

# ACLU *of* MONTANA

SPRING 2017

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## SPEAKING FREELY

by Caitlin Borgmann,  
Executive Director

A lot of people are wondering how the ACLU has changed since the election of President Trump. The media has reported on how much money the National ACLU has raised and how many new members it has. Are we changing as we grow? Have our priorities shifted?

As Legal Director David Cole put it at the recent ACLU Nationwide Staff Conference, "It isn't so much that the ACLU has changed, but that the world has changed around us." How has the world changed? To be sure, racism, sexism, and hostility to immigrants and other marginalized groups were alive and well before the election. But the Trump Administration is adopting and promoting official policies that pose challenges to civil liberties unprecedented in recent history. While in some ways 9/11 was a similarly game-changing time for the ACLU, the Trump presidency poses a bigger threat to a much broader array of individual rights and liberties. Moreover, Trump's rhetoric toward women, people with disabilities, immigrants, and others has emboldened people to spew hateful bigotry and white supremacist views with a gusto that has shocked those who assumed we live in a "post-racial society." Montana has been no exception. These attacks – both the official and the unofficial – on vulnerable members of our society strike directly at the communities the ACLU represents.

Although we are still the same ACLU, we've been able to evolve in light of these changes. We have always been and remain an organization whose mission is to protect and enhance individual freedom, dignity, and autonomy. We will continue to combine litigation, legislative and policy advocacy, and communications to advance civil rights and liberties. However, the

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challenges we must meet today are unique in their size and breadth. Fortunately, a groundswell of public support and engagement has increased our capacity to meet these challenges. The National ACLU is hiring dozens of new staff to combat the threats to immigrants' rights, free speech, LGBT equality, reproductive freedom, and other fundamental rights.

Even with expanded staffing, the ACLU's resources are a fraction of those of the federal government. Both in Montana and nationally, we still need every supporter! The ACLU is working hard to engage its members and supporters in new ways to help us fight for civil rights. PeoplePower.org is one example of such an initiative that will help supporters mobilize against civil liberties threats.

The Trump Administration has presented this country with undeniable challenges to our most cherished rights and freedoms. The ACLU has always defended those freedoms, no matter who is in office. While the battle may be more urgent and intense now, it's essentially the same battle we've fought for nearly 100 years. We are adapting to the times, but we will always remain the nation's guardian of liberty.

### Q: What's the difference between being a "card-carrying member" of the ACLU and donating to the ACLU Foundation?

**A: Membership dues are not tax-deductible.** Membership dues and other donations to our 501c4 entity help fund our lobbying and legislative advocacy – activities that 501c3 foundations can engage in only in limited ways. **Foundation gifts are tax-deductible.** These gifts support our legal program, educational activities, and much of our policy advocacy, which make up over 90% of our work. For some supporters, also being a "card-carrying member" of the ACLU is incredibly important because it reflects the pride of belonging to an organization that has fought for equality, liberty, democracy, and freedom for nearly 100 years.

**To make a tax-deductible gift use the enclosed Foundation envelope or online at [www.aclumontana.org/donate](http://www.aclumontana.org/donate).**





## LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

by SK Rossi,  
Director of Advocacy and Policy

The 2017 Montana Legislature voted to adjourn sine die on April 28th (my birthday – what a great gift). The battles that continued until the final minute were disputes over infrastructure and bonding bills. On May 11, the ACLU stopped the last bad bill from getting past the Governor’s office. That means we killed all targeted “bad bills” this year and assisted in passing a few really good pieces of legislation – a very successful session for the ACLU of Montana.

Below is a brief summary of the “biggest” bills of the session. A more extensive “End of Session Report” will be available online in mid-May. Thank you to our members, our board, and the rest of the ACLU staff for your support and patience during this very busy legislative session.

### **Mixed bag on LGBT rights**

The ACLU and our partner organizations were able to stop the “bathroom panic” bill, pushed by the Montana Family Foundation, in its first committee. HB 609 died 11-8 in the House Judiciary Committee with bipartisan opposition.

2017’s attempt to add express protection for LGBT people into the Montana Human Rights Act also died in House Judiciary, which was disappointing for us and our LGBT rights coalition partners. Rest assured we will be back in 2019, again asking the legislature to finally treat LGBT folks with the dignity and fairness they deserve.

