

# **Exodus Transitional Community Inc.**

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## **2021 Annual Report**

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**&**

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Programs**



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## Message from Julio Medina, CEO

Through faith and a deep, unwavering belief in the human spirit, Exodus Transitional Community has continued to touch lives and restore hope every day for the past 23 years! As the founder and CEO of Exodus, one of my greatest joys is that I get the opportunity to serve thousands of people impacted by the justice system. Through our innovative cutting edge workshops, I witness people heal. And healing is the first step in the recovery/reentry process. To be engaged in supporting people healing from past traumas and witnessing them grow into life giving conscious community transformers/wounded healers is profound. Going a step further, when I witness people working hard to transform



their lives, with a deep sense of purpose, passion and commitment, I get the privilege of interviewing and eventually hiring them. Yep 85% of the Exodus staff, (even before it became somewhat sexy) have been impacted by the Justice system and are contributing to their families and communities. Our success, growth and love for the work is weaved into our culture and staff at Exodus understand that there are no throw away people. Everyone, no matter your past, has the ability to change, “give back” and Exodus provides that platform. Now will some people experience challenges after spending decades in prison and transitioning to the workforce, yes. But at Exodus we value our employees enough to make certain they are receiving all the supports necessary to thrive and succeed. And to all employers who are looking for a committed workforce, don’t overlook those in the Reentry space, they can be some of your best employees!

Over the course of the past year, Exodus has grown exponentially in more ways than one. We now have a staff of over 300 people who are skilled and credentialed in trauma, compassionate treatment, group facilitation, workforce development, music, boxing, yoga, case management, court advocacy, and policy. We are also providing Immigration Reentry services, youth programming and have a youth basketball team called the Exodus Spartans. We manage six reentry hotels across the city that provide safe housing upon release in addition to the wrap-around services necessary to support a smooth transition home. Although we took on the hotels at the onset of COVID with minimal housing experience, we’ve quickly become the emergency housing “go to” for other non-profit providers and government entities like NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS), NYC Department of Correction (DOC), NYC Sheriff’s Office, Bronx Defenders, Brooklyn Defender Services, Legal Aids’ Women’s Pretrial Release Initiative, Staten Island Justice Center, Women’s Prison Association, Osborne Association, Fortune Society, Bard Prison Initiative, Appellate Advocates, Parole Revocation Defense Unit of Legal Aid, CASES, Fedcap and countless others.

## Message from Julio Medina, CEO (part 2)



In addition to the great work we are doing in East Harlem and around the city with our emergency housing in our 6 hotels that house about 800 people, we also manage two locations in the Hudson Valley Region of New York: one in Poughkeepsie and one in Newburgh. Both of these sites have grown in capacity and in our Poughkeepsie office we will soon be starting a housing program that will be able to place 7 people returning from prison into a house with all the supportive services we offer at our reentry hotels.

They will live in a community type setting and we fully believe that this will be the first step in our expansion for Dutchess County housing. Which is such a vital need for people transitioning back into the community after prison.

Over the past year one of our major goals has led us to increase our community presence in an attempt to reduce gun and gang violence—we have built a podcast and music studio aimed at getting our young people off the streets and investing their energy into positive outlets. We also have close to 50 credible messengers going into Rikers Island to provide programming and also utilize music as a tool in reducing violence.

What makes Exodus so effective is that those of us who have been most directly impacted are the ones doing the work. Here at Exodus we celebrate all levels of personal growth. It is such a privilege to watch someone's rebirth and reclamation of 'self'—to see someone recognize and develop their own untapped potential and to breathe life into themselves. It is amazing the heights that people can reach when they are afforded the resources and support to do so.

Finally, the success of Exodus exists because of the support it has throughout the city and the country. We know our success is because of the strong relationships and collaboration with all our partners. To the Exodus Board of Directors who are engaged beyond fiduciary oversight and are invested in our mission. And to our funders. Continue to believe in our work and I am sure, one day, we can decarcerate at record numbers.



