

# INTERNATIONAL PRISON RADIO

Impact Report 2021



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# INTERNATIONAL PRISON RADIO

## Impact Report 2021

### Introduction

Around the world there is a growing interest in using audio as a force for good in criminal justice settings.

People working in 'prison radio' are making an incredible impact. We are changing and even saving lives. We are influencing how criminal justice systems operate. We are repeatedly recognised for the high quality of their work, and receive remarkably positive media coverage. We are regularly invited to talk about their ground-breaking work at national and international audio / radio / criminal justice conferences.

Those who have contributed to this report have received honours and nominations from the Third Coast International Audio Festival, Webby Awards, Peabody Awards, New York International Radio Awards, D&AD, Rose d'Or Awards, Sony Radio Academy Awards, Audio & Radio Industry Awards (ARIAS), British Podcast Awards and the Pulitzer Prize.

Co-operation between those of us around the world that are working in this field has been growing steadily during the last decade. Prison radio / audio is a growing global movement.

This report has been published as a result of this growing international collaboration. It was produced following the first International Prison Radio Conference – *Making Waves Behind Bars* – held online in November 2020.

The conference was attended by 22 people from 11 (non-governmental) organisations in ten countries. Delegates represented NGOs / charities, academic institutions, community radio organisations, public radio broadcasters and podcast networks.

All those organisations / projects are at different stages of development – some established for more than a decade, with others with projects in their infancy. And there is a great variety in the work we do.

Examples of this work include:

- full-time national radio stations exclusively for people in prison;
- content produced with people inside criminal justice settings for broadcast on national / public / community broadcasters;
- content produced with people inside criminal justice settings for release as podcasts; and
- content produced in community settings (often with formerly incarcerated people) for broadcast both inside and outside prisons.

The motivations for working in the field vary, from supporting people through their prison sentences, to changing public opinion about the people who live in our prisons; humanising them. For some, freedom of speech and offering people inside a voice is at the centre of their work. Others are working to create a dialogue about the state of our criminal justice systems. Helping to keep people out of prison is important to us all.

We all aim to make positive social change through our activities. And we all put experts through experience at the heart of our work and our storytelling. We value individual people's experience and we are grateful for their willingness to share their time, energy and honesty with us.

We are building a mutually supportive community by sharing how we face our challenges and accomplish our achievements. It is the differences in what we do and how we do it that excites us most. Those differences serve as an incredible opportunity for learning, for sharing best practice, and ultimately, for delivering impact.

This report showcases the work of 16 different organisations working in prison radio / audio in 12 different countries.

For more information, please contact **Phil Maguire OBE, Chief Executive of the UK's Prison Radio Association:** [phil@prison.radio](mailto:phil@prison.radio)



## Australia

### Prisoner Radio Network

The Prisoner Radio Network is an informal network of like-minded people dedicated to broadcasting prisoner voices in Australia. Prisoner radio in Australia is represented by a mixed bag of programmes. This is because the Australian prison system does not operate at a national level - each state and territory has its own system of incarceration, which means different legislation (and government departments) for each of those jurisdictions.

The unifying factor for prisoner radio in Australia is its well-established, nearly-50-year-old, community radio sector and this is where most prisoner radio can be heard. The Prisoner Radio Network operates a website and social media platforms that act as places to promote, network and share prison-related radio and audio production.



The network launched in 2018 at the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia's national conference. We are a volunteer, grassroots organisation and encourage anyone (organisations or individuals) to list their prisoner radio projects with us.

The Prisoner Radio Network does not produce prisoner radio itself but acts as a central networking point for broadcasters across the country.



Prisoner Radio Network is coordinated by Dr Charlotte Bedford and Dr Heather Anderson, who are dedicated to action research projects that further knowledge and understanding of the benefits of prisoner radio, in Australia and internationally.

There are currently seven prisoner radio programmes heard on Australian community radio, produced at six different radio stations across five states:

- 3CR's *Beyond the Bars* is a series of live radio broadcasts for, by and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmates (held each July). It overcame Covid-19 restrictions in 2020 by recording interviews, stories, poems and cheerios over the phone with inmates across Victoria. In 2021 *Beyond the Bars* celebrates 20 years on air.
- *Jailbreak* – produced at 2SER in Sydney, New South Wales – is available for broadcast nationally via the Community Radio Network.
- Other prisoner radio programmes on Australian community radio include: *Locked In* (4ZZZ, Brisbane); *The Prison Show* (3D Radio, Adelaide); *Radio Seeds* (WOW-FM, Adelaide); *Doin' Time* (3CR, Melbourne); and *WKRP* (6DBY, Derby).
- A new podcast series, *Birds' Eye View*, produced in the women's unit at Darwin Correctional Centre (Northern Territory), was named Podcast of the Year at the 2020 Australian Podcast Awards.
- Podcasting training projects are underway at Malmesbury Youth Justice Centre & Loddon prison, both in Victoria.



## Australia

### Beyond the Bars

Beyond the Bars is a project founded by 3CR Community Radio in Naarm / Melbourne, Australia. Its purpose is to give voice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members within the Victorian prison system and to include them in the annual National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) celebrations.

The project is a series of live radio broadcasts featuring the voices, songs, poetry, opinions and conversations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prison. Singer-songwriter, broadcaster and Mutti Mutti man Kutcha Edwards, and Aboriginal broadcaster and community advocate the late Gilla McGuinness helped found the program and drive its annual presentation.

A large number of First Nations broadcasters have contributed as broadcast presenters during the annual radio project. It began with a single live radio broadcast in 2002 from Port Phillip Prison, and since 2004, a Beyond the Bars highlights CD has been produced and audio made available online.



- Each year we broadcast from six Victorian prisons
- The broadcasts are annual and take place during NAIDOC Week in July
- The project delivers radio broadcast workshops for inmates prior to the live broadcasts
- Each year Beyond the Bars hears from about 100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inmates from prisons across Victoria, Australia
- The Beyond the Bars workshops and broadcasts are presented by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcast team
- Beyond the Bars celebrates 20 years on the airwaves in 2021
- Indigenous Australians are the most incarcerated people in the world
- Audio and information from the project is available online at [www.3cr.org.au/beyondthebars](http://www.3cr.org.au/beyondthebars)

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM 3CR'S PRISON BROADCASTS BEYOND THE BARS



## Australia

### Jailbreak

Australia's first prison radio program, Jailbreak, launched locally on Sydney's 2SER 107.3 FM community radio as a 30-minute weekly program one spring evening in November 1997.

