

# Alex Frank, ASW

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### RACE FORWARD

August 2022 - Present

*Director of Root Solutions for Public Safety, GARE Initiative*

- In partnership with the Government Alliance on Race Equity [GARE] Initiative Network, research, identify, share, and disseminate ways that racial equity can be achieved within the criminal legal system;
- Document and promote opportunities to invest in alternatives to punitive interventions that interrupt the cycle of criminalization, incarceration, and violence;
- Curate best practices that make public systems [police, District Attorneys, probation/ parole, jails, and prisons] more accountable to community safety by advancing antiracist policy and practice solutions;
- Organize peer-to-peer learning exchanges across the GARE network including criminal legal system practitioners that draw inspiration from the progress they are making in the movement for racial equity.

### ALEX FRANK CONSULTING

February 2022 – Present

*Senior Consultant*

- Co-author and collaborator on publications and reform projects with grassroots community based partners including Raw Wisdom LLC [Vineland, New Jersey] and the MILPA Collective [Salinas, California].
- Support Justice Policy Institute [Washington, DC] on grant writing, analytics, reporting and management.

### VERMONT LAW SCHOOL

September 2020 – Present

*Adjunct Professor & Course Developer, National Center on Restorative Justice*

- Design and teach VLS's youth justice courses.
- Participate in convenings and think tanks around restorative justice, ending mass incarceration, and enhancing the learning experience of students.
- Support development of University scholarship and research at the intersection of antiracist policy change, restorative justice, youth justice, and systems change.

### NEW YORK CITY, DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

*Assistant Commissioner*

August 2021 – January 2022

- Reporting to the Commissioner, served as a trusted advisor and thought partner within the executive leadership team on matters related to stabilizing the humanitarian crisis at Rikers Island, participatory project management [in partnership with incarcerated people and front-line staff], strategic planning, antiracist policy change, and communications.
- Developed and led the departments strategy around young adults as a key entry point to broader reform given the disparate impact of the inhumane conditions on young people of color and in alignment with the values of antiracism, cultural healing, truth telling, and restorative justice.
- Managed a multidisciplinary team of expert consultants and internal DOC partners across operations, programs, communications, and training in alignment with the above values to implement reforms.
- Managed and built relationships with external funders, community partners, advocates and allies in the field.
- Co-led the Young Adult Task Force, an interdisciplinary team including grassroots advocates, funders, providers, and government leaders.
- Served as the lead with external funders and donors supporting the inside/ outside reform strategy.

*Senior Consultant*

June 2021– August 2021

- Designed and led a strategy to stabilize the crisis at Rikers Island with a focus on young adults across jail operations/ security, programs, and internal and external communications.
- Led an assessment of current living and working conditions on Rikers Island, with a focus on young adults and managed a consultant team in partnership with the MILPA Collective and the Justice Policy Institute [JPI].
- Supported fundraising efforts to engage external supports and content knowledge experts including managing the budget, writing grants, and funder/ donor relations.

### COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, JUSTICE LAB

February 2021 – August 2021

*Senior Consultant*

- Provided strategic consulting and technical assistance on projects aimed at advancing race equity and transforming the treatment of young adults [ages 18-25] across the justice system.
- Led and project managed a youth and young adult diversion project with a large county jurisdiction in partnership with local legal aid, state's attorney, and grass roots community partners to design and implement a diversion program for young adults.

### VERA INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE – New York, NY

July 2016 – October 2020

*Project Director, Co-Founder [Restoring Promise Initiative](#)*

- Co-Founded the Restoring Promise Initiative – a national initiative working to transform the prison system, build people power of those most impacted, and advance antiracist policy change focused on young adults.

