

AFJ INSIDER



Dear Friend,

As you may have seen, if you follow us on our social media (if you do not, please do so on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)) or receive other emails from AFJ, on August 7, 2024, we celebrated the 45th anniversary of Alliance for Justice's founding. I doubt that when Nan Aron founded the Alliance in 1979, she could have imagined the legacy of this storied organization OR that we would be fighting, just as hard, 45 years later.

AFJ was founded to counter threats from the far right to roll back decades of progressive advances in the United States. Eerily, we're in a very similar time.

But AFJ FIGHTS ON – building and confirming its tremendous legacy.
Whether it's:

- ✓ leading the coalition to confirm Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first Black female Supreme Court Justice or successfully leading the charge in the 80s against the confirmation of Robert Bork;
- ✓ playing a crucial coordinating and behind-the-scenes role in encouraging and advocating for hundreds of demographically and professionally diverse jurists to join the federal and state judiciary;
- ✓ training thousands of nonprofits and tens of thousands of advocates and activists on how to engage in more powerful advocacy; or
- ✓ amplifying the impact of our now-130+ member organizations, diverse in mission but united in our commitment to justice and democracy

AFJ's impact can be felt in court rooms across the country, on the steps of the Supreme Court, and in small towns and cities in every state where folks are empowered to boldly advance their social justice goals and nonprofit missions.

AFJ supporters get the satisfaction of knowing that with each gift, they are not only supporting AFJ, but also supporting the work of hundreds of nonprofits annually who benefit from AFJ's Bolder Advocacy program and/or through their Membership in Alliance for Justice.

It is only through the longstanding generosity of our supporters who value and want justice to be their legacy that AFJ is here to celebrate our 45th Birthday. **Do you want JUSTICE to be your LEGACY?** As you may know, August is National Make Your Will month. Alliance for Justice has partnered with FreeWill.com to allow our donors and supporters to easily include AFJ in their estate plans, making justice their legacy. Help ensure that AFJ is around for the next 45 years. [Details here](#) and also below.

Onward to the next 45,

Keith Thirion

Vice President of Strategy, Interim Co-President



Our Impact

Federal Courts

Two weeks ago, the Biden-Harris administration announced support for Supreme Court reform, echoing AFJ's long-standing call for action. With over half of Americans disapproving of the Court's work and recent revelations of misconduct by Justices Thomas and Gorsuch, the urgency for reform is clear. Our interim co-president, Keith highlighted in his blog for Ms. Magazine, [Reforming the Supreme Court Should Be Commonplace](#), that the Biden-Harris administration's proposed reforms offer a critical chance to not only hold the third branch of government accountable, but advocate for broader reforms like court expansion, a gifts ban, and jurisdiction stripping as well.

In the broader judicial landscape, the Senate recently confirmed Stacey Neumann, Meredith Vacca, and Joseph Saporito Jr., bringing Biden's total confirmations to 205. Neumann brings professional diversity, and Saporito was a priority nominee due to his nearly 30 years of service as a public defender before joining the bench. With 33 pending nominees on the calendar, including six circuit court nominees, it is vital that the Senate acts swiftly to confirm them once back in session. Among those awaiting confirmation are several nominees who would bring much needed professional diversity to the bench, including Karla Campbell (6th Circuit), Adeel Mangi (3rd Circuit), Sarah Russell (D. Conn.), Judge Mustafa Kasubhai (D. Or.), and Amir Ali (D.D.C.).

For a deeper understanding of the judicial nominations process, check out our latest blog, "[10 Things You Might Not Know About Judicial Nominations](#)," written by one of our Dorot fellows, Brianna Davis. She explains how the 890 Article III judges, appointed for life, shape our legal landscape in profound yet often overlooked ways. As we push for reform, recognizing the impact of these lifetime appointments is crucial.

State Courts

AFJ's State Courts team is also following several upcoming leadership changes to state supreme courts around the nation. This year, over 80 seats are up for election across 33 states. Do you know if your state is holding an election for your state supreme court? Find out [here](#)!

In vacancy and election news, Connecticut Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard Robinson is set to retire in September; Indiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Loretta Rush is seeking a third term as chief justice; and after the Alaska Judicial Council closed applications on July 24, the council began its screening and public vetting process. There will be a crowded election for Mississippi Supreme Court District 1, with five candidates on the ballot. Justices filed for retention in Utah and Iowa. Learn everything you need to know in our [Vacancies and Elections update](#) here.