### **Immigrant rights – one big fight over one bad bill**

The ACLU and our allies nearly escaped the legislative session without a fight over any anti-immigrant or anti-refugee legislation. Unfortunately, Rep. Derek Skees (R-Kalispell) threw one in at the last minute. HB 611 would have banned “sanctuary cities” in Montana, though none currently exist, and penalize local governments who implemented those policies. Thankfully, after some quick lobbying, the House Appropriations committee voted the bill down, it missed the deadline for transmittal to the Senate and died.

## Speech/Expression – attempts to suppress protest suppressed by the ACLU

Though there were a handful of bills targeting peaceful protestors this legislative session, only one caused any real consternation. HB 571 would have created a new felony for anyone who covered their face in the commission of an offense against the public order (i.e. someone accused of “rioting” when they are actually just protesting). The ACLU was able to shut this bill down in its first committee with the help of some Democrats and libertarian-minded Republicans who disfavor the creation of new criminal laws.

## Criminal justice reform – an example of thoughtful and determined bipartisan leadership

The hard work of the interim Commission on Sentencing paid off with the passage of a large package of bills aimed at reducing the number of Montanans in our jails and prisons. Sen. Cynthia Wolken (D-Missoula) and Rep. Nate McConnell (D-Missoula) built a bipartisan coalition and worked tirelessly to get legislation through that will reform the parole board and probation system and reduce a litany of sentences for nonviolent, low-level offenses. Sen. Wolken also sponsored an interim study bill that will delve into the impact our criminal justice system has on Native American people in Montana.

## Reproductive Freedom – thank you, Governor Bullock!

Senators Keith Regier and Albert Olszewski (both Republicans from Kalispell) filed two different bills that would ban abortion access for Montana women after arbitrary and unscientific deadlines – 20 weeks in Regier’s bill and (originally) 24 weeks in Olszewski’s. Both bills created penalties for physicians and inserted the government into decisions that should be left to a woman and her doctor. Thankfully, Governor Bullock has vetoed both of these blatantly unconstitutional bills.

## Privacy – four wins for the right to be free from government surveillance and intrusion

HB 146, 147, 148, and 149 were all filed by Rep. Daniel Zolnikov (R-Billings). The ACLU and a growing group of other privacy advocates in Montana supported each of these measures all the way to the Governor’s desk, with Rep. Zolnikov leading the charge. These bills set much needed parameters for police checkpoints and roadblocks, restrain the government in searching your cell phone and other electronic devices, and limit the use of license plate readers by police.

### Q: You get government grants, right?

**A: No.** We sue the government, so we do not receive any grants from them. We occasionally receive funds from private Foundations, but the amount of philanthropic dollars available in Montana is small compared to other states.



# COMMUNITY ORGANIZING



## WHAT DOES DISCRIMINATION LOOK LIKE IN MONTANA?

by Meg Singer,  
Indigenous Justice Outreach Coordinator

In November 2016, The ACLU of Montana was contacted by the Sweetgrass Society (SGS), Montana State University-Northern's only Native American student club. The group suffered racial discrimination and violations of their First Amendment right to free speech. Since then, SGS has been working to start a dialogue on race, but they've met with more pushback than support, especially from the MSU-N administration. Meg Singer, ACLU-MT's Indigenous Justice Outreach Coordinator, sat down with members of SGS for an exclusive interview on their reasons for standing up to MSU-N, and why they welcome all Montanans to join them. (Their answers have been edited for clarity.)

### What do racism and discrimination look like in Havre?

*Radium Wolf:* People single me out in classes for being the only Native person. I'm asked to speak on behalf of all tribes. Teachers expect me to educate other students on all Native issues, ever. It's frustrating because I don't know everything about these issues. I'm still learning, too. I can't speak for all Natives. I was told if I was from Browning then I must drink or must be on meth. I'm here for an education. I'm trying to better my life.

*Amy Murdock, President of the Sweetgrass Society:* I felt like the once the public knew what was happening, we received letters and emails of support, the media was telling our story and that we were talking with the ACLU - that's when the administration started taking our concerns seriously. That is what it feels like to experience discrimination - it's seeing that your concerns mean absolutely nothing in comparison to others' comfort. It's seeing that things only get done when enough people care to push people to care.

