

RETHINKING
THE AMERICAN WAY OF
PUNISHMENT

REPORTING FELLOWS NOV 3-4, 2021

**Photos and bio info for some fellows were unavailable.*

(in Alphabetical order)

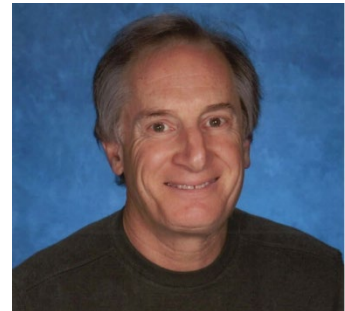


MICHAEL BARAJAS

Michael Barajas is a reporter for the *Texas Observer* who writes about mass incarceration, criminal punishment, police violence and other civil rights issues.

RON BERLER

Ron Berler is the author of “Raising the Curve: A Year Inside One of America’s 45,000* Failing Public Schools.” He has lectured on public education at a number of colleges, including Baylor and Wellesley. His work has appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*, *Wired*, *Men’s Journal*, *Outside* and on the op-ed pages of the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times* and *Chicago Tribune*, among other publications.



CHANDRA BOZELKO

Chandra Bozelko is a syndicated columnist, freelance opinion writer and thought leader. Her weekly column, *The Outlaw*, now appears in over 150 daily and weekly Gannett/Gatehouse Media papers through its syndication company More Content Now. Since its start in 2018, *The Outlaw* column has won awards from the National Federation of Press Women, the Connecticut Press Club, Connecticut Society of Professional Journalists (CTSPJ), The Illinois Press Association, The New Hampshire Press Association, and the Newswomen of New York. Chandra was the first inmate to write a regular newspaper column from behind bars, which *The New Haven Independent* named “Prison

Diaries.” It won the People’s Voice Webby Award in 2018 and 2019 for Personal Blog/Website, has won two awards from the National Society of Newspaper Columnists (2016 and 2018) and from the Alliance for Women in Media (2019). Her book of poetry entitled “*Up The River: An Anthology*” (BleakHouse, 2013) won American University’s Best Book Award in 2015.



ORALANDAR BRAND-WILLIAMS

A veteran Journalist of broadcast and print Media, Oralandar Brand-Williams covers Criminal Justice issues and the Wayne County court beat for The Detroit News. She has covered the Same-Sex Marriage federal court case that became part of the U.S. Supreme Court case that made Same-Sex marriage legal in the United States in 2015. Oralandar, a University of Michigan Journalism graduate, has extensively covered the issue of wrongful convictions in Michigan. She has followed the cases of several

Michigan residents who have been exonerated following years of efforts to prove their innocence. Oralandar's former beats have included Race Relations and Religion focusing on metro Detroit's Muslim community. She is a mentor for Report For America and is a former vice-president/Print for the Detroit chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists.

JONATHAN BULLINGTON

Jonathan Bullington is an investigative reporter with *The Courier Journal* in Louisville, Kentucky. A Chicago-area native, he previously worked at the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Times-Picayune* in New Orleans. His coverage of gun violence and criminal justice issues has won national and regional awards. In 2020, he was part of *The Courier Journal* team that won the Pulitzer Prize for breaking news for its coverage of former Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin's flurry of last-minute pardons and commutations.



EDDIE BURKHALTER

Eddie Burkhalter spent almost a decade at *The Anniston Star*, covering education, business, crime, politics for the daily newspaper and winning numerous Alabama Press Association awards. He was named a Poynter-Koch Media and Journalism fellow in 2019 and began covering state politics, climate change and criminal justice at *Alabama Political Reporter*, where he still works. His work has been picked up by *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, The Rachel Maddow Show, All in with Chris Hayes, and numerous other national news outlets.

CASSIE CHEW

After almost a decade as a Capitol Hill reporter, Cassie is pursuing explanatory reporting projects that explore policy impacting economic mobility. Cassie earned a master's degree in Journalism with a focus on business news and multimedia from the Medill School at Northwestern University. Recently she served as reporter in the Sojo.net Election 2020 pop-up newsroom. Her work this past year also can be seen in *The Crime Report*, *ABA Journal* and *Civil Eats*. She is a graduate of the Medill School of Journalism where she studied multimedia, feature and business news reporting and the University of Illinois where majored in English, Art and African-American literature along with study abroad in Guanajuato, Mexico.



