

SOLUTIONS NOT PUNISHMENT CO.

**BLACK  
TRANS  
FUTURES**

ARTIST'S SIGNATURE



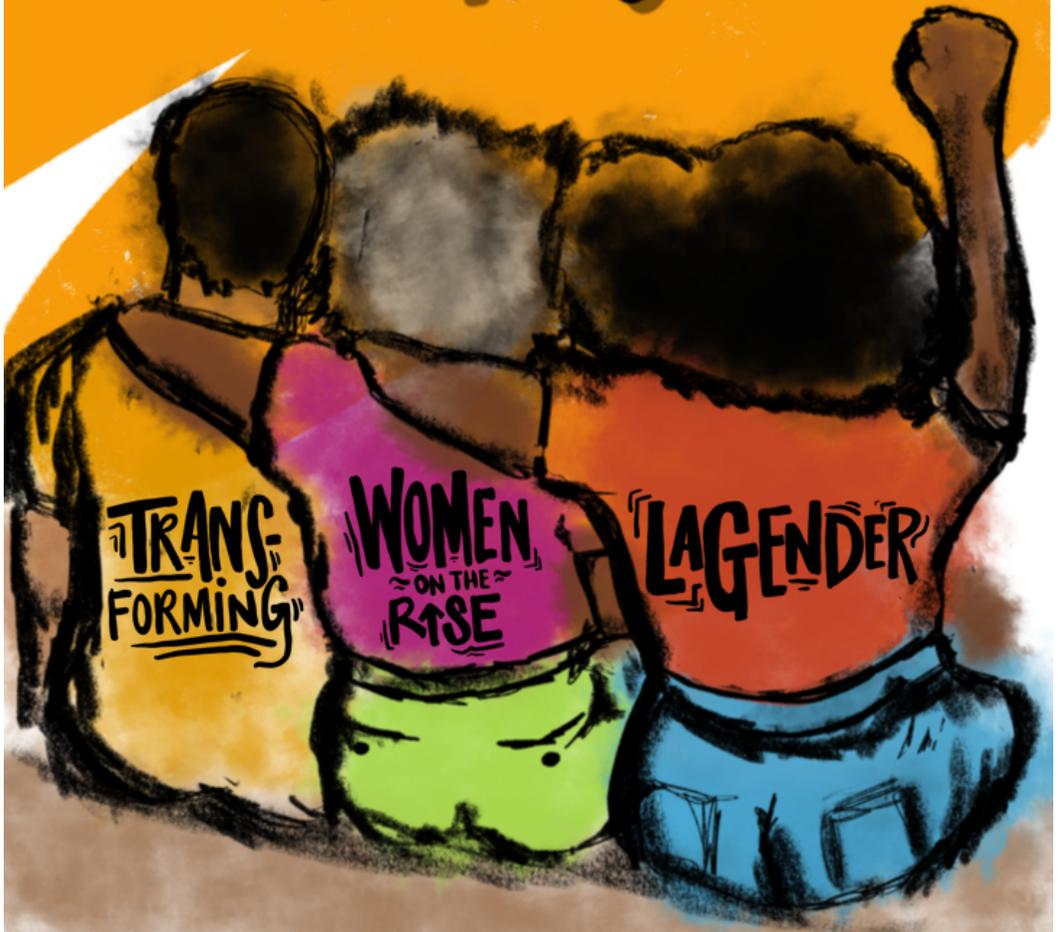
**THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:**



**SNAP CO. MEMBER SINCE:**



# SOLUTIONS NOT PUNISHMENT



## Solutions Not Punishment Coalition

Multiple organizations, activists, and community members united in the fight to end the Banishment Ordinance and joined the 'Working Group on Prostitution' (WGOP) to find a solution rather than allow the city of Atlanta to continue to criminalize sex work/ sex workers. Some of the organizations include LaGender, Women on the Rise, Georgians for Alternatives for Death Penalty, Atlanta Harm Reduction Coalition, Trans(forming), Occupy Atlanta's Women Caucus, and TILTT (Transgender Individuals Living Their Truth).

Within the fight to decriminalize sex work, some organizations and organizers found themselves aligned wanting to be a part of a coalition that would center all marginalized folks within the city of Atlanta...