# 2021 In Pictures



# 2021 In Pictures



# 2021 In Pictures



# 2021 In Pictures





# 2021 IN NUMBERS

**2,915**

Participants Served



**12,189**

Case Management  
Sessions



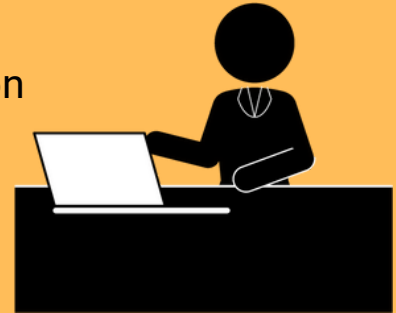
**817**

Jobseekers Graduated  
Employment Readiness  
Workshop



**797**

Employment Position  
Placements



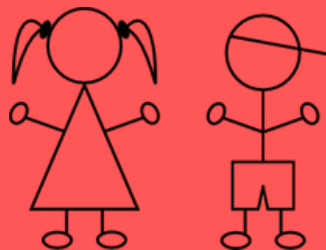
**976**

Emergency Hotel  
Intakes



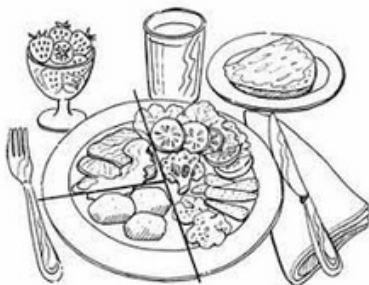
**126**

Youth Served



**250,000+**

Meals Served



# Reentry Hotel Program

Since the start of the COVID19 pandemic Exodus has heeded the call to help our incarcerated brothers and sisters released to NYC amidst the pandemic with no home to go to. Since the start of the pandemic, we have provided private hotel rooms to more than 1820 individuals. We currently operate 6 reentry hotels under contract with the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) in Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan with a daily census of over 860 individuals.

All our hotels are staffed 24 hours a day 7 days a week by Exodus personnel, security, and trained medical professionals. Participants are provided a private hotel room, wrap-around case management, 24/7 emergency response, three hot meals a day, clothing, assistance obtaining ID, a cell phone, and job placement and permanent housing. We seek to provide not only a better alternative to the shelter system, but also the stability our participants need to reclaim their lives and determine their next steps.



**The Tillary Hotel**



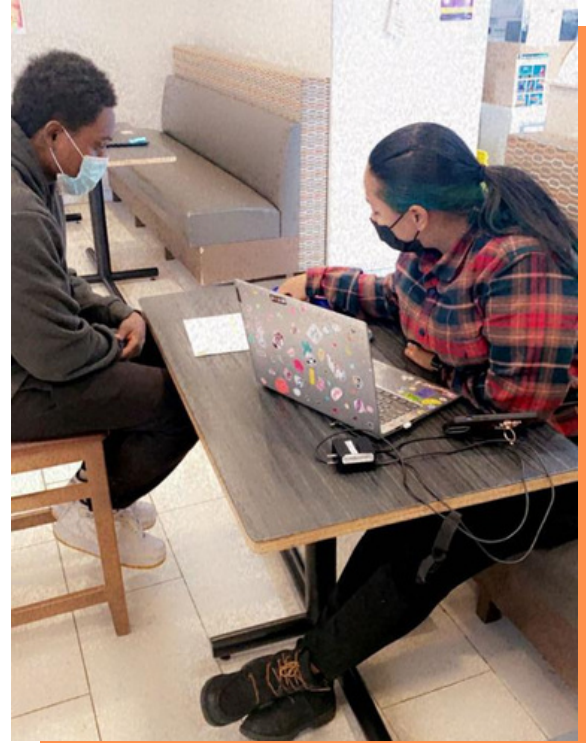
**Wyndham Gardens**



**Wolcott Hotel**

## Reentry Hotel Program

With support from Exodus, its partners, and the surrounding communities we continue to see progress and resilience among hotel program participants. The passion and effectiveness of many our staff comes from having been participants themselves. Exodus staff work hard to collaborate with community partners, MOCJ, BOC, DOCCS, & Public Defenders to identify and connect with eligible justice-impacted individuals in need of safe and secure housing before released from incarceration. Exodus is excited to continue our partnership with the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. The impact of our hotel program shows that with this housing model people can rebuild their lives and thrive.



**Holiday Inn**



**Fairfield Inn**



**Howard Johnson**

# Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI)

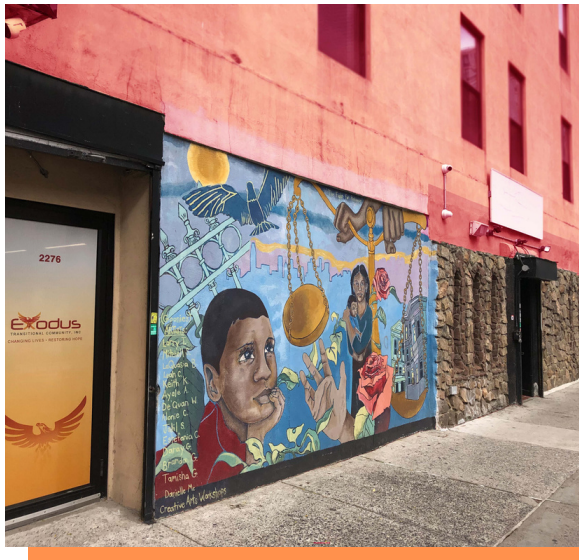
The Exodus ATI program opened in October 2020 and features a collective community centered approach where participants take ownership of their lives and work with staff to hold space where everyone is accountable. We served 90 people in 2021, and provided peer led transformative groups, employment opportunities, and other basic needs such as relapse prevention services, therapy, food, metro cards, clothing and referrals for housing.

