

ACLU Minnesota CIVIL LIBERTIES NEWS

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ACLU-MN WINS FREE PRESS SETTLEMENT

MINNESOTA STATE PATROL ATTACKED MEDIA COVERING PROTESTS.



When protesters demonstrated against the police killings of George Floyd and Daunte Wright, journalists from around the world who came to document our pain and rage were met with police violence themselves.

Officers fired hard projectiles, concussive grenades and tear gas at journalists. They beat the media with batons and arrested reporters. They ordered journalists to leave even though curfews exempted the press. All of it was captured on video by media clearly identifying themselves as journalists.

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AMIR LOCKE SHOULD STILL BE ALIVE TODAY.

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Ian Bratlie, Staff Attorney
Julia Burman, Operations Director
Barbara Clare, Finance Director
Ismael Dore, Organizer
Julia Decker, Policy Director
Clare Diegel, Staff Attorney
Karla Esqueda, Organizer
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Julio Zelaya, Community Engagement Director

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HOLDING ONTO RESILIENCY IN THE FACE OF TRAGEDY



Fighting for civil liberties isn't for the faint of heart, and I can't think of a better month to demonstrate that than this February. It was a month of emotional highs and lows. Staff at the ACLU of Minnesota and our communities had to draw on deep wells of resiliency to get through it.

On February 2, Minneapolis police shot and killed Amir Locke. The SWAT team entered on a no-knock warrant. The 22-year-old Black man wasn't listed on the search warrant, wasn't a suspect and didn't even live in the apartment. He was sleeping on his cousin's

couch, wrapped up in blankets. Police entered the apartment without knocking. Nine seconds later, he was dead.

On February 8, the ACLU of Minnesota won a settlement agreement with the Minnesota State Patrol. The \$825,000 settlement is on behalf of journalists who were attacked and arrested by MSP while covering the George Floyd and Daunte Wright protests. The *Goyette* case settlement also includes several policy and procedural changes by MSP that we hope will prevent future attacks against freedom of the press. Journalists covering protests against police violence should never be met with police violence.

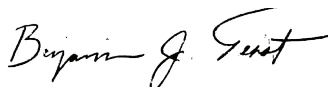
And on February 24, a jury found the three officers who helped Derek Chauvin kill George Floyd guilty of all the federal civil rights charges facing them. Any of the officers could have saved George Floyd. They failed to do so. Now they've all been held accountable for his death.

In all three instances, the ACLU of Minnesota was there - working alongside our allies - in the courts, in our Legislature, and in our communities.

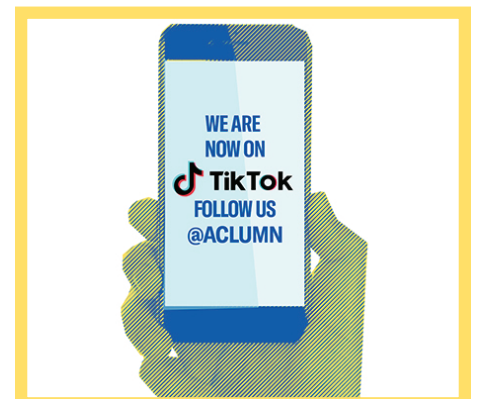
When we achieve a victory like we did for the First Amendment, we take a moment to celebrate. It's part of how we find our resilience for the hard stuff, knowing that more attacks on civil liberties lie ahead.

Another key to our resilience is knowing we have your support as members, volunteers and donors. Knowing that you find this work important and relevant keeps us going, too. Your donations make this work possible.

As we start a new fiscal year, we hope you'll continue your support so we can continue this difficult and essential work. We hope you'll find comfort and resilience in knowing that we'll never stop fighting for your rights and the rights of all Minnesotans.



Benjamin J. Feist
Interim Executive Director



AMIR LOCKE SHOULD STILL BE ALIVE TODAY



Amir Locke was sleeping soundly, nestled in a blanket on a couch, when a team of Minneapolis police officers burst into the apartment just before 7 a.m. Nine seconds later, police fatally shot him.