Jailbreak's aim and target audience at that time was support for families and communities of people in custody. Today's listener and participant-profile trajectory has evolved significantly since that initial landmark broadcast.

Jailbreak is supported by the New South Wales (NSW) Health Department and aims to provide support to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families, as part of the state's strategy to minimise the spread of blood borne viruses and promote healthy lifestyles among people in prison. The Jailbreak Health Project (JHP) is funded to produce 90-minutes of weekly music and storytelling, including three minutes of health information. The programming is presented by and targets people in custody and their families.

Jailbreak broadcasts locally on Redfern's (Indigenous) community radio Koori Radio 93.7 FM and nationally and on Australia's digital Community Radio Network to remote, regional and metropolitan community radio stations of local correctional centres.

The JHP is one of many great projects of NSW's Community Restorative Centre (CRC), an independent community-based NGO supporting people exiting custody and their families. CRC's governance and evidence-based, trauma-informed care framework ensures the delivery of quality prison radio production, therapeutic listening and participant engagement.

As a CRC project, Jailbreak successfully navigates the challenges of prison barriers – physical, political and bureaucratic – to reach and engage vulnerable, isolated people through radio.

The radio project partners with many creative NSW and interstate First Nation cultural, correctional, prison radio, health and musical initiatives and aspires to a future prison dedicated community radio station, modelling the Prison Radio Association's UK-based station, National Prison Radio.



#### Jailbreak exists because:

- Australia's prison-impacted communities have a disproportionately high incidence of complex social, physical and mental health care needs;
- Australia's First Nations Peoples experience far worse health outcomes than their non-Indigenous counterparts and are the most incarcerated people in the world;
- Radio is an outstanding medium that transcends prison barriers and reaches isolated and vulnerable people; and
- Jailbreak delivers and facilitates life-saving, harm-reduction health promotion strategies.



#### In one year :

- Jailbreak broadcasts around 570 weekly 30 mins- 60 mins community radio programmes nationally and locally;
- Podcasts and streams around 400 programmes every week
- Produces 172 variations and extended specials (e.g. International Women's Day, NAIDOC, Christmas Day)
- Delivers approximately 1,300 culturally appropriate blood borne virus and sexual health harm minimisation messages
- Engages 2,000 – 3,000 people impacted by incarceration, in and out of custody - 1,000 - 1,500 identify as First Nation Peoples
- Visits people in one to two prisons each week covering 11 NSW correctional centres

## Hungary

### Adj Hangot Egyesület (Speak Out Association)

Hungarian prison radio was initiated by a small group of radio presenters and psychologists in 2013. We set out to adapt and implement the initiative of the UK's National Prison Radio to the Hungarian system.

We launched prison radio at Vác Penitentiary, a middle-to-high security prison for men, and later opened two more radio stations: one at a remand prison and another at a prison for women. The radio programs were produced by prisoners for prisoners.

Participation in radio work was voluntary and open to all prisoners. Volunteers received basic training in editing and journalism and took part in team building activities. The inmates decided the content of the radio programmes and they did all the journalistic and technical work.

Apart from the radio work in prisons we organised and took part in various events:

- We conducted several talks, human library projects with prisoners or ex-prisoners at schools, universities and festivals.
- At our first press conference in Hungary, prisoners, prison officers and charity members sat at the same table.
- Our first prison radio conference in Hungary was organised jointly and performed by prisoners and charity members.
- We participated in a week-long popular festival three years running, where visitors could familiarise themselves with prison life.

Our work was abruptly terminated unilaterally by the prison authorities together with many other prison programs four years after our start. If there is ever a change of government, we will surely open again!

- Two years after the launch of the radio almost half (48,6%) of the prisoners tuned in on *Bars FM* several times a day and another quarter (24%) daily.
- A *Bars FM* radio reporter won the special prize award for under-30s journalists reporting on human rights issues in 2016 and 2017.
- In our *Photovoice* project, prison radio presenters described what freedom meant for them in photographs. Exhibition and talks were held in five different cities.

