

2023 Highlights

Empowering communities and leaders
to create a just and safe world.



A Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As 2023 draws to a close, there are many reasons to be hopeful, both for our nation and for the future of the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform.

The surge in crime that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic seems to finally be slowing, with many forms of violent crime having either remained stable or decreased in 2023. In June 2023, California closed its three remaining youth prisons—a major victory resulting from the tireless efforts of justice reform advocates throughout the state. And in October, President Biden announced the establishment of the first-ever White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention.

It was also a year of progress for our organization. NICJR hosted a successful convening of the National Offices of Violence Prevention Network, as well as won our first federal grant awards. And we've grown our staff, infrastructure, and suite of services to better meet demand for our services.

We've also worked with more than 15 jurisdictions throughout the US to reimagine justice systems

and implement effective gun violence reduction strategies (GVRs), leading to safer cities and stronger communities. In Indianapolis, this has meant more than a 30% reduction in murders since the City began implementing its GVRs with NICJR support. We're thankful to the many partners, funders, and champions who make this work possible.

Even with all this progress, there is still much work to be done. Far too many people across the US are injured or killed by gun violence every day, and millions of Americans are ensnared in a costly, harmful, and ineffective justice system.

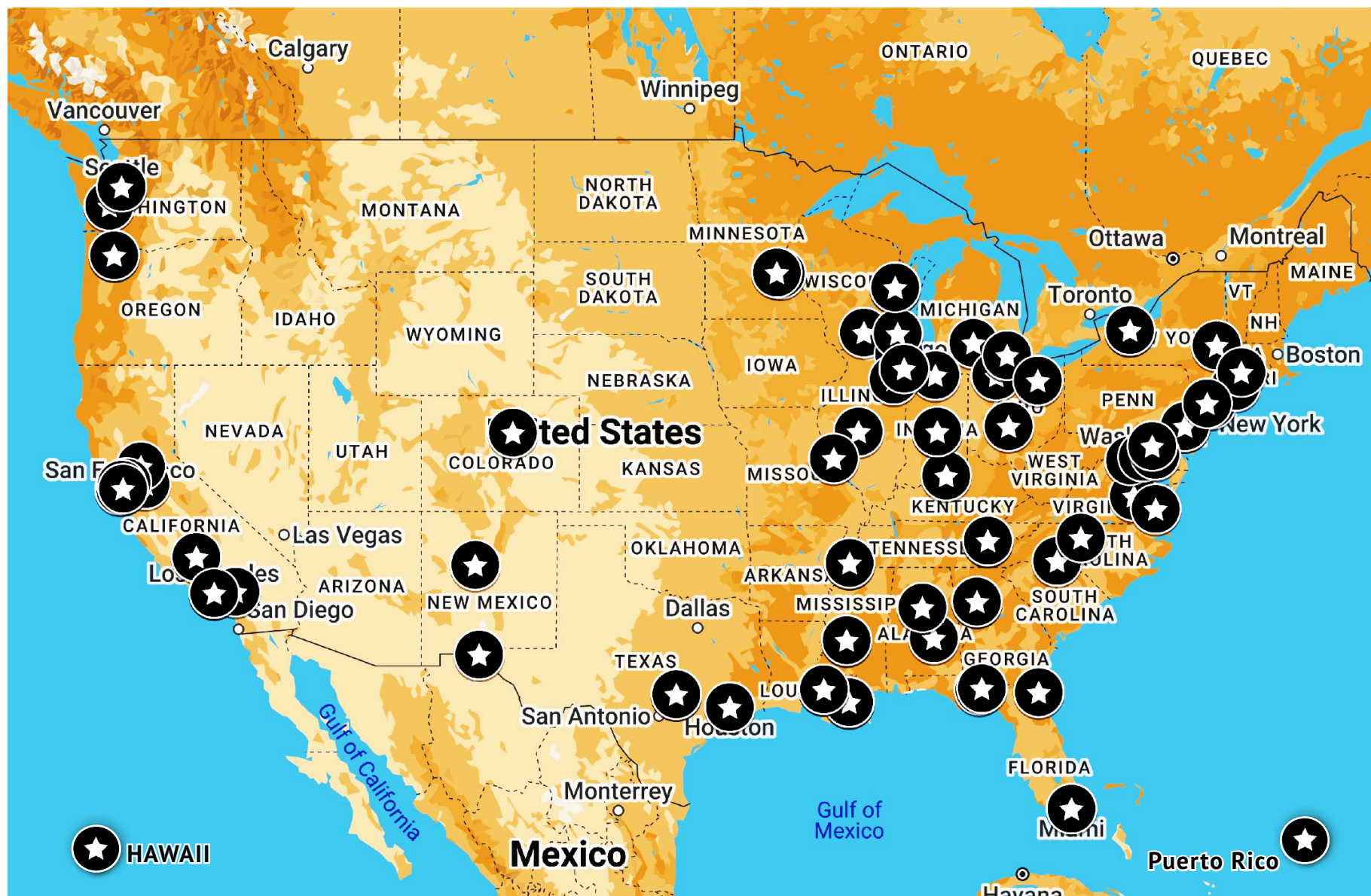
We will continue working hard to empower communities and leaders to create a just and safe world. We see a bright future up ahead, and we hope you'll join us in making it a reality.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Muhammad'.

