

ACLU NEWS

BECAUSE FREEDOM CAN'T PROTECT ITSELF



SOLITARY AT EL PUEBLO

ACLU of Colorado Fights to End Solitary Confinement of Children and the Mentally Ill

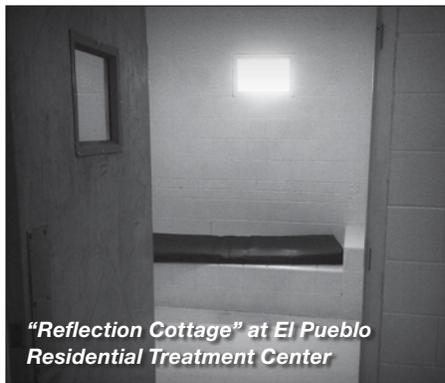
El Pueblo Residential Treatment Center is a facility ostensibly dedicated to helping at-risk children, many of whom have developmental and mental disabilities. Yet despite existing state laws, court decisions, and widely-accepted standards for the treatment of troubled youth, El Pueblo routinely forced children into solitary confinement for days and even weeks at a time in rooms they called “reflection cottages.” In reality, the “cottages” were nothing more than bare concrete rooms where teens in need of treatment and care were forced to spend hours on end reliving the past trauma that brought them to the facility.

While in the “reflection cottages,” children were denied socialization and exercise. Each child slept on a thin camping pad and had to ask permission to leave the cottage to use the bathroom.

When the ACLU of Colorado learned about the “reflection cottages” at El Pueblo, we immediately took action. ACLU lawyers contacted the Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS) and demanded that they end the illegal use of solitary confinement at the facility. We then initiated a media campaign resulting in widespread local coverage to put pressure on El Pueblo and DHS to quickly end the practice.

Less than a month after our initial contact with DHS, it released the results of an official investigation confirming the ACLU’s claims. It ordered El Pueblo to suspend operation of the “reflection cottages” until a clinical and educational foundation for their use is developed and approved by the agency.

Warehousing vulnerable populations in long-term solitary confinement is inhu-



“Reflection Cottage” at El Pueblo Residential Treatment Center

mane and can lead to serious consequences for public safety.

According to a new ACLU report, more than half of the prisoners who are currently housed in solitary confinement in Colorado’s prisons have significant mental health needs.

Through legislative campaigns and legal action, and by working closely with Colorado’s new Department of Corrections Director, the ACLU of Colorado is dedicated to ending solitary confinement, starting with children and the seriously mentally ill.

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Nathan Woodliff-Stanley

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SPEAKERS BUREAU

**Request an ACLU Speaker for
your next meeting, event, or
gathering.**

The ACLU Speakers’ Bureau gives free presentations to students, community groups, service organizations, professional associations and a variety of other groups. The presentation topics are as current as today’s headlines. Our speakers are lawyers, educators, members of the ACLU Board of Directors and other experts in civil liberties. Speakers talk about current cases and controversies or about the general work and history of the ACLU. To request a speaker, contact info@aclu-co.org.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR >>

LETTER FROM NATHAN WOODLIFF-STANLEY

Is America making progress on civil liberties or moving backwards? Both, I would say. This newsletter is filled with examples of civil liberties successes by the ACLU of Colorado in recent months—in the legislature, the courts and the public arena. We have seen advances on freedom of speech, civil unions, due process, drug laws, immigration, voting rights, stopping discrimination, solitary confinement and much more. Nationally, we are seeing an historic shift in public opinion in favor of marriage equality, and there is at least a chance that national immigration reform is on its way.

At the same time, we are learning more every day about the growth of a pervasive surveillance state and drone attacks on American citizens in the name of national security, and we are facing unprecedented threats to privacy and Fourth Amendment rights. We have a long way to go toward equal pay, racial justice, reproductive freedom, privacy in an electronic age, ending the highest rates of incarceration in the world and protecting religious freedom while stopping discrimination in the name of religion. Although the first execution in 15 years in Colorado was halted, we have not yet ended the death penalty in our state.

We have come as far as we have thanks to engaged members and supporters, a strong nationwide ACLU network and the best ACLU staff and volunteer leadership I could ask for here in Colorado. When you support the ACLU, you get our best as we fight relentlessly for your civil rights and civil liberties.

—Nathan Woodliff-Stanley



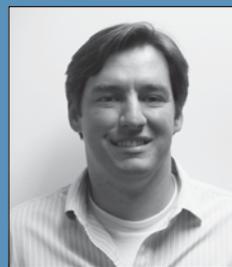
IS AMERICAN MOVING FORWARD ON CIVIL LIBERTIES OR MOVING BACKWARDS? BOTH...



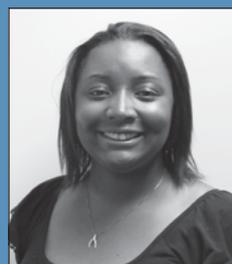
WELCOME

MEET THE NEW MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM

JOHN KRIEGER is our new Director of Communications and Outreach. Prior to the ACLU of Colorado, he was a staff attorney, lobbyist, and Communications Director for the United States Public Interest Research Group in Washington D.C., where he directed a national grassroots campaign to create the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. He studied journalism and public relations at Flagler College and earned his law degree from the University of Richmond.



JESSICA HOWARD is our new Legal Assistant. Jessica received her Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Colorado and is currently pursuing her Certificate in Paralegal Studies. Jessica worked as the Legal Intern for Colorado Legal Services in 2009. She previously worked as the Legislative Intern for Colorado State Senator Gail Schwartz.



