

2021 Impact Report

Arouet is a modern, innovative, second-chance movement for individuals impacted by the criminal justice system. Our mission is to restore individuals, rebuild families, and positively impact communities.

OVERVIEW

It has been a year of great expansion at Arouet! We are thrilled to share this update with you. We enhanced our programming offerings to more than double our participant base. We have developed an innovative model that has positioned us as a leader in the Arizona Criminal Justice Reform discussion. We could not have done this without our incredible supporters, partners, and volunteers, thank you! We put this report together to show how much your dedication and support has impacted the lives of the women we serve.

COVID RESPONSE

There is no avoiding the most talked about and unprecedented event of our lives. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has impacted everyone in unexpected ways that have required community response to help mitigate the worst of it.

At Arouet, thanks to our incredible partners and community of organizations, we were able to play a role in this for our participants. During the pandemic we have been able to provide dozens of participants with Emergency Cash Assistance. This has kept people homed, fed, clothed, and safe.

The world has changed, and we are proud to partner with forward thinking organizations like Valley of the Sun United Way to address these changes. The impact of the digital divide has been brought into clear focus by the pandemic and thanks to you, we have been able to help bridge the divide.

To bridge the gap, Arouet has been able to provide 35 laptop computers and 60 smart phones to participants and their families. Never has secure and consistent access to the internet been as important as it is today with work, applying for jobs and services, and school all being online in some capacity now.

2021 AT A GLANCE

2021 Active Participants: **320+**

2021 Recidivism Rate: **2.9%**

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Inside Classes: 19 | One-on-Ones: 128 |
| Starter-Kits: 75 | Phones Given: 60 |
| Job Placements: 127 | Job Partners: 52 |
| Loans Given: 24 | Amount: \$62,000 |
| Storytellers: 45 | Mentorship Pairs: 5 |



TAKE IT FROM CRISTY

Arouet is organization that is in the trenches with the very women they are helping rebuild their personal and professional lives.

From the moment that I was released after 17.75 years into global pandemic, Arouet has been by my side. The first week Arouet came by with necessities, and money to make it through until I could receive a paycheck to live. The same week, I was placed in a job, again through Arouet that would give me the ability to move forward. I have received emotional support, financial support, and professional support for the last

from this wonderful and amazing team. They have given me the ability to secure a full-time job with benefits, an apartment and have played a crucial part in my being able to purchase a used car in the last few months.

Then, four months into my journey, I get another call from Arouet right in time to help again, out of the blue they would like to pay my September rent to make sure that I am still able to keep moving forward. The common thread here is transition, not just pieces and parts but all aspects of transition. Arouet is a cradle to close empowerment organization.



ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

There have been many changes at Arouet, and we wanted to address them with you all. It began with a shortening of our name to just Arouet and a change in web domain to ArouetEmpowers.org that we feel better represents our mission and where we are going as an organization.

We knew that addressing the needs of this community was of critical importance to the health of our community and we are so pleased to find that we were not alone. Due to the support of our partners Arouet was able to not just weather the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to adapt and GROW.

Since January, Arouet's full-time staff has grown from four to six plus two part-time team members. This is all thanks to our incredible community of partners who connect us with similarly aligned organizations that help us grow. We have created a full mentorship program, we are developing a volunteer program, and so much more!

PARTNERSHIPS

Arouet has grown because of our wonderful community who believe in us and trust us to do right by our participants. Our dedication to the holistic success of our participants is what sets us apart and our growing list of partners shows that we are not alone in this. We would like to thank all our partners on this journey with us. We could not have done this without you.