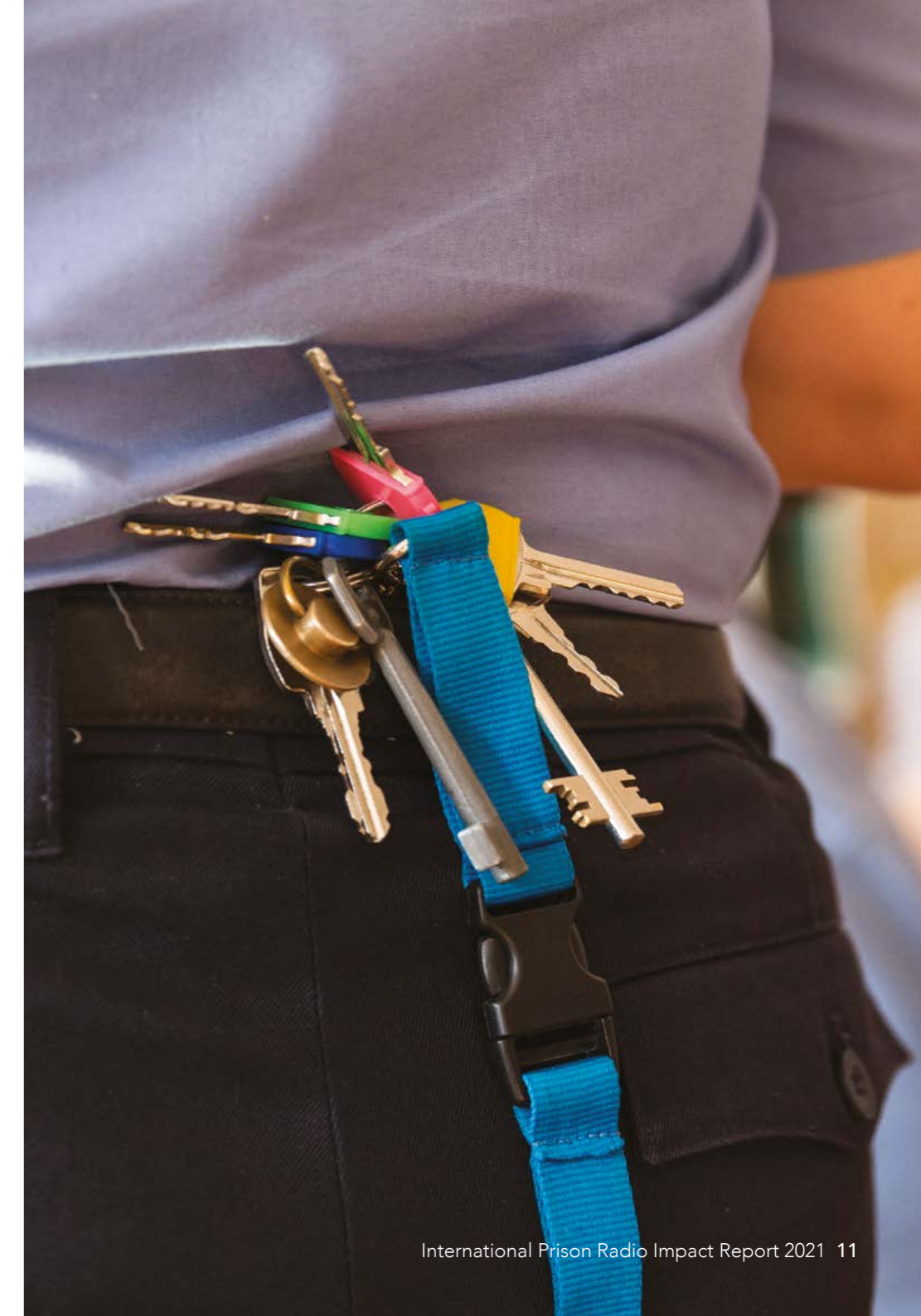


**“You have the right to remain silent!...  
Or give your voice!”**

Prison radio slogan



Börtönrádió



## India

# Tinka Tinka Foundation

Tinka Tinka Foundation is a Public Charitable Trust constituted to work on prison reforms by encouraging inmates to reform through art, culture, literature and media and celebrate the progress made by them. It aims at joining dots by connecting jails and subsequently inmates, to each other.

Prison Radio is one such important tool of communication that is conceptualized and executed by Tinka Tinka in several jails in India.

Dr. Vartika Nanda is the founder of this Trust. Being a former journalist who was the first woman to head a crime beat on Indian Television as well as the founder member and first Executive Producer of Lok Sabha TV (lower house of Indian Parliament) and now head of Department of Journalism at Lady Shri Ram College, Delhi University, she is attempting to make use of her journalistic, academic and literary background towards the enrichment of the lives of inmates.

## PROGRESS

- 2019: 31 July: Tinka Tinka Foundation started its first prison radio in District Jail Agra, situated in the largest state of India, Uttar Pradesh. This jail is one of the oldest surviving prison buildings in India. Inspired by this initiative, jail radio was started in other prisons in the state.
- 2021: January- April: Tinka Tinka started the first prison radio in the state of Haryana and radios were started later in six other prisons of the state. Tinka Tinka played key role in all the stages of prison radio from the beginning till execution, including shortlisting and audition of inmates, training, dry run, final selection of programmes, content creation and getting on air.
- First Prison Radio of the state was inaugurated in District Jail, Panipat by the Jail Minister of Haryana. Prison radios in the second phase were inaugurated by the Additional Chief Secretary (Home & Jail Department), Government of Haryana & Director General of Prisons, Haryana.
- As a rare initiative, seven prison radios were launched in a span of four months starting from January 16 to April 29. Haryana state has 19 prisons in total, out of them seven now have stations. Other five are in development.
- 47 inmates have been trained in the first two phases.
- This was completely done on an honorary basis.

tinka  
tinka  
foundation

## IMPACT

- 1. Reduced Stress and Depression:** Feedback clearly indicates that those inmates who were directly associated with Jail Radio reported reduced level of depression.
- 2. Increased self-confidence:** Participants shared that they have gained immensely in terms of confidence, exposure and skills due to the training received by them for prison radio. Their levels of stress have fallen and confidence has improved. The launch of the radio has positively impacted both the listener audience as well as the jail staff. Jail officials have witnessed a fall in incidents of aggression and indiscipline in jail.
- 3. Increased interest:** At least 30 new inmates have expressed the desire to be radio jockeys. New inmates have come forward to participate in the radio as singers.
- 4. Tool to communicate:** Prison radio has helped inmates speak about their concerns related to Covid-19. Jail radio is the tool which has helped them deal with difficult circumstances during the pandemic. Inmates have started using radio as an important instrument of communication, especially in the absence of visitations / mulaqats.
- 5. Art and creativity:** Jail radio has helped them bring out their creativity in varied forms. Sheru, a Tinka Radio Jockey, lodged in Central Jail, Ambala sang a song on Covid-19 which was released on May 22. This song was retweeted by the Union Health Minister, Government of India which served as a morale booster to both inmates and the jail staff.
- 6. Local language and dialect:** Inmates have expressed their happiness on being given the opportunity to use their mother tongue / local language.
- 7. Raising awareness on Covid-19:** Prison Radio has emerged as a major tool to raise awareness on news, information and support related to Covid-19. It is working as an internal communication system.
- 8. Useful in providing legal aid:** Prison radio is being regularly used as a channel of communication by legal authorities during their jail visits. Legal representatives make use of the prison radio frequently to answer queries of inmates. This has rendered the legal aid process safer and convenient during the pandemic. The Chief Judicial Magistrate of Ambala has confirmed that she would like to continue making use of prison radio in the future as well.



## Israel

### Radio Focus

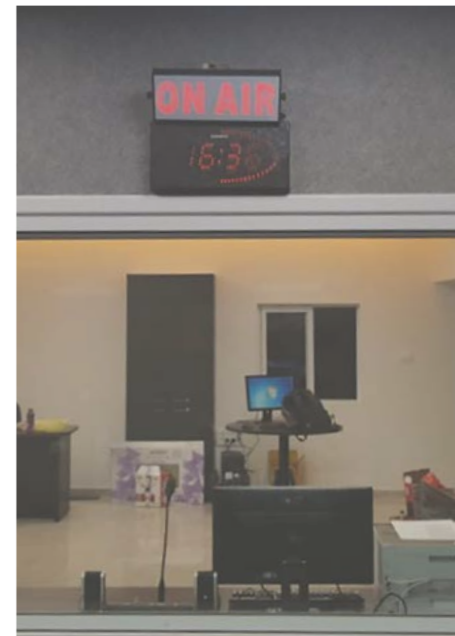
Radio Focus is a multi-dimensional venture, dealing with all areas of prisoners' lives, as well as the community: rehabilitation, care, education, vocational training, employment and integration into the community.