MEGHANN CUNIFF

Meghann Cuniff is a reporter and editor for Law.com. She also freelances on legal affairs with bylines in the *ABA Journal*, *Los Angeles Magazine* and *Los Angeles Times Community News*. She's reported full time for *The Spokesman-Review*, *Idaho Statesman*, *Orange County Register* and the *Los Angeles Daily Journal*. She's a graduate of the University of Oregon.



MICAH DANNEY

Micah Danney is an associate editor at the *New York Daily News* and a freelance writer with a focus on criminal justice reporting. He has covered religion and violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories, police abuse in Alabama, and social issues and politics in New York and nationally.



SHAILA DEWAN

Shaila Dewan is the National Criminal Justice Editor for the *New York Times*. Shaila is from Houston, where she attended Rice University and began her career at the Houston Press, an investigative weekly. She joined the Times in 2000 and has covered a variety of beats including the NYPD, the South and the economy, always with a special affinity for criminal justice issues.



DANA DIFILIPPO

Dana DiFilippo is a reporter at *NJ Monitor*. Over a 26-year-career, she has worked in newspapers, web, magazines and radio, most recently in Philadelphia, where she spent 16 years at the *Philadelphia Daily News* and *Philly.com* and another two years at WHYY, Philly's NPR station. At both places, she covered breaking news and enterprise, centering on crime, corruption, and criminal justice reform. In her current job, she focuses on stories of statewide impact, covering the

New Jersey Legislature and state agencies and policies that affect residents from Cape May to Montague.

DAVID DUDLEY

David is a journalist, educator and playwright. A staffer at *St. George News* in Southern Utah, he's written for the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Zenger News*, the *Barton Chronicle*, *North Star Monthly*, and *The Northland Journal*, among others. He has covered various beats, including breaking news, courts and crimes, sports, and arts and entertainment. His writing on theatre appears regularly in *American Theatre Magazine*, *Contemporary Theatre Review (UK)*, *ConJunto (Cuba)*, and *HowlRound.com*. David's play, *800 Days of Solitude*, about the ways in which solitary confinement affects juveniles and their families, was awarded the 2018 Christian Moe playwriting prize. He earned a BFA with summa cum laude honors from DePaul University, and holds an MFA in playwriting from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. He was a CMCJ Southwest Justice Reporting Fellow earlier this year.





MAYA DUKMASOVA

Maya covers judges and the courts as a senior reporter at *Injustice Watch*. Before joining the organization in 2021 she was a senior staff writer at the *Chicago Reader*, where she began working in 2016 and covered housing, policing, city politics, and local social justice movements. She's the recipient of multiple local and national journalism awards in support and recognition of her work on the pitfalls of the criminal legal system. Most recently she was a commissioned writer in the

Illinois Humanities Envisioning Justice initiative and a fellow in the Logan Nonfiction Program for a multi-year investigation into the wrongful conviction claims of a paroled "cop killer."



MELANIE EVERSLEY

Melanie Eversley is a NYC-based contributing journalist to The Guardian, the National Association of Black Journalists' Black News and Views, National Geographic and more. She previously covered breaking news and race for USA Today, and was a Washington correspondent for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution (Cox Newspapers) and the Detroit Free Press (Knight-Ridder). In addition to the named news organizations, her work has also appeared on NBC

News, *Fortune*, the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Miami Herald*, the *New York Daily News*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and more. She has written about the impending closing of Rikers Island, coronavirus behind bars, HIV behind bars, and the deaths of several people in police custody or in jail, among other related topics. She is a graduate of Columbia Journalism School and Oberlin College.



ERIC FERKENHOFF

Eric Ferkenhoff is the Midwest Criminal Justice Reporter for USA TODAY Network. After 23 years in Chicago and five years in North Carolina, Ferkenhoff moved to his hometown of Kansas City last year to cover the field across the region. He has reported and written stories ranging from serials and spree killers to mass incarceration, claims of wrongful convictions and juvenile justice. He has written for the *Chicago Tribune*, *The Boston Globe*, *Time* and *The New York Times*. He has also taught at

Northwestern University and UNC-Chapel Hill. He is married with two teenage sons.