# THE COALITION

# RACIAL JUSTICE ACTION CENTER



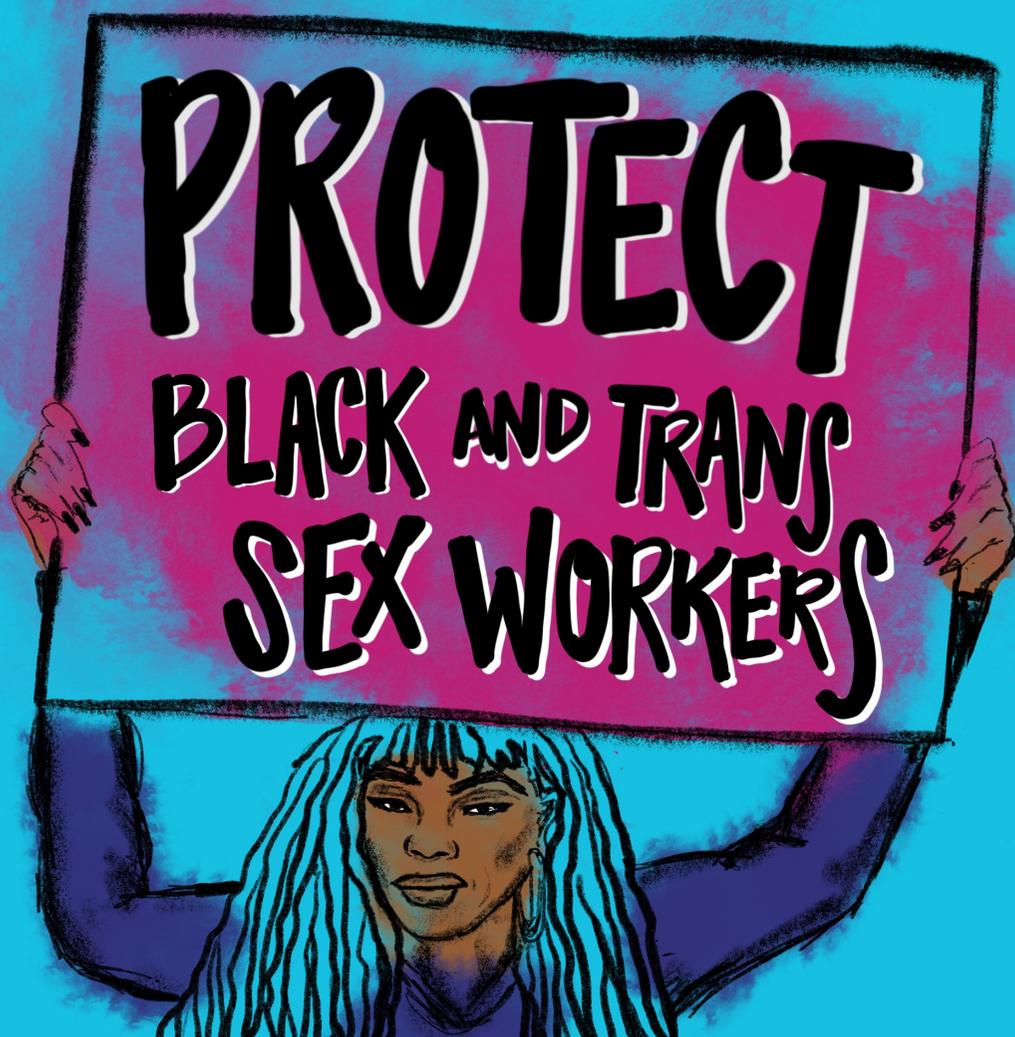
The four organizations - Racial Justice Action Center, LaGender, Women on the Rise, and Trans(forming) - formally aligned and became anchors to the coalition called **Solutions Not Punishment (SNaP Co)**. The Blue House is the practice-hub for transformation, uplifting the magic and brilliance of trans and queer people of color; dedicated to building a world without cages, and creating solutions (not punishment) within Atlanta and the surrounding metro areas.

“It all Began with the”  
**BANISHMENT**  
“ORDINANCE ...”



**In 2013, the Atlanta City Council considered an ordinance that would banish sex workers from parts of the city at first offense — like Midtown, a historic area for TLGBQ folks — and from Atlanta city limits at second offense.**

The ordinance known as SOAP (Stay Out of Areas of Prostitution) or the Banishment Ordinance, was put forth because some residents of Atlanta's Midtown neighborhood felt uncomfortable about sex workers they referred to as a "gang of tranny prostitutes."



**On May 20th, 2014, Janell and Tyra,**



**two Black transwomen, were  
attacked on Marta by a group of men  
who harassed them for being trans.**

# When we fight, we win.

SNaP Co. fought to uplift and support Janell and Tyra by demanding the City of Atlanta to offer resources for their healing from the trauma they endured, for the men who were arrested to participate in a restorative justice process that centers the healing and wellbeing of the survivors, and for MARTA police to apologize for their continued transphobia after the initial incident of violence.

Additionally, SNaP Co. fought alongside the survivors to challenge the state/ agents of the state from using incarceration as a form of accountability for the harm-doers. SNaP Co.'s principles are embedded in creating a world without cages, and a world without punitive responses that make it harder for our people to survive. Restorative justice does not exist within the confines of an antiblack oppressive system, but exists within the worlds we create beyond and outside of it.

This incident of violence and response by the police/ agents of the state only fueled the vision and mission of Solutions Not Punishment Collaborative to protect, center, and amplify the experiences of Black trans, gender nonconforming, and queer folks within Atlanta.