David Muhammad
Executive Director





Our Impact

This map includes all jurisdictions NICJR has worked with since the beginning of FY23. This includes communities we support through violence reduction work as well as places where we support justice reform. Some jurisdictions represent intensive, multi-year relationships, while others have received short-term and/or lighter-touch support.

Our Stories ★

Reimagining Youth Justice through the Neighborhood Opportunity and Accountability Board

What happens when a teenager is arrested for a crime like robbery? They're swept up into a system that separates them from their community, punishes their behavior without addressing its root causes, and prepares them for a life of further delinquency.

Numerous studies show that involvement in the juvenile justice system causes youth to have worse outcomes, including large decreases in the likelihood of high school completion and large increases in the likelihood of adult incarceration. This system is also incredibly expensive. A 2019 San Francisco Chronicle study found that Alameda County, CA spends \$493,000 per year for each youth incarcerated in its juvenile hall. Meanwhile, the neighborhoods these young people come from suffer from concentrated poverty, low-performing schools, and high unemployment resulting from generations of disinvestment.

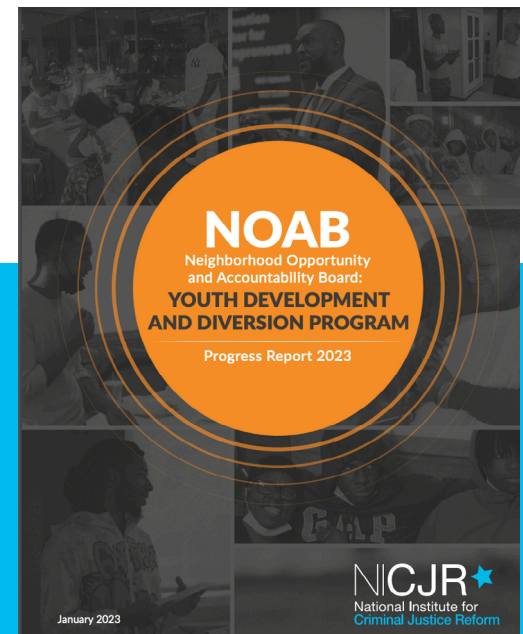
It doesn't have to be this way. **The Neighborhood Opportunity and Accountability Board (NOAB)** is an innovative model that diverts youth from formal justice system involvement at the point of arrest and focuses on restorative, rather than punitive practices; increases community involvement in decision-making; and invests resources in youth, families, and neighborhoods

Youth and their families referred to a NOAB appear before a board of community leaders to develop a support plan and are immediately connected to life coaching and community-based services, with a focus on addressing the underlying causes of their behavior. After six to nine months of successful program participation, the youth graduates and charges are disposed.

