



CARE NOT COPS

MENTAL HEALTH CARE, NOT
POLICING!

CAMPAIGN HISTORY

2013-2014

In late 2013 the Critical Resistance Portland chapter was formed. Leadership in the chapter at the time was comprised of nearly entirely all queer and trans people of color who had been formerly organizing as part of another group known as Decolonize PDX. With the desire to focus on the Prison Industrial Complex, they sought out to become a CR chapter. During this time, the work was predominantly determining the focus and scale of a local grassroots campaign to address the biggest PIC threat in the Portland area. The chapter determined that an anti-policing campaign was the priority since Portland was not actively building new prisons and taking into account Portland's long history of white supremacy, increasing police violence and deaths, and a recent federal Department of Justice lawsuit against the Portland Police Department for excessive force. We decided to host a series of community forums on policing in our communities to help us determine the right anti-policing campaign target and direction. We hosted our first 3 of these in late 2014: Ferguson to Portland—flashpoints of police violence and our community, Youth Justice and Policing, and Migrant Justice and Policing.

2015-2016

In 2015 we concluded our series of forums with an "Alternatives to Policing in Portland" discussion and visioning session. The overwhelming feedback we received during this forum was related to policing and how it relates and interacts with health and emergency first response. We took this feedback and researched a few different proposed directions to address policing and health in Portland. From this initial analysis we decided to make the campaign's focus on mental health care and policing. We then used power mapping and a target assessment to help us determine that our campaign focus would be to decouple police and policing from acting as mental health first responders and work to build up alternatives to support mental health needs that would not involve policing. With low chapter capacity we put campaign planning on the back burner as we rebuilt capacity and focused on community education and building events to amplify awareness of our new campaign focus while we built momentum for a full campaign launch.

2017-2018

At the end of 2016 we lead a larger Anti-Policing workshop that launched us into our plans. We moved forward with a coalition based campaign model. We launched our first coalition campaign meeting in February 2017 with nearly 50 people in attendance. We've been meeting monthly since with a core group of 10-20 folks who attending with additional workgroups who meet throughout the month. About 6-9 months in we realized that coalition building from the start was ambitious so we scaled back as a campaign group to focus our energy on solidifying our shared principles, decision making processes, and to build towards campaigning at the city's budget cycle which includes the police budget. We successfully mobilized for the 2018 City budget hearings and we believe our consistent messaging, testimony, and turn out prevented the Mayor from approving his initial police budget. While we did not win a hiring freeze or no new

increases, the reduced police budget that passed was nearly half of its original amounts for funds and new hires and we believe this overall reduction was a result of our mobilizing.

After mobilizing to the community budget forums in April 2018, we held our Envisioning Community Safety forum on May 5th. With this event we built collective power with organizations and community members with shared values and goals to vision community safety without relying on--and by actively resisting--the violence of policing. We connected with many of these groups through the budget forums as well as other chapter organizing work. In order to create the alternatives that make policing obsolete, we need to strengthen our networks, learn together, build skills together, build relationships with each other. By partnering with these organizations through the budget forums and this community event, we begin laying the foundation for a coalition in the future, as we had hoped for at the start of the campaign.

LOOKING AHEAD

Learning more about the Treatment Industrial Complex (TIC) really impacted the strength of our work. Through the work of people involved in the campaign directly impacted by policing and the TIC, we gained the opportunity to learn how the PIC and TIC overlap, reinforcing both industries. This helped us develop further our analysis around the ways people can end up policing each other beyond just calling the cops, and the violence of non-consensual medication and "treatment". With this deeper understanding of policing and the TIC, our campaign commits to advocating for user-led, non-coercive resources centering people's autonomy and self-determination that resists pathologization and harmful medicalization.

Now we are planning out our work to support our campaign goal of reducing our reliance on policing for mental health first response by building up community skills, knowledge, and connection to support each other in our self-determined needs and care.

KEY STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS

- Community Forums on policing
- "Alternatives to Policing" discussion and visioning sessions
- Research, analysis and power mapping to focus campaign
- Coalition model campaign launch
- Working groups: Police Budget, Research, Education, Outreach
- Year one mobilizations rejecting PPB budget increases and new positions
- Reorganization of working groups: Anti-policing, Community skills, Coalition development
- Refocus on shared principles and decision-making processes
- Year two mobilizations rejecting PPB budget increases and new positions
- Organizations partnerships for mobilizations and community events building towards future coalition
- Build community and media awareness around the campaign
- Skilling up campaign members & community
- Develop plan for political education