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Parole Preparation Project In New York Receives $50,000 Grant From Barnes & Thornburg Racial And Social Justice Foundation

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NEW YORK – The Barnes & Thornburg Racial and Social Justice Foundation, which was founded last year, has awarded a $50,000 grant to the Parole Preparation Project in New York, a program that provides support to current and formerly incarcerated people serving life sentences and works to transform the parole release process in New York State.

The grant is one of six being awarded this year by the foundation, which is funded by Barnes & Thornburg's lawyers and staff, who together raised $300,000 this year.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to support an organization that provides resources to those who are too often forgotten or left behind in our criminal justice system," said Robert J. Boller, partner in charge of Barnes & Thornburg's New York office. "The Parole Preparation Project has helped grant the release of 60 percent of its applicants before the New York Parole Board, compared to the 35 percent state average, while supporting the broader movement for parole justice in the state."

Barnes & Thornburg's New York office is committed to supporting the community and working alongside clients, community advocates and colleagues to make a positive impact in our city.

The Parole Preparation Project provides critical advocacy and direct support to current and formerly incarcerated people serving life sentences. The organization also works to transform the parole release process by working with partners across the state to advocate for a more transparent, just, and merciful parole release process. Since its founding, the Parole Preparation Project has assisted over 250 people in prison by

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developing release plans, creating advocacy packets to submit to the Parole Board, and conducting interview practice for parole appearances.

“This donation from Barnes & Thornburg will support the training of our volunteers and help us continue to provide services to people in the parole release process,” said Michelle Lewin, executive director of Parole Preparation Project. “We have trained 500 volunteers since starting out in 2013, and these funds will help us continue that growth and our work on behalf of current, future and formerly incarcerated individuals.”

Barnes & Thornburg’s Racial and Social Justice Foundation

The Racial and Social Justice Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, was established in 2020 and provided $200,000 to nonprofits in four of the firm’s local communities across the country. The foundation’s mission is to promote, advocate, and effect racial and social justice in our local communities and nationally.

“We are pleased to continue our efforts with the Racial and Social Justice Foundation to support the Parole Preparation Project and five additional community organizations,” said Robert T. Grand, managing partner of Barnes & Thornburg and foundation board member. “We remain steadfast in our dedication to advocate for organizations support and promote equality, advancement, and justice.”

To choose grantees, the foundation employed a rigorous scoring system to vet charitable organizations against specific criteria that align with its mission and goals.

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