

# ACLU

Missouri

*Annual Report*

FISCAL YEAR 2024



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# *A Letter from the Executive Director*



In 2019, Missouri passed one of the most extreme abortion bans in the country, attempting to outlaw what little abortion access was left in the state. Immediately, the ACLU of Missouri team began organizing with partners to fight back—with an eye towards taking abortion to a vote of the people. In 2022, when Missouri became the first state to enact a total abortion ban minutes after the fall of Roe, the ACLU of Missouri team remained steadfast in its commitment to restoring the right to abortion. After years of litigation, polling, and community conversations, a ballot campaign launched publicly at the beginning of 2024: [Missourians for Constitutional Freedom](#).

When you read about that campaign and its successes in the news, I want you to remember this:

You made the choice to invest your money in the ACLU of Missouri long-term, and your support allows us to play the long game to make profound change. **Thank you.**

I am fiercely proud of the ACLU of Missouri's work to defend reproductive rights—and all our work during the 2024 fiscal year. I hope you share my pride.

Sincerely,

**Luz María Henríquez**

*(she/ella)*

# Staff

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**Luz María Henríquez**

*Executive Director*

**Katie Hinnens-Mueller**

*Deputy Executive Director*

**Nicole Rainey**

*Director of Development*

**Suzette Newman**

*Administrative Assistant*

**Tom Bastian**

*Deputy Director for Communications*

**Tori Schafer**

*Deputy Director for Policy and Campaigns*

**Elaine Sutton**

*Deputy Director for Community Engagement*

**Gillian Wilcox**

*Deputy Director for Litigation*

**Iyaun DeMore Bell, Sr.**

*Community Engagement Restorative  
Justice Fellow*

**Sage Coram**

*Legislative Associate*

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*Graphic Designer*

**Kristin Mulvey**

*Staff Attorney*

**Jason Orr**

*Staff Attorney*

**Jon Schmid**

*Voting Rights Legal Fellow*

**Sydney Smith**

*Community Engagement Restorative  
Justice Fellow*

**Krysten Vaughn**

*Community Engagement Associate*

**Stephen Wilder**

*Development Associate*

**Reva Wood**

*Major Gifts Officer*

# *Board of Directors*

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**Brendan Donelon**  
*President*

**Robert W. Waugh**  
*Treasurer*

**Dana Sandweiss**  
*Secretary*

**Josephine Goode**  
*Affiliate Equity Officer*

**Daron Smith**  
*National Board Representative*

**Ron Nguyen**

**Steve Singer**

**Mark Utterback**



**Staff retreat at Les Bourgeois Vineyards – Photo Courtesy of Tom Bastian**



**First day of court in a case challenging strict restrictions on acceptable IDs used to vote** [Left to right: Donita Patterson-Brown (NAACP - Pulaski County), Ted Kramer (MVPC), Luz María Henríquez, Kristin Mulvey, Jason Orr, Rod Chapel (NAACP-MO, Plaintiff), Gillian Wilcox, Jon Schmid, and Miranda Drakes (MVPC). Front: Denise Lieberman (MVPC), Kimberly Morgan (Plaintiff) Yolanda Martin (NAACP - Lincoln University)] – Photo by Tom Bastian



**The ACLU-MO joins Swing Phi Swing Social Fellowship, Inc., at Harris-Stowe State University to discuss priority issues with students** [Left to right: Derrionna Epps (SΦS), Candace Koonce (SΦS), Stanyale Riley (SΦS), Tori Schafer, Elaine Sutton, Dr. Terry Daily Davis (HSSU), and Jon Schmid] – Photo by Chima Mbionu



# *Voting Rights*

In 2022, the Missouri legislature passed sweeping changes to our elections and voter-engagement practices, prompting legal action from the ACLU of Missouri. In November 2023, the Missouri ACLU team went to trial contesting new requirements that would limit specific forms of photo identification to vote in person and absentee. Such strict restrictions to vote disproportionately burden marginalized communities, including people of color, voters with disabilities, low-income individuals, and students.



In other ongoing litigation, we are contesting provisions which limit voter registration activity and the distribution of absentee ballot applications. These constraints infringe on the right to political speech by severely restricting engagement with voters. The court stopped the restrictions from going into effect while the case continues. The ACLU of Missouri is also leading proactive Voting Rights Act litigation challenging

a state election provision that disenfranchises voters with limited English proficiency or with disabilities who require assistance in casting a ballot.