Radio Focus is the first and only rehabilitation radio station in Israel and the second national prison radio in the world, after the UK.

Located within the walls of detention facilities in Ayalon prison (Ramla) and now in Neve Tirza women's prison, where prisoners transmit their voices to other prisoners. Prisoners learn to use their voice with confidence and respect for positive purposes.

The broadcasters and other role holders (editor, producer, etc.) on the radio, and also the listeners, are all partners in the same community and enjoy the development of abilities and skills.

In the near future we aim to work more with women and young people in custody as well as creating closer relationships with the outside community.



- Radio Focus is the voice of prisoners in Israel; it is their radio station.
- It is a channel for conveying constructive messages to prisoners by prisoners about a range of issues, for example regarding health and crime prevention.
- Radio Focus provides vocational training and work experience in the field of audio production.
- Radio Focus give prisoners the opportunity for personal expression, to take initiative and responsibility, and to express themselves creatively.
- The radio station helps its audience and prisoner production team with personal development through the promotion of dialogue, discussion, listening, understanding and reflection.
- Participating prisoners develop a range of life skills, including working as part of a team, working under pressure, mathematics, computing and language literacy.
- Radio Focus offers prisoners the opportunity to succeed at something positive and tangible – and to have that success recognised and celebrated.



## Norway

### RøverRadion

RøverRadion is Norwegian prison radio, and was established in 2013. RøverRadion is made for and by Norwegian inmates, and is produced in five prisons; Oslo, Bergen, Halden, Eidsberg and Bredtveit prison for women. The show is broadcast inside Norwegian prisons, and also nationally through Norway's public service broadcaster, NRK.

In RøverRadion we work so prisoners' voices are heard in society. This to ensure their democratic right to freedom of speech. And we work also to be a bridge between prison and society on the other side of the wall.



Røverradion has received multiple awards for shows that touch upon drug use, mental health, sexual health, rehabilitation, questions of justice and life in general behind bars.

RøverRadion is also an important source of information for people who are incarcerated. Information about what rights they have, what programs they can apply for, information from public authorities and campaigns to improve inmates' life in prison.



- In 2017 RøverRadio became the first prison radio in the world to broadcast on a national radio station, NRK
- Since it was founded, RøverRadion has worked with approximately 150 inmates as editorial staff, across six different prisons.
- RøverRadion also broadcasts inside prisons through various channels. The goal is to create a single system for all prisons in order to be able to directly reach every prison cell in Norway.
- RøverRadion carries out multiple projects and campaigns targeted towards the prison population.
- The organisation also works with the editorial staff on a diversity of projects, after they have done their time.
- The show has received multiple nominations and also won three Prix Radio Awards – Norway's 'radio Oscars'.
- RøverRadion is actively working towards influencing Norway's criminal justice system by meeting with government politicians, the justice minister, prime minister and other central decision makers.
- RøverRadion wishes to increase its representation in the Norwegian prison population, and is constantly working towards visiting every prison in Norway, to make radio or to establish autonomous departments in different prisons.

Simen Iskariot Larsen, former prisoner and participant in RøverRadion in 2015 and 2016:

*"After living many years on the edge of society, it was easy to think I didn't belong there to begin with. When your self-worth and self-esteem are low, taking drugs can seem like the only solution. That someone thought I had something to say that was worth hearing, turned my world around."*

*Joining RøverRadion made me look at the world and see that not all my bridges were burned down. Without RøverRadion, I would probably be sitting somewhere with a needle in my arm, be in prison, or worse.*

*Now I no longer burn the candle at both ends. I am studying criminology, meeting with community leaders, helping others with the same experiences as me, and having talks in front of hundreds of people. And I am mastering it!"*



## Poland

### University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn

Prison radio stations are located in almost every correctional institution in Poland. These stations can only be heard within the prison confines and concentrate mainly on re-transmitting programmes of popular radio stations. They also share news from inside prison and support the rehabilitation process through educational programming (Doliwa, 2013).

All of them use the closed circuit cable system of broadcasting. This is mainly connected to the fact that this way of transmitting the radio signal was widespread in Poland after World War II.



\* Doliwa, U. (2013). Radio behind bars: The Polish case. The Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast and Audio Media, 11(2), 119–36.

The new communist regime was interested in the development of radio as a tool of propaganda. They were created in housing estates, workplaces, dormitories and prisons.

As for now, Polish prisons remain one of the few places where one can find a network of loudspeakers joined by means of cable.\*



- There are around 150 prison radio stations active in Poland.
- There is no formal network between the different prison radio stations.
- They distribute their programme using closed circuit cable system.
- Most of the time they re-transmit programmes of popular radio stations.
- A core element of every programme are announcements with an obligatory menu for the day.
- Every year there is a contest organised 'Living History - My Small Homeland - My Family - Me' - for the best broadcast prepared by prison radio journalists hosted by pre-detention centre in Koszalin.
- The primary goal of every prison radio is taking part in the rehabilitation process of prisoners.
- Prison radio is the most egalitarian medium in prisons – not everyone has a TV-set in the cell but everyone has a radio loudspeaker.

## Republic of Ireland

### Inside Radio

Inside Radio is a new initiative being developed by the founder of the Irish Prison Radio Network, Davin O'Callaghan. It aims to present and produce talk and music-based content for the inmates in the Republic of Ireland via a dedicated channel on the in-cell television streaming service.

During 2020 Davin began developing this prison radio service remotely, but with full support of the governor of Midlands Prison – the largest prison in Ireland.

Inside Radio has been piloting a series of three-hour music based radio programmes for weekend evening broadcast, to offer companionship and late night entertainment after lights out.

As soon as conditions allow, Davin intends to work onsite with the prison's education department to train prisoners in production – adding to the station output.

As soon as is possible, the station hopes to broadcast prisoner-produced content across the weekends, complemented by automated content during the week.

