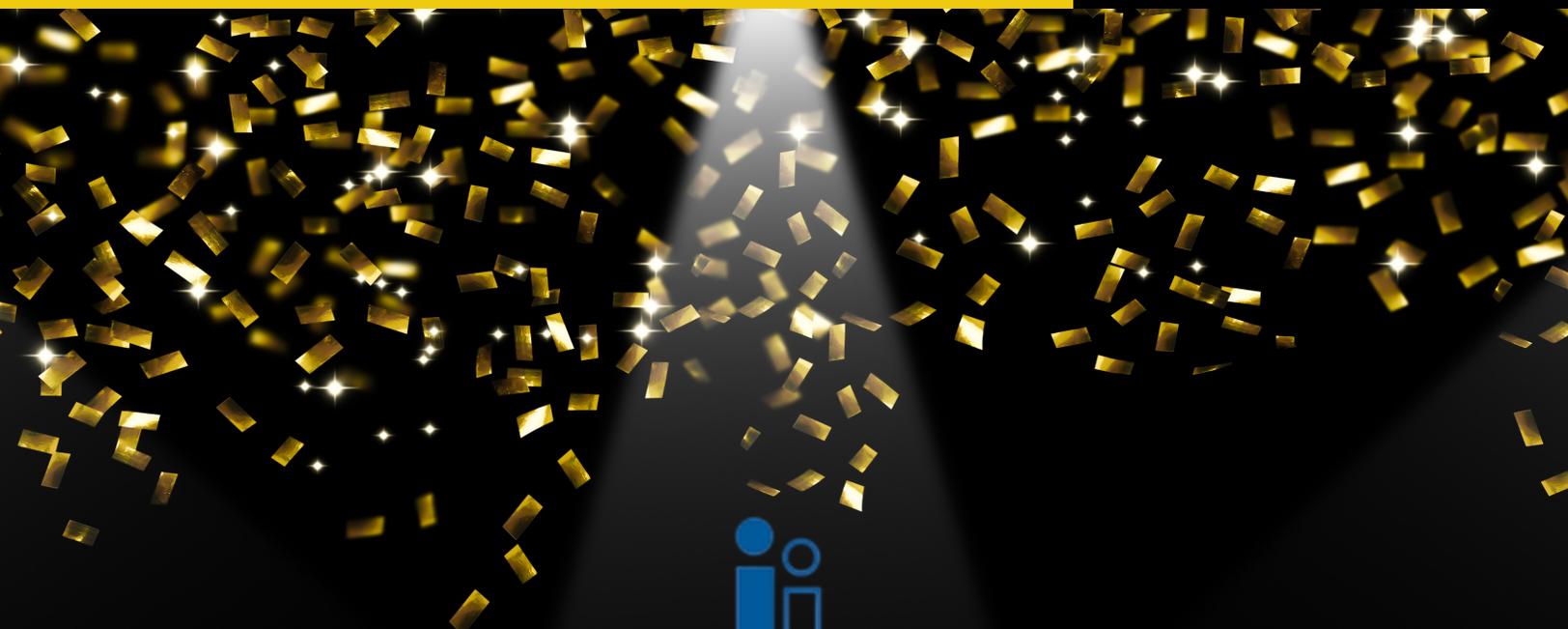


COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

ANNUAL  
AWARDS  
LUNCHEON

20  
20



THURSDAY, NOV 19TH  
12:40-2:00PM EST



Each year, Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ ) leaders, members and allies gather to recognize and celebrate individuals who exemplify excellence, dedication, and commitment to CJJ's core mission to reform the juvenile justice system and improve the lives of children, families, and communities nationwide.

CJJ hopes these outstanding individuals inspire others to serve their communities with the same distinction.

# SPIRIT OF YOUTH AWARD

The 2020 Spirit of Youth Award is presented to Ezequiel Vasquez of Oregon. Ezequiel is recognized for his advocacy and support of incarcerated youth through mentorship and dedicated leadership.

