

# Coalition for Juvenile Justice National Awards



June 28, 2018  
Washington, DC



*Give light and people will find the way.*

*- Ella Baker*

Each year, Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) leaders, members, and allies gather to recognize and celebrate individuals who exemplify excellence, dedication, and commitment to CJJ's core mission to reform the juvenile justice system and improve the lives of children, families, and communities nationwide. CJJ hopes these outstanding individuals inspire others to serve their communities with the same distinction.



# Spirit of Youth Award

**CJJ's 2018 Spirit of Youth Award is presented to Ms. Amanda Clifford of California for her personal triumphs, professional achievements, and extraordinary service to others.**

The Spirit of Youth Award is given annually by CJJ to recognize and celebrate a young adult, under the age of 28, who made great strides after involvement with the juvenile justice system, overcame personal obstacles, and is now making significant contributions to society.

Amanda Clifford embodies the true essence of a Spirit of Youth awardee. Ms. Clifford was 17 years old when she came in contact with the juvenile justice system. She spent two months in Santa Clara's juvenile hall before being transferred to the adult system, where she served nearly two years in the maximum security wing. After being released from custody, Ms. Clifford obtained her Bachelor of Science in Sociology and Political Science from West Valley College. She graduated with honors, and also founded and served as president of the Administration of Justice Club on her campus.



In Ms. Clifford's second year of college, she decided she wanted to use her lived-experiences to address the serious consequences of youth involved in the criminal justice system. In July 2017, Ms. Clifford accepted a Policy Associate position at Bill Wilson Center, a local non-profit that specializes in serving youth experiencing homelessness. In her short time there, Ms. Clifford has been recognized by the CEO for her outstanding accomplishments advocating for youth in Washington D.C. and was recognized as one of 2017's Phenomenal Women by a local non-profit, Building Peaceful Families.

Amanda is on a path to make serious improvements to the juvenile justice system. In her position at Bill Wilson Center, Ms. Clifford serves on several committees offering insight from her lived-experiences to shape federal, state and local policies for youth. One of her most notable accomplishments is her contribution to "Collaborating for Change," a CJJ initiative that brings together stakeholders from multiple disciplines to ensure that young people are not criminalized for experiencing homelessness, and that if they do come in contact with the system that they exit to safe and stable housing. Ms. Clifford's recommendations to the group have resulted in policy considerations related to how 18 to 24 year-old youth are detained, ensuring life-skills training for youth incarcerated during adolescence and support for youth-centric probation requirements, ensuring the right to complete high school, and receiving support to enroll in college. Amanda additionally advocates that all youth with lived experiences be treated as experts with unique qualities valuable to shaping policy.

Amanda is currently attending graduate school to obtain an MA in Public Policy and Administration and strengthen her advocacy skills for disadvantaged youth. She also plans to continue serving on local collaborative committees and sharing her lived-experiences with policymakers.

*The Spirit of Youth award, overseen by the CJJ National Youth Committee, provides an important opportunity to learn from a young person's direct experience about the hard work and dedication it takes to build a better life, and how those in the juvenile justice system and at the community level can help.*

# Tony Gobar Outstanding Juvenile Justice Specialist Award

**CJJ's 2018 Tony Gobar Outstanding National Juvenile Justice Specialist Award is presented to Jennifer Withrow of Kentucky for her leadership through service and for reminding us all that every child is indeed special.**

With this award, CJJ recognizes an individual that has served as a State Juvenile Justice Specialist in the last five years who exemplifies excellence in service to others, is dedicated to improving the juvenile justice system, and demonstrates compassion and concern.

Jennifer G. Withrow fully embodies the Tony Gobar Outstanding Juvenile Justice (JJ) Specialist Award. Mrs. Withrow earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Transylvania University in 1996 and her Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Kentucky in 2001. Ms. Withrow has worked at Kentucky's Department of Juvenile Justice for the past three years as the Juvenile Justice Specialist, managing Title II formula grant funding, and was recently promoted to the agency's branch manager of federal grant programs. Additionally, she serves as a subject matter expert reviewer for the Kentucky Justice Cabinet for the Violence Against Women Act and Victims of Crime Act grant applications.



Prior to her position at Kentucky's Department of Juvenile Justice, she was a Program Administrator for the Kentucky Children's Advocacy Center grants through the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Her professional experiences give her a comprehensive view of interagency collaboration, as she has worked in the areas of juvenile justice, disabilities, adoptions, child welfare, sexual assault and domestic abuse prevention, and adult criminal justice.

