

CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS AT THE CONSTITUTION UNCORKED

This year, our annual fundraising gala, “The Constitution Uncorked,” celebrated ACLU-TN’s fiftieth anniversary in Tennessee! After toasting to our past half-century, Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to the Honorable Johnnie R. Turner and activist Sally Levine, who both inspired the crowd as they shared heartfelt words of wisdom about their lifetimes of championing civil rights and civil liberties. Guests also enjoyed a special performance from Ari Afsar, singer-songwriter and star of the Chicago production of “Hamilton.” Thank you to all of our sponsors and guests who joined us for a special night — here’s to fifty more years of defending freedom and fairness in Tennessee!



As 2018 draws to a close, let us reflect on the words of venerated civil rights icon Coretta Scott King: No fight for freedom ever stays won. Instead, we must earn it and win it in every generation.

In Tennessee, we have been fighting for and earning our freedom for fifty years now.

It was in 1968 — half a century ago — that ACLU-TN's fight began. And now, as we celebrate fifty years fighting for freedom and fairness in our state, King's words have never rung more true.

When we began the fight, our country was just a few years and one presidential administration away from implementation of the War on Drugs, the insidious and systemic racism of which ballooned our prison and criminal justice systems. Today, one of ACLU-TN's priorities is unravelling the resulting mass incarceration crisis that has bloated our nation's prisons and trapped generations of Tennesseans in the seemingly unescapable maze of the criminal justice system.

When we began the fight, a generation of heroes had just succeeded in winning the Voting Rights Act, in some cases giving the ultimate sacrifice to preserve the universal right to vote. Today, with those protections stripped away by the Supreme Court's 2013 decision in *Shelby v. Holder*, we are still fighting to protect the cornerstone of our democracy from attempts to suppress vulnerable voters and create ever more barriers to the ballot box

When we began the fight, we were on the prec-

ipice of winning the right to choose with *Roe v. Wade*. Today, with the appointment of Brett Kavanaugh to the highest court in the land, we steel ourselves for yet another fight of a lifetime over a woman's right to have an abortion without government interference.

And when we began the fight, ACLU was on the ground in Memphis, working to protect the striking sanitation workers' right to protest without fear of retaliation. Today, that fight continues with our landmark government surveillance case, *Blanchard v. Memphis* — a fitting end to our golden anniversary year and a perfect encapsulation that our freedoms must be won and secured by each succeeding generation.

As we reflect on where we have been in the past fifty years — both the progress we've made and the way history too often seems to repeat itself — we are heartened by the words made famous by one of ACLU's clients, and Coretta Scott King's husband, Dr. Martin Luther King: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

We have been honored to keep fighting — aided every step of the way by generation after generation of our supporters, members and allies — for the past half a century. As the year draws to a close, we hope that you will consider helping us continue our fight by donating to ACLU-TN at www.aclu-tn.org/give/.

Thank you for standing with us for the past fifty years. Here's to fifty more.



ACLU-TN TIMELINE: FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM AND FAIRNESS FOR THE PAST FIFTY YEARS

ACLU's first lawsuit in Tennessee took place in 1925 when we, aided by legendary attorney Clarence Darrow, defended teacher John Scopes' right to teach evolution in the famous Scopes Monkey Trial. The state affiliate, the ACLU of Tennessee, was founded in 1968. Since then, the timeline of our work, litigation and advocacy shows clearly how ACLU-TN became a powerful force for justice and equality in Tennessee.

1960s

1968 FREE SPEECH/RACIAL JUSTICE ACLU intervenes to protect Rev. Martin Luther King's right to protest during the Memphis sanitation workers' strike

1970s

1971 VOTING RIGHTS | The Supreme Court of the United States strikes down Tennessee's one-year residency requirement to vote in *Dunn v. Blumstein*, in which ACLU is co-counsel

1978 FREE SPEECH/GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE | We secure a landmark consent decree barring Memphis police from spying on political protesters

1979 PRISONERS' RIGHTS | With Legal Services of Nashville and the ACLU Prison Project, ACLU-TN for the first time in the nation convinces a state judge to declare prison conditions unconstitutional

1980s

1982 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM | We successfully challenge the "Silent Prayer Act," the first time a "silent moment" law is struck down

1982 VOTING RIGHTS | We prove that Chattanooga's at-large election scheme was intentionally designed to be racially discriminatory and violates the Voting Rights Act