*Diona Buck, Secretary of the Sweetgrass Society:* If people glare at me, and they do, I'm constantly wondering what they're thinking about me. "Are they going to hurt me? Or are they watching to see if I do something they don't like?" So many people are mean and say hurtful things. It's an uneasy feeling to go to class and see students and faculty glare.

*Evie Red Boy:* Isolation. I've sat next to people and had them move to avoid me. It's depressing until you find other people, other Natives to be friends with. People assume the worst of you. You're a bad person because you're Native. You have to work twice as hard to just make them realize that they can't assume to know who I am based on a stereotype. It's constant and you feel used to it.

*MiaLee Lamebull:* We have always been told to expect racism in Havre. It's something we grew up experiencing sometimes daily. Everyone knows it, but we're the only ones talking about it.

### **What is your motivation for creating change?**

*Radium:* When the administration was made aware that we felt that they were infringing our rights and felt targeted as Native students, their response was to dehumanize us. Native people have historically been stripped of their autonomy, of

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their rights, and now that we have them and are in a public school that is meant to protect us, we're disrespected, we're told to get ourselves under control. We're not cowards for sticking up for ourselves and our fellow marginalized students. We're doing this so everyone can have an equitable college experience; so that they can feel like this is their campus and so they can be safe. I know this is hard to take in and deal with but I know things will get better. We have a long journey ahead but we can tackle it because we are strong Indigenous women and we got this.

*Amy:* When you know the history of what Natives have gone through and our resilience it seems so improbable that we are still having to put up with this discrimination in 2017. I ask myself, "Why do we have so many stereotypes? Why is this school trying to hide the racism?" We just want to be treated like people. It's shocking to hear from people, "That's just Havre. It's just Northern." People know that racism exists here but no one has ever done anything to stop it. I want to be that person who does something!





*Members of the Sweetgrass Society. Top row (from left to right): Radium C. Woolf, Diona Buck, Amy Murdock, and Mia LameBull. Bottom row: Winston Stewart and Jonathan Nepoose Jr.*

*Evie:* It's cultural training that the administration and the community need. I want this campus to feel more welcoming for everyone. I don't want anyone to have to go through what we've gone through. I want other Natives—who maybe never even thought about college—to have a good experience, even at Northern.

*Diona:* Often, people who experience discrimination and speak out are told that we're the villains. There are no villains here; there are only opportunities to grow. Everyone should know what the right thing to do is; it should be common sense. When stuff like this happens it makes you want to bolster your own community. I want everyone to know that what is happening is real and we're not staying quiet. We're doing this for all Native students and other marginalized groups.

*MiaLee:* I am fighting to change that stigma. Racism shouldn't be "normal" or expected. I hope that one day my nephews and nieces can come to Northern or Havre and feel accepted and celebrated. I fight for the generations that follow me.

### **What will victory look like for you?**

*Radium:* This is systemic. Every level of the administration, including teachers and staff, are unqualified to address the issues of rights violations. We shouldn't be meant to suffer for their lack of experience. We need administrators willing to deconstruct their own identities and biases, and work with us rather than against us. We need administrators who can empathize where we are coming from, care about our dreams, and help us to achieve them.

***I am fighting to change that stigma. Racism shouldn't be "normal" or expected.***

*Amy:* I would love for more people to be involved in organizing and advocating for change. Write to us. Give us your ideas. Reach out to the Montana University System Board of Regents and tell them to work to understand where we're coming from because we're constantly struggling to get anyone to listen to us. We need more people who know how important it is to be safe in our schools.





Evie: I want the administration to know that discrimination isn't OK. I've heard people say that "silence is acceptance." I would love to see people come together and stand together. This is a scary situation, for me and my family; we have real concerns about safety here.

Diona: I have hope that things will be better. If we keep standing up and fighting for what we believe in, things can change. I hope people want to understand where we're coming from and will want to make actions to end racism. At the same time, the school needs to take more responsibility for their lack of action. They're missing an opportunity to do something great. The administration needs to meet with us, understand our side, advocate for education and public outreach. This is an opportunity to learn about Natives and the way we think instead of feeling guilty or angry. If people knew what we've gone through and continue to go through, the jokes will stop, the stereotyping will go away. It will stop.