Her professional experiences include leading the process to create statutory changes in the independent adoption process in Kentucky and assisting in developing an initiative to integrate Social Workers into Kentucky's Public Defender system to provide diversionary treatment and other alternatives to incarceration for adults and youth. Mrs. Withrow also led the effort to



*This award is named for Tony Gobar, a longtime Juvenile Justice Specialist from Mississippi. He was honored posthumously by CJJ in 2004 for his exemplary service in the field of juvenile justice reform. He was known for his selflessness, his dedication to his community, and his unceasing compassion for youth.*

*We will be known forever by the tracks we leave.*

*- Dakota Proverb*

implement Reentry programs for adults and youth.

She is a Kentucky Colonel, the highest title of honor that can be bestowed by the Governor of Kentucky, and was named Social Work Practitioner of the Year by Spalding University in 2016. She is an adjunct professor of Social Work at Asbury University as well as the University of Kentucky. Ms. Withrow serves on several boards and advisory councils including Lexington Kentucky's Anti-Human Trafficking Taskforce, Asbury University's Social Work Advisory Board, Project SAFE (Safety and Accessibility for Everyone) Executive Board, Kentucky Partnership for Families and Children's board, and on the Kentucky Trauma Informed Care Statewide Taskforce. She is also a Trauma Informed Care trainer. She is currently collaborating with multiple state organizations and national experts to develop and promote innovative practices within the juvenile justice system.

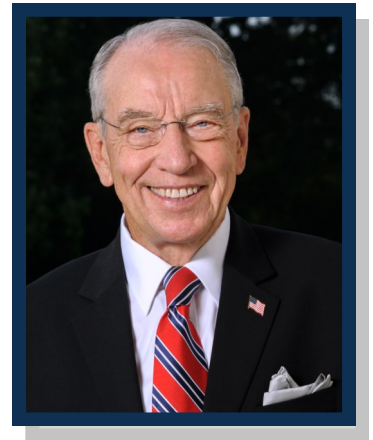
# A.L. Carlisle Child Advocacy Award

**The 2018 A.L. Carlisle Child Advocacy Award is presented to Senator Chuck Grassley for being a long-time champion of youth, with courage, compassion, and commitment.**

This award is presented annually by CJJ to an individual who makes outstanding contributions to youth, the improvement of juvenile justice, and in the broader area of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention.

Senator Chuck Grassley of Iowa is a longtime advocate of juvenile justice reform, helping lead the effort to reauthorize the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP Act) for the last three Congresses.

Most recently, on April 5, 2017, Senator Grassley, along with Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), introduced the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2017 (JJDP Act), which updates and strengthens protections for young people in our juvenile justice system and reauthorizes federal funding for key juvenile justice programs. The bill passed the Senate on August 1, 2017.



"Youngsters who encounter the juvenile justice system should be treated safely, fairly and in a manner that encourages greater respect for the law. The federal juvenile justice program helps states achieve these fundamental goals, but the program hasn't been updated in more than a decade," Grassley said in a joint press release with Senator Whitehouse on the day of the bill's passage in the Senate.

CJJ applauds Senator Grassley's hard work and dedication to youth in the justice system. The Senate legislation builds upon national standards by improving treatment for youth with mental illness and substance abuse issues; encouraging states to make efforts to identify, report and reduce racial and ethnic disparities for youth who enter the juvenile justice system; supporting alternatives to incarceration, such as problem-solving courts; and strengthening oversight of the federal grant program and holding states accountable for meeting core grant requirements to protect the safety of minors in the justice system.



*This award is named in honor of A.L. Carlisle, CJJ's founding force. She was a volunteer activist who strived to ensure that the nation's most troubled and vulnerable children would have secure futures. She served as the first CJJ National Chair and Northeast Regional Chair from 1979 through 1987. The saying goes that, in its formative years, "The national coalition was run out of A.L.'s kitchen in Maine!"*

*Nothing you do for children is ever wasted.*

*- Garrison Keillor*

Senator Grassley has served as one of Iowa's U.S. Senators since 1981. He holds the record for the longest consecutive voting streak of any senator in the history of the country. He has previously chaired the Senate Finance Committee and has served as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee since 2015.

Senator Grassley is a lifelong proponent of transparency, and has advocated that a reauthorized JJDPa will ensure states are better able to remain in compliance and provide at-risk youth with the best opportunity to live productive, flourishing lives. Recognizing that children are not a one-party issue, Senator Grassley has worked to ensure JJDPa reauthorization is a bipartisan initiative at every step of the way. As a champion of fiscal responsibility, Grassley's efforts have truly demonstrated the importance of investing in our young people's futures. Today, we honor him for his tireless efforts to reform the juvenile justice system and his commitment to serving all of America's youth.



1319 F Street NW, Suite 402  
Washington, DC 20004  
P: 202.467.0864  
F: 202.887.0738

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