While we fight back in court to protect and expand access for voters, we also defended against attacks on the initiative petition process during the legislative session. This process serves as Missourians' avenue to exercise direct democracy, yet some lawmakers have proposed constitutional changes to increase the difficulty of passing popular ballot measures. Voting is a fundamental right, and the ACLU of Missouri remains dedicated to challenging discriminatory voting laws and ensuring all Missouri voters are heard.



**Nicole Rainey and Reva Wood at a signature gathering drive-thru event in Springfield**  
*Photo by Nicole Rainey*



**Missouri and Connecticut affiliate staff canvassing for abortion rights at Ohio University** [Left to right: Gus Marks-Hamilton (ACLU of CT), Claudine Constant (ACLU of CT), Krysten Vaughn, Stephen Wilder] – *Photo Courtesy of ACLU of Ohio*



**Tori Schafer speaks at a Missourians for Constitutional Freedom rally following the turn-in of more than 380,000 signatures to end Missouri’s abortion ban at the ballot box** – *Photo by Tom Bastian*



# *Reproductive Rights*



**Tom Bastian collects signatures to put the amendment to end Missouri's abortion ban on the ballot** – Photo Courtesy of Rachel Sweet

Last year, a series of initiative petitions aimed at creating an amendment enshrining abortion and other reproductive rights into our state constitution were filed. Since then, our legal team has fought for Missourians' right to take this issue to a vote of the people. Despite attempts by state officials to stall the process, we fought in court to uphold established procedures. Notably, the Missouri Supreme Court compelled the unelected Attorney General to approve the State Auditor's fiscal note to the ballot measure after the Attorney

General refused to do so and attempted to instead assign the ballot measure a grossly inflated fiscal note. These wins in court were pivotal, laying the groundwork for the ballot initiative to move forward.

The ACLU of Missouri is seated at the executive leadership table of the Missourians for Constitutional Freedom campaign, a statewide coalition centered around getting the initiative on the ballot and passing the amendment. Though we expect more battles in our efforts to restore access, we will continue to advocate for and defend Missourians' right to make informed decisions in all aspects of their reproductive health including abortion care.



**Krysten Vaughn (right) leading a Know Your Rights Session held at the Cross Keys Baptist Church for parents in the Hazelwood School District – Photo by Elaine Sutton**



**Krysten Vaughn tabling for the Racial Equity Summit at The Dome in downtown St. Louis – Photo by Elaine Sutton**



**Iyaun Bell and Elaine Sutton joined Tau Theta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., to discuss our rights during a police encounter  
Photo Courtesy of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., St. Louis Chapter**

# *School to Prison Pipeline*

Corporal punishment in public schools. The ninety-day suspension. Zero tolerance policies. These practices are legal in Missouri and have been shown to launch children onto a dangerous path commonly called “the school-to-prison pipeline.”

In 2020, ACLU data analysis showed that Hayti schools are one of the state’s worst offenders for over-disciplining Black children, children with disabilities, and boys. One way the ACLU of Missouri is confronting these disparities is by embedding two Community Engagement Restorative Justice Fellows in the Hayti public school district. Moreover, Hayti residents have a strong community and are ready to advocate for change. During the 2023-2024

school year (the second year of the program), our team celebrated powerful wins:

1. Engaging with parents, leading to the establishment of the first ever PTO at Hayti High School.
2. Linking school policy with voting, partnering with clergy to turn out the vote for the April 2023 election.

In collaboration with partners, we also brought our learnings to the St. Louis area, hosting community meetings with a focus on Hazelwood and KIPP schools.



**Sydney Smith leading a Summer Reading Program activity at the Caruthersville Public Library – Photo by Marsha Hayes**





**BCLP hosted a happy hour at their Kansas City office to honor the ACLU of Missouri** [Left to right: Jim Lawrence (BCLP), Nicole Rainey, Reva Wood, Luz María Henríquez, Jason Orr] – Photo by Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner



**Katy Erker-Lynch (PROMO) and Luz María Henríquez at Urbanaire 2023**  
Photo by Tony Rothert



**First Day of Court seeking a preliminary injunction to halt Missouri's ban on gender-affirming care for minors from taking effect** [Left to Right: Ben Clark (BCLP), Jim Lawrence (BCLP), Omar Gonzalez-Pagan (LL), Nora Huppert (LL), Gillian Wilcox, Jason Orr, Michael Rowan (BCLP), and Mary Grace Warren (BCLP)] – Photo by Tom Bastian

