The mission of the Education Justice Project is to create a model college-in-prison program that demonstrates the positive impacts of higher education upon incarcerated people, their families, the communities from which they come, and society as a whole.

**ejp’s vision**

is a humane and just society, sustained through education and critical awareness.
We are committed to developing strong relationships as a matter of efficiency and integrity. We work at the intersection of two large state systems that ordinarily have little contact, and support the efforts of each to better serve the residents of Illinois. We strive in all our interactions to conduct ourselves with honesty, clarity, and transparency.

This involves critical, rigorous academic offerings within the prison and support to students transitioning out of prison, in order to help ensure their continued success in college and life. EJP also recognizes the multiple impacts of prison education upon incarcerated students’ family members, and will continue to support their interests in pursuing higher education and learning generally.

We acknowledge the reciprocity of learning that takes place within EJP’s prison-based programs, and commit to “bringing it back to campus” by hosting events in Urbana-Champaign that support critical awareness of penal incarceration and criminal justice. Such awareness is necessary to bring about meaningful change to current approaches to crime and violence.

This is a moment of intensified interest in incarceration, criminal justice, sentencing reform, and related issues. EJP members—incarcerated students, alumni, instructors, and others—offer powerful and critical perspectives on these matters, all of which bear on the future of higher education in prison.

EJP supports fundamental, humane change of our current system of incarceration. Accordingly, we will engage discussions and debates around imprisonment and criminal justice, especially those related to prison higher education. We will prioritize cultivating and broadcasting the voices of EJP students and alumni, as their experiences should be central. EJP is committed to helping to shift the narrative around incarceration in the United States.

The lack of a stable funding stream hinders our medium- and long-term planning processes. We will develop strong relationships with external funders who will become committed partners of EJP’s work and strengthen our individual donor base.

The need for varied processes and metrics to aid understanding of the value of postsecondary education in prison has never been higher. Many social goods are served through quality postsecondary prison education. EJP will work to push the conversation beyond recidivism.