- **Initiative Operations:** Served on the leadership team of Restoring Promise to manage a budget of \$14.5 million, team of 22 people [5 direct reports], consultants, sub-grantees, grant applications, funder, partner, and media relations; recruited, trained, and onboarded new staff and consultants, and supported growth and professional development of staff.
- **Site Work:** Designed and managed our national scale strategy and our state-based teams in providing technical assistance [TA] with the state Department of Corrections in CT, SC, ND, CO, ID, and a county Jail in MA including the state-specific reform strategy, coaching agency staff, managing media inquiries, supporting antiracist policy changes, research and evaluation agenda, training curriculum, team wellness, local community partnerships, and relationships with DOC leadership, state legislature, and Governor offices.
- **Narrative Change and Communications:** Co-managed the narrative change strategy including the design and launch of the brand concept and website, fielded media inquiries, co-developed and managed crisis communications strategy, and supported the production of publications and multi-media reports.
- **Network Engagement:** Managed the health and growth of the Restoring Promise network including engaging new partners, organizing and facilitating peer-to-peer learning exchanges (domestic and international), hosting webinars, building/ nurturing relationships with funders, justice system partners, and consultants, and managing the production of the annual convening with 100+ participants at a historically significant location in the US including the EJI Museum & Memorial; Whitney Plantation, New Orleans, LA.
- Presented and spoke at conferences across the US on youth and young adult justice, antiracist policy change, prison conditions and reform strategies, and the social and historical context of the carceral system.

**ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION** - Baltimore, MD

*September 2013 – June 2016*

*Program Assistant, Juvenile Justice Strategy Group*

- Managed grants and relationships with grantee organizations and consultants with a focus on those doing work to partner with young people and families directly impacted by the youth justice system.
- Provided technical assistance for state and local youth justice reform including identifying “inside” and “outside” system reform opportunities to change policy and practice, designing and facilitating meetings with stakeholders, identifying and supporting local reform leaders, providing data analytical support, and supporting a prison-based participatory action research study.
- Led the development of a national youth justice reform strategy and funding portfolio to partner with young people currently and formerly involved in the justice system including establishing the Foundations first national youth justice advisory board and building strategies for partnering with young people in reform work.
- Supported the production of annual convenings (one with 300+ participants, a second with 1,000+ participants) from across the country to deepen our collective learning, network, and advance the work of youth justice reform.
- Presented and spoke at national conferences and participated in ad-hoc consultative sessions on topics related to youth justice, youth and family engagement, probation, prison conditions and reentry reform.

**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION**- New York, NY

*August 2012 – August 2013*

Assessor [Contractor], Alternative to Placement Assessment Unit (ATP)

- Supported the development of the ATP assessment unit including processes, policies, and protocols.
- Completed assessments of youth involved with the justice system to identify alternative disposition to prevent incarceration in partnership with youth and families.
- Presented written and oral dispositional recommendations to judiciary.

MSW Field Placement - Juvenile Operations

- Conducted literature reviews and research related to probation policy and program reform efforts including the New York City, Close to Home Initiative.
- Drafted and presented policy recommendations and reports and supported policy and program development stakeholder workgroups.

**SAFE SPACE, NYC**- Far Rockaway, NY

*August 2011- May 2012*

Case Planner (MSW Field Placement)

- Provided intensive case management to children and families with severe and persistent mental illness deemed “high risk” of foster care placement by the Association of Children’s Services (ACS);
- Provided crisis management, counseling, family team conferencing, and strengths based case management support to families;
- Supported families as an advocate in schools, to secure housing, food, and with public and private agencies.

**SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFFS DEPARTMENT, NASHUA STREET JAIL**- Boston, MA *August 2009 – July 2011*

Group Facilitator, Assessor, and Counseling Intern

- Completed psychological/social intake assessments and provided case management support.
  - Developed, implemented and evaluated mindfulness meditation program.
  - Facilitated current events/ political education/ book club.
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## RELEVANT MEDIA COVERAGE

2022:

Columbia News: [Former Commissioner of the Department of Correction Says That Everything You've Heard About Rikers Is True](#)

2021:

NY Times: [A Rare Glimmer of Hope at Rikers Island: Can It Last?](#)

2020:

Podcast: [Criminal Justice Insider](#)

NPR, CT Public Radio: [Losing Bill: Living Behind Bars Because Of Gun Violence](#)

2019:

60 Minutes: [German-style program at a Connecticut maximum security prison emphasizes rehab for inmates](#)

The Atlantic: [An Airbnb for the Formerly Incarcerated](#)

Greenville News: [To curb jail violence, repeat offenders, SC prisons take page from Europe's playbook](#)

MASS Live: ['I want to change for the better': Inside a Massachusetts jail's innovative unit for young adults](#)

2018:

NPR: [A New Approach To Incarceration In The U.S.: Responsibility](#)

Teen Vogue: [South Carolina Adopts Vera Institute of Justice's Restoring Promise Initiative](#)

Mother Jones: [A Connecticut Prison Has a Radical New Plan to Keep Young Inmates From Coming Back](#)

The Marshall Project: [Rikers Doesn't Put Teens in Solitary. Other New York Jails Do.](#)

Glamour Magazine: [Inside a Radical Experiment to Transform the Lives of Incarcerated Women](#)

2017:

Boston Globe: [In Billerica, a cell block for young men holds promise](#)

CT Mirror: ['To focus on young adults who are in prison is very cutting edge'](#)

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## PUBLICATIONS & WRITTEN TESTIMONY

*[Pending Publication, MILPA Collective]*

[Truth Telling and Palabra: A Project at Rikers Island](#)

September, 2022

*[Pending Publication, Society for the Study of Social Problems Journal]*

[Cultural Healing and Racial Justice: Unpacking the Paradox of Criminal Justice Reform](#)

Fall, 2022

MASS Design Group

[The Role of Architecture in Fighting COVID-19: Carceral Environments and COVID-19](#)

May, 2020

Annie E. Casey Foundation

[Leading with Race to Reimagine Youth Justice](#)

April, 2020

Vera Institute of Justice

[Cultivating Change](#)

March, 2019

[Through Their Eyes: A Multimedia Experience](#)

April, 2019

[Can we Learn from our Past?](#)

September, 2018

Written Testimony to the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut's Committee on the Judiciary

March 2017

[Governors Bill 7045: An Act Concerning Juvenile and Youth Adult Justice](#)

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## SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS

*Speech:* Restoring Promise Annual Convening; Montgomery, AL

November 2019

- Equal Justice Initiative Memorial and Museum

*Panelist:* Best of Justice Awards, Vera Institute of Justice; Los Angeles, CA

February 2019

- The Movement to Protect Kids Who Are Incarcerated; Alex Frank & NBA star Caron Butler

*Panelist:* Building Bridges Conference; Central Connecticut State University

March 2018

- Re-Entry: A Pathway to Success into a Welcoming Community

*Workshop:* American Correctional Association Conference

August 2017

- Connecticut TRUE unit; Alex Frank; Warden Kenneth Butricks; Warden Julie Modano

*Workshop:* Annual Deep End Convening, Annie E. Casey Foundation

Spring 2017

- Workshop Presenter on Conditions of Confinement

*Webinar:* Restoring Promise; MILPA Collective & Vera Institute of Justice

October 2017

- Reforming the Care and Custody of Young Adults Sentenced to State Prison

*Panelist:* Vera Institute of Justice & Georgetown University

Spring 2016

- Identifying, Engaging, and Empowering Families: A Charge for Juvenile Justice Agencies
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## **LICENSURES & TRAININGS**

*Associate Clinical Social Worker*

California Board of Behavior Sciences, Registration Number: ASW108074

Justice 4 Families [J4F]

*June 2021*

*On-Call Trainer*

- Completed Train the Trainer certification to serve as an on call trainer on family and community partnership including training for staff who work in juvenile and adult justice systems on addressing barriers to family engagement, and developing skills to better support young people in staying connected with their families and communities while incarcerated.
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## **EDUCATION**

*New York University, Silver School of Social Work, New York, NY: Master of Social Work*

Relevant Projects:

- Independent study: Prison release policies and reentry
- Del Carmen, Philippines: Community health needs assessment: A collaborative research study
- Buenos Aires, Argentina: Macro practice, policy, & social movements

*Lesley College, Cambridge, MA: Bachelor of Arts- Holistic Psychology, Counseling Psychology Track*

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