ALEXIA  
CHRISTIAN



DEANDRE  
PHILLIPS



TEE TEE  
DANGERFIELD



NINO STARR  
FORTSON



CANDACE  
TOWNS



LUCY  
MCCURTY

WHO We've  
FOUGHT FOR ...  
REST in POWER

Trans and Queer Black women face higher rates of physical violence, than their cisgender and heterosexual peers. In Georgia, 5 Black women of trans and/ or queer experience were murdered in a time span of just 3 years. Below, are the most recent deaths of Black trans and queer women, in Atlanta and Georgia.

**#SayHerName @snap4freedom**

**Tee Tee Dangerfield**, reportedly the 17th transgender person to be murdered 2017, was killed because she was trans. What we know is, that police responded to a "person shot" call at around 4:20 a.m. on July 31, and discovered Dangerfield, 32, inside her vehicle in the College Park area of the city. **#SayHerName @snap4freedom**

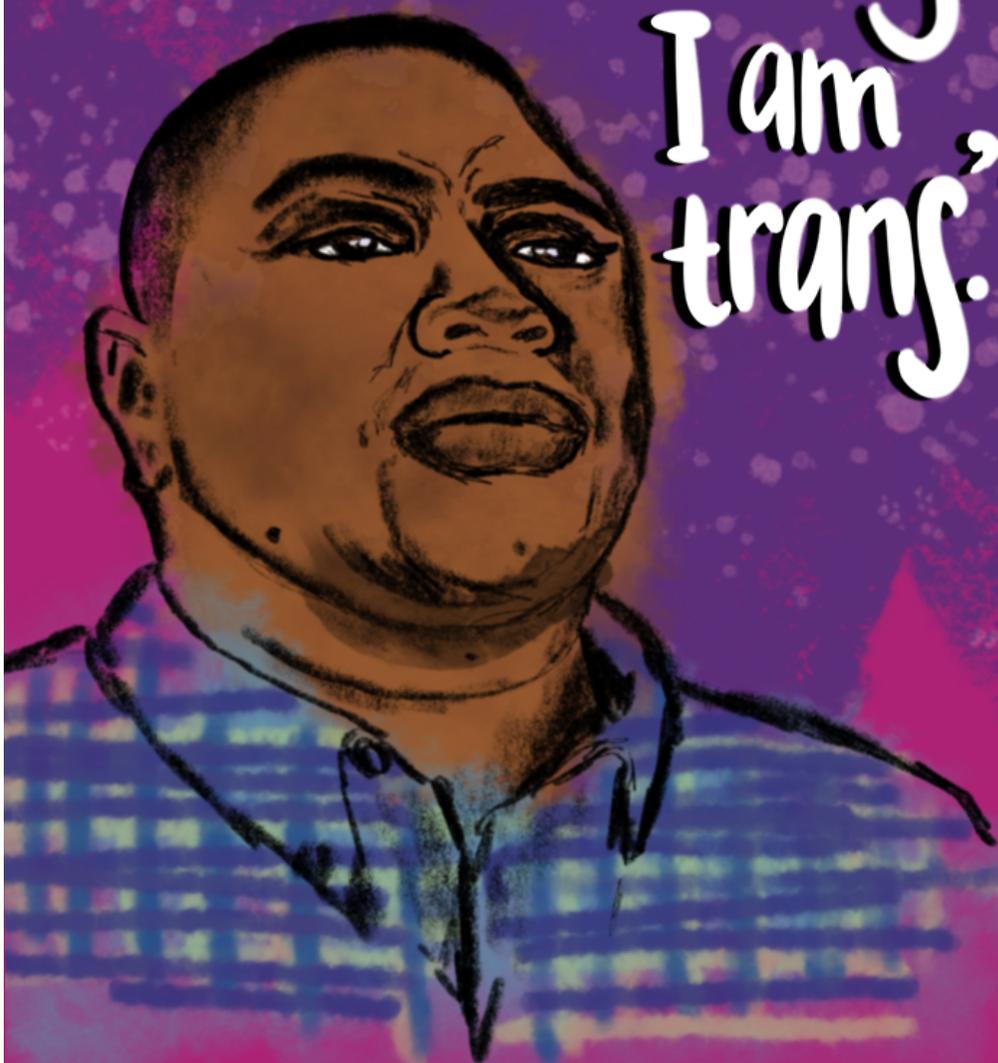
**Nino Fortson**, a gender nonconforming person, was shot to death on Sunday while walking home, during an argument with a group of people, police said. Family and friends wonder if Fortson's gender identity and expression may have played a role in the murder. Fortson was a member of the local ballroom scene and was only 36 years old. **#SayHerName @snap4freedom**

**Shaneku "Lucy" McCurdy**, a former college athlete and barber, was killed during an attempted car-jacking at the Chevron on Redan Road in Stone Mountain. McCurdy was shot several times. McCurdy graduated from South Atlanta High School and attended Stillman College and Clark Atlanta University. McCurdy worked at the Five Dollar Barber Shop off Candler Rd. **#SayHerName @snap4freedom**

**Candace Towns**, one of three Black Trans woman murdered in Georgia in 2017, was reported missing for three days before her body was found at the end of a driveway, near her home. Candace died at the age of 30. **#SayHerName @snap4freedom**

**Alexia Christian**, 26, was shot 10 times by Atlanta police officers Jeffery Cook and Omar Thyme on April 30th in the heart of Five Points in Downtown Atlanta. She was the mother of two. One week after Christian's death, community members demanded more answers from APD, calling for the release of surveillance footage, and insisting that an independent investigator handle the internal inquiry into both police officers. **#SayHerName @snap4freedom**

“I am not an “it.”  
I am not a “thing.”  
I am  
trans.”