CHAPTER NEWS

The **Boulder County Chapter** is working with County election officials to revise their policies for polling places after a Catholic Church last November included an anti-abortion display that was intimidating to voters.

The **Colorado Springs Chapter** will host an outdoor forum on July 23rd to examine emerging privacy battles.

The **Northern Colorado Chapter** is planning a roundtable for this fall with panelists from law enforcement, the county jail, and the community titled "Criminalizing the Mentally Ill, Is Jail the Answer?"

ACLU AROUND COLORADO >>

ACLU IN THE COURTS

POLICE BRUTALITY // ACLU of Colorado attorneys negotiated a settlement of over \$1 million with the Colorado State Patrol on behalf of the family of Jason Alan Kemp, an unarmed Grand Junction resident who was shot and killed in 2010 when he refused to allow state troopers into his home without a warrant. The settlement also requires the State Patrol to conduct training for all current and future officers on the Fourth Amendment and limits on the use of force.



FIRST AMENDMENT // The ACLU defended the First Amendment rights of Colorado bookstores and newsstands by obtaining a federal court order blocking a new Colorado law that would have required retailers to hide marijuana-related magazines behind the counter.

DEATH PENALTY // To encourage public debate about Colorado's use of the death penalty, the ACLU filed a lawsuit to uncover the exact procedures and drugs that would be used to carry out an execution, after public access to those records were denied by prison officials.

SCHOOL VOUCHERS // In a case that began with an ACLU trial court victory

in 2011, we recently asked the Colorado Supreme Court to declare that a Douglas County School District's voucher program illegally diverts taxpayer money to private religious schools, in violation of the Colorado Constitution.

LGBT RIGHTS // ACLU clients Dave Mullins and Charlie Craig filed a complaint with the Colorado Civil Rights Division after they and several other same-sex couples were denied service by the Masterpiece Cake Shop in Lakewood. An investigation by the state confirmed that the bakery's discriminatory policies violate state law. The Attorney General's office has filed formal charges against its owners.

ACLU IN THE COMMUNITY

TWO AMERICANS FILM SCREENING // Last May, we hosted a screening at Su Teatro Cultural and Performing Arts Center of *Two Americans*, a documentary film about a mixed-status Arizona family pulled apart by Sheriff Joe Arpaio. The filmmakers and the Figueroa family traveled from Arizona for the event, which was attended by a diverse standing room only audience. At the screening we collected more than 250 postcards encouraging Colorado's Senators to support comprehensive immigration reform.



2013 PRIDEFEST // At PrideFest celebrations, we collected more than 500 photos of couples and families thanking legislators for passing civil unions. We combined the photos into a slideshow and delivered it to the lawmakers who helped make this important step toward marriage equality a reality.

STANDING UP FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM // ACLU of Colorado Executive Director Nathan Woodliff-Stanley, an ordained Unitarian Minister, gave recent sermons on religious liberty in Durango and Carbondale and was the keynote speaker at the graduation ceremony for the Western Peace Officers Academy.

ACLU AT THE CAPITOL

The 2013 legislative session was truly historic for the ACLU of Colorado, with several major victories for civil liberties. Here are our top ten achievements from the session.

1. After seven hard-fought years, we won civil unions in Colorado, moving us one step closer to equality for same-sex couples.
2. Gov. Hickenlooper signed ACLU-backed legislation fixing several problems in our voting system and adding same-day voter registration.
3. The ACLU of Colorado helped repeal a controversial racial profiling law requiring law enforcement to report those suspected of being here illegally to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.
4. Our legislative team defeated a bill that would have required anyone convicted of simple misdemeanors to submit DNA to the government.
5. We helped toughen Colorado's anti-discrimination laws by giving wronged workers the ability to recover lost wages.
6. The right to legal representation for individuals who are facing jail time was strengthened, through a bill supported by the ACLU.
7. We helped pass legislation to give the wrongfully incarcerated more resources to rebuild their lives.
8. Juvenile delinquency records are now easier to expunge and drug sentencing laws were reformed to focus more on treatment and rehabilitation rather than incarceration.
9. New ACLU-backed privacy laws ensure that employers cannot access the social network sites of their employees and potential hires.
10. A new state law supported by the ACLU guarantees in-state tuition for Colorado high school graduates regardless of their immigration status.

CONGRATULATIONS

ACLU OF COLORADO HONORS TRAILBLAZERS OF LIBERTY

This year's honorees at the Carle Whitehead Bill of Rights Dinner on Friday, October 11.



REP. CLAIRE LEVY will receive the Carle Whitehead Memorial Award for her lifetime work as a lawyer and a legislator defending and preserving civil rights and civil liberties.



KEVIN PAUL, whose career of legal advocacy for reproductive rights has positively impacted hundreds of thousands of men, women and teens throughout the state, will receive the Edward Sherman award.



KEVIN WILLIAMS, who directs the Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition (CCDC) Legal Program, which has successfully litigated hundreds of disability rights cases, will receive the Ralph L. Carr Award.



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SAVE THE DATE >>

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2013

Carle Whitehead Bill of Rights Dinner

The Curtis Hotel
1405 Curtis Street, Denver

Join us in celebrating our victories and fueling our inspiration to continue the critical work of defending and preserving civil rights and civil liberties for all. The program will feature an inspiring speaker and will highlight the extraordinary work of our honorees, Claire Levy, Kevin Paul and Kevin Williams. The doors open for the cocktail hour at 5:30 pm.

For sponsorship and ticket information visit aclu-co.org/event/carle-whitehead-bill-of-rights-dinner