ATI Court Advocates work closely with the District Attorney's Office to present alternatives that do not remove people from their families and support systems. Constantly in communication with judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys, our court advocates ensure that our participants facing trial are empowered with the knowledge and moral support they need to successfully navigate their court proceedings, thereby keeping ATI participants from having to go through the trauma of spending time on Rikers Island.

In 2022 we plan on expanding our ATI services to serve women as well as men.



## Center for Trauma Innovation (CTI)



Trauma-informed practice is the foundation on which we build all our programming at Exodus. Recognizing the need to continue supporting our community, Exodus opened the Center for Trauma Innovation (CTI) in late 2021 and began developing and implementing trauma-informed services in collaboration with community members and community grassroots healers.

With funding from the Criminal Justice Investment Initiative and the District Attorney of New York, the Exodus CTI is the first of its kind.

Our staff utilizes innovative clinical and non-clinical practices based in research and lived experience. The Center for Trauma Innovation utilizes a three-tiered approach, concentrating on populations that have historically endured higher rates of violence and failed access to resources, including: “adults with justice involvements, young adults, the LGBTQIA+ community, and immigrant populations.”

The emphasis on innovation puts our CTI staff in the best position to help our participants through individual and group therapy in different modalities, including pet therapy, and emotional regulation. The CTI will also release important research studies and collaborative learning modules as well as grassroots incubator projects that help people heal from trauma.

We believe that every person’s journey of healing unfolds differently. We seek to provide a place for our participants to name, manage, and overcome their traumas at their own pace. Since opening in September of 2021, we have seen an incredible growth in participation and openness from the community to receive these services.

**EXODUS CENTER FOR TRAUMA INNOVATION**

*Trauma and Resilience*

*Group*

FRIDAYS  
2PM-4PM!

**Location:**  
 2276 3rd Ave. NY, NY 10035  
 (Southwest Corner of 124th St.)  
**JOIN US IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT:**

- IMPROVING SENSE OF SAFETY.
- REGULATING EMOTIONS
- ACKNOWLEDGING LOSSES
- ENVISIONING OUR FUTURES
- RESTORING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

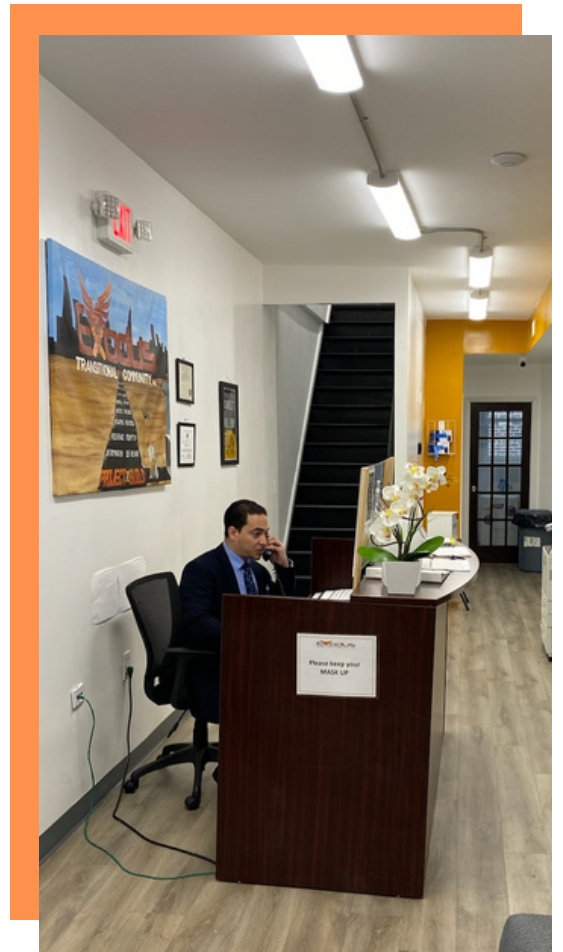
**EMOTIONAL REGULATION**

Emotional Regulation for Practical Re-Entry and Reintegration  
**THURSDAYS @ CTI BUILDING FROM 12:00PM-1:30PM**

# The Wellness Center

Our Wellness Center provides holistic trauma informed treatment for our participants who are battling substance use disorder. Our New York State Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS) licensed Wellness Center is open five days a week and works closely with all our other programs to help move participants from crisis to stability and recovery. The Wellness Center is staffed by highly trained medical and non-medical staff and delivers treatment informed, evidence-based quality care with the goal of helping our participants overcome their addictions and move forward to lives that are fuller, freer, and healthier.