## **On October 23rd, 2014, Juan Evans, a Black transman, was stopped by East Point Police for speeding and subsequently harassed for being trans.**

Juan was pulled over for speeding, in the city of East Point, about 10 minutes from Downtown Atlanta. He did not have his driver's license on him but gave his birth name to the officer. The officer claimed to be confused by his gender and the gendering of his birth name, creating a transphobic, anti-Black exchange. The officer harassed Juan by threatening to do a genital search to determine his gender and maintained a hostile demeanor.

Juan, an organizer at SNaP Co., was traumatized and humiliated. After refusing a genital search repeatedly, and surviving repeated harassment with the police, he was finally able to call upon his personal loved ones and his organizer family to support him.

After being released, Juan demanded justice for himself and other Black trans folks, who are constantly targeted for their Blackness, their transness, and their queerness by agents of the state.

Over 50 people showed up to East Point to protest the discrimination and violence that happened to Juan. Marching from the East Point Police Department to City Hall, activists and SNaP Co. members demanded an apology from the officers involved and the previous mayor of East Point, Jannquelle Peters. They also demanded new standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure they listed new protocols and accountability for unwarranted searches, disrespectful language, and harassment. The East Point's SOP's are the most progressive around the country — collectively visioned and drafted by Black trans and queer people, and our coconspirators.

# THE SOLUTION



In response to the Banishment Ordinance, SNaP Co. was instrumental in creating the solution to end punishment and incarceration of trans and queer folks within Atlanta - specifically Black trans sex workers. Inspired by Seattle's Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD), the **Atlanta/Fulton County Pre-Arrest Diversion Initiative (PAD)** became the first major campaign for SNaP Co., redirecting sex workers, folks experience homelessness and struggling with their mental health to community-based treatment and support services to end incarceration and criminalization of sex work. Led by Black and Latina trans and queer people, people living with HIV, and formerly incarcerated women, on December 7, 2015, SNaP Co. rallied on the front steps of City Hall and moved the members of City Council to vote UNANIMOUSLY for a Pre-Arrest Diversion initiative in Atlanta and Fulton County.



# DEAN AND TONI- MICHELLE



## **The Game Changers.**

Throughout the growth and expansion of vision of Solutions Not Punishment Coalition, the organization's founders decided to hire Toni-Michelle Williams and Dean Steed as lead organizers and to head the trans leadership internship program. The relationship was mutually beneficial, as SNaP Co. needed the vision and transformative leadership skills of young Black trans and queer organizers with deep roots to their communities within Atlanta. In 2017, the organization moved from a coalition to a collaboration, in which SNaP Co. became a stand alone entity, birthing the #SNaP4Freedom Movement in Atlanta.

Over the next three years, Toni-Michelle and Dean have led and organized multiple successful transformative campaigns, created programming and education for the community, and has modeled and embodied the practice of developing and investing in Black trans leadership across Atlanta.

# ATLANTA TRANS LEADERSHIP

In her role as organizer/leadership development coordinator, Toni-Michelle, with Dean's support developed and led the Atlanta Trans Leadership (ATL) internship program. The program was originally titled Trans Leadership Connection (TLC) and is a derivative of Ms. Dee Dee Chamblee, executive director of LaGender Inc., and BT, executive director of TransForming's vision for "THE UNICORN," Toni-Michelle, to create a leadership development pipeline for Black trans communities within Atlanta and across the south!

ATL is designed to educate and empower members of the Black trans community to become leaders in ending the crisis of mass criminalization, and health disparities in Atlanta and within the South. The internship cohorts have consisted of beautiful and brilliant trans people who were all chosen because of their desire and commitment to learn, grow, heal and transform themselves in the service of our larger trans community.

The first cohort - Ms. Lynn Morrison, Necaela Penn, TK Hotep, DJ Jones, and Raquel Willis - was tasked with developing the "The Most Dangerous Thing Out Here is the Police." The second cohort - Ka'Milla Harris, Toya Washington, Diamond Carter, and Simaya Turner - led critical outreach efforts to win the campaign to reclassify the possession of small amounts of marijuana in Atlanta to make it a non-arrestable offense and supported the SNaP4Freedom School. The third cohort - Derrick Baugh, Tavianna Rouse, and Beautifull Divinne - supported the campaign to Close the City Jail and to archive the works of SNaP Co.'s history.