Within three years Inside Radio plans to broadcast 24/7 to all off the 4000+ prisoners in the Republic of Ireland's twelve prisons.

#### Inside Radio:

- is the first prison radio service in the Republic of Ireland;
- has received the full support from the prison governor;
- is exclusively for the inmates and their mental health;
- aims to offer inmates access and vital communication;
- supports freedom of speech expression and music;
- is the missing "connection" in the Irish prison system;
- brings hope and a sense of self-worth to the inmates.



*Your voice -  
your station*

## Scotland

### Station House Media Unit (shmu)

Station House Media Unit (shmu), established as a charity in 2003, is one of the core cultural organisations in Aberdeen, and is at the forefront of Community Media development in Scotland, supporting residents in the seven regeneration areas of the city in radio and video production, traditional and on-line publications, music production and digital inclusion.

The organisation also supports other disadvantaged communities, both geographic and communities of interest, with an employability and training arm and a programme for offenders, both pre- and post-release.



We have been supporting programmes in prisons for over ten years and run a Creative Media Unit in HMP Grampian in North East Scotland, which includes a radio station (*Con Air*) which supports both adult male and female prisoners to produce and present their own shows which are broadcast through the prison's TV system in cells across the prison.

In addition to support within the prison, we also provide support through-the-gate and offer training and long-term volunteering opportunities within the community.



#### Station House Media Unit:

- provides the first cross-platform, peer-led, Creative Media Unit (CMU) within a UK prison and is the only Scottish Prison to broadcast National Prison Radio.
- has supported 646 prisoners to take part in 2,500 sessions of radio, film, music and magazines and 143 prisoners to receive post-release support and engagement.
- has supported male prisoners, female prisoners, young offenders and protection prisoners to engage in accredited courses and have a voice through their prison radio.
- builds meaningful and sustained relationships with prisoners – allowing successful transitions back to the community and ongoing engagement and participation.
- creates employment opportunities for prisoners in the CMU as Peer Mentors and Media Assistants.
- gets the word out there – we have presented at multiple events, including social work and Scottish Prison Service conferences, and had two articles published in the *Inside Times*. Some of our prisoner films were also part of national campaigns to highlight key topics such as mental health and substance misuse.

#### Some of our top achievements:

- 79 full SQA awards (level 5) & 45 partial SQAs (level 5);
- 42 Koestler Awards, including 3 platinum awards;
- 7,222 pre-release volunteering hours;
- 1,454 hours of prison radio;
- 823 original songs;
- 48 films & 10 TV shows; and
- 5 magazines producing 3000 copies.

#### A case study

Ali started attending the Creative Media Unit to continue her passion for music. She quickly became involved in other media activities, taking part in film and radio training. This led to having her own weekly radio show and producing a number of films. She gained her media qualifications and two platinum Koestler Awards.

Ali worked with our support team to plan for her release and continued engaging with this support in the community. Ali worked hard with her supports from shmu and other agencies to address issue relating to her offending and to build a positive life for herself.

She faced many challenges and had setbacks, but she persevered and utilised the support she had and the creative opportunities available at shmu.

Ali took part in groups and continued to create radio shows. She took on the role of peer mentoring others on their release and is an active representative of shmu, taking part in meetings and events and working with us on the overall development of Adult Services and our prison work.

Ali is settled in her life; she engages with all her support networks and is perusing her own business as well as continuing her peer mentoring. Ali still has issues she needs to manage and her own struggles, but she is thriving in the life she has created for herself.



## Sweden

### Radio Fri

Radio Fri is part of the foundation Fanzingo. The project started in 2011 and was initially aimed at young people who had been taken in by the state (in Sweden people aren't generally sentenced to prison before the age of 20, but are kept in separate institutions).

Since 2016 Radio Fri has had a project within the general correctional system and worked with adults in prison. We visit the prison once a week and within a ten-week period the participants go from being introduced to radio production to making a one-hour show. The show is produced in front of a live audience as well as being broadcast into cells. As the participants continue they are given more and more advanced assignments.

- Between 2011-2016 Radio Fri produced 210 live shows and broadcast them to the general public.
- Between 2016-2020 Radio Fri produced ten one-hour long shows which were produced in front of a live audience of prisoners.
- Radio Fri has met and worked with hundreds of young people in custody and about 150 adults.
- Radio Fri has made a study on how to increase reading and writing abilities among incarcerated youth using radio production as a means of education.
- Radio Fri is on hold in 2021 after ten years of engaging radio production created by and for people who have committed crime, suffered drug abuse or who have experienced incarceration.
- Radio Fri is unique in doing this work so far in Sweden.



### Baggy man - a case study

Nadia (producer and project manager) writes:

*This person's journey and hard work I will never forget!!*

*Baggy came to us 2014 suffering heavily from drug abuse. He was often wearing a mask and felt very suspicious of people. Radio Fri lets everyone participate as they feel comfortable and it didn't take long before Baggy was our main show host.*

*We found out that he was a former rapper and told him to use his flow in the presenting of the show. He became one of our most popular hosts ever and showed up every Wednesday for rehearsal and every Friday for the recording of our "live on tape show", until we had to close down our studio in 2016.*

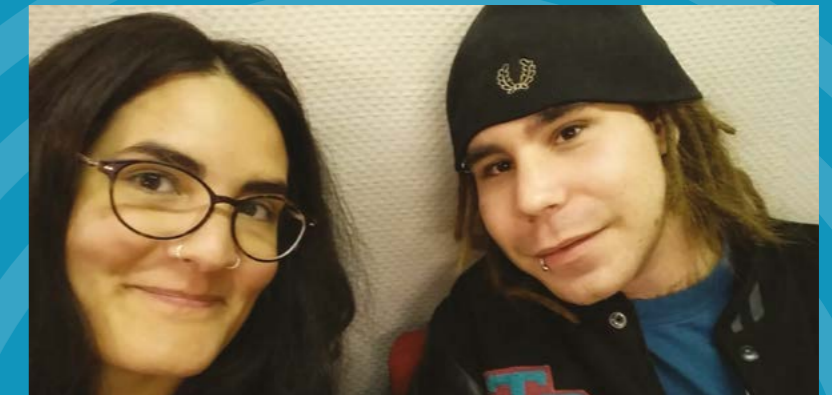
*During these two years Baggy told us he found community and a safe place where he belonged. We talked about how to get treatment for the addiction, where to find a suitable place to live and later on how to get a job.*