The Spirit of Youth Award is given annually by the Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) to recognize and celebrate a young adult under the age of 28, who has made great strides after involvement with the juvenile justice system, has overcome personal obstacles, and is now making significant contributions to society. The award is given by CJJ's Emerging Leaders Committee.

This year's award is given to Ezequiel who has gone above and beyond to use his lived expertise to help others who are also involved with the youth justice system. Currently incarcerated, Ezequiel is working to help others inside his detention facility and the broader community.

Ezequiel has earned a Bachelor of Arts and was accepted at Portland State University's Masters in Social Work Program. He uses the information he gained through this process to help other students at his facility apply for college courses, credits, and scholarships. He also assists them in filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), an application that is essential to securing funding for college, but which can be challenging to navigate.



## EZEQUIEL VASQUEZ

Ezequiel's passion to mentor and assist others with similar experiences truly represents the core values of the Spirit of Youth Award.

Ezequiel has participated in the Lewis and Clark Law School Legal Studies program, where he has worked with lawyers and law students. He has met with state representatives, judges, and district attorneys about various issues such as the school-to-prison-pipeline and the harmful effects of gang designations. Through the Lewis and Clark program, Ezequiel has presented bill drafts and, on many occasions, has shared his lived experiences with legislators.

Ezequiel's work continues through mentoring young people at the Aztec group (an organization that teaches incarcerated youth about Aztec traditions, dance and culture, and represents new beginnings). He has also become a Certified Recovery Mentor to work with youth struggling with substance abuse. Additionally, Ezequiel assists at the Lewis and Clark Law School Youth Legal Clinic in developing legal manuals to help others understand their legal rights. Ezequiel has also become a live-in mentor in the mental health unit in order to be available 24/7 for incarcerated youth.

Ezequiel is currently working with legal organizations to develop a new mentorship program between youth who are transitioning to an adult prison and system involved adults who experienced the same transition in the past. Through his dedicated mentorship, Ezequiel Vasquez has become a leader in youth justice reform and advocacy.

**EZEQUIEL VASQUEZ**

# TONY GOBAR OUTSTANDING JUVENILE JUSTICE SPECIALIST AWARD

The 2020 Tony Gobar Outstanding National Juvenile Justice Specialist Award is presented to Jessica Wheeler of Maryland for her constant compassion and support of all youth, especially those who have experienced challenges and barriers throughout their lives. Jessica served on the CJJ Executive Board for four years, beginning in 2016. In her position as National Juvenile Justice Specialist, Jessica served as the voice for Juvenile Justice Specialists across the country. She is a leader in her field.



With this award, CJJ recognizes an individual that has served as a State Juvenile Justice Specialist within the last five years, who exemplifies excellence in service to others, is dedicated to improving the juvenile justice system, and demonstrates compassion and concern. This award is named for Tony Gobar, a longtime Juvenile Justice Specialist from Mississippi. He was honored posthumously by CJJ in 2004 for his exemplary service in the field of juvenile justice reform. He was known for his selflessness, his dedication to his community, and his unceasing compassion for youth.

Jessica Wheeler is the essence of the Tony Gobar Outstanding Juvenile Justice Specialist Award. In her role as Juvenile Justice Specialist, Jessica has mentored and been a true support to other Juvenile Justice Specialists. She has helped keep the State Advisory Group staffed and prepared to do vital work in the State of Maryland. She has also supported Maryland's Compliance Monitor and Statewide Racial and Ethnic Disparities Coordinator.

## JESSICA WHEELER

For the past nine years, Jessica has been instrumental in guiding the State of Maryland to make improvements within its youth justice system. At the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services she serves as the Deputy Director of the agency's Children and Youth Division where she leads the agency's prevention efforts and oversees the Governor's Office of Children. Jessica's efforts include successfully leading the implementation of the Handle With Care program in Maryland and expanding diversion opportunities. Jessica has also supported efforts to develop and increase youth and law enforcement engagement activities through Police Athletic Leagues and providing structured youth programming during after-school hours.