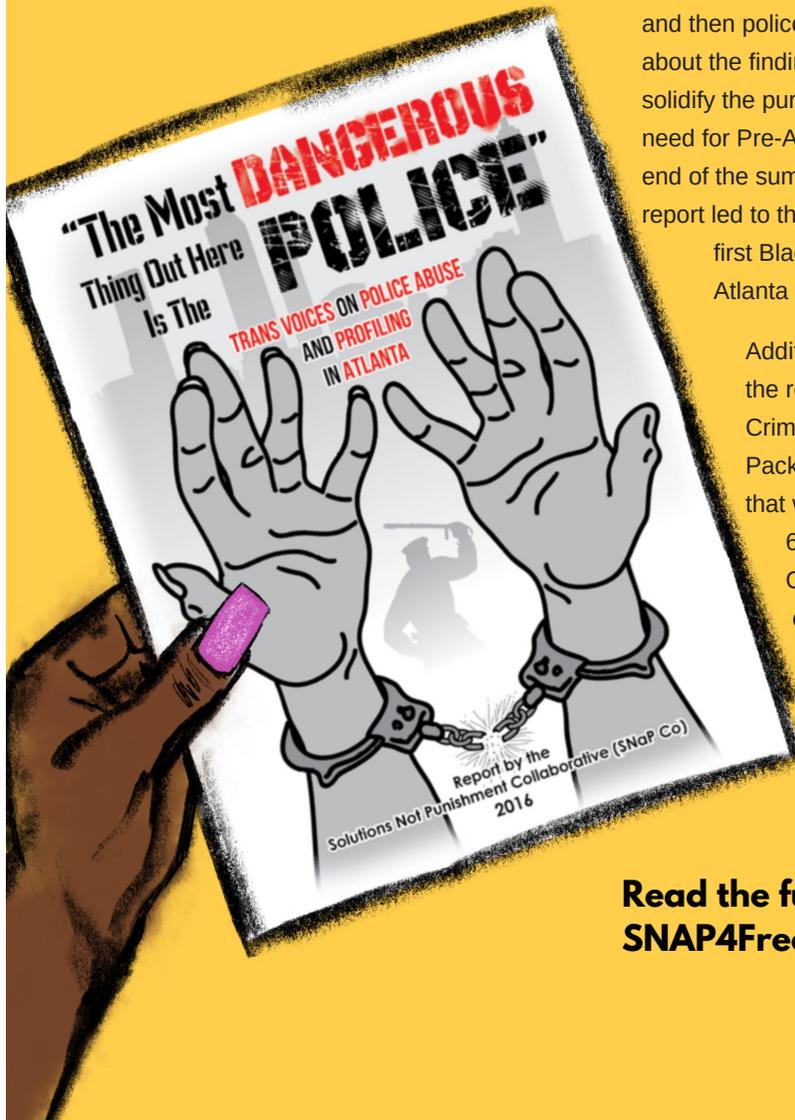


# Using Data to Hold the Police Accountable

In 2016, SNaP Co. created the **Most Dangerous Thing Out Here is the Police** data report to hold Atlanta Police Department accountable for the violence trans and queer people of color experience by the hands of police officers. The report was released on March 31, 2016 recognizing Trans Day of Visibility and presented by a panel of Black trans experts and a selection of Black transwomen who shared their experiences in the report. Over 200 people attended the Listening Session & Townhall, including members of the Atlanta City Council and representatives from the City of Atlanta's Mayor's office.

In July of 2016, after the deaths of Philando Castile, Cain Rogers, and Alton Sterling, leaders of SNaP Co. took an opportunity to confront then Atlanta Mayor, Kasim Reed, and then police chief, George Turner, about the findings. This helped to solidify the purpose and community-need for Pre-Arrest Diversion. By the end of the summer, the impact of the report led to the appointment of the first Black transwoman to the Atlanta Citizens Review Board.

