



TROY 4 BLACK LIVES

2021 Newsletter



Photos from right to left: An altar for those lost to police and state violence; a rally to close the Rensselaer County Jail and free detained immigrants; a circle of youth mentees; Supporting the mother of Yasmeeen at a Justice 4 Yasmeeen press conference; a portrait of Edson Thevenin

2021 was a year of expanding and deepening our work to increase police transparency and accountability while creating a community in which Black Lives can thrive. Our local government continues to block any real change, favoring instead to protect the status quo through superficial soundbites and a sham police reform process while increasing police spending and militarization. In the face of navigating hostile elected officials, we focused on building coalitions with aligned organizations on the city, regional, and state level and investing in mutual aid for our Black community, specifically those facing additional intersectional oppressions.

The highlight of the year for us has been connecting with and nurturing the leadership of other Black folks in our community. We know firsthand that people are the power of this movement and are deeply excited to keep building and growing a critical mass of folks who will accept nothing less than Black Liberation. The grant we received from the Envision Freedom Fund (formerly BCBF) helped us do the following activities through supporting stipends for our organizers and covering project and event supplies:

OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

- Flowers 4 Black Life march, 300+ person speakout, and Hoosick Street shutdown to remember Edson Thevenin and all Black Troy folks harmed by police violence.
- Vigils and rallies at Troy City Council meetings and the trial of former DA Ablove demanding accountability for covering up the murder of Edson.
- Creating an animated short film about the police killing of Edson Thevenin and its relationship to racist policing everywhere (featured last month on WMHT).
- Powerful response with partners to demand real community input into the Reimagining Policing process mandated by ex-Governor Cuomo, and to expose the mayor's sham report that cut out community voices and protected the status quo.

COALITION AND MOVEMENT BUILDING

- Creating the Troy Partnership 4 Black Lives - a coalition of organizations and groups dedicated to Black Life & Liberation in Troy.
- Supporting regional and statewide organizers with resources, supplies, training & healing space to build capacity within our freedom movements.
- Anti-eviction and housing rights support for folks being wrongly evicted during a pandemic through protests, sit-ins, and press conferences.
- Initiated a statewide coalition around the abuse of detained immigrants in the Rensselaer County Jail. Co-Organized a rally and met with state officials to demand closing jail and severing its contract with ICE and successfully secured the release of one immigrant.

SUPPORTING AND NURTURING LOCAL BLACK LEADERSHIP

- Mentorship for Black, Indigenous, POC and Queer Youth who are mobilizing their peers around issues pertaining to their lives.
- Justice 4 Yasmeen: Fought together with a Black Mom for justice for a child with a disability who was seriously abused in the school and school busing systems; rallied with Troy Bike Rescue and other partners.

MUTUAL AID

- Over \$12,000 in mutual aid and bail funding given to members of the Capital Region's Black community during their moments of personal crisis, with a focus on supporting Black women, Trans folks, parents, and survivors of domestic violence.

Thank you for supporting our work!