# *Transgender Rights*

Thanks to grant funding, the ACLU of Missouri retains a special lobbying firm in Jefferson City to fight for transgender rights (This firm is in addition to a lobbyist retained for all other civil liberties issues, and two ACLU of Missouri staffers). Despite the efforts of anti-LGBTQ lawmakers, Missouri failed to pass any anti-trans bills until 2023. Unfortunately, at the end of the 2023

legislative session, with the Governor threatening a special session, the state house passed SB 49. The bill denies adolescent transgender Missourians access to evidence-based treatment supported by the overwhelming medical consensus. The ACLU of Missouri sued in partnership with Lambda Legal and Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner, and the case will go to trial in 2024.

The ACLU of Missouri will continue to fight anti-trans bills in the Missouri Legislature and advocate to protect and expand the rights of transgender Missourians.



## **BCLP staff and ACLU of Missouri staff at Urbanaire 2023**

*[Left to right: Stephen Wilder, Luz Maria Henríquez, Michael Rowan (BCLP), Tony Rothert. Front: Mary Grace Warren (BCLP), Krysten Vaughn, Monica Haines]*

*Photo by Megalux Photo Booth/PROMO Missouri*

# *Notable Work*

## *Missouri's 2023 Legislative Session Recap*

After a session-long fight, no changes were made to Missouri's initiative petition process. Two bills did pass impacting transgender Missourians, one restricting sports for youth and another restricting healthcare for children; ACLU of Missouri is investigating all possible next steps. Additionally, ACLU of Missouri partnered closely with Republicans to introduce new privacy legislation.

## *Missouri's 2024 Legislative Session*

The 2024 Missouri legislative session was widely viewed as one of the more chaotic in recent years. Despite the disarray, ACLU of Missouri staff and lobbyists - along with thousands of Missourians who made their voices heard - worked with both sides of the aisle to protect Missourians' right to amend the constitution through the initiative petition process. We continued work with our friends at PROMO to prevent any additional anti-transgender bills from passing. Proactively, the Missouri ACLU team continued to push for privacy legislation that we initiated in 2023 - and made headway on legislation that would expand the right to vote to people completing probation or parole stemming from a felony conviction.

## *Federal Court Free Speech Win*

A three-judge panel from the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit upheld a district court's ruling that the City of St. Louis is liable for constitutional violations committed by the former Board of Aldermen President, Lewis Reed, when he blocked a constituent from his official twitter account.



## *Library Funding Protected*

Earlier this year, the Secretary of State submitted a proposed rule to withhold funding from public libraries to compel censorship. We responded swiftly with a narrative advocacy campaign that led to comments from over 20,000 Missourians, forcing the Secretary of State to tamp down his rule. Additionally, we garnered national attention when the State House attempted to remove funding for all public libraries. The publicity forced the Senate to restore the entire \$4.5 million appropriation.

## *MASL Honors ACLU of Missouri's First Amendment Work*



**MASL representatives present certificate of commendation to the ACLU-MO** [Left to right: Melissa Corey (MASL), Gillian Wilcox, Tom Bastian, and Tom Bober (MASL)] – Photo Courtesy of MASL

The ACLU of Missouri was proud to be recognized by the American Association of School Librarians and the Missouri Association of School Librarians for our legal and advocacy work to protect and defend Missouri students' right to read. We will always defend students' First Amendment rights and continue to combat the

rise of book bans throughout Missouri. The collective action of groups like the Missouri Association of School Librarians, Missouri Library Association, and the ACLU of Missouri are not only challenging unconstitutional laws in the courts, but raising awareness throughout the state and country about the invasive tactics our government is deploying on parents and students to suppress the stories and experiences of Black and Brown people as well as the LGBTQ+ community.

## ***Judge Declares Waitlists Unconstitutional***

Missouri's criminal legal system notoriously places accused people on a waitlist for counsel, leaving them to navigate the important stages of their cases on their own. A judge found that some languished in jail for months and, in some cases, over a year without an attorney only to be released when counsel finally joined them in court. In 2023, a judge ordered Missouri to provide counsel to defendants in criminal cases in time to assist the accused person with critical stages of the process like bail or bond hearings – at a minimum, counsel must be provided within two weeks of qualifying for court-appointed counsel.