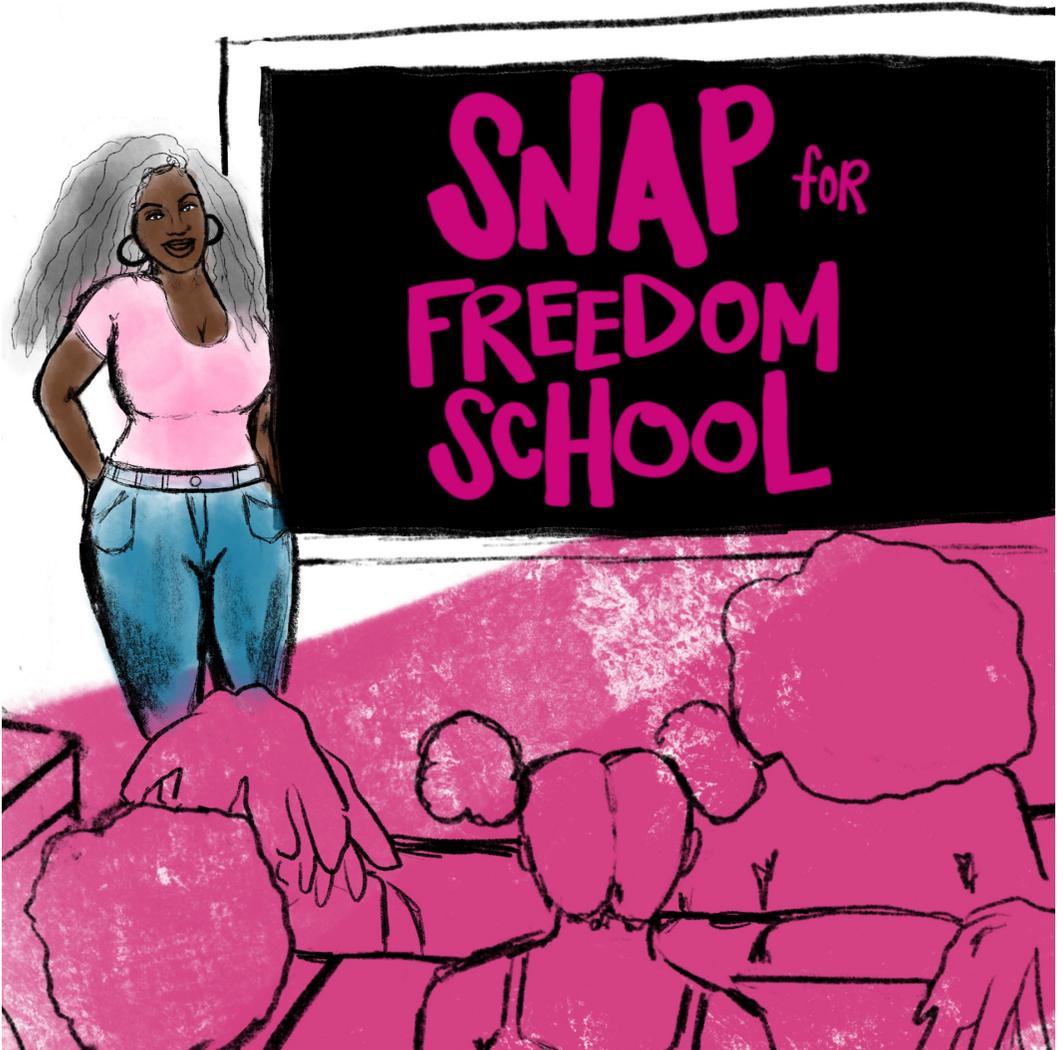
Additionally, the impact of the report introduced the Criminal Justice Reform Package, new legislation that would eliminate over 60 Quality of Life Offenses like spitting on the sidewalk, jaywalking, marijuana possession under an ounce, and sex work.



**Read the full report on  
[SNAP4Freedom.org](http://SNAP4Freedom.org).**

# Shifting Culture through Education

In 2017, through Dean's vision and leadership, the dynamic duo expanded upon the **Atlanta Trans Leadership** internship program by creating the **SNaP4Freedom School**, an intentional space for ALL of us across identities and experiences to come together, share stories and build power to build out a Black Trans Feminist Framework for Black Trans Futures and Practical Abolition.



## Fighting to Protect Black Transwomen

In the year of 2017, over 8 transwomen were killed in the first three months. 6 of them were Black - Mesha Caldwell, Keke Collier, Ciara McElveen, Jaquarrius Holland, Jojo Striker, and Chyna Gibson. SNaP Co.'s SNaP4Freedom School, community organizers, and members rallied together to create a Black transwomen (THE GURLZ) centered protest demanding safety, visibility, and humanity.

Over 200 people showed up and showed out throughout the streets of Atlanta — taking over the historic Peachtree Street and Midtown Area — demand justice for Black transwomen everywhere. SNaP Co.'s vision and mission includes using protests as healing while also decolonizing from trauma-centered rapid-respose organizing, and instead, challenging allies and communities members of Atlanta to invest in Black trans leadership and resources consistently - not just when we're murdered.