NICJR launched the first NOAB program in Oakland in May 2020, after a multi-year planning process with the Oakland Police Department (OPD) and the community. In 2023, we continued to build on the program. We also took time to celebrate NOAB youth, hosting a dinner where Life Coaches presented each family with financial support from the NICJR Giving Initiative, taking NOAB participants to view Kehinde Wiley's work in the de Young Museum, and hosting a celebration of participant accomplishments. Finally, the American Institutes of Research began conducting a rigorous evaluation of the NOAB model.

Read our 2023
Progress Report

nicjr.org/noab/



NOAB Participant Spotlight: Tony's Story*

During a traffic stop, officers arrested Tony and his brother for stealing a car by force. Tony was 11 years old at the time of the arrest. While OPD took his older brother to the county juvenile detention center, OPD referred Tony to the NOAB program. Within a few days, NICJR's NOAB Coordinator met with Tony and his mom at their home for an initial assessment.

In the assessment, Tony shared that he had been surrounded by negative influences his whole life, including being exposed to robberies and carjackings from older siblings. He noted that he was still affected by the arrest and worried about his brother's safety. His family also expressed that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated Tony's negative behaviors and highlighted the need for more positive influences in his life.

The family met with the Neighborhood Opportunity and Accountability Board in September 2022 to discuss the best options for Tony. The group determined that he could benefit from mental health services to help shift negative thinking patterns and build his sense of self-worth. Additionally, the Board recommended that a NOAB Life Coach provide Tony with intensive support as a positive role model. Tony and his mom were receptive to the recommendations and were also connected to the Center for Family Counseling, an Oakland-based organization that specializes in intensive family counseling and restorative healing.

Since being connected to NOAB, Tony has been attending school full time, his brother has safely returned home, and he is doing well.

* Participant's name has been changed to preserve anonymity



25

Number of referrals

21

Number of participants

14

Number of program completions

Over

90%

of youth referred to the NOAB participated in NOAB hearings and adhered to their service plans.

More than

65%

of NOAB participants who were referred more than a year ago have either completed or are still enrolled in a youth development program.



Turning the Tide of Violence in Indianapolis

Every day, NICJR supports cities across the US as they work to understand the nature of their local gun violence problem and enact proven, community-focused strategies to reduce that violence. The City of Indianapolis serves as a great example of the many ways NICJR provides this support,

After two years of thorough assessment and planning, NICJR partnered with the City of Indianapolis to design a gun violence reduction strategy (GVRs) that began implementation in January 2022. At the outset, we worked with GVRs stakeholders to identify goals and objectives as a way to measure progress. The group decided on an ultimate goal of a year-over-year reduction of at least 10% for murders and 10% for non-fatal shootings, among other measures.

Mayor Hogsett committed more than \$100 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds toward achieving this ambitious goal. The City hired a full-time GVRs director and, partnering with the Indianapolis Public Safety Foundation, hired 60 frontline violence intervention workers. Additionally, the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) dedicated more than 80 officers to two new units focused solely on reducing gun violence. The City also partnered with the Central Indiana Community Foundation to distribute \$15 million per year for three years to dozens of community-based organizations (CBOs) to support community violence intervention and prevention work.

Moving forward, a team of four to five NICJR team members have visited Indianapolis for a full week

every month to provide training, technical assistance, assessment, support, and detailed recommendations. This has intersected with our work through the Coalition to Advance Public Safety (CAPS). Through CAPS, NICJR is partnering with the Health Alliance for Violence Intervention, the Community Based Public Safety Collective, and Cities United to greatly expand and strengthen violence reduction work across 12 cities. Indianapolis has been a part of the first CAPS cohort of four cities, with NICJR taking the lead in assessing the violence reduction landscape, identifying a cohort of community violence intervention-focused CBOs to receive training and TA, and supporting the city's key GVRs stakeholders.