***They're missing an opportunity to do something great.***



*Members of the Sweetgrass Society modeling their jackets.*





## WHERE WE STAND: THE DEATH PENALTY IN MONTANA

by Jennifer Hermanson,  
Montana Abolition Coalition Director

The books closed on 2017 Legislature with the death penalty still legal in Montana. Despite no abolition bill being signed into law, there is much to celebrate about the ground gained on Montana's progress towards justice.

We celebrate that for another biennium, Montana does not have the legal means to carry out executions. In October 2015, Montana District Judge Sherlock struck down the State's lethal injection protocol, giving Montana no way to perform executions. The efforts of the ACLU legal team in this case made it so Montana

***We celebrate that it is not if we will end Montana's death penalty but when we will.***

would be in moratorium until either there was a judicial reversal or action was taken by the state legislature. Sometimes victory is a bittersweet stalemate.

Our extensive work during the legislative interim and throughout the session, as well as the momentum for abolition across Montana and the U.S., created a political climate in the legislature where attempting to restart executions wasn't tenable or possible. Our opponents were unwilling to even introduce legislation to make changes to the death penalty or execution protocol. We celebrate that Montana remains a state in moratorium with no working death penalty.

We had unprecedented bipartisan support this session. Representatives and Senators that didn't agree on any other issue worked tirelessly together to repeal the death penalty; dozens of Republicans and Democrats came together to publicly call for abolition. We saw so many young legislators come out in favor of

ending the death penalty – showing that abolition is the future. Few other issues at the Legislature have ever generated this kind of bipartisan support. We celebrate the great number of bridges built between political rivals and a tremendous hope for the next political generation.

The diverse voices that spoke out for abolition was encouraging - murder victim family members, corrections workers, faith leaders, former prosecutors, exonorees, and the list goes on. Not a single opponent spoke against the bill to repeal the death penalty, not one. The public debate has shifted in favor of repealing capital punishment in Montana. This is a movement we can keep building upon. We celebrate more people joining our fight and we celebrate that it is not *if* we will end Montana's death penalty but *when* we will.

We value justice and we believe in creating a fairer and more equitable criminal justice system, holding offenders accountable for their crimes while still preserving human dignity, protecting our communities without wasting valuable resources, promoting healing in the aftermath of violence for victims, offenders, and our communities. We will not stop until that dream is achieved.

While our goal may be delayed this legislative session, we celebrate the moratorium, we celebrate our work and our progress, and we celebrate all the signs that show our dream of abolition in Montana *will* come true.

**Q: I like to see the impact of my giving in my local community. Does my gift to the ACLU really make a difference in Montana?**

**A: Yes.** We are one ACLU, regardless of where you send your gift. Unlike many other national/state-based organizations, the ACLU shares donations, and so it truly does not matter whether your gift is “banked” at National or here in Montana. In a sparsely populated state like Montana, we benefit from this sharing formula, similar to federal transportation dollars. In fact, roughly one-quarter of our annual budget comes from National ACLU, just for being a small affiliate. This would not be possible without the cadre of nationwide ACLU supporters.

Unlike our local foodbanks or pet shelters, the business of defending and advocating for civil liberties is truly a nationwide endeavor. The National ACLU helps ensure that we have experts on staff that specialize in specific arenas, whether it is reproductive freedom or national security issues. Also, we need to fight battles the first time they spring up in a state legislature, so we do not get copycat legislation spreading like wildfire across the country. The ACLU of Montana benefits greatly from all this in-kind support from National ACLU and fellow ACLU affiliates.





## CARE DENIED: MENTAL HEALTH AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

by Jon Ellingson, Staff Attorney

Inmates with mental health issues have long been neglected by the criminal justice system. While the implications are far-reaching, I want to focus on one particular young man's story that we confronted in our work at the ACLU of Montana.

Several weeks ago, Krystal Pickens and I scheduled an interview with a prisoner. To protect his privacy, I will not use his name or disclose where the interview took place. This young man is a disturbing example of what can happen to one of our fellow human beings who is not provided with adequate community support to heal the emotional wounds that he suffered at an early age.