In the hours and days following yet another police killing in Minnesota, the details started to go public.

We learned that the Minneapolis Police Department was serving a no-knock warrant on behalf of Saint Paul Police, despite a declaration that no-knock tactics were no longer in use. We learned that Locke was not listed in the warrant, or a suspect in the case. We learned that he did not even live in this apartment. He was sleeping on his cousin's couch. Minneapolis police killed him for it.

The more we learn, the worse it gets. And there is so much more to learn. That's why the ACLU of Minnesota filed a request under the state Government Data Practices Act to get additional public information released. We requested that Minneapolis release all information relevant to Amir Locke's killing: all bodycam footage, not just the fraction released so far; all communications about the city's 2021 no-knock warrant restrictions and recent moratorium on the practice, and much more.

Following Locke's killing, the ACLU-MN immediately called for an independent investigation and full transparency. We renewed our call for a full ban on no-knock warrants. These warrants run counter to the duty of police to deescalate and too often end in violence, especially against people of color. We also publicly questioned why MPD insisted upon a no-knock warrant despite the fact that the agency requesting the search, Saint Paul Police, didn't think one was necessary.

The ACLU of Minnesota echoed calls made by the NAACP and other community organizations to fire officer Mark Hanneman, who killed Locke.

The fact that Locke owned, possessed, or handled a gun in the presence of officers is not justification for his killing. A Black man in America has the same rights and privileges afforded to white people, and that extends to legal gun ownership. To us, it appears that Locke was killed because he was a Black man with a gun.

MPD policy requires officers to prioritize the "sanctity of life." If that had happened, Amir Locke would still be alive today. Locke was given no chance to survive. Those officers turned a search warrant into a death warrant.

We've learned a lot about Locke. We know that he was a beloved son. He aspired to become a hip-hop artist and already had designed a logo for his business. He had a loving heart. He was 22.

And so we come back to what we all know: Amir Locke should still be alive.

This refrain resounds too much in Minnesota. Amir Locke should still be alive. Daunte Wright should still be alive. George Floyd should still be alive. Philando Castile should still be alive. Jamar Clark should still be alive. The list of lives lost in our state because of police violence keeps growing, and it disproportionately includes people of color.

We'll keep saying their names and fighting for justice until police start doing their jobs to protect and serve everyone — and stop killing Black people. ■

“WITHOUT A FREE PRESS, WE DON’T HAVE A FREE SOCIETY, AND WE CAN’T HAVE JUSTICE.”

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The extraordinary and unprecedented escalation of unlawful force by the Minnesota State Patrol, Minneapolis Police Department and the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office deliberately targeted journalists. Reporters who have been to war zones said they had never experienced anything like it.

On Feb. 8, the ACLU of Minnesota reached a settlement agreement with the Minnesota State Patrol that awards \$825,000 to our plaintiff journalists and requires several changes to prevent such attacks in the future. It's part of the *Goyette* lawsuit we filed on June 3, 2020 on behalf of the Communications Workers of America and several journalists to protect freedom of the press. The settlement is with the state patrol – the lawsuit continues against the City of Minneapolis, former MPD Chief Medaria Arradondo, former Minneapolis Police union head Robert Kroll, and the Hennepin County Sheriff.

“For me, this lawsuit and settlement is bittersweet - because it is sad that we even needed to do this in the first place. We should have already been protected by the First Amendment, and able to operate without fear of being attacked by security forces for our work,” said plaintiff and video journalist Ed Ou, who was maced in the face and assaulted, requiring stitches. “It sends a signal to security forces that they cannot act with impunity, and there are consequences for their actions.”

Under the settlement, for the next six years, the state patrol and law enforcement acting in concert with them are prohibited from attacking journalists who are reporting on and recording protests. Under the court order, the state patrol is prohibited from:

- Arresting, threatening to arrest, and/or using physical force or chemical agents against journalists.
- Ordering journalists to stop photographing, recording or observing a protest.