ROBERT GREENE

Robert Greene is an editorial writer at the Los Angeles Times, where he covers water, drought, criminal justice reform, policing, mental health and Los Angeles County government. He won the [Pulitzer Prize](#) for Editorial Writing in 2021 for work “that clearly and holistically examined the Los Angeles criminal justice system.”

Greene previously was a staff writer for the *L.A. Weekly* and a reporter and associate editor for the *Metropolitan News-Enterprise*. Prior to becoming a journalist, he was an attorney in Los Angeles. He is a resident of Highland Park and a graduate of USC and Georgetown University Law Center.



MEGAN GUZA

Megan Guza is an award-winning criminal justice and public health reporter for the *Tribune-Review* in Pittsburgh, where she covers a broad range of issues in Southwestern Pennsylvania, with the past six focused on the justice system. During that time, she’s covered the mass shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue, the shooting death of an unarmed Black teenager by a white suburban police officer, and protests and cries for racial justice sparked by the murder of George Floyd. Megan earned her bachelor’s degree in journalism from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and holds a master’s in communications from Point Park University. She is a three-time Guggenheim Symposium on Crime fellow and previously participated in the Dart Center’s Institute of Gun Violence.



SYLVIA A. HARVEY

Sylvia A. Harvey is an award-winning journalist, who reports at the intersection of race, class, policy, and incarceration.

Harvey's work has appeared in *Vox*, *Elle*, *Politico*, *The Nation*, *The Appeal*, *The Marshall Project*, *Imprint News*, *Colorlines*, *the Feminist Wire*, and AOL's *Bedford-Stuyvesant Patch*, where she served as the gentrification columnist, and more. Her commentary on race and the criminal justice system has been featured on NPR, WBAI, Cheddar News, Women's Media

Center Live with Robin Morgan, HuffPost Live, Radio Curious, and beyond. Harvey is the author of *The Shadow System: Mass Incarceration and the American Family*, a searing exposé on the effects of the mass incarceration crisis on families – including the 2.7 million American children who have a parent locked up.



STEVE JANSEN

Steve Jansen is a New Mexico-based investigative reporter who has won and been nominated for state, regional, and national awards, including the Best of the West, Maggie's Association of Black Journalists Awards. In 2013, his investigation into two crumbling dams in Houston was awarded first place for Best Print News/Feature Story in the Texas statewide Lone Star Awards competition. He's a former staff writer for the *Phoenix New Times* and *Houston Press*. He's currently a reporting fellow for the Center for Sustainable Journalism.



WISTA JEANNE JOHNSON

Wista Jeanne Johnson's deceased son spent much of his life in New York State prisons. Hence, she writes about criminal justice reform and hosts *In the Name of Justice* podcast. She has a BA in communications and media from the City College of New York. Johnson has held editorial positions with *Essence*, *Food and Wine*, *the Amsterdam News*, and *the Village Voice*. She's contributed to *POZ*, *Black Enterprise*, *Today's Black Woman*, *Beauty Digest*, *The City Sun*, and *St. Petersburg Times*. As a Ford Foundation Fellow,

Johnson reported on school health education in six cities nationwide.

NANA KARIKARI

Nana Karikari is an award-winning broadcast journalist, currently working as a national producer with Fox News Network, where she produces current affairs and original content for more than 180 Fox News affiliates nationwide. She is professionally affiliated to the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) and United Nations Correspondents Association (UNCA). These experiences have helped her develop a strong sense of confidence, character and team work. Throughout her career, she has gained extensive knowledge of global issues.



ANDREA KECKLEY

Andrea Keckley is an Editor at D.C. Witness, a publication dedicated to covering Washington, DC's criminal justice system. Earlier she spent one year as D.C. Witness' Assistant Editor through the Poynter-Koch Media and Journalism Fellowship. Andrea moved to DC after earning her B.A. in Journalism from Stony Brook University. Working with D.C. Witness, Andrea reports, "has caused me to develop a strong enthusiasm towards covering the criminal justice system."

APRIL S. KELLEY

April S. Kelley is an independent freelance journalist, who has written for several local newspapers throughout the US South. She has reported on criminal justice, social justice, education and music for over a decade.