*Today he is the father of two and a skilled metal worker. I meet him from time to time and he still calls me boss and always makes sure that we know how the Radio Fri community helped him find trust in people and the self-confidence needed to find a happier life.*

*He has been a rock for the project and helped lots of new members find their place and was the first one to show up and talk to our funders when we were at risk of having to close down.*

*"All these lies and half-truths I've told my family. I remember one time. I was sitting and reading the Alcoholics Anonymous handbook and my sister called.*

*I told her I was reading, and she thought it sounded great and wanted to give me another chance. However, I didn't tell her that I was drinking at the same time. That's the kind of thing I can talk about here. This is where I feel at home. I can show both sides and still be welcome."*



(left)  
Nadia and Baggy



## Trinidad & Tobago

### RISE Maximum Radio

RISE (Rehabilitating Inmates Seeking Empowerment) Maximum Radio was launched in Trinidad and Tobago's Maximum Security Prison in September 2012 to much fanfare and the involvement of then Minister of Justice Hon. Herbert Volney and then British High Commissioner HE Arthur Snell.

The project first germinated in 2009 when the hosts of the award-winning radio show *Eye on Dependency* – Garth St. Clair and Natasha Nunez – visited the UK and discovered the work of the Prison Radio Association (PRA) and its radio station, National Prison Radio. The discovery led into a fruitful relationship with Phil Maguire and Andrew Wilkie of the PRA, who assisted in selling the concept to government and prison officials.

RISE Maximum Radio is a hybrid setup involving prison officers and prisoners, who at the onset were trained in radio arts together and since the on-air launch, share broadcasting and programming duties.

Although *Eye on Dependency* is no longer involved in the day-to-day operations of RMR, we are proud to have contributed to this element of restorative justice in action.



- Anslem Spring, a prison officer and leader at RISE Maximum Radio, attended PRA Conferences in London in 2014 and 2015.
- A three-part radio drama about drug trafficking, scripted and performed by the RMR staff of prisoners and prison officers, was broadcast on RISE Maximum Radio and *Eye on Dependency*.
- There have been numerous simulcasts with RISE Maximum Radio and *Eye on Dependency* at Christmas, Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day allowing prisoners to connect with family by sending recorded greetings and receiving live phone calls.

- Most of the prisoners working at RISE Maximum Radio are on long sentences but the experience has enriched their time by providing a meaningful contribution to enhanced communication with prisoners at MSP.
- RISE Maximum Radio has a Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/risemaximumradio](http://www.facebook.com/risemaximumradio)
- In 2021, *Eye on Dependency* will continue to lobby the prison authorities to expand the reach and impact of RISE Maximum Radio as well as to assist with programming that more accurately reflects the original intent of the project.



Officer at the controls (top left); Phil Maguire (PRA) at RISE launch (centre left), at the controls (bottom left), Minister of Justice Hon. Herbert Volney and then British High Commissioner HE Arthur Snell (above top), inmates and officers during setup with Max (above bottom)

UK

## Prison Radio Association

The Prison Radio Association (PRA) is a UK charity, founded in 2006, that runs National Prison Radio, the world's first national radio station for people in prison.

National Prison Radio supports people through their prison sentences and supports reducing reoffending efforts. The Prison Radio Association's team of radio professionals work with people in prison to make inspirational, informative and entertaining radio programmes designed to engage listeners in activities and discussions that increase their chances of living crime-free lives.

National Prison Radio broadcasts into prison cells across England and Wales, via the in-cell television system, 24 hours per day, seven days per week. It has become a central part of prison life.

National Prison Radio's programmes are produced in the Prison Radio Association's studios at HMP Brixton (a men's prison in London) and HMP Styal (a women's prison near Manchester). Our teams of experienced, professional radio producers work alongside men and women serving sentences to create content. Our colleagues in prison are involved in every step of the production process, developing new ideas, writing scripts, presenting programmes, choosing music, presenting and editing the final shows before they are broadcast.

Recent research tells us that 99% of people in prison know about **National Prison Radio**, that 89% of people in prison listen for an average of 16.2 hours each week.

Prison  
Radio  
Association

National  
Prison Radio



Covid-19 resulted in most people in prison being isolated within cells for up to 23 hours a day. National Prison Radio has become more of a lifeline than ever. We have developed stronger links with the prison service communications team to ensure timely and accurate information reaches our listeners.

We broadcast weekly interviews with the Director General for Prisons, who answers listeners' questions on the impact the pandemic is having on prison regimes.

We also broadcast interviews with senior leaders in the Ministry of Justice including the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Robert Buckland QC. In the last 12 months we received 36,559 communications (letters and calls) from people behind bars.

The true value of National Prison Radio can be seen in our partnership work. Last year we worked with 206 different organisations to promote the activities of those charities / NGOs to our audience of over 80,000.

Our broadcasts amplify the work being carried out across the 121 prisons in England and Wales, and we are able to disseminate new ideas and positive thinking, as well as practical advice and solutions.

National Prison Radio programmes are available 'on demand' to people in two prisons (total population 3,100) via in-cell laptops through the prison service pilot Digital Hub system. In the 12 months to 31 March 2021, there were a total of 225,689 plays of National Prison Radio content on the Digital Hub.

Over the last 15 years, we have won a raft of national and international awards for our work, including:

- UK Charity of the Year (2016);
- a coveted Rose d'Or (2016);
- D&AD Impact award (2017); and
- several New York Festivals Awards.

We hold ten Sony Radio Academy Awards, two gold ARIAS (the UK's radio Oscars) and two British Podcast Awards.

In 2017 and 2020 we were crowned Production Company of the Year at the UK's Audio Production Awards. In November 2020 we also won Gold in the Grassroots Production category of the Audio Production Awards, marking our contribution to the development of new talent in the industry, underlined by the Prison Radio Association's Anthony Olanipekun winning the New Voice Award.

Over the next three-year period, our future plans are:

- to maximise the impact of National Prison Radio, in the light of lessons learned from Coronavirus;
- to develop production and presenting talent from within the criminal justice system;
- to grow prison radio's global impact through Prison Radio International; and
- to develop the Prison Radio Podcast Network.