These efforts have paid off. By the end of 2022, Indianapolis had exceeded its GVRs goals. Not only did the city experience a 16% reduction in murders in 2022, but according to IMPD, through November 1, 2023, the city had seen an additional 17% year-to-date reduction in murders. This means there has been a more than 30% reduction in murders since the implementation of GVRs. These numbers are particularly notable given that the city experienced a record-breaking number of homicides in six of the seven years between 2015–2021.

While there is still much work to be done, these gains speak to the progress that can be achieved when a city thoughtfully focuses time and resources on a comprehensive approach to violence reduction. (This work was highlighted in the *IndyStar*, [here](#).)

NICJR in Indianapolis

January 2020

NICJR begins working with the City of Indianapolis.

May 2020

NICJR releases the **Indianapolis Cost of Gun Violence** report and a **Landscape Assessment** with recommendations for GVRs.

February 2021

Indianapolis joins the NOVPN as a founding member.

National
OVP
Network

September 2021

Indianapolis City-County Councilors unanimously approve \$150 million from the American Rescue Plan to go toward Mayor Joe Hogsett's three-year anti-violence plan.

August 2021

NICJR releases the **Gun Violence Problem Analysis** (featured on **Fox59 News**).

January 2022

GVRs implementation begins (Mayor Hogsett announced the new strategy during a **press conference** with NICJR).

August 2022

City leaders **announce** a 17% year-to-date decrease in murders and an 11% year-to-date decrease in non-fatal shootings.

November 2022

City GVRs leaders attend the inaugural NOVPN Convening.

November 2023

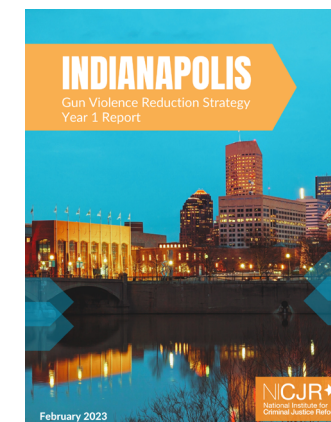
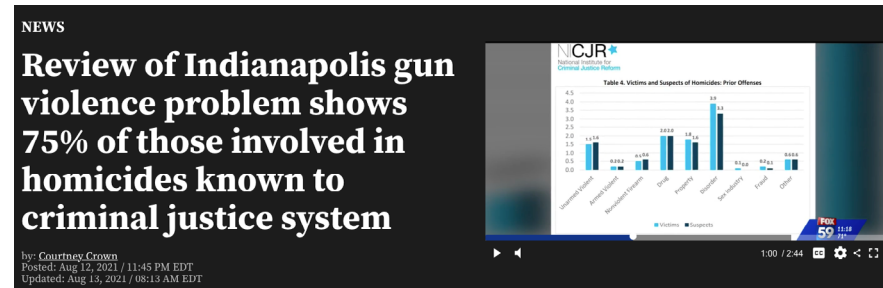
Indianapolis sees a 32% decrease in murders and a 20% decrease in non-fatal shooting since the launch of GVRs in January 2022.

32%
reduction in
murders

20%
reduction in
non-fatal
shootings

June 2022

NICJR awards **Giving Initiative** grant funding to grassroots community violence intervention and prevention organizations in Indianapolis.



February 2023

NICJR releases **GVRs Year 1 Report**.

Gathering Leaders at the National Offices of Violence Prevention Network Convening

We are in the midst of a unique time in the field of violence reduction. Since 2020, violence has surged nationwide, calls for community-centered approaches to public safety have grown greatly, and unprecedented levels of federal funding have become available through the American Rescue Plan Act. As a result, many communities are now creating offices of violence prevention (OVPs), offices of neighborhood safety, and other similar agencies. Although the field of violence reduction has existed for years, most of these communities are embarking upon this work for the first time.

The National Offices of Violence Prevention Network (NOVPN) was launched in 2021 as a space to build the expertise and capacity of OVPs. This first-of-its-kind learning community has become a powerful space where these newcomers can learn from cities who have been doing this work for years, while more established offices benefit from fresh perspectives in the field.