MAJOR INVESTORS



INVESTERS

Thunderbirds
JP Morgan Chase
Wells Fargo
PNC Bank

Bank of America
Credit Builders Alliance
BoK Financial
Arizona Republic

Uber
AZ Federal Credit Union

CORPORATE PARTNERS

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of AZ
Salt River Project
Safety Services Company

Community Medical Services
InsideView
Iconic Results

SupportU
And Many More That We Deeply Appreciate

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Arizona Department of Corrections, Reentry, and Rehabilitation

Arizona Department of Economic Security
Arizona@Work
St Joseph the Worker

Dress for Success
And Many More That We Deeply Appreciate

SPECIAL EVENTS 2021 & BEYOND



AROUE NIGHT OUT

Many of you may have known we were planning a special event in the months before the pandemic. After over a year of pandemic related delays, we are pleased to announce that we were able to hold it this past May in the home of Jordan Rose.

The event was attended from all sectors of the community to hear the story of a woman who is impacted by the criminal justice system. Some of the people and organizations who were able to join us were SRP, EPCOR, David Adame from Chicanos Por La

Causa, Danny Seiden from Arizona Chamber of Commerce, Neil Giuliano from Greater Phoenix Leadership, Sharon Harper from Plaza Companies, ASU, Department of Corrections, Reentry, and Rehabilitation, Representative Robert Meza, Representative Justin Wilmeath, Representative Shawna Bolick, Justice Clint Bolick and many others.

DAY OF EMPATHY

This year we were chosen by DreamCorps Justice to be the lead organization for Day of Empathy in Arizona. We are proud to carry on the legacy of our dear friend Sue Ellen Allen. As part of this event, we brought together a bipartisan group of legislators to speak about the importance of the Fair Chance movement. We had over 100 people attend our virtual event where Arouet Storytellers shared their experiences to encourage the audience to take a stand for Fair Chances. We are already planning on making 2022 bigger and better than before and cannot wait to share more with you.



COMING SOON IN 2022...

EMPLOYMENT SYMPOSIUM & WEBINAR SERIES

We are in the very early stages of building out a series focused on workforce development and the steps that can be taken to become more friendly to hiring people who are impacted by the justice system. We will be announcing more of this very soon! We are extremely excited about what is being planned. The series of monthly webinars will culminate in a morning event with some well-known figures taking center stage.

Once Upon a Second Chance

In honor of April being Second Chance month, we are putting on a small happy hour fundraising event to celebrate the transformative power of giving someone another chance. The event's details will be announced soon, we are so excited to partner with likeminded organizations to put into focus the power of another chance. We will have featured storytellers and fun all to celebrate Second Chance month.

ERICA'S MESSAGE



"I will show you that I am nothing like it says on paper. By giving me an opportunity, I will work hard and outshine everyone. You will miss out by not giving me an opportunity."

PROGRAM UPDATES

It has been an incredible year for our programs and services. Adding two new fulltime staff, joined our program inside with the Second Chance Center, added new lines of business in the Opportunity Center, created a Mentorship program, expanded ways for people to get engaged, and 2021 still has a month to go!

INSIDE BY THE NUMBERS

Classes: **19**

Hours of Programs: **190**

One-on-Ones: **128**

Transitions: **156**

INSIDE

What started as a beta pilot program in August of 2020, in collaboration with Arizona Department of Corrections, Reentry, and Rehabilitation, has grown into not just a strong community partnership, but also a critical, core piece of programming for the Arizona's Second Chance Center, in Perryville Prison.

There are many reasons why people - women in particular - break laws which send them to prison: Lack of coping skills, financial insecurity, poor boundaries, unhealthy relationships; to name a few. Foundations in Freedom, our AZ reentry program for incarcerated women, aims to provide a chance to change their mindset, access to community and employment resources, and basic financial and credit information.

The motto of the program inside is 'Come Home Stay Home' and this year with **a less than 3% recidivation rate** this year for participants who continued with Arouet programming post-release, they are well on their way.

RELEASE

One of the most challenging aspects of reentry are the first 72 hours from the gate. That's why our Release programming is such an integral part to what Arouet does. From rides to housing, to Arouet Starter Kits, to accessing benefits, to addressing temporary food insecurity, Arouet staff and volunteers provide individualized support to ease the stress - and some of the barriers - of starting from scratch.