For more information, please contact Phil Maguire OBE, Chief Executive of the UK's Prison Radio Association: [phil@prison.radio](mailto:phil@prison.radio)

## USA

### Inside Wire Radio & With(In) Podcast/ University of Denver Prison Arts Initiative

The University of Denver Prison Arts Initiative (DU PAI) generates creative and collaborative learning experiences across the state of Colorado, in order to empower incarcerated individuals to improve the quality of their lives and support them as they prepare to make positive changes in their communities upon release.

In 2021, DU PAI is launching Inside Wire Radio, the first-ever statewide prison radio station in the U.S., created by and for incarcerated artists. The core radio leadership team is composed of residents at Limon Correctional Facility, working in collaboration with staff in the Colorado Department of Corrections, and with the support and mentorship of DU PAI and consulting experts from the field. DU PAI's radio initiative is led by our Radio General Manager and Creative Producer Ryan Conarro.

DU PAI is also currently in production for season 2 of With(In), our podcast committed to shifting the conversation on who is in prison through meaningful, complex conversations with incarcerated people and others in and around the system. With(In) is led by DU PAI Executive Director Ashley Hamilton, with a team of co-producers inside and outside Colorado prisons.

For more, visit [www.thisiswithin.com](http://www.thisiswithin.com) and <https://liberalarts.du.edu/prison-arts>.



UNIVERSITY of  
DENVER

COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES  
& SOCIAL SCIENCES  
Prison Arts Initiative



As of March 2021, DU PAI has...

- Designed, planned, and recorded interviews and stories for Season 2 of our podcast With(In);
- Established Inside Wire Radio's core leadership team of five incarcerated residents at Limon Correctional Facility;
- Launched a series of leadership and audio production workshops at Limon, including an audio production certification process;
- Collaborated with Colorado Department of Corrections staff to secure equipment and establish studio spaces at several facilities;
- Consulted with friends, colleagues, and leaders in the prison radio, both nationally and internationally;
- Initiated partnerships with media organizations locally and statewide;
- Laid the groundwork for listener announcements to be disseminated to incarcerated residents across the state, as ads in our statewide newspaper, The Inside Report; and
- With the guidance of the Limon radio leadership team, articulated a guiding mission and vision for Inside Wire Radio.

## USA

### Ear Hustle

Launched in 2017, Ear Hustle from PRX's Radiotopia was the first podcast created and produced in prison, featuring stories of the daily realities of life inside California's San Quentin State Prison, shared by those living it.

Ear Hustle was co-founded by Bay Area artist Nigel Poor alongside Earlonne Woods and Antwan Williams — who were incarcerated at the time — the podcast now tells stories from both inside prison and from the outside, post-incarceration.

In 2019, Rahsaan "New York" Thomas joined Ear Hustle as a co-host inside San Quentin. Episodes have been downloaded over 46 million times, and today, several prisons around the world are sharing Ear Hustle stories internally.



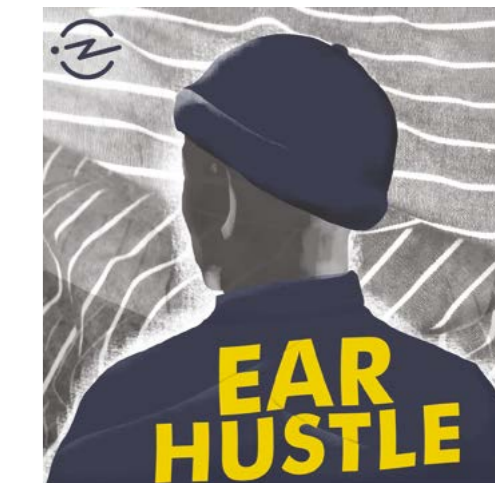
- Ear Hustle came to public media organization PRX and the Radiotopia podcast network in 2016 through an open call to creators around the world. The show emerged as the winner from more than 1,500 international entries.
- Ear Hustle challenges stereotypical narratives of the incarcerated and humanizes the effect of mass incarceration on individuals. With stories ranging from the mundane to the extraordinary: from cellmates, to food, to birthdays, to caring for pets, the episodes push audiences to re-think how to wrestle with judgment and empathy. By including perspectives from correctional officers, prison staff, and family members, the show adds depth, context, and texture missing from many commercial podcasts with more sensationalized crime stories.
- In November 2018, California Governor Jerry Brown commuted Earlonne's 31 years-to-life sentence after 21 years of incarceration. Gov. Brown cited Earlonne's work with Ear Hustle in the commutation.
- Ear Hustle has grown into a team of eight, including formerly incarcerated producers John "Yahya" Johnson, and Antwan Williams, who now contributes sound design and original music from the outside.
- Ear Hustle prioritizes engagement with the public, via social media and our monthly newsletter, The Lowdown, which is distributed to 20K+ people around the world.



- In 2019, Ear Hustle collaborated with The Metropolitan Museum of Art and New York City Ballet dancer and choreographer Silas Farley, on Songs From the Spirit -- a live performance which featured recordings of new spirituals and original music by musicians featured in the podcast.
- Ear Hustle enjoys a large and dedicated listener following outside of prison. But we're also dedicated to getting the show played inside as many prisons as possible. In 2018, after lengthy negotiations with administration, the show started airing in 35 California prisons operated by the California Department of Corrections.



- Ear Hustle has been acknowledged, recognized and the recipient of some of the most sought-after accolades in the industry, including recognition from the Peabody Awards, DuPont Awards, and being named a 2020 finalist for the inaugural Pulitzer Prize for audio reporting in 2020.



## USA

### KALW/Uncuffed

KALW, a public radio station in San Francisco, has led classes in San Quentin State Prison since 2012, and Solano State Prison since 2018. Participants learn how to make powerful audio stories. They record honest conversations about the struggles and triumphs of people behind prison walls. Then, they edit those interviews themselves, using industry-standard equipment and software. The finished product goes out on KALW's airwaves, kalw.org, prison TV systems, and the award-winning podcast Uncuffed.

