On April 9, 2018, United States District Court Judge Goldsmith issued an important decision in Hill v Snyder. This is a case brought in federal court back in 2010 by the ACLU and Ms. LaBelle on behalf of juvenile lifers in Michigan as a class. When the law was changed following the Supreme Court’s decision in Montgomery v Louisiana, plaintiffs amended their suit to challenge various provisions of the new juvenile lifer law in Michigan, MCL 769.25a.

First, Judge Goldsmith granted class certification. This means that all current and former juvenile lifers are now plaintiffs in Hill v Snyder. In other words, you and all other juvenile lifers will benefit from any favorable decisions in the case.

The other big issue Judge Goldsmith had to consider was whether a portion of MCL 769.25a violated the ex post facto clause by denying good time and/or disciplinary credits to juvenile lifers whose offenses occurred before December 15, 1998. Judge Goldsmith ruled that this portion of MCL 769.25a is unconstitutional and should not apply to juvenile lifers whose offenses occurred before December 15, 1998.

Judge Goldsmith ordered the MDOC to calculate the good time and/or disciplinary credit for all juvenile lifers who have already been resentenced. He also ordered the MDOC to calculate the good time and/or disciplinary credit within seven days of any future juvenile lifer resentencings.

This decision does not apply to those juvenile lifers whose offenses were committed after December 15, 1998. At that time, Michigan eliminated good time and disciplinary credit for all people who committed offenses from that time on.

Judge Goldsmith’s decision is great news, but the attorney general plans to appeal this decision and ask the higher courts to stay or delay Judge Goldsmith’s order until the appeal is over. That means the decision could potentially be overruled. It also means it could be some time before the decision goes into effect.

What does this mean for former juvenile lifers who have since been released on parole? Depending on how much good time and/or disciplinary credit you have, it is possible you could be eligible to discharge from parole early. Whether early discharge is a possibility for you depends on your institutional record and whether the attorney general is able to get Judge Goldsmith’s order stayed. If you have questions about your individual situation, you should contact your current or former attorney for advice.
Ray Howell is spending most of his time looking for jobs. When he’s not doing that, he’s spending time talking with his family and going to the movies.

**SUCCESES SINCE RELEASE**

Being back in it: getting all forms of identification, a car, hunting for a job—not letting rejection get him down, but using it as motivation to work harder.

**STRUGGLES SINCE RELEASE**

Finding a job, navigating county-by-county resources. Trying to “put it all together” and pick up the missing pieces. Family has been a big supporter, but he’s working toward independence.

**MESSAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY**

“What I’m running into right now is knowing when to remove myself from a situation, knowing that it will hurt me financially. Balancing financial well-being with mental health has been a constant struggle. I try not to worry too much, but it’s hard not to doubt yourself; but, I still get up in the morning, praying and hoping, and believing I’m ready for the next thing. Never settle for less, always strive for more. All in all, I’m good, I’m blessed, I’m grateful. Spending more time with my mother is my biggest inspiration—my wife and children, too. I’m proud of them, they support me. If you have good people around you, surround yourself with them.”

In order to continue to receive benefits, you must notify your case manager about the following two scenarios, if applicable.

- **If you have gained employment since receiving benefits**, you must submit pay stubs to a case manager at MDHHS. Call and talk with the counselor to learn how to do this. Make sure you have your case number on hand.

- **If you have moved from the address you were paroled to**, you need to submit a change of address form to a case manager at MDHHS. You will need to know your case number for the form.

Not doing these two things could result in a loss of benefits.

Please contact Project Reentry if you need assistance with either process. Not submitting this form will result in a loss of benefits. If you are having further issues, contact Lakeshore Legal Aid at (888) 783-8190.

**Hobbies & Interests**

Ray Howell is spending most of his time looking for jobs. When he’s not doing that, he’s spending time talking with his family and going to the movies.

**Successes since release**

Being back in it: getting all forms of identification, a car, hunting for a job—not letting rejection get him down, but using it as motivation to work harder.

**Struggles since release**

Finding a job, navigating county-by-county resources. Trying to “put it all together” and pick up the missing pieces. Family has been a big supporter, but he’s working toward independence.

**Message for the community**

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On March 27th, 2018 Mr. Edward Sanders was invited to the University of Michigan School of Social Work to speak to students in a community and social systems class. Prior to the speech, students discussed reform efforts including prison abolition, drug courts, Raise the Age, and restorative practices while Mr. Sanders waited patiently to share his experience.

Mr. Sanders began his speech with honesty and boldness, stating “I’ve waited 43 years to be here so I hope no one has plans to go anywhere soon”. This statement initially grasped the class’s attention but Mr. Sanders’s personal story and inside knowledge of the system held it. For most students, this was the first time they heard first-hand knowledge about America’s prison system and what Mr. Sanders shared was, as he stated, “not academic”. Mr. Sanders’s offered the class insights on good time policies, youth sentencing, maltreatment of people with mental illness in prison, aging in prison, and the injustices held up by the 13th Amendment.