(Photo via Instagram/NBC News)

- Making journalists disperse.
- Seizing or intentionally damaging equipment such as photo, audio or video gear.

Other parts of the settlement include:

- Independent expert review of all complaints alleging mistreatment of the media during the protests.
- Issuing body-worn cameras to all troopers by June 2022.

This lawsuit was made possible thanks to the brave journalists who stood up for the First Amendment, and these incredible pro bono attorneys: Kevin Riach, the Law Office of Kevin Riach; Dulce Foster, Karen Schanfield, Pari McGarraugh, Emily McAdam, Marielos Cabrera and Leslie Anderson from Fredrikson & Byron; and Adam Hansen and Colin Reeves, Apollo Law LLC.

“The Court’s ground-breaking injunction will hold state law enforcement accountable and require them to respect the First Amendment, rather than use violence and threats that deter the media from covering protests and police conduct,” said ACLU-MN Legal Director Teresa Nelson. “We need a free press to help us hold the police and government accountable. Without a free press, we don’t have a free society, and we can’t have justice.” ■

NEW FACES

Barbara Clare, Finance Director

Barbara joined the ACLU of Minnesota in November of 2021. She has worked in the Twin Cities nonprofit sector for more than 25 years, including working at CLUES (Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio) and MAP for Nonprofits. Barbara graduated from the State University of New York at Albany with a bachelor's in Spanish and a minor in business. She received her MBA from the American Graduate School of International Management. In her spare time, she likes to experiment in the kitchen with new recipes, and to spend time in her garden or at the beach.

Lily Russ, Executive Assistant and Board Liaison

Lily joined the ACLU of Minnesota in 2021. As executive assistant and board liaison, Lily provides support to the executive director and manages communication between the Board of Directors and ACLU-MN staff, preparing materials and keeping records. She previously worked for Community Dental Care and WomenVenture. Lily received her bachelor's degree in political science and public policy from Gettysburg College. Outside of work, Lily enjoys knitting and hanging out with her dog, Mabel Bagel. She also fosters dogs through a local rescue.

PROMOTIONS

Julio Zelaya

Staff member Julio Zelaya was promoted to Community Engagement Director on January 1, from his previous role as Community Engagement Coordinator.



WE'RE HIRING!

STAFF ATTORNEY

[ACLU-MN.ORG/EN/CAREERS](https://aclu-mn.org/en/careers)

ACLU
Minnesota



A CONVERSATION WITH MONICA IBARRA



ACLU-MN has a phenomenal congregation of volunteers led by our Volunteer Manager, Rodrick Fields. Last year, our volunteers amassed a total of 1,060 hours of service, and they are on track to continue that trend. Our volunteers are an indispensable extension of our team and without them, ACLU-MN could not tackle the breadth of issues, events, and cases that we take on.

This season, we are highlighting Monica Ibarra, one of ACLU-MN's committed volunteers.

Q: Describe your background. This can be anything from where you grew up, your family, career, etc.

A: I'm located in Lowertown, Saint Paul and I love it. I'm an ex-pat from Wisconsin with credentials in education.

Q: Tell me more about your experience working in education.

A: I've only worked in urban classrooms, which is a driving factor in my race and equity work. I shifted to higher education and now work at Mayo Clinic as an equity and inclusion advisor.

Q: What made you become a volunteer with the ACLU of Minnesota?

A: I was an empty nester when I first moved here. That gave me the space to really delve deeper into what I feel is my true self beyond parenting 24/7. I began to engage in difficult topics daily, and that's when the ACLU came into my life about four years ago.

Q: What ACLU-MN volunteer opportunities have you felt were the most impactful?

A: For me, it's the expungement clinics and the difference that makes for so many people. Criminal background history impacts the ability to get work, the ability to get financial aid, ability to live in certain communities or housing, mortgages ... there are a lot of spaces that are affected by that.

Q: Can you dive deeper into that?

A: Coupled with the policies that drive justice and how our laws are written, that ties into systemic racism. Here, in Minnesota, Black men are disproportionately affected.