The NOVPN was founded by NICJR and partners with a membership of 21 established OVPs. Since then, it has grown to more than 45 agencies (including several established with NOVPN support), with no sign of growth slowing.

In November 2022, the Network achieved an exciting milestone as NICJR hosted the inaugural in-person NOVPN Convening in Washington, DC. This event brought together 86 staff from 27 OVPs for two days of networking, knowledge sharing, and professional development.

We built on the success of this event with our second annual NOVPN Convening in September 2023. Held in New Orleans, this year's Convening gathered 95 attendees, with representatives from 28 OVPs and several jurisdictions that are considering establishing an OVP, as well as representatives from 16 funders and partners. Attendees visited the city's Trauma Recovery Center and Hospital Violence Interruption Program to learn from their work, participated in a full schedule of panel discussions and learning sessions, and enjoyed a network mixer.

We are so excited to continue growing the NOVPN and creating more opportunities for communities to learn from and support each other's work.

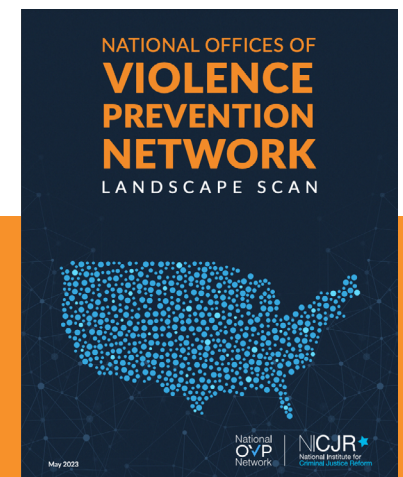
"Stepping into this week feeling more empowered than usual, thanks to the second annual NOVPN Convening that I was fortunate enough to attend last week. I'm still in disbelief as I reflect on the many relationships fostered, the advice given, and all of the insight I've gained in such little time."

Tierra Lemon, LMSW, Director of Gun Violence Prevention Initiative, Lake County, IL



Read the NOVPN
Landscape Scan

ovpnetwork.org



Investing in Community-Led Safety with the NICJR Giving Initiative



In the fall of 2022, the NICJR Giving Initiative (NGI) proudly launched in Atlanta, GA; Indianapolis, IN; Oakland, CA; and Washington, DC.

Through generous contributions from the Jacob and Valeria Langeloth Foundation, Microsoft, Public Welfare Foundation, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, and Walmart Foundation as well as a federal grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, to date, NICJR has been awarded more than \$1.7 million to provide direct financial support to CBOs and to families of youth and young adults served by programs operated by NICJR, such as NOAB, or programs that receive our training and TA. Nearly \$430,000 of that was distributed in FY23, and another \$676,000 has been distributed thus far in FY24.

NGI builds upon our previous work as part of the White House Community Violence Collaborative, through which we distributed \$314,500 in subgrants to 11 CBOs in Baltimore, MD; King County, WA; and Washington, DC.

Grassroots organizations are crucial to the work of gun violence reduction. As those closest to the challenges, these respected community stakeholders are also closest to the solutions. But these smaller organizations are often passed over for large government grants. NICJR is working to not only provide

financial support to these CBOs, but also working to increase their capacity.

This support has very real impacts on organizations such as Greatness Unlimited, a CBO dedicated to providing services for DC communities with a high risk of violence and improving the outcomes of system-impacted youth from those communities. With support from the NICJR Giving Initiative, Greatness Unlimited was able to engage high-risk individuals in discussions about violence prevention and how to maintain peace between two communities with a history of conflict. The organization also took eight system-impacted youth on a healing retreat, and they hosted a community cookout. Finally, they increased their organizational operating capacity by purchasing much-needed office equipment. Overall, this support strengthened the ability of Greatness Unlimited to address violence in their community and create lasting change for the next generation. NICJR is proud to support this type of critically important work through the Giving Initiative.