At the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services, Jessica has been instrumental in leading efforts to address childhood trauma for all youth in the State of Maryland. Her efforts have ensured that effective grassroots organizations that work to address trauma, abuse, and neglect are supported in providing services to Maryland's young people. Understanding the essential role of lived expertise, Jessica has ensured committees such as the Children's Justice Act Committee, State Advisory Group, and others, include voices of youth and adults that have experienced system involvement or traumatic experiences. Jessica demonstrates outstanding leadership in her field.

**JESSICA WHEELER**

# A.L. CARLISLE CHILD ADVOCACY AWARD

The 2020 A.L. Carlisle Child Advocacy Award is presented to Ken Schatz of Vermont for being a long-time champion of youth, with courage, compassion, and commitment.

This award is presented annually by CJJ to an individual who makes outstanding contributions to youth, the improvement of juvenile justice, and in the broader area of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention. It is named in honor of CJJ's founder, A.L. Carlisle, who created the Coalition for Juvenile Justice from her kitchen table in Maine in 1984.



Ken made enormous contributions to the well-being of youth and improving the juvenile justice system while serving as an instrumental, voluntary leader of the Coalition for Juvenile Justice for more than two decades. Ken served as the CJJ National Chair during critical years, during which he was able to create a strong vision for CJJ's future. He believed in the essential nature of independent, well-coordinated advocacy that highlighted the views and interests of the State Advisory Groups (SAGs), and their unique ability to inform and shape national policy.

Ken was actively involved in the 2002 Reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJCPA), which included strengthening the requirement related to Disproportionate Minority Confinement to a broader system-wide view of Disproportionate Minority Contact. Ken solidified the relationship between CJJ and Senator

## KEN SCHATZ

Patrick Leahy (D-VT), who has held a prominent and influential role with the Senate Judiciary Committee. By lining up evidence and building consensus among CJJ's diverse members, Ken was able to gain support from Sen. Leahy for critical improvements to the youth justice system.

In 2005, under Ken's determined leadership, CJJ was involved in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision, Roper v. Simmons. The decision abolished the juvenile death penalty and held, that under the 8th Amendment, it is unconstitutional to impose capital punishment for crimes committed under the age of 18. The decision was premised on a national consensus, as seen by a majority of states that had done away with the juvenile death penalty or, although allowable by law, have never implemented it.

Ken recently retired as Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Children and Families where he helped implement legislation to raise the upper age of juvenile court jurisdiction.

Ken also previously served as the Vice Chair of the Vermont State Advisory Group (SAG). On the SAG, Ken worked extensively to enhance and expand the use of community based restorative justice programs to divert youth from the system. Ken's efforts helped thousands of youth and families. He is an individual of great integrity and vision.

**KEN SCHATZ**

# ANDREW SMITH AWARD

The 2020 Andrew Smith Award is presented to Anna Lopez of Colorado. Anna is recognized for her contributions to addressing racial and ethnic disparities in the youth justice system.



The award is named to honor Andrew Smith, an incredible voice for youth and a pivotal Racial and Ethnic Disparities Coordinator. Mr. Smith served as New Hampshire's Racial and Ethnic Disparities Coordinator and was responsible for the creation of the Mirror Project, an effort to bring together law enforcement and youth. Mr. Smith's dedication to his work and commitment and to improving the lives of young people is commendable and serves as an inspiration to us all. The recipient of this award is an individual who embodies Mr. Smith's legacy and the passion he brought to his work.

Anna is currently Colorado's Racial and Ethnic Disparities (R/ED) Coordinator. In this role, she provides technical assistance to local jurisdictions and assists communities to organize stakeholders, collect data, and implement change in policy and practice to reduce the disproportionate entry of youth of color into Colorado's juvenile justice system. She also facilitates the Coalition for Minority Youth Equality, and engages stakeholders in planning efforts to address R/ED throughout the state. Anna has assisted in identifying gaps in services, policy changes and changes in practice to reduce the number of youth of color entering the system. She has provided training to the courts, state agencies, and local communities on the issue of racial and ethnic disparities and effective strategies to address identified areas of concern.