JOJO STRIKER



KEKE COLLIER



GINNA GIBSON



MESHA CALDWELL



JAQUARRTUS HOLLAND



CIARA MCELVEEN

# MARCH for the GURLZ

THE  
**MARIJUANA**  
CAMPAIGN



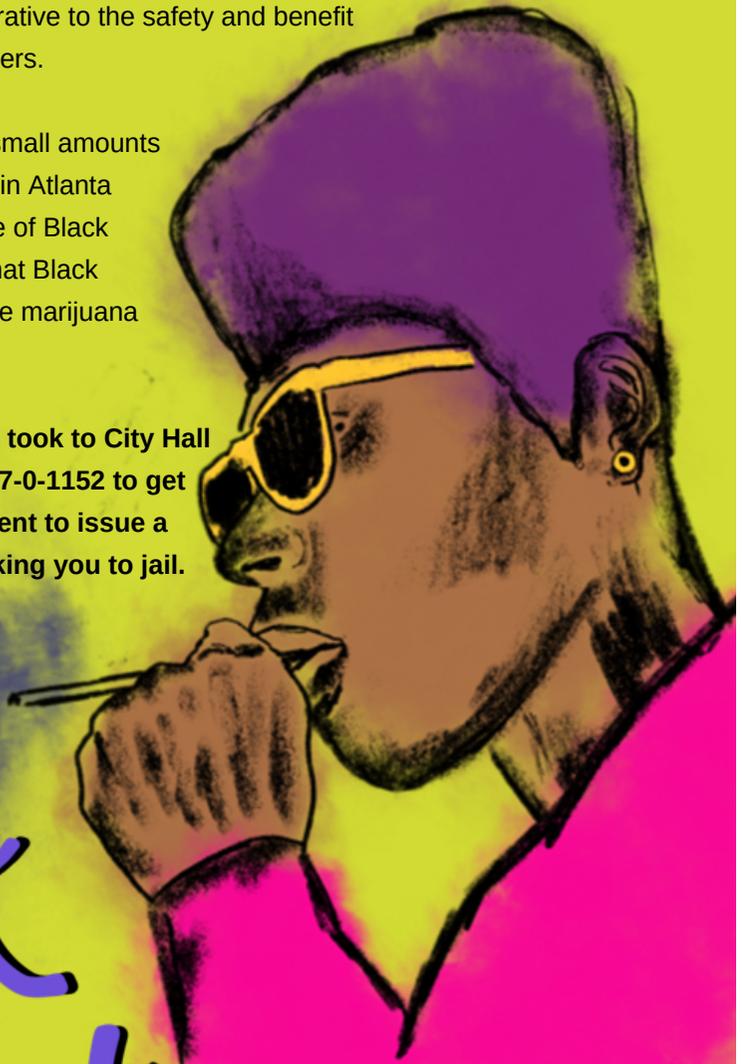
“Why should we have to wait? How many people have to die?” —DEAN STEED

# Ending Racially Based Marijuana Arrests in Atlanta

SNaP Co.'s next campaign in 2017 was to end antiblack-motivated arrests around the criminalization of small amount marijuana usage/ suspected usage. Racially-based marijuana arrests in Atlanta increases the risk of police violence and brutality - like the murder of DeAundre Phillips. Holding APD accountable for using the smell of marijuana as pretext for harassment, arrest, or murder is imperative to the safety and benefit of ALL community members.

Over 92% of arrests for small amounts of marijuana possession in Atlanta between 2014-2016 were of Black people despite the fact that Black and non-Black people use marijuana at the same rates.

On May 23rd, SNaP Co. took to City Hall to support Ordinance 17-0-1152 to get Atlanta Police Department to issue a \$75 ticket instead of taking you to jail.



“SPARK THAT BLAHRIE!”

-TONI-MICHELLE WILLIAMS

# # CLOSE <sup>the</sup> JAIL ATL

## Community Over Cages.



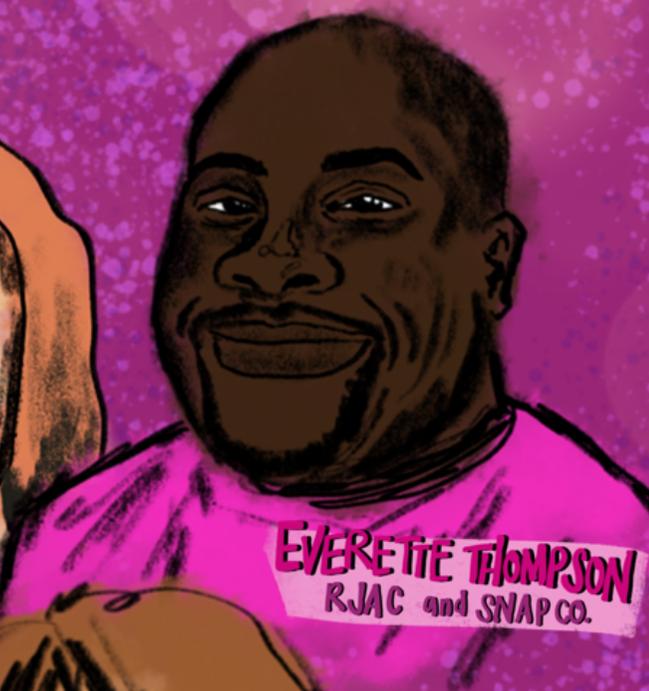
Women On the Rise, one of our anchor organizations, director Ms. Marilyn Winn, in partnership with Xochitl Bervera created the campaign to close the city jail, to divest from prisons and invest in community benefits and resources. For example, using some of the \$32 million currently allocated to operate the jail towards saving housing programs for people living with HIV, mental health support, housing, and/or re-entry services for women who are entering back into community.

SNaP Co. is helping to support this ongoing campaign and bring a trans and queer lens to the organizing strategy, trainings, base building and, most importantly cultivating a culture where transformation is an invitation to bask in freedom.