1985 CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM | ACLU-TN and AFSCME lead opposition to prison privatization legislation, particularly concerning the Corrections Corporation of America's (now CoreCivic) proposal to purchase the entire Tennessee prison system

1986 PRIVACY | We successfully challenge the unconstitutional mandatory drug testing of Chattanooga police officers

1987 FREE SPEECH | ACLU-TN launches our Anti-Censorship Campaign to counter censorship attempts in public schools and libraries

1990s

1990 FREE SPEECH | We successfully challenge a Memphis statute prohibiting parents, performers and producers from "knowingly" allowing minors in certain concerts

1990 FREE SPEECH | ACLU-TN successfully argues in Tennessee Supreme Court that the state's obscenity statute's ban on "excessive violence" in books, magazines and videos is unconstitutional

1992 REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE | ACLU-TN and the ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project protect procreational autonomy and oppose "life begins at conception" language in the landmark "frozen embryo" case *Davis v. Davis*

1992 VOTING RIGHTS | We defend eligible voters in Chattanooga and Knoxville whose registrations were wrongly rejected without due process

1996 REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE | We challenge Tennessee's parental consent statute in *Planned Parenthood of Memphis v. Sundquist*

2000s

2000 LGBTQ EQUALITY | We draft legislation and work to pass a new law which, for the first time, includes sexual orientation as a protected category in a state statute

2000 - 2005 RACIAL JUSTICE | In our Campaign Against Racial Profiling, we successfully pursue several anti-racial profiling laws regarding police traffic stops and racial data collection

2000 REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE | We convince the Tennessee Supreme Court to overturn several abortion regulations, including waiting periods, biased counseling and hospitalization for second trimester abortions

2000 VOTING RIGHTS | ACLU-TN and the Rural West Tennessee African-American Affairs Council prove that a Tennessee House of Representatives districting plan violated the Voting Rights Act

2002 - 2004 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM | In a series of lawsuits, we ensure removal of the Ten Commandments posted in Hamilton, Rutherford and Monroe County courthouses

2004 LGBTQ EQUALITY | With the National ACLU Lesbian and Gay Rights Project, we convince the Tennessee Court of Appeals to reverse its decision upholding a restraining order that prohibited a father from "exposing" his son to a "gay lifestyle"

2006 VOTING RIGHTS | We challenge the state's voter restoration law, arguing in federal court that people who complete felony sentences should not have to pay all restitution and child support in order to restore their right to vote

2006 LGBTQ EQUALITY | The court finds ACLU-TN's clients lack standing in our lawsuit challenging Tennessee's "Marriage Protection Amendment," which defines marriage as between a man and a woman (cont. on p. 4)



Tennessee

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(cont. from p. 3) **ACLU-TN TIMELINE: FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM FOR THE PAST FIFTY YEARS**

2007 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM | ACLU-TN intervenes for a Wilson County family who had to homeschool their child after repeated religious activities at school

2008 DEATH PENALTY | ACLU Capital Punishment Project helps a Tennessee inmate with severe mental illness receive a life sentence rather than the death penalty

2009 FAIR TREATMENT OF IMMIGRANTS | ACLU-TN co-founds “Nashville for All of Us” and successfully mobilizes opposition to defeat an English-only ballot initiative

2009 FREE SPEECH | We successfully sue to stop Knox and Davidson County schools from blocking websites containing information about LGBTQ issues

2010s

2011 FREE SPEECH | ACLU-TN successfully sues to protect Occupy Nashville protesters who had been arrested due to a law passed in secret by the state

2012 GENDER EQUALITY | We defend a Memphis Fire Department employee who faced employee discrimination for requesting privacy and access to a sanitary room to pump breast milk

2012 FREE SPEECH | A judge dismisses our case defending *The Contributor* vendors’ right to sell their newspapers in Brentwood, Tennessee

2015 FAIR TREATMENT OF IMMIGRANTS | ACLU-TN secures monetary reimbursement and seven-year deferred action status for 15 clients in a lawsuit against ICE and Metro Nashville police, who illegally raided an apartment complex home to mostly Latino residents

2018 PRISONERS’ RIGHTS/JUVENILE JUSTICE | In two class action lawsuits, we sue the state for failing to provide adequate treatment to prisoners with Hepatitis C and Rutherford County Juvenile Detention Center to stop putting children in solitary

2018 FREE SPEECH/GOVERNMENT SURVEILLANCE | ACLU-TN proves in federal court that the Memphis police department violated our 1978 consent decree by, once again, spying on political protestors