One student asked, “what can we do as social workers?”, in reference to challenging the injustices of the criminal justice system. Leaving the class with something to remember, Mr. Sanders asked that social workers always look beyond the crime and never stop seeing the good in humanity. University of Michigan students applauded Mr. Sanders’s unforgettable speech and thanked him for his time, with recognition that he waited 43 years to be there.

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**SIMPLYHIRED.COM**
Job-search website with felony-friendly job listings. Not all jobs listed are felony-friendly. Be sure to look at job requirements to see if employers do background checks and/or they are felony-exempt employers.

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**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT LAB**
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- Instruction and resources for trainees in workforce development programs

Call (313) 451-8055 to enroll in free classes or drop in during open lab hours from 3-5pm, Monday-Thursday.
Locations:
- 8640 Vernor Highway, Detroit, MI
- OR 4214 Vernor Highway, Detroit, MI

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**GET COOKING!**
**LAYERED ENCHILADA CASSEROLE**
A hearty and satisfying “Mexican lasagna” that comes together quickly.

- 2 pounds lean ground beef
- 1 large onion
- 1/4 cup chili powder
- 1 jalapeño chili, chopped
- 12 corn tortillas
- 1 15-ounce can chili beans
- 1 1/2 cups grated sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 14 1/2-ounce cans of Mexican style stewed tomatoes

Preheat oven to 350°. Butter 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish. Sauté beef and onion in large pan over high heat until brown, about 10 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Mix in chili powder and jalapeño and sauté 5 minutes. Season mixture with salt and pepper.

Overlap 6 tortillas on bottom of baking dish, covering completely. Spoon beef mixture, then beans evenly over tortillas. Cover with remaining 6 tortillas. Sprinkle cheese over the top. Pour tomatoes with their juices over cheese. Bake until casserole is heated through and bubbling at edges, about 1 hour.

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**HAVE QUESTIONS OR SOMETHING TO CONTRIBUTE?**
Send your letter to:
PROJECT REENTRY
STATE APPELLATE DEFENDER OFFICE
645 GRISWOLD, SUITE 3300
DETROIT, MI 48226

Call:
THE STATE APPELLATE DEFENDER OFFICE
(313) 256-9833
and ask for a Project Reentry Team Member
or e-mail:
REENTRY@sado.org
I am completing my first year of graduate school so my field placement with SADO is coming to an end!

Future Plans
I will be studying abroad in Norway and Sweden this summer and plan to see family during my summer break before I go back to school in the fall.

What you’ll miss most about SADO
I will miss Y’ALL, the clients. We do this for all of you and knowing that we have possibly helped you in some way or another is the most important thing to me.

Message to the community
“Seek to have a hard head and a soft heart. Having a hard head means being mentally tough, courageous, disciplined, and perseverant in the face of obstacles. At the same time, a hard head is best accompanied by a soft heart—by compassion, empathy, and understanding...A hard head without a soft heart can lead to cruelty or a survival of the fittest mentality. A soft heart without a hard head can be overindulgent, condescending, and even patronizing.”

- City Year Wisdom

I am leaving so that I can focus on my last few classes for my undergrad at Wayne State.

Future Plans
After graduation, I plan to take a year off to focus on studying for the LSAT and apply to law schools.

What you’ll miss most about SADO
Prior to my internship at SADO, I had never worked anywhere related to what I wanted to do in my future. I am so grateful for the opportunity to work with everyone and for how helpful everyone was. This was truly an amazing experience and has helped me to be sure that I am going in the right direction with my career.

Message to the community
I would like to thank everyone who I have come into contact with while working on Project Reentry. I have learned so much from everyone and have had my eyes opened to just how many people are willing to help you, if you just ask.

I am done with the first term of my program, so my field placement at SADO is ending.

Future Plans
Become a juvenile public defender.

What you’ll miss most about SADO
Working with awesome people!

Detroit’s first ride of 2018 is scheduled for May 7th!

Slow Roll is a community of bike riders that take different tours throughout Detroit.

Rides will happen almost every Monday, May-October.

For more information, go to www.slowroll.bike

The beautiful struggle
by Ta-Nehisi Coates
An exceptional father-son story about the reality that tests us, the myths that sustain us, and the love that saves us.
Available at your local library or on Amazon

Released from prison on good behavior, ex-con Tray falls back on skills he learned in prison to support himself on his kids.

Tuesdays at 10:30 pm on TBS

On juvenile incarceration, childhood trauma, alternatives to incarceration, and rehabilitation. You can access the episode on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=164&v=yq3uVJQN8Gw

A podcast about the invisible things that influence our behavior.