## ***LGBTQ+ Advocates Fight Attorney General's Attacks on Trans Community***



**Crowd protests against anti-trans legislation at the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City – Photo by Tom Bastian**

Shortly after announcing his intent to enact an emergency rule misusing Missouri's consumer protection laws in order to deny all Missourians access to gender-affirming care, the ACLU of Missouri along

with partners Lambda Legal and Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner filed a petition seeking a temporary restraining order to block the implementation of the Missouri Attorney General's unprecedented and extreme restrictions targeting transgender Missourians. After an expedited hearing in the St. Louis County Circuit Court, Judge Ellen Ribauda granted the restraining order to block the Attorney General's attack. The Attorney General shortly thereafter rescinded the rule.

# Snapshot of Fiscal Year 2024

**18 staff**

**Offices in 2 cities, and a strong presence in four** (Hayti, Jefferson City, Kansas City, and St. Louis)

**11,000+ Missouri ACLU Members**

**20 interns and law clerks**

**1500 intake requests**

**307 bills tracked**

**Legal filings:** two amicus briefs, four appeals, eight new cases, ten other active cases

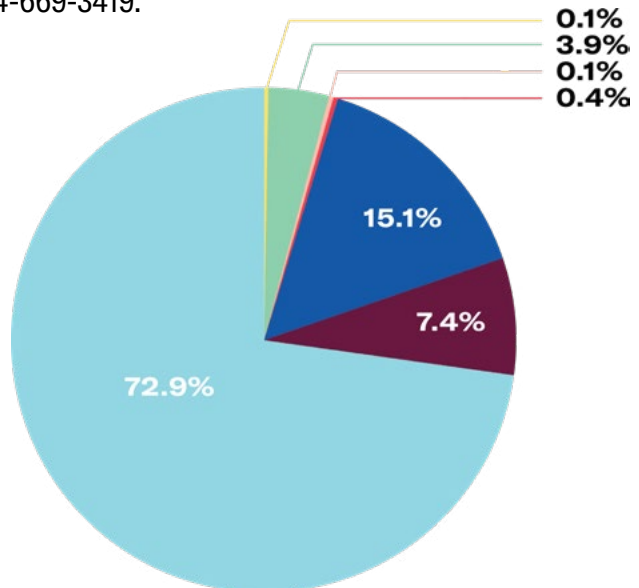
**10,423 media mentions in 2023**

## Financials

*April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024*

As of this report's printing in May 2024, ACLU of Missouri's final revenue numbers are still pending our national office's contribution. They will be available by August 2024; please contact us if you would like final numbers: [nrainey@aclu-mo.org](mailto:nrainey@aclu-mo.org) or 314-669-3419.

- Personnel  
\$1,834,547
- Occupancy & Office  
\$186,906
- Programs  
\$379,348
- Development  
\$10,525
- Board  
\$3,101
- Professional Services  
\$98,795
- Other Expenses  
\$3,376



**FY24 EXPENSES: \$2,516,598** | Please note that the numbers listed are unaudited



# ACLU Missouri

## OFFICIAL MERCHANDISE

Show your support and visit our online Bonfire store



# *Support the ACLU of Missouri*

Protecting and defending our constitutional and civil liberties takes hard work – and financial support. Please remember to give generously when you can.

***Donate*** Support our legal, communications, policy and campaigns and community engagement activities by visiting [www.aclu-mo.org](http://www.aclu-mo.org) to make a tax-deductible donation or by mailing a contribution to:

ACLU of Missouri Foundation, 906 Olive St., Ste. 1130, St. Louis, MO, 63101

***Join*** Strengthen our lobbying efforts by visiting [www.aclu-mo.org](http://www.aclu-mo.org) and clicking JOIN to become a “card-carrying member” of the ACLU. (*Memberships are not tax-deductible but do support our legislative and campaign work.*)

***Other Ways to Give*** The ACLU of Missouri accepts gifts of stock, IRA and other retirement assets and offers methods to contribute via your will, trust or life insurance policy. These gifts are a simple and effective way to support the future of civil liberties.

For more information, please contact Development Director, Nicole Rainey, at [nrainey@aclu-mo.org](mailto:nrainey@aclu-mo.org) or 314-669-3419.






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# ACLU Missouri

*Illustration and design by Monica Haines,  
Graphic Designer at the ACLU of Missouri*