Knowing that there is no “one size fits all approach” to treatment, our Wellness Center staff develops treatment plans based on the individual needs of our participants. Customized treatment and our non-judgmental culture helps our staff build therapeutic alliances, identifying risk factors as well as strengths in our participants. This whole person approach coupled with our comprehensive services, including group and individual counseling, help our participants reach their fullest potential.



*Connecting to a positive link of support*



# Civic Engagement and Advocacy

Exodus made great strides in our advocacy efforts in 2021. Our Advocacy Team worked alongside staff, volunteers, participants and community members to dismantle systems of oppression and reallocate funding to invest in solutions to scale. We partner on several campaigns, including Clean Slate, Treatment Not Jails, and Communities Not Cages.

As environmental justice advocates, Exodus helped lead the way in passing the Renewable Rikers Act in February 2021 - which transfers jurisdiction of Rikers Island from the Department of Correction to the Department of Environmental Project for infrastructure such as renewable energy once the detention centers close in 2027. The Renewable Rikers Act correlates significantly with the Rikers Public Memory Project - an initiative that used storytelling, art-making, and oral histories to document and make visible the impact of Rikers Island. During this project, it was made clear that the people most harmed by Rikers want to help make our City more energy efficient. Exodus continues to work day and night to ensure that Rikers Island closes for good in August 2027.

Housing is a human right! Exodus continues to advocate for housing for all, as well as the passage of the Fair Chance for Housing Act - which would ensure landlords cannot use background checks as a means of discrimination. We hosted several rallies in solidarity with our Reentry Hotel participants and their right to access quality housing upon release from incarceration. Housing is an integral part of an individual's reentry process; as such, we must ensure that every community resident in need of housing has a safe place to go upon release.



## Exodus Based Initiatives (EBI) on Rikers Island

The Exodus Based Initiatives (EBI) Rikers Engagement Crew began working with individuals incarcerated on Rikers Island in September 2021. Our staff were among the first outside providers to resume in-person services for people who had been isolated & detained during one of the deadliest pandemics in the history of Rikers. In addition, COVID pandemic caused major staffing shortages on Rikers, resulting in a rise in violence so catastrophic that it was labeled a “humanitarian crisis.” The work of our Credible Messengers inside the housing units has forged meaningful connections with people in custody and allowed us to address the culture of violence, supplement services, and provide a lifeline to the individuals detained on Rikers.

The Rikers Engagement Crew facilitates evidence based groups inside the housing units on topics such as anger management, anxiety, socialization, Thinking for a Change, trauma, and others. We have also implemented programming among young adults using a Violence Interrupter Model and have completed over 230 Transition Plans helping individuals being released connect with community services, get jobs, find housing, reconnect with family, and not return to jail. One of the earliest initiatives yielding a positive impact is the distribution of over 4000 tablets. Offering this positive incentive has resulted in a lessened level of tension and a better understanding among staff and individuals detained on Rikers, and a reduction in overall violence. The team continues to engage with and learn from those in custody about how to reduce incidents of violence and bring a humanitarian approach to providing services.





## Reentry Taskforces

### The New York County Reentry Task Force

The New York County Reentry Task Force (NYCRTF), officially started April 2020, was created to support those coming home reacclimate to society. In partnership with over 60 Manhattan-based service providers, the NYCRTF centers its work around those paroled to Manhattan.

Our dedicated task force receives referrals of incarcerated individuals awaiting release with the aim of aiding that transition. We ensure that our participants are enrolled in programming that is centered on reentry while also meeting any mandated requirements. Those working with the NYCRTF are also offered access to Exodus' other services and those offered by our partners.



### DUTCHESS COUNTY REENTRY TASK FORCE

The Exodus Poughkeepsie office coordinates the Dutchess County Reentry Task Force (DCRTF) in partnership with six other regional organizations to help meet the needs and challenges of individuals returning home from prison to Dutchess County under parole supervision.

With the goal of increasing the resources available to our participants in the Hudson Valley, DCRTF provides services including case management, assistance obtaining vital records, workforce development, job placement, transportation assistance, and assistance meeting other basic needs.