Q: Which opportunities have been the most memorable for you?

A: Always the Pride parade. I always love being able to have conversations with strangers. I love that ACLU allows people to be vulnerable in public and aware that it's a safe space. Many joyful moments at the Pride parade.

Q: What skills do you often use as an ACLU-MN volunteer?

A: I'm fluent in Spanish. Being able to fill that gap and leverage language to do something so impactful and so important is a gift.

Q: Are there issues that overlap with ACLU-MN and in your personal life?

A: When we're talking about student data privacy, having worked in higher education, but not only that, as a Latina and as an immigrant myself, I work with a lot of Dreamers. Right now, I'm hoping that the push for student data privacy will overlap with supporting Dreamers and their right to privacy.

Q: Where do you see ACLU-MN heading in the future and what would you like to see?

A: Focusing on health equity, I think, if we're talking about systemic racism in Minnesota and we can see that in how COVID has impacted BIPOC communities. I think it's important to acknowledge the role generational trauma has in that too. ■

SUPPORT OUR WORK

It has been a busy year for the ACLU of Minnesota, and there is no sign the pace will let up. We've been fighting against killings by police, for freedom of the press and the freedom to protest, for LGBTQ+, immigrant and reproductive rights, and so much more.

Your support allows us to guard the civil liberties and civil rights of all Minnesotans. Thank you for your donations and membership: Without you, there is no ACLU-MN!

There are so many ways to keep this crucial work going, and we appreciate all that you do to make it happen.

MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT TO THE ACLU OF MINNESOTA FOUNDATION

The best way to immediately support our work is to make a tax-deductible donation to the ACLU of Minnesota Foundation. No matter the amount, tax-deductible donations keep our lights on and support a wide variety of legal and organizational work funded by our 501(c)3.

Just return the enclosed envelope or visit www.aclu-mn.org/donate.

BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO THE ACLU

Membership in the ACLU of Minnesota supports our non-partisan legislative and grassroots advocacy. When you become an ACLU member in Minnesota, you also become a member of the national ACLU. Membership gifts are not tax-deductible.

Head to aclu-mn.org/donate to update your membership status.

HONOR AND REMEMBER SOMEONE SPECIAL BY MAKING A GIFT IN THEIR NAME

A tribute gift to the ACLU of Minnesota Foundation is a meaningful way to honor someone special while helping to protect civil liberties and human rights across our state and nation.

MAKE A DISTRIBUTION THROUGH YOUR DONOR ADVISED FUND

The ACLU of Minnesota Foundation is a 501 (c)3 organization that can receive contributions from donor advised funds. Our tax ID# is 41-6050012.

CONTRIBUTE STOCK

Making a gift of stock is an easy and advantageous way to support the ACLU of Minnesota Foundation. Please visit our website (<https://www.aclu-mn.org/en/stock-donations>) or contact Molly Miller Mons at the number below for instructions on how to donate securities.

MAKE A GIFT THROUGH YOUR IRA

Contact the financial institution that holds your IRA about how to instruct them to make a direct charitable transfer. Instruct them to make a distribution to:

American Civil Liberties Union on Minnesota Foundation
P.O. Box 14720
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Tax ID # 52-1283242

PLAN A LEGACY GIFT

Providing for a future gift to the ACLU of Minnesota can be an opportunity to advance the values that have been most important to you throughout your life. For more information, please return the enclosed envelope or contact Molly Miller Mons, Philanthropy Director via email or phone at:

mmiller@aclu-mn.org

or

612 - 990 - 0048

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

ACLU-MN volunteers participate by visiting lawmakers at the State Capitol, joining us at events like the Pride parade and the State Fair, and working alongside our legal department. Head to aclu-mn.org/en/volunteer to learn more.

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Civil Liberties News
Newsletter of the American Civil Liberties Union of MN Foundation

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SAVE THE DATE

ACLU-MN ANNUAL MEETING

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

9 A.M. CST

STAY CONNECTED



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