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From: WitnessLA: California Justice Report[taylor@witnessla.com]
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Subject: Sisters Rising

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WitnessLA's *Best of the Week*

Sisters Rising - How Justice Involved Young Women Learned to Help Each Other and Themselves: When girls emerge from the juvenile justice system, their reentry challenges are different than those of boys. One San Francisco program called Sisters Rising trains justice-involved young women to advocate for better programs for other young women like themselves and, in so doing, transform their own lives. [WitnessLA](#)

LA County Supes to Approve County's Participation in MacArthur Foundation's Grant-Driven Plot to Reform LA's Jails: Agreeing to the initial round of \$150,000 in grant funds from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation means committing to a plan for jail reform that LA County officials have not previously managed to fully embrace. Then, if the county makes it to the next round of the grant competition, it could get \$2 million a year to implement that jail reform plan. You've heard of Trojan horses? This is a Trojan grant---but one with a very positive purpose in mind. [WitnessLA](#)

Ten LA County Sheriff's Jail Personnel Relieved of Duty Over "Troubling" Report of Inmate Abuse: LA Sheriff Jim McDonnell announced that ten department members working in the county's jail system had been relieved of duty pending an investigation of a report of "troubling" inmate abuse that allegedly occurred last month. [WitnessLA](#)

Girls and the Abuse-to-Prison-Pipeline: Across the nation, abused young girls are incarcerated at much higher rates than girls who have not been abused, according to a report. In California, as many as 81% of girls in the juvenile justice system have been victims of physical or sexual abuse (or both), and their common reactions to abuse (like truancy, possession of drugs and alcohol, and running away) are often criminalized. [WitnessLA](#)

LA County District Attorney and Former CA Senate Prez Honored for

Mental Health Efforts: LA County DA Jackie Lacey and former CA Senate Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg were honored by the National Association on Mental Illness for their work toward decriminalization of mental illness and increased community-based supports and programs for the mentally ill and their families.

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Finding LA's Child Welfare Czar: The LA County Board of Supervisors interviewed candidates to lead the Office of Child Protection, as recommended by a blue ribbon commission convened to jump-start much-needed reform efforts in the county's child welfare system. [WitnessLA](#)

Protecting CA's Foster Kids: A report from the California State Auditor says the CA Dept. of Social Services is not doing enough to protect vulnerable foster kids from sexual exploitation, and may be spending millions placing kids with costly foster care agencies instead of licensed foster homes. [WitnessLA](#)

CA Supremes Rule on Police Privacy v. Defendants' Rights: The CA Supreme Court ruled that defense attorneys don't need any extra help from prosecutors in gaining the limited access that the law allows to the disciplinary records of police officers---even if a prosecutor believes the records would likely be of exculpatory value to the defendant. [WitnessLA](#)

...And from Around the Web

SoCal

Wrongful Death Lawsuits Against Riverside County Sheriff's Dept. Cost Taxpayers Millions: Riverside County has coughed up at least \$8.4 million since 2003, settling wrongful death lawsuits after fatal officer-involved shootings. That number doesn't include litigation costs or non-fatal shooting settlements. Between 2004-2014, Riverside has averaged 14.6 officer-involved shootings per year, in comparison to San Diego's 3.9 and OC's 2.3. [Riverside Press-Enterprise](#)

San Diego County Agrees to Pay \$1 Million to Family of Man with Down Syndrome Who Was Beaten By a Deputy: The San Diego Supervisors agree to a \$1 million settlement after a deputy pepper sprayed and beat a man with the mental capacity of a seven-year-old. [LA Times](#)

LAPD Shootings Up 21% Over Recent Years: Twenty people were shot by Los Angeles police officers during the first half of 2015, in comparison to around 15 to 16 during the first six months of recent years. [KPCC](#)

NorCal

San Francisco's Immigrant Sanctuary Law Might Not Be to Blame in High-Profile Killing: After Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, an undocumented immigrant, allegedly shot and killed Kathryn Steinle in San Francisco, the city's

sanctuary law---which protects undocumented immigrants from deportation---came under fire and became a national topic of debate. The SF Sheriff's Department had refused an ICE request to detain Lopez-Sanchez several months ago. But there's not much evidence that the sanctuary law is to blame for the brutal killing, according to Daniel Denvir. [CityLab \(The Atlantic\)](#)

An Alameda County Public Defender Says Public Defenders Are an "Untapped Resource" in the Conversation About Improving Police-Community Relations: Because public defenders represent 80% of everyone arrested in every municipality, they have a unique and extremely valuable perspective, and should be called on to help improve relations between law enforcement officers and the communities they serve, says a public defender in Alameda County. [KQED](#)

An Inmate at CA State Prison, Solano Was Found Sawed Nearly in Half and Missing Many Organs 15 Hours After a Riot: The gruesome death of 24-year-old Nicholas Anthony Rodriguez raises serious questions about the security of a Northern California prison in which an inmate can acquire a weapon capable of such an act, and a disemboweled body can remain undiscovered for 15 hours. [Associated Press](#)

Statewide

Most Elected Prosecutors in the US Are White Men: Of the states that elect prosecutors, 66% have no black prosecutors, according to a report by the Women Donors Network. A whopping 95% of 2437 elected prosecutors are white, and 79% are men. [NY Times](#) **CA's Attorney General Kamala Harris Is Among the 1% of Elected Prosecutors Who Are Women of Color:** Andrea Dew Steele, who founded Emerging America, a training program for female democrats running for office in NorCal, notes that part of the problem may be lack of available resources and training. [Huffington Post](#)

Bills to Protect CA Foster Kids from Over-Drugging by Doctors: Four bills currently in the CA Assembly would task juvenile courts and child welfare agencies with keeping doctors from unnecessarily prescribing psychotropic drugs to foster kids, after Karen de Sa's powerful investigative series exposed excessive and unchecked drugging of foster children across the state. [San Jose Mercury News](#)

CA's Foster Kids to Get Better Services and Support in Community Colleges: An allocated \$15 million in the CA budget will fund counseling, mental health services, tutoring, mentoring, help with housing, and school supplies for current and former foster kids in community colleges. [The Chronicle of Social Change](#)

Bill to Protect People Who Record Cops Advances in CA Legislature: The California Assembly has approved a bill that will protect people who are appropriately recording law enforcement in public from getting charged with a crime. [Associated Press](#)

Nationwide

Training Program Teaches Mid-Career Cops When to Be A "Guardian" and When to Be a "Warrior": A program called Street Survival teaches cops the importance of improvisation, judging situations, de-escalation, and knowing when to shoot. [Bloomberg](#)

Newspapers for Inmates in Illinois: A federal judge ruled that banning Cook County inmates from reading newspapers is a violation of the First Amendment. [Chicago Sun Times](#)

NY State Attorney General Will Be Special Prosecutor for Cases Involving Fatal Shootings by Cops: NY Gov. Andrew Cuomo tapped NY Attorney General Eric Schneiderman to be the special prosecutor for officer-involved fatal shootings. The idea is that the state AG would not have conflict of interest that local prosecutors who work closely with law enforcement might have. [Wall Street Journal](#)

Nine Lesser-Known Facts About Parole: Here's a quick and interesting list of answers to questions about how parole works. For instance, a prisoner has no rights during a parole board hearing, and parole boards don't even always meet a person up for parole. [The Marshall Project](#)



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