## Post Incarceration Services

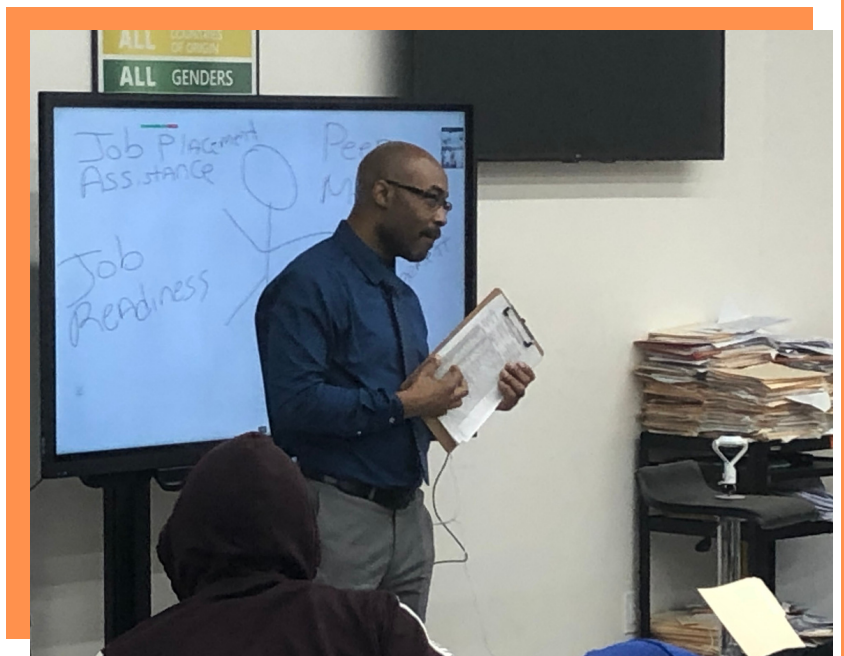


Promoting economic well-being for those transitioning back into society has been integral to the Exodus mission since its founding .

Many participants come to Exodus lacking access to what most take for granted. The dedicated case management staff of the Community Reentry Justice Network (CJRN) work with participants to help them with food, clothing, a cellphone, obtaining ID, accessing medical care, and transportation. Many of our participants also attend our Wilderness job readiness workshop where they work on skill development, writing resumes & cover letters, and interviewing. Once ready, participants work with our job development team to find gainful employment in the field that best suits them. When ready, participants have access to a team of housing specialists to help navigate the road to permanent housing.



Thanks to the hard work and follow through of the CRJN staff, over 70 percent of participants are on their way to economic well-being.



## Newburgh and Poughkeepsie



Exodus' Hudson Valley sites located in Newburgh and Poughkeepsie, like the East Harlem HUB, offer an array of hope restoring reentry services to justice impacted individuals, and help them write the next chapters of their stories. Our Hudson Valley Offices provide members of their communities with access to food (including hot meals) and clothing, workforce development services based on the Ready, Set, Work curriculum, Moral Recontion Therapy, and Anger Management. We offer these services and programs to any justice impacted individual who comes into our offices.

Our Hudson Valley staff reach out to help those paroled to Orange and Dutchess counties find the support that they need in all areas of life to successfully transition back into society. The Poughkeepsie office also coordinates the Dutchess County Reentry Task Force which goes beyond reentry and wraparound case management services into advocacy for legislation regarding the challenges and needs of our participants.

We emphasize the importance of continuing education to our participants and offer a variety of programs ranging from digital literacy and high school equivalency classes to an accredited college class conducted with Vassar College staff and students. This class has become very popular and has already been renewed in 2022.

# Transforming and Transitioning: Napolean's Story



Napolean became a participant of the Exodus Hotel Program in November of 2020. Napolean would have ended up in a shelter if not for the hotel program. During previous bouts of homelessness Napolean spent time in the city's shelter system. The difference between those experiences and the Exodus Hotel Program was apparent immediately. Napolean was greeted by staff, offered the first of many meals, introduced to his case manager, and shown to his private room.

Having been involved with Exodus since being a part of our youth program in 2019, Napolean knew the value of what was at his disposal. He fondly remembered his time in our youth program and with

our Youth Mentors. He was quick to offer praise for them, stating "... whatever you want to be they could probably help you with that if you talk to them."

Napoleon made full use of his time in the Hotel Program which he used to "... keep expanding, keep learning and growing." While with us, he worked different jobs and made it a point to save his money with the aim of obtaining and keeping his own housing. .; this enabled Napolean to be ready for his next phase of life thanks to a referral Exodus made in the Summer of 2021 to the Jericho Project, an organization that helps younger people find permanent housing. "It didn't happen overnight," Napolean commented while speaking about the five-month waiting period between applying for and being presented with housing options. But good things come to those who wait.

While waiting for his housing to come through, Napolean began working on his high school equivalency diploma. He also attended an Exodus hosted Harlem Careers event which landed him a job interview with the NYC Department of Education. Finally, the good news came. After a lot of hard work and saving/budgeting his money, Napolean signed a lease for his very own apartment in February of 2022. After receiving the keys, he was able to proudly check himself out of the Tillary Hotel as a much stronger person ready to take on the world.

We can't wait to see what's next for you, Napolean. Always know that if you need anything, Exodus will be here.