\$1.7 M

*Total awarded to NICJR
for the Giving Initiative*

Our Growth ★

A Year of Organizational Growth

In FY23, NICJR continued to grow and strengthen our staff, suite of services, national presence, and organizational infrastructure—all in response to significant increases in the demand for our services. This growth included:

- expanding the leadership team to include the Director of Data and Research, Director of Development and Operations, and Violence Reduction Program Manager;
- hiring additional staff, including growing our administrative, development, and analytic teams;
- expanding our pool of active project contractors;
- implementing an online organizational project management tool;
- contracting with a financial firm specializing in nonprofit accounting services; and
- contracting with an HR firm to improve our payroll and human resources services.



Meet the Leadership Team



David Muhammad
Executive Director



Diana Dahl
Director of Development and Operations



Mikaela Rabinowitz
Director of Data and Research



Keiland Henderson
Violence Reduction Program Manager

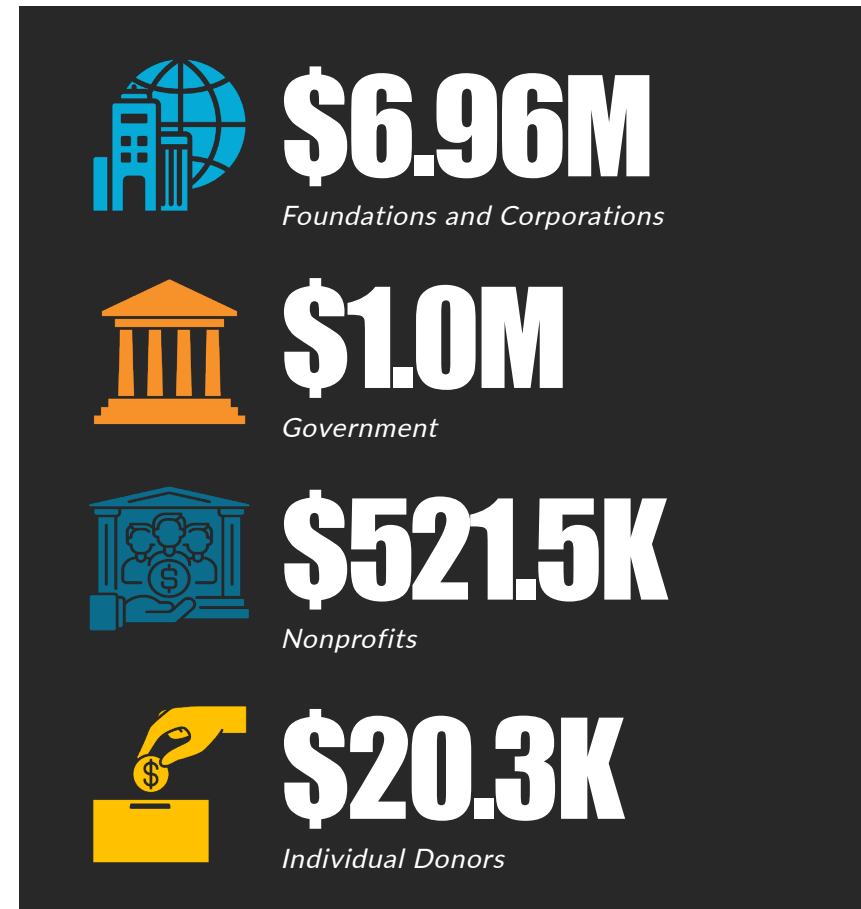
Financial Highlights

In FY23, we secured our first federal grants, both from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention: 1) A Credible Messenger grant that provides key support for the Giving Initiative and 2) a grant award under the Community-Based Alternatives to Youth Incarceration Initiative to provide TA that will help multiple jurisdictions to close and repurpose their youth prisons and reallocate savings to community-based supports. We're excited to partner with the federal government in this work.

FY23 Funding by Revenue Type



FY23 Funding by Revenue Source



Thank you to our Major Funders!

NICJR would like to especially acknowledge our top four foundation/corporate funders of FY23: The Ballmer Group, Walmart Foundation, Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, and Public Welfare Foundation. Thank you!

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