CARSON KESSLER

Carson Kessler is currently a Lorana Sullivan Investigative Business Reporting Fellow at ProPublica based in New York City. She graduated from New York University in 2015 with a B.A. in Journalism and English. From there, she traveled a little further uptown to attend Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, where she received her Master's in Journalism and specialized in investigative techniques. Upon graduation, she was awarded the Pulitzer Traveling Fellowship, given to the top four graduates in the program to travel and report abroad. Her writing can be found in both magazines and on the web in/at

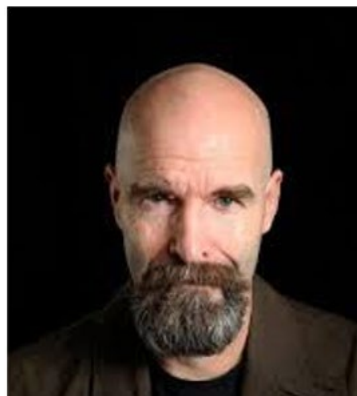
THE CITY, Fortune, VICE, Marie Claire, Our Town NY, and The Brooklyn Ink.



SONALI KOLHATKAR

Sonali Kolhatkar joined YES! in summer 2021 as Racial Justice Editor, building on a long and decorated career in broadcast and print journalism. She is the host and creator of Rising Up with Sonali, a nationally syndicated television and radio program airing on Free Speech TV and dozens of independent and community radio stations. She is also a writing fellow with Independent Media Institute, and was previously a weekly columnist for Truthdig.com. She is the author of *Bleeding Afghanistan: Washington, Warlords, and the Propaganda of Silence*, and the co-director of the nonprofit group, Afghan Women's Mission. She has a Master's in Astronomy from the University of Hawai'i, and two undergraduate degrees in Physics and

Astronomy from the University of Texas at Austin. Sonali reflects on "My Journey From Astrophysicist to Radio Host" in her 2014 [TEDx talk](#) of the same name.



TRISTRAM KORTEN

Tristram Korten is a freelance journalist and investigative reporter who covers the criminal justice system and the environment, among other topic areas. His work has appeared in national magazines such as *GQ*, *Smithsonian*, and *The Atlantic Monthly*, as well as newspapers including the *Washington Post* and *The Miami Herald*. His radio work has been featured on PRI's *The World*, and NPR's *Here and Now*. He is the former editor of the Florida Center for Investigative Reporting, and the author of the 2018 book "Into The Storm" (Ballantine/Random House).

KIRA LERNER

Kira Lerner has been a senior news editor at PBS NewsHour where she edits reporting on politics and criminal justice reform issues. She has edited news coverage for national outlets including PBS Newshour and Votebeat. As a reporter covering criminal justice reform, her work has exposed unethical conditions in local jails and drawn attention to efforts to make it harder for people with felony convictions to cast ballots. In April 2019, her reporting led the city of Chicago to suspend the use of technology that could listen and record children on ankle monitors without their consent.



RAINA LIPSITZ

Raina Lipsitz has written about gender, politics, and culture for a variety of publications. Her forthcoming book, *The Rise of a New Left: How Young Radicals Are Shaping the Future of American Politics*, will be out from Verso Books in 2022



HARRISON MALKIN

Harrison Malkin is an executive assistant for Rumble Media. He's also a culture writer with bylines in publications like USA Today, Weedmaps, Tablet Magazine, Yahoo, and Sports Illustrated. He's currently based in the New York area. He's founding editor of *Ongoing*—an independent platform for left politics and culture—which focuses on complex issues, such as narrative colonization in food, the role of capitalism in shaping the jazz canon, as well as the beauty and selfishness of tavel. Malkin has contributed to *USA Today*, *Yahoo*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *SLAM Magazine*.



CATHERINE MATAICIC

Catherine Maticic is an online editor at *Science* magazine, where she specializes in linguistics and the social sciences. She has written on numerous criminal justice-related topics, including algorithmic risk assessment and the utility of cash bail.

AARON MORRISON

Aaron Morrison is a national writer for *The Associated Press*, where he writes extensively about race, civil rights, criminal justice reform and grassroots social movements. He is also an adjunct lecturer at the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism in New York City, where he is teaching a new course about reporting on race and ethnicity. His work has also appeared in *The Appeal*, a nonprofit criminal justice news outlet covering the biggest drivers of mass incarceration; *Mic*, where he was a video correspondent and senior writer; and *The Record* newspaper, in Bergen County, New Jersey.