## Staff Spotlight

Arthur Cooke is a Case Manager and Court Advocate in the Exodus Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Program. Arthur has been with our ATI Program since July 2021 and has brought an incredible energy, fierce advocacy, and hope to our participants since day one. Arthur is also a loving father whose six-year-old son is his top priority. "Growing up, I had uncles and, you know, family and father figures. But, to have your father... it's a different feeling. Like to see the joy in his eyes gives me joy." In his free time Arthur enjoys playing poker with his friends. He also loves to watch comedies to destress. "It helps remind me that, you know, things aren't as serious."



Arthur, like the majority of Exodus staff, is justice-impacted. After coming to Exodus for reentry assistance, he met with the Workforce Development team to consider career opportunities. Initially, he considered finding work as a driver. But the team saw the value Arthur could bring to Exodus and encouraged him to apply for an opening at ATI. After going through the interview process, he was offered the job. For Arthur, the decision to work at ATI was one of the best decisions of his life. "I wanted to be a part of the solution as opposed to a part of the problem."

Through his work as a Case Manager/Court Advocate, Arthur has learned to leverage his lived experience to relate to and reach the ATI participants, and to be an example to the judges and court personnel of what one can do when given the opportunity. He sees how his own mindset has shifted from one of hopelessness since serving his sentence to one of hope and aspirations, and he is always helping his participants do the same. "It seems like we're changing that a little bit. At least for me, the narrative is changing." In many ways the greatest impact Arthur has made through his work has been on himself.

When asked about his first time in court, Arthur described a surreal experience. "The first time I go to court, it's the actual court that I got sentenced in. ... The judge that I'm presenting in front of is the judge that sentenced me." But instead of dredging up bad memories, this experience made Arthur want to work even harder for his participants. In many cases Arthur and the ATI team are the only support the participants have in court. To Arthur, the value of his work is apparent when he gets to "see the joy that they get when they realize that there is light at the end of the tunnel. That means everything."

Knowing how much good ATI has done, Arthur is determined to promote the program. He wants anyone who finds themselves facing charges to know: "There is hope, there is help."

## Partnership Highlights

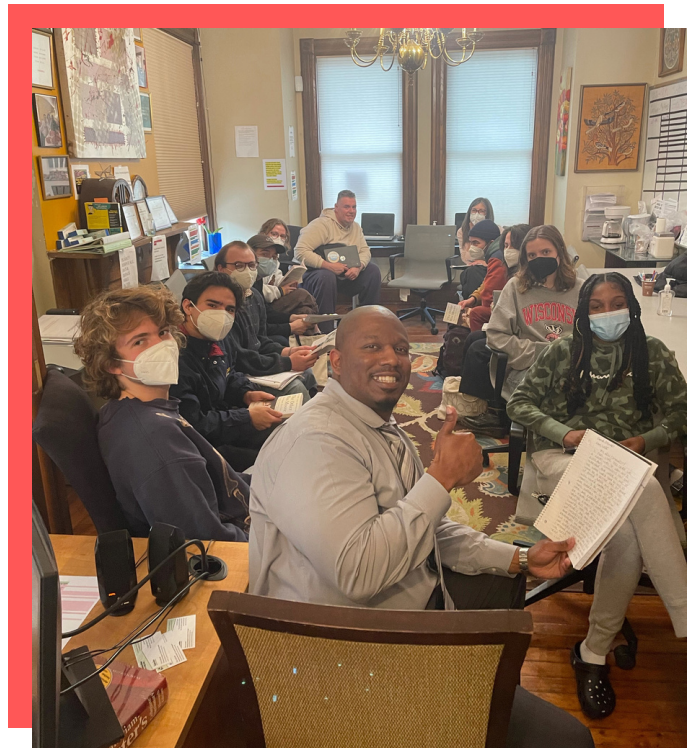
### NYC Cares

In October 2021 Exodus had the pleasure of partnering with NYC Cares for a Winter Coat Drive. Our East Harlem hub served as a donation site where coats were collected alongside the almost 100 coats generosity gifted by the NYC Cares team and through a much appreciated partnership with Brooklyn Defender Services. Exodus staff distributed these coats to our participants and members of the community, protecting them from the bitter cold of the New York winter. Exodus is excited to continue the partnership with NYC Cares in 2022 and beyond!