**Read, follow, and participate in the campaign at [ClosetheJailATL.com](http://ClosetheJailATL.com).**



**EVELYN THOMPSON**  
RJAC and SNAP CO.



**EVERETTE THOMPSON**  
RJAC and SNAP CO.



**JESS ST. LOUIS**  
RJAC and SNAP CO.



**OUR FOLKS  
WHO'VE TRANSITIONED**



**SHANELL MATHIS**  
RJAC, WOR, and SNAP CO.



**CHE J. LONG**  
PAD • PAD DESIGN TEAM



**KAMILA STAR-HARRIS**  
SNAP CO. OUTREACH

**BUT.♥  
MADE HUGE  
IMPACTS!**



**ALICIA  
NEWSOME**



**JUAN  
EVANS**



**SCOUT  
SCHULTZ**

# WHO WE'VE LOST



MONTE  
QARIO

REST IN  
POWER



CHERYL  
COURTNEY  
EVANS



KIWAN  
BENSON



# SHOUT OUT TO THE HOMIES:

**SNaP Co. members, interns, admirers,  
collaborators, the ATL organizing fam,  
the City Council members who  
championed our cause, our funders, the  
Gurlz, the Bois, the NB's, the Studs, the  
AG's, the Femmes, the Butch Queens, the  
Queers, & Beyond!**

**May we forever SNaP4BlackTransFutures  
& SNaP4Freedom!**



# SOLUTIONS NOT PUNISHMENT

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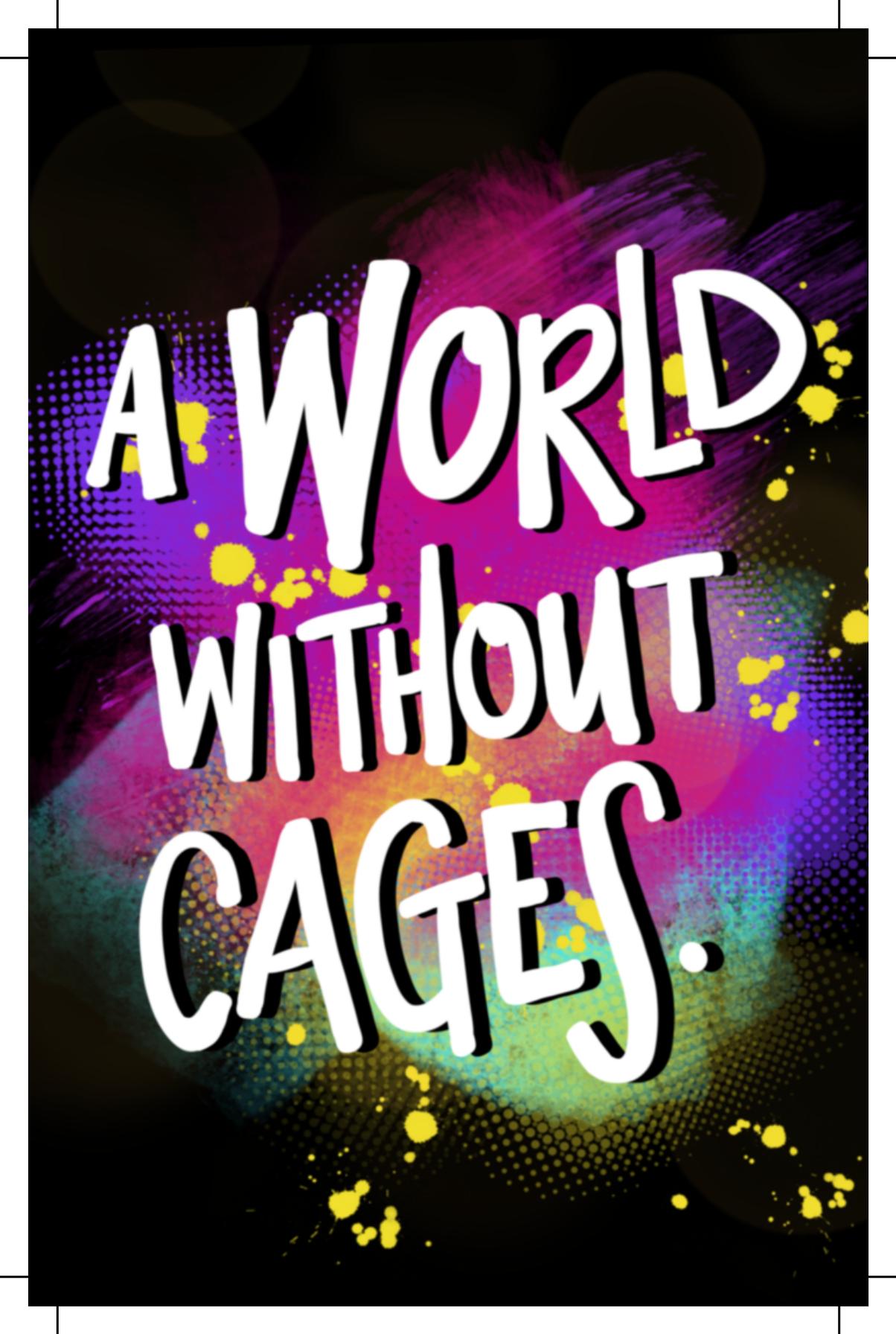


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**A WORLD  
WITHOUT  
CAGES.**