JAMES MUÑOZ

James Muñoz has worked in seven Texas television newsrooms since 1998 including KVII Amarillo, KIII Corpus Christi, KTRE Lufkin, KSAN San Angelo, KENS San Antonio, and KWES Midland. He currently serves as Executive News

Director and news anchor on Newscenter25 at 5 p.m. Muñoz is

a graduate of Texas Tech University and author of a memoir, *Some Monument to Last*. The book documents his interview with Walter Cronkite in 2000. Muñoz has strong ties to Texas. His third great-grandfather, James Murray Doughty, was a co-founder of the City of Rockport, the first superintendent of the King Ranch and Sheriff of Refugio County. Another ancestor, John Moses, came to Texas in 1847 and wrote a series of columns for the San Antonio Express-News from 1887 to 1890 under the pseudonym Sesom.



M.L. NESTEL

M.L. Nestel is an award-winning writer/editor/filmmaker. In his nearly two-decade career, M.L. has published work at several titles including: *The Sun*, *Newsweek*, *The Guardian*, *ABC News*, *The Daily Beast*, *Vocativ*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily*, *The New York Post*, *The New York Daily News*, *BoxOffice* *magazine*, *SOMA*, and *Newsday* amongst others. He also

marshaled the development department at Fountainhead Films. He splits time between Los Angeles and New York City with his wife and two young children.

OSAGIE OKORUWA

Osagie Okoruwa is a documentary filmmaker with a passion for investigative reporting, social justice, public service and human rights advocacy. Osagie uses his experience as a filmmaker to tell the hard, under-explored, and vital stories of our time. Osagie has spent the last seven years documenting several incidents of wrongful convictions. Utilizing the stories from the victims and their families, Osagie has produced a documentary film series titled: *The Innocent Convicts*. As the Founder/Director of The Innocent Convicts organization, Osagie oversees investigations into the judicial system and currently heads a nationwide campaign to abolish wrongful imprisonment, through film presentations and civic education.



MADISON PAULY

Madison Pauly is a California-based reporter at *Mother Jones*, where she specializes in stories about sexual violence, prisons and policing. Her writing has also appeared in *BuzzFeed News* and *Hopes&Fears* magazine, and been republished or aggregated by outlets including NPR's *Here & Now*, *STAT*, *Prison Legal News*, *Longform*, the *Cut*, and the *Daily Beast*. Madison's

reporting has prompted changes in how the state of California tracks late-night jail releases; exposed mishandling of sexual harassment allegations at the University of Rochester; and motivated the US Commission on Civil Rights to call for an investigation into abusive labor practices in immigration detention centers. Her feature on a flawed, three-decade police investigation into a serial rapist in Minneapolis, "When Your Rape Doesn't Count," was a finalist for a 2020 Dart Award for Excellence in Coverage of Trauma.



KAILA PHILO

Kaila Philo is a journalist based in Washington, D.C. She writes about politics, policy, and law. She currently works as the government and political institutions reporter for a [new DC-based media start-up](#). Her work has been published in *Politico*, *The New Republic*, *Washington Monthly*, *Washingtonian Magazine*, *Vice News*, *The Appeal*, *Jewish Currents*, *The Baffler*, and *The Atlantic*, where she worked as an editorial fellow from 2019 to 2020.

LAUREN MEREDITH POTEAT

Lauren Poteat is an award-winning journalist and author who has worked for media outlets including the *AFRO American Newspaper*, the National Newspaper Publishers Association, PG CTV News and the *Washington Informer* where she garnered a Dateline Award through the Society of Professional Journalists. She served as the Washington Correspondent for the *National Newspaper Publishers Association* (NNPA), which also produces *Black Press USA*. Lauren also served as a general assignment reporter for the *AFRO-American Newspaper* located in D.C. and the *Washington Informer*, where she was awarded with a “Dateline Award” and developed her own weekly column entitled “Africa Now,” that focused on international and domestic affairs happening within the continent. In addition to print journalism, Lauren also serves a general assignment field reporter for PG-CTV, located in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Lauren was recently awarded a fellowship, through the Ida B. Wells Society, to this year’s Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE) national convention in Houston and was given an “Emerging Leaders Award” from the Washington Women’s Public Relation Society.