### Vassar College

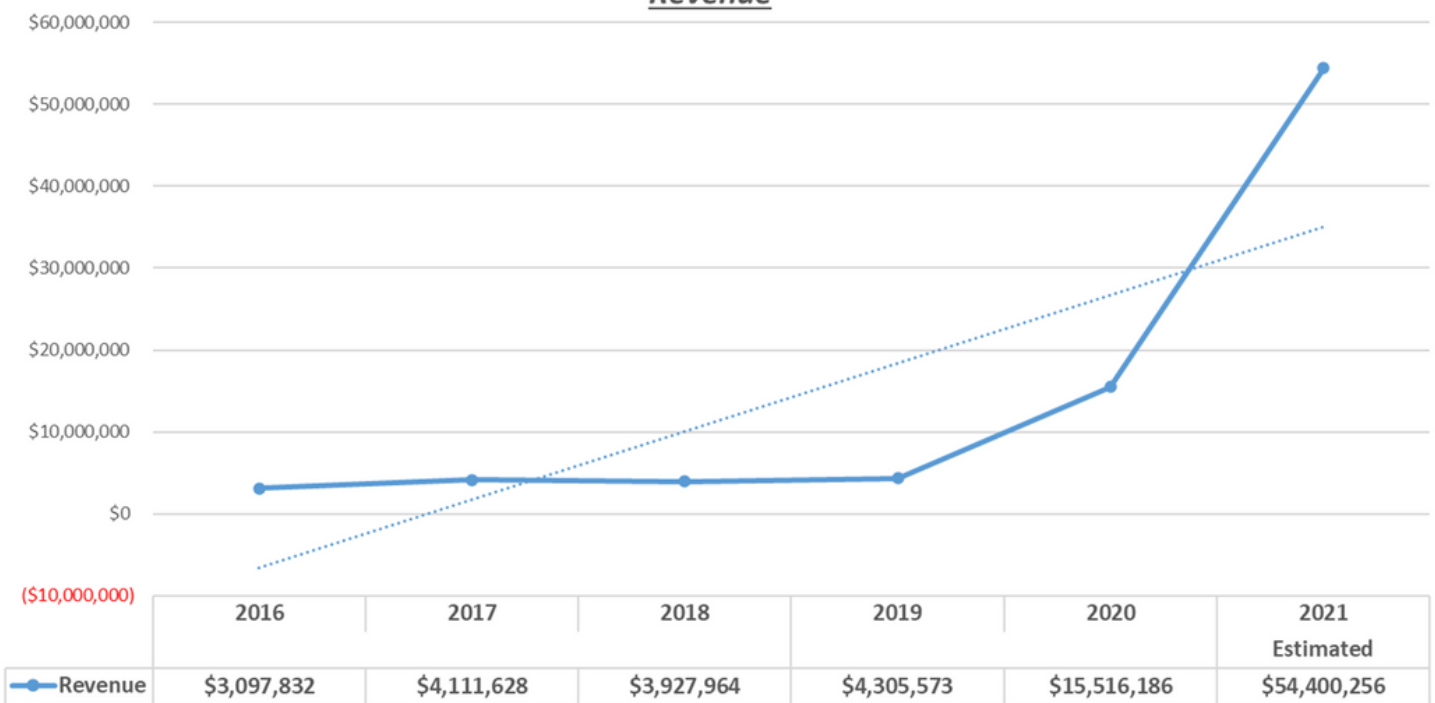
With funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Exodus Poughkeepsie office and Vassar College cohosted a class on the impact of social & racial issues in education. Attended by both Exodus participants and Vassar College students at the Exodus Poughkeepsie office, everyone involved emerged richer for the experience. Not only was it a chance for the participants to further their education; everyone involved was exposed to perspectives that they might not encounter otherwise. The success and popularity of the program led to another offering which will end in May of 2022.