Explore recent cases from around the country impacting crucial issues, including criminal procedure, education, environmental protections, executive authority, firearm restrictions, housing rights, LGBTQ+ rights, public records access, reproductive rights, statutory interpretation, and voting rights. [Find out all about these important decisions here!](#)

Bolder Advocacy

Earlier this year, Bolder Advocacy released the 5th Edition of The Connection, a guide for 501(c)(3)s, 501(c)(4)s, and Political Organizations. Since then, exciting new developments have emerged, with an [FEC advisory opinion](#) impacting the work of some organizations engaged in door-to-door canvassing activities. For more details, [download your free copy](#) of The Connection and refer to a [client memo](#) by Trister, Ross, Schadler & Gold, PLLC for an in-depth analysis.

Like summer, GOTV efforts are heating up on all fronts. Our Bolder Advocacy Program Director, Natalie Roetzel Ossenfort, joined the [Center for Effective Philanthropy](#) to outline how foundations can support their grantees as they look to ensure that all eligible voices are heard during the 2024 general election. With the rise of artificial intelligence in elections, our Brittany Hacker and Alexandra Roseberry's [latest blog](#) equips nonprofits with a few tools to safeguard against the misuse of AI heading into the November election. Lastly, catch our latest Rules of the Game [podcast](#) episodes where we explore [student advocacy](#); discuss [politically motivated attacks](#); and uncover [campaign finance reporting](#). Let's make our voices heard!



Membership & Outreach

We're excited to welcome our newest member organizations, and we'd like to shine a light on two of them.

Wisconsin Muslim Civic Alliance (WMCA), founded in 2019, is dedicated to empowering the Muslim community and its allies in civic engagement, democracy, and related issues. Since its inception, WMCA has endorsed over 120 candidates, mobilized thousands of Muslim voters, hosted impactful events, conducted national fundraisers, and engaged with elected officials across Wisconsin.

Community Initiatives serves as a thought partner and offers professional services to nonprofit startups, established initiatives, networks, and collaborations. Their mission is to sponsor projects that benefit communities and drive social change.

Celebrating 45 Years of Impact

OUR HISTORY OF Building Power, Transforming Courts, and Securing **Justice for All**

AFJ's journey began in **1979**, when Nan Aron created the nonprofit to combat modern era of court-packing under Ronald Reagan.

						
1987	1991	1992 - 2001	Mid 2000s	2009 - 2010	2018	2022
We stood against Robert Bork's extreme SCOTUS nomination, protecting decades of progress. AFJ has always been on the front lines of defending our rights.	AFJ brought Anita Hill's story to light during Clarence Thomas's nomination, highlighting the issue of sexual harassment in the national spotlight.	AFJ launches the Bolder Advocacy program to combat Reagan-era attacks on nonprofit advocacy. AFJ supported nominations of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, and Roger Gregory.	AFJ opposed nominations of John Roberts and Samuel Alito, who posed threats to civil liberties. Our fight for a just judiciary never wavers.	During the Obama era, AFJ backed Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan, reinforcing our commitment to progressive jurisprudence.	We led the charge against Brett Kavanaugh's nomination, emphasizing the need for a judiciary that upholds justice and equality for all.	AFJ played a pivotal role in supporting Ketanji Brown Jackson's historic Supreme Court nomination, marking a new era of representation and inclusion.

What's Coming Up

What will your legacy be? August is National Make a Will Month.

Many AFJ supporters designate a gift in their will or revocable living trust to support our work, for years to come. These gifts cost nothing today but make a lasting difference for justice for future generations. Use FreeWill's free estate planning tool to easily create your plan and legacy at no cost to you. [Get started here.](#)

Important Dates

- ✓ **August 26:** Anniversary of the 19th Amendment
- ✓ **August 26:** Women's Equality Day
- ✓ **August 28:** Anniversary of the March on Washington
- ✓ **September 15-October 15:** Hispanic Heritage Month
- ✓ **September 17:** National Voter Registration Day
- ✓ **September 26:** *How Nonprofits Add 501(c)(4)s to Expand their Movement Impact* feat. Bolder Advocacy Director, **Natalie Roetzel Ossenfort**. [Click here to register!](#)

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