The producers say: "*Uncuffed is vulnerable and personal. If you can see the humanity in us, you can see the humanity in everyone. We've got the mic, and we're telling our own stories.*"

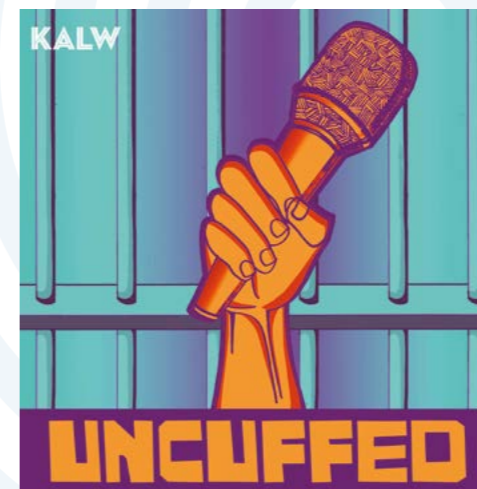
Our goal is to transform the criminal justice system by elevating the voices of incarcerated people.

- In March 2020, the *Uncuffed* producers at Solano recorded a special episode about Covid-19, which had begun to spread in California. Their memories of previous disease outbreaks shed light on what a new lockdown would mean. The conversation was featured in *Reveal* and other national media. This was the last story we were able to record inside before the coronavirus lockdown.



- In July 2020, we released a special episode featuring people with loved ones in prison. They recorded heartfelt letters addressed to their sons, fathers, partners, and friends whom they hadn't been able to visit in months as the pandemic threatened their lives. Highlights appeared in the podcasts *Snap Judgment* and *The California Report*.

- Two *Uncuffed* producers were released from prison in July, after having contracted the coronavirus. They shared their experiences on the podcast, describing the horrors of the pandemic, and the struggles they faced returning to a closed-down world.
- In the past 12 months, the *Uncuffed* podcast has been downloaded 45,139 times by 26,874 listeners.
- We provided correspondence courses to old and new participants at San Quentin and Solano. The courses include listening assignments to KALW stories and other radio and podcast programs. We provide exclusive interviews with the producers of KALW stories, asking them about their process.



- We partnered with an institutional TV program to broadcast captioned *Uncuffed* stories throughout the California state prison system.
- We formed a Community Advisory Board of formerly incarcerated artists, writers, journalists, and advocates to guide our decision making.
- We were named finalists for the national Local That Works Award.

#### Greg - a case study

Greg Eskridge is an award-winning journalist and a founding member of San Quentin Radio, where he currently serves as a facilitator and mentor. His stories have aired on KALW's Crosscurrents, on Life of the Law, and on Crooked Media.

He co-produced Life of the Law's live storytelling event Stand Up San Quentin, which won a local Emmy with KOED. Greg is a member of the Northern California chapter of the Society for Professional Journalists.

He is also pursuing a college degree and is a facilitator of many self-help groups. As a journalist, his goal is to give incarcerated people a platform to express themselves as well as give the public an accurate account of prison life.

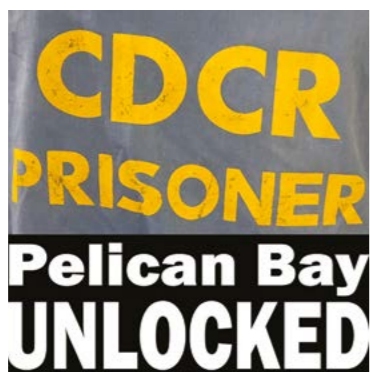
When he is not producing, Greg is living out his basketball dreams. Despite 26 years of incarceration and being 47 years old, Greg still has a little game left.



## USA

### Pelican Bay UNLOCKED

Pelican Bay UNLOCKED is a production of the Audio Journalism classes at Pelican Bay State Prison in California. The classes are part of the Arts In Correction initiative funded by the William James Association. Since 2019, fifteen inmates in the highest security prison in California have been recording their thoughts, discussions, interviews, and poetry in order to “dispel the negative images attributed to prisoners, while displaying the redemptive qualities of our humanity in furtherance of rehabilitation and re-entry.”\*



The changes that have transformed California's prisons over the last six years began with the hunger strikes in the Secured Housing Unit at Pelican Bay. Along with offering inmates a (relatively) unfettered vehicle for general expression, it is very much part of the mission of UNLOCKED to record an oral history of this transformative “awakening” by collecting the stories, voices, and remembrances of the men who were there.



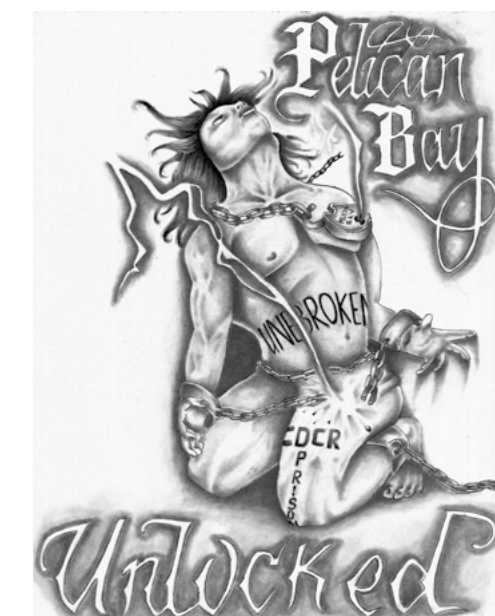
Producing segments highlighting some of the programming available to inmates gives the team the chance to work as journalists - researching, interviewing, editing, writing, and presenting.

We don't have a media room. We have a laptop, a USB mixer, and two SM58s.



- Because we recorded compulsively for the first six months, production has continued during the Covid-19 shutdown, with new episodes being released every six weeks or so.
- UNLOCKED is the only podcast emanating from a Level 4 prison in California.
- Two students have transferred to lower-level prisons and are continuing their personal stories remotely as they move closer to release.
- One student is making a name for himself as a writer and has even been paid for articles.
- To date, the seven episodes of UNLOCKED have gotten more than 12,000 listens and downloads.
- Because of Covid-19 and the difficulty in getting media of any kind inside the wire, there are some students who have yet to hear every episode of UNLOCKED.
- One of our students has been down for thirty-two years. His exploits as a Crip in the '80s were celebrated in rap songs. His prison record includes multiple assaults, assaults on staff, participation in race riots.
- The man from the previous bullet point is one of the nicest, most thoughtful men we've ever met.

**“Where truth meets reality, we are Pelican Bay UNLOCKED...”**



\* “Big” Mike Swanigan, B-Yard, PBSP)

