ordinances that set standards for jail operations, NPAP brings expertise to communities demanding police reform nationwide.

Only 1% of people who believe their rights have been violated by the police ever file a lawsuit. Finding a lawyer can be next to impossible. NPAP is growing the number of attorneys trained to take police misconduct cases so victims – who are disproportionately people of color – have an opportunity to seek justice. This year we trained 26 attorneys and legal professionals in the Great Plains region (KS, NE, ND, SD), where previously there were only a handful of attorneys taking these cases.

2023 was the second year of NPAP's co-counsel program, which supports attorney members in the South and Midwest to bring more robust cases to challenge abusive police departments, jails and prisons. The program can mean the difference between holding individual officers accountable for one incident of violence and holding an entire department accountable for a longstanding pattern and culture of excessive force.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. We are excited to share with you this beautiful artwork by New Orleans artist Langston Allston and our vision for a better future. Please read the stories of the people whose lives we are impacting. They are why we work tirelessly to build a future free from police violence. THANK YOU for partnering with us.



Our clients

NPAP clients Regina Armstead (57) and Michael Lewis (67) were driving to their home in Rosenberg, TX after picking up dinner in November 2020 when they were pulled over by police who were searching for a car being driven by a group of allegedly armed teenagers. Despite the fact that the older couple clearly did not match the description of the teens, Rosenberg Police Department (RPD) officers proceeded to order the couple out of the vehicle and onto their knees, handcuff them at gunpoint, unlawfully search their car, and seize their phones.

Mr. Lewis tried to explain to the officers that he had a stint in his hand for regular dialysis treatment and that his doctor had instructed him not to place any pressure on it, but the officers ignored him. As a result of being handcuffed, Mr. Lewis' stint malfunctioned, requiring multiple medical procedures to replace.

As is so often the case with patterns of police abuse, this was not an isolated incident. The department has been the recipient of more than 100 civilian complaints over the last seven years, alleging abuse of people with medical vulnerabilities, excessive force, unlawful detentions, and illegal searches and seizures.

This case is a perfect example of the impact of NPAP's co-counsel program. With NPAP's support, our Texas-based co-counsel was able to expand their lawsuit from a case that holds five officers accountable to a case that holds the entire department to account. Together, we are working to ensure RPD cannot continue its history of abusing civilians' civil rights and is forced to implement policy changes that will prevent the recurrence of such abuses in the future.

Our partners

This year, NPAP is proud to partner with Know Your Rights Camp (KYRC), founded by Colin Kaepernick in 2016 in the aftermath of the police murder of Mario Woods in San Francisco just blocks away from Candlestick Park, where Colin played professional football. The organization offers legal, cultural and community resources in support of Black and Brown communities in their fight against systemic oppression, police terrorism and racial inequality.

One of KYRC's programs, the Autopsy Initiative, provides secondary autopsies free-of-charge for victims' families who have lost their loved one due to an in-custody or police-related death. The victim's first autopsy is conducted by the coroner or medical examiner in the state where the death occurred.

When a police-related death is involved, various concerns may arise, including the reliability of the first autopsy conducted. The Initiative seeks to be a resource to victims' family members by providing transparency and objectivity within the autopsy process.

In their efforts to further support family members who have lost a loved one to police or prison violence, KYRC reached out to NPAP for technical support. Many victims' families may want to pursue legal action against the officers or government agencies involved in the death of their loved ones. The process for bringing a civil lawsuit against a police officer varies from state to state.

At KYRC's request, NPAP researched and developed a guide for families on how to get the information they will need to file a lawsuit, preserve their claims, and find an attorney. Working together, NPAP and KYRC are helping victims' families get the justice they deserve.



NPAP by the numbers 2023

10

community partners supported

304

legal professionals & students trained

93

law students engaged

552

attorney members

27

bills testified on

9

active cases

17

amicus briefs filed

7

staff

\$1.2M

budget

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The National Police Accountability Project

www.nlg-npap.org

Building a future free from police violence



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