



MUSIC ON THE INSIDE

Harmony and Hope in Criminal Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 3, 2021

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MOTI RECEIVES \$75,000 IN PROGRAM SUPPORT FROM THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

New York, N.Y. – Today, [Music on the Inside \(MOTI\)](#), a nonprofit that connects youth and adults impacted by incarceration with professional musicians as teachers and mentors, announced the award of a \$75,000 grant funded by the New York State Council on the Arts to support the organization’s long-term sustainability. The program grant will be distributed over three years and is intended to allow continued growth as the organization continues to expand its reach and serve more men, women and children in re-entry.

“This grant means so much for MOTI at this time when the country is finally awake to the inequity of our criminal justice system and so many musicians want to help,” says Alina Bloomgarden, the Executive Director and Founder of MOTI.

This announcement comes just after the organization has had its 70th *Music While We’re Inside* concert, celebrating the over 500 musicians who have come together to support MOTI’s mission of bringing hope and healing to those who have been impacted by the criminal justice system. The concerts, which will be rebranded as *Musicians for Justice* in the new year, were a response to the Covid pandemic as MOTI pivoted to serving those in re-entry. The concerts, once weekly, are now on a monthly schedule and showcase top jazz musicians alongside formerly incarcerated musicians.

This is a critical moment in MOTI’s history as the organization continues to expand its programming into communities impacted by incarceration. The organization has just announced two new community programs for court impacted youth which will be started in the new year: “Bars Beyond Bars,” where participants write their own songs and work side by side with a professional producer to create professionally-produced recordings. “Beats in Your Feet,” where students will learn to hoof and tap with a world-class Broadway and jazz dancer.

“Prison is a punitive environment which often reinforces a sense of inadequacy and defeat. Over 95% will be released and need confidence and self-respect to face their challenges and make better decisions. Music is the great connector and our one-on-one music mentorships have been so transformative. You play music together and you’re just human beings making music and that sense of presence and heart-to-heart human connection is so needed,” says Bloomgarden.

For more information, please contact Krystin Roehl, Operations and Education Manager, at krystinroehl@gmail.com or 703-832-5269

About Music on the Inside

[Music on the Inside \(MOTI\)](#), a 6-year-old nonprofit, connects youth and adults impacted by incarceration with professional musicians as teachers and mentors to bring hope and healing through the transformative power of music.