

AVENUES FOR JUSTICE

Andrew Glover Youth Program

One of Brian's digital literacy students and participants, Moses, is currently in a residential drug treatment program which requires that all residents stay indoors. Moses, like most of our young people, has a weary perception of law enforcement. For years, Moses has felt that he was targeted because of the color of his skin. He knows that if not for the residential treatment program, he would be out in the streets protesting, despite the imminent risk of arrest.

AFJ Court Advocate Brian Stanley, is no stranger to police brutality, harassment, and discrimination. Growing up as a young black man in Brooklyn's East New York, Brian was unlawfully stopped multiple times as a teen. Brian recalls constantly having his pockets searched, glasses smashed, and one scary day, guns drawn on him as he took out the trash at his apartment. He was only 15 at the time of that incident.

Given the possibility of new arrests, AFJ Court Advocates are adamant that their participants do not participate in the demonstrations against police brutality. While Brian has experienced police harassment and deeply wants to show solidarity with his city, he wants to set the example for his participants by staying at home.

Moses' progress with AFJ has been remarkable. When Moses started, he was defiant, reserved and had relationship issues with his single mother. For weeks, he struggled to comply with AFJ's mandates and curfew. Once he realized that no matter how hard he tried to push Brian, his mother, and the program away, no one was going to give up on him, he started chipping away at his issues.

Moses' favorite workshop was Art Therapy, where he was able to express a lot of his pent up emotions and feelings without having to verbalize them. The instructor was really able to work with and reach Moses in a way no one else had been able to.

The last stage in Moses's recovery was residential drug treatment which gave him the much need rigid structure. With no father at home and a mother who works 60 hour work weeks, Moses never had any structure in the home. Moses went from failing every class to not only passing, but having teachers reach out to AFJ to notify them about how inspired they are by Moses' progress. Now, Moses is thinking about his career instead of the streets.

Moses and his mother are now closer than ever. Moses is one of the 20+ participants enrolled in AFJ's digital literacy class! We are thrilled to help position Moses for a brighter future once this pandemic is over.