## Financial Report

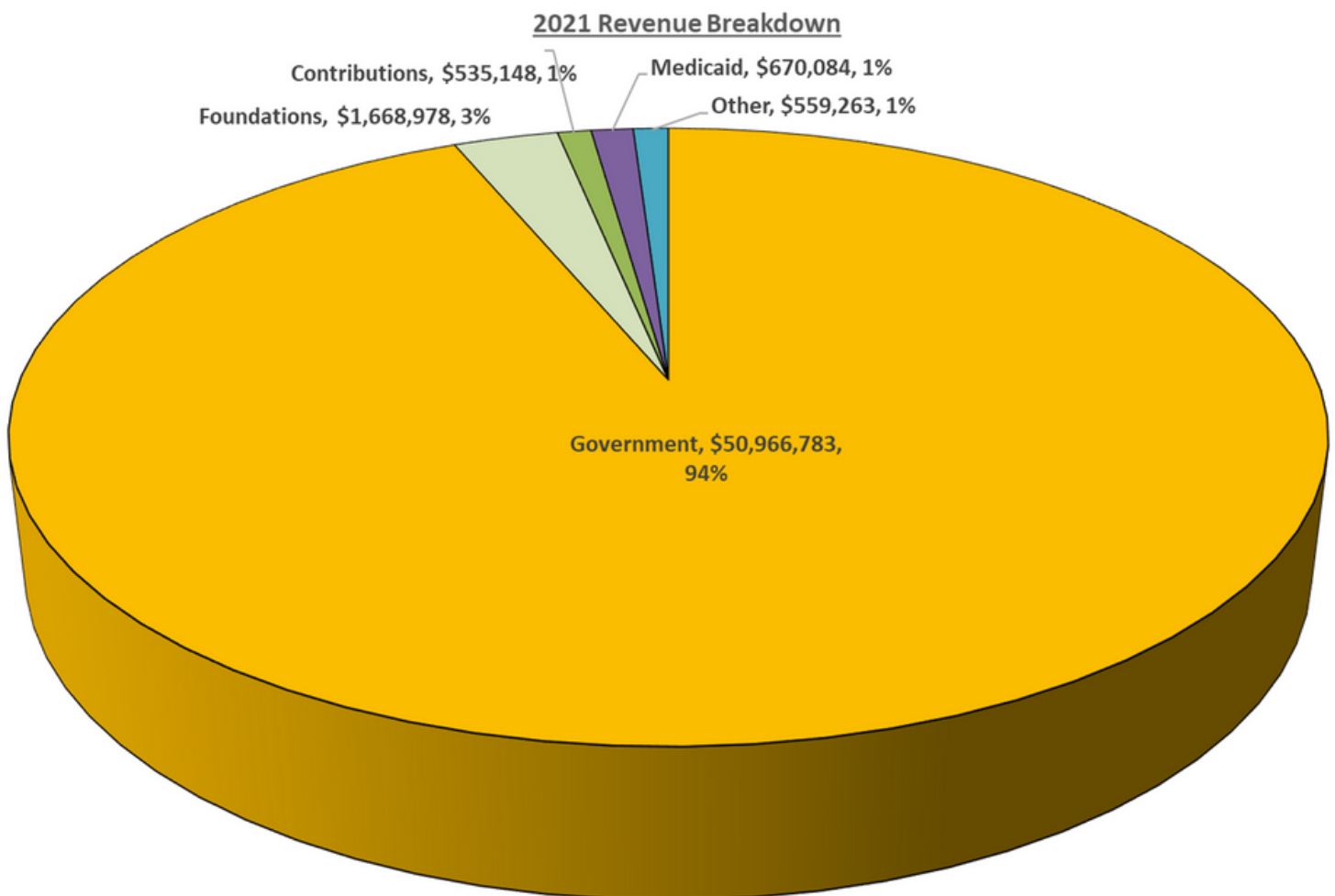
Sources include Audited Financial Statements for 2016 - 2020, preliminary estimate for 2021 and the estimated budget for 2022

*Revenue*



## Financial Report

Source: Preliminary estimates for 2021





## Executive Goals

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Goals	Outcomes
<p><b>Strategic Partnerships</b></p>	<p>Executive Team engaged in intentional and thoughtful partnerships that provide a host of fruitful benefits and support our fundraising, programmatic, and policy efforts. One particular focus has been faith based partners.</p>
<p><b>Clear Data and Metrics</b></p>	<p>With the hiring of a Data Manager in 2020, we successfully switched our data and metrics tracking to Salesforce, which will provide us a more robust software application with the ability to build out dashboards for all levels of data tracking and metrics management.</p>
<p><b>Staff Retention &amp; Development</b></p>	<p>We implemented a measured strategy related to retention and professional development of our staff to allow Exodus to continue to expand in the area of holistic reentry, and to hire individuals who are justice impacted, even if they have little work experience. This is being done through a combination of enhanced onboarding, staff development, a trauma-informed focus, created an HR Department based on the principles of restorative justice and mentorship relationships.</p>

<p><b>Development and Fundraising</b></p>	<p>We have successfully maximized all contracts, strengthened an integration of policy with practice, built stronger connections with institutions of faith by reaching out to 2 churches per month. Continued to diversify funding streams and focused efforts in private and individual donors.</p>
<p><b>Expand our Housing Footprint</b></p>	<p>CY2021 saw a huge expansion in our reentry housing activities with the opening of six (6) Reentry Hotels to provide transitional housing for individuals being released from incarceration to NYC during the COVID19 pandemic, with plans to expand into transitional housing. Part of our strategic plan for housing in 2022, will be to complete all steps necessary to open a transitional housing program in our Poughkeepsie site and to add permanent housing to our housing portfolio through both private and public funding streams.</p>
<p><b>Increase Services in Newburgh</b></p>	<p>Newburgh is a community with many diverse needs and a large immigrant community. In 2021 we hired our first Immigrant Reentry Case Manager with funding from the NY Department of State (CARES Grant) and exceeded all our goals and metrics in our first 6 months of offering these services.</p>