KEATON ROSS

Keaton Ross has covered prison conditions and criminal justice issues for Oklahoma Watch since June 2020. Over the past sixteen months, Ross has reported on the consequences of the state’s [prison staffing shortage](#), the state’s [ineffectiveness to control COVID-19 behind bars](#) and how Oklahoma is an [especially difficult place](#) to raise a post-conviction innocence claim. Ross is an April 2020 graduate of Oklahoma Christian University.



CAITLIN SCHMIDT

Caitlin Schmidt is the *Arizona Daily Star's* solutions reporter, covering people and groups working to solve social problems, fill gaps and break down barriers in equity. Since graduating from the University of Arizona in 2014, Schmidt has worked on the *Star's* public safety, local government and sports desks, and has written dozens of stories about criminal justice reform efforts and gender-based violence within the University of Arizona athletic department. She serves on the boards of the Arizona

Press Club and Association for Women in Sports Media and is a former Solutions Journalism Network, John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Poynter fellow. She's a two-time winner of the Arizona Press Club's Sledgehammer Award for pursuit of information and a co-winner of the 2019 National Sports Media Association Arizona Sportswriter of the Year award.



GABBRIEL SCHIVONE

Robert B. Silvers grantee is a freelance investigative reporter who focuses on illuminating the dark side of public policy, from policing to gun violence to privatized education. Most recently, their unique reporting into the leftist radicalization of police forces, historically to the present, has been gaining interest from editors and journalism foundation granters. Gabbriel is now working on a book of narrative nonfiction. When Gabbriel isn't writing, you can find them on the soccer field for weekly queer-run pickup games, as well as playing on

city league and intramural teams.

DYLAN SMITH

Dylan Smith is the Editor and Publisher of *TucsonSentinel.com*, a pioneering nonprofit local independent online news organization. He was the founding Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Local Independent Online News Publishers (LION Publishers), organizing a group of publishers of nearly 300 local news websites across the country. He is a member of Investigative Reporters and Editors, the Society of Professional Journalists, and the president of the Arizona Press Club. He's won numerous state and national awards and accolades, including the Sledgehammer Award from the Arizona Press Club, and is a Brechner Reporting Fellow at the Brechner Center for Freedom of Information at the University of Florida. An experienced designer and programmer, he served as the only journalist to be an Invited Expert on the World Wide Web Consortium's HTML Working Group, helping write the latest specification for the language that runs the Internet.

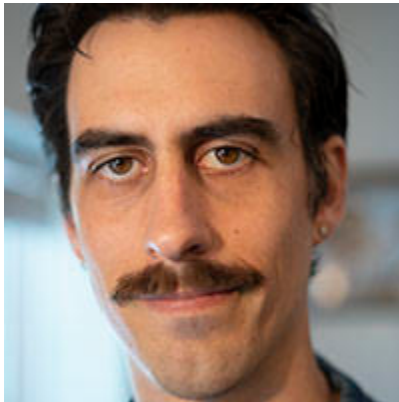




JAMIE THOMPSON

Jamie Thompson is a freelance writer based in Bethesda, MD. A graduate of the Columbia School of Journalism, she has spent the past 20 years writing for newspapers and magazines, including the *Dallas Morning News*, *Politico*, *Tampa Bay Times*, *Texas Monthly* and the *Washington Post*. Jamie recently completed her first book about race and policing, Standoff: Race, Policing, and a Deadly Assault That Gripped a Nation. He is currently working on on

stories about the tension between mass incarceration and rising crime rates. (Particularly how some high profile police chiefs keep emphasizing that people out on bail or parole are contributing to the current rise in crime.)



JORDAN WILKIE

Jordan Wilkie is a staff reporter and Report for America corps member with *Carolina Public Press*. In 2018, Jordan graduated with a masters' in journalism from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Previously, he worked as an administrator and instructor of educational programming in prisons and juvenile detentions in Oregon. He lives in Durham County and reports on election integrity, open government and civil liberties for Carolina Public Press.



JANAE WILLIAMS

JaNae Williams is a reporter at *The Oklahoman*. She was the 2020 Oklahoma Collegiate Media Association Journalist of the Year and is a graduate of the University of Central Oklahoma. Since starting at the Oklahoman in April she has been covering county government, homelessness and general assignment beats. Much of her reporting has focused on the Oklahoma County Jail and the trust that oversees it.