This year we expanded our efforts in with the release programming to provide more Arouet Starter Kits than last year thanks to the incredible generosity of partners like InsideView and Church of the Palms. These amazing partners helped to provide materials necessary to help women like Diane land on their feet.

RELEASE BY THE NUMBERS

Starter-Kits: **75**

Reentry Gift Cards: **31**

Phones Given: **60**

Laptops Given: **35**

Pick Ups: **19**



DIANE'S EXPERIENCE - *"I can't express how much Arouet has been there for me. My backpack upon my release was a life saver along with all the encouragement from everyone that things would be ok. When I needed financial help for keeping my phone service on, Arouet was there in a pinch. I needed a ride for a medical procedure they made sure I had a ride to from it. I can't thank everyone there enough, when I thought I couldn't make it they made sure I could. All I can say is I know I have support for as long as I need it!"*

OPPORTUNITY CENTER

Our award-winning Opportunity Center focuses on providing wrap-around services to help with employment, financial security, income support, and educational resources. This year has been one of major growth for this program. In February, Arouet launched two key financial products for our participants - a credit building program and auto loans. These are in partnership with the International Rescue Committee's (IRC) Center for Economic

THE OC BY THE NUMBERS

Active Participants: **253**

Loans Given: **24**

Loans Amount: **\$62,000**

Job Placements: **127**

Job Partners: **52**

Opportunity (CEO), which provide a pathway for credit thin individuals to build positive credit history and access auto financing up to \$20,000 at fair rates.

In May of this year, we welcomed Irene Garnett as our newest Employment and Financial Coach. She has provided a wealth of knowledge to our women and gained the trust and respect of our community. With her help, in 2021 the OC engaged with 250 participants, 93% utilized all our bundled services available.

Our TalentLMS platform was launched to deliver short, curated lessons on topics necessary for our women. Currently our Employment Course covers topics such as how to position yourself despite a background, how to explain your conviction, how to handle interviews, and the best local resources for finding jobs. In 2022, we hope to launch the next Financial Courses.

VALERIE'S OPPORTUNITY – *“When I began in the Opportunity Center, I really had no idea. As someone who was a bit of late bloomer, I opened my first bank account at 34, when it comes to responsible finances, I felt the need to play a lot of catch up. At 42 years old, I am looking at that retirement countdown wanting to make sure that I save enough that I can support myself in retirement and old age rather than having to worry about adding to my family's stresses. Arouet's Opportunity Center has been instrumental in giving me the peace of mind that I needed to begin to address my long-term financial needs. With the OC my credit score has increased over 139 points in less than 90 days”*



ENGAGEMENT

Continued engagement for our participants and community at large is of incredible importance to us at Arouet. As such, our Engagement programming and services have expanded in amazing ways.

First, through strong word of mouth the Arouet Storytellers program has continued to grow leading to us reaching more than double the audience of last year and training another twenty storytellers.

In August we were able to hire Samantha Garcia Pennell to become our Mentorship and Volunteer Program Coordinator. She has already launched our official peer mentor program with plans for a professional mentor program to launch early 2022.

In addition to this, we have launched two new ways for our women to get in engaged. First, a series of community events to bring people together just to have fun. Each event is something different, roller skating, bowling, and volunteering. Finally, in October we had our first Reentry Simulation and are planning on more in 2022.

ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

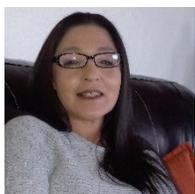
Storytellers: **45**

Storytelling Events: **115**

Audience: **2,000+**

Pilot Mentorship Pairs: **5**

Community Events: **3**



BRIDGETTE'S ENGAGEMENT – *“The mentorship program to me means finding ways with the help of others to access one's smallest and greatest achievements together. Knowing that whatever a person wants in life, help is available to make it possible. Striving for the top isn't unrealistic if one puts forth 120%. Having a mentor makes me want to accomplish so much more than I myself thought could be possible.”*