## ANNA LOPEZ

Anna has been able to assist communities in reducing their R/ED rates through innovative practices and initiatives.

In recent years, Anna has been constantly working to improve her local community. She worked with school districts to increase their restorative practices, connect with their juvenile assessment center that created a Truancy Diversion Program, increase trauma-informed practices, increase mental health resources for bilingual youth, and develop a partnership with municipal probation and the school principals to educate them on law enforcement alternatives in schools. Through these actions, schools successfully decreased the number of referrals to law enforcement for students of color.

Through her training and technical assistance she has made communities aware of disparities and has provided platforms for stakeholders to engage communities in conversations on how to eliminate these disparities. Anna has empowered and educated communities to be the voices needed to impact system change.

**ANNA LOPEZ**

# PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

## Spirit of the Youth Award

Past award winners of the Spirit of the Youth Award include:

Derrick Bedford,  
Corey Kean,  
Shelley Atkins,  
T. Nicole Wright,  
Rita Naranjo,  
Jeremy Estrada,  
Antoine Perry,  
Marvin Gumba,  
Keanalu Chartrand,  
Lance Garner,  
Michael M. Cox,  
Brandon McMillian,  
Andrew Peterman,  
Jabriera Handy,  
Hernan Carvente,  
Marquis Parker,  
Raul Baretto,  
Sang Dao,  
Dalton Gordon,  
Raul Barreto,  
Amanda Clifford,  
and The Youth Advocates at Green Hill School.



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# PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

## Tony Gobar Outstanding Juvenile Justice Specialist Award

Past award winners of the Tony Gobar Outstanding Juvenile Justice  
Specialist Award include:

Edward Chargualaf (HI),  
Suzanne Toguchi (HI),  
Pat Cervera (CO),  
Larry Carter (NV),  
Richard Lindahl (NM),  
Sandy Rempe (MO),  
Christian Kervick (DE),  
Joseph B. Vignati (GA),  
Alan Miller (ID),  
Valerie LaMotte (CT),  
Reg Garff (UT),  
Edward Chargualaf (HI),  
Robert Vickery (IL),  
Meg Williams (CO),  
Jennifer G. Withrow (KY),  
and Michael D. Pennington (PA).



COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

# PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

## A.L. Carlisle Child Advocacy Award

Past award winners of the A.L. Carlisle Child Advocacy Award include:

Doreitha Madden (NJ),  
Robert M. Hunter (CO),  
Birch Bayh (IN),  
Terry Edwards (NJ),  
Bernardine (Hall) Adams (LA),  
George B. Rasin, Jr. (MD),  
Frank A. Orlando (FL),  
Allison Fleming (IA),  
Stacey F. Atkinson (SC),  
Irene Abernethy (NE),  
Robert Mardis (IN),  
Linda W. Hayes (NC),  
Robert E. Shepherd, Jr. (VA),  
Sharon Harrigfeld (ID),  
B. Thomas Leahy (NJ),  
John Dewese (SC),  
William R. Byars, Jr. (SC),  
Linda O'Neal (TN),  
Vincent N. Schiraldi (DC),  
Robert G. Schwartz (PA),  
Christopher Murphy (CT),  
Richard J. Gardell (MN),  
Robin Jenkins (NC),  
David Schmidt (NM),  
Hon. Michael Mayer (MN),  
Laurie Garduque (IL),  
Hon. George W. Timberlake (IL),  
Sen. Charles Grassley (IA),  
and Cecely Reardon (MA).

# PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS

## Andrew Smith Award

Past award winners of the Andrew Smith Award include:

*Andrew Smith (NH) posthumously*



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