For ten years, from his early teenage years to the present, he has been in state institutions. The divorce of his parents was tough on him and triggered anger and assaultive behavior, landing him in a therapeutic institution. There his care providers diagnosed him as bi-polar, schizophrenic, and depressed. He stayed there for four and a half years.

Perhaps it is not remarkable that he was not "cured" after his stay in therapy. No one can guarantee a cure, but four and a half years is a long time. One would hope that if our institutions were operating effectively, this would be a sufficient period to, if not cure him, at least teach him the coping behaviors that a mentally ill person needs to live outside of an institution.

But this was not the case. Our subject was released to a group home and then to his father, whom he severely assaulted. Charged and convicted, he was sent to prison. Before receiving his housing assignment, he assaulted again. He was immediately placed in solitary confinement where he lived the entire period of his incarceration with minimal mental health treatment and minimal meaningful human interaction.

After years in solitary confinement, the prison released our subject directly back into the community. He assaulted again and was quickly returned to the criminal justice system.

Krystal and I were both sobered after listening to the history of this young man. We

wondered: Why can't our community do a better job for someone like this? Why couldn't we find the resources to treat him effectively during his teenage years? Why weren't steps taken to provide a smooth transition from an institutional setting to the community? How could we be so stupid as to think that a mentally ill prisoner could be released from the isolation of locked housing directly into the hustle and bustle the outside world, with no moderating transitional phase whatsoever?

The answers to these questions are clear. Our government won't fund the services that he needed to succeed. So people like him will continue to fall through the cracks, going through a repetitive cycle of assaults and incarceration for the rest of his life.

Is this really the kind of society that we wish to live in? Or are we willing to do something about it?

These are the questions I leave you with in this last newsletter essay before I retire.

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## A Special Thanks to Alena Lovi-Borgmann

Alena has served as our "Number One Temp" for six months, first filling in as Office Coordinator while Michelle was on parental leave and then as Interim Communications Coordinator for four months during a staff vacancy. Her creativity, attention to detail, willingness to jump in at a moment's notice to help out, and passion for our work will be sorely missed in the office on Monday mornings! Alena graduated from Columbia University in May, 2016 with a B.A. in Biology and relocated to Missoula last summer. Alena recently completed her Wilderness EMT certification and plans to start medical school in the next several years.

## FAREWELL TO JON ELLINGSON

Jon Ellingson will retire this summer after serving as a half-time staff attorney from October, 2014 – June, 2017 and as Legal Director from February, 2012 – August, 2013. Originally from upstate New York, Jon has spent most of his adult life in Montana working as an attorney in private practice in Missoula; serving multiple terms in the Montana House of Representatives (1994 – 1998) and Montana Senate (1998 – 2006), where he concluded his legislative career as majority leader; and as an assistant attorney general under Attorney General Mike McGrath and then Attorney General Steve Bullock from 2004 – 2010. Jon saw his ACLU legal tenure at the end of his career as an extension of his life's work, dedicated to protecting civil liberties on behalf of LGBT Montanans, working hard to protect and expand voting rights, and fighting for rights and liberties assaulted by a combination of advancing technologies, big government and business, and extreme ideologues. We wish Jon and his family the best in retirement and know he'll continue robust conversations about campaign finance reform in the public domain!





## PARTING THOUGHTS

by Jim Taylor, Outgoing Legal Director

In the four years I have been here, there has been an enormous amount of change in the organization and it continues to evolve and be reshaped. Going forward, the ACLU will be more vibrant, with a stronger focus on policy, organizing, and racial justice. During my tenure, the Legal Department has been fortunate enough to secure important victories in voting rights, racial discrimination issues, marriage equality, a crucial final settlement to provide disability access at the Montana State Prison, an injunction against immediate application of the ill-conceived CI-116 (Marsy's Law), and a permanent injunction against the current lethal injection protocol. In reviewing those victories, credit goes to Jon Ellingson, Staff Attorney, Krystal Pickens, Paralegal and Intake Coordinator, the great law school interns we have worked with, and all the tremendous attorneys both within and outside Montana that have worked tirelessly with us because they believed in the justice of the cause.

Yet the work continues to roll into the office on a daily basis. We will need to continue to energize new cooperating attorneys; we will need to continue to work with and support our clients as they bear the burden of being the face of the issues. Our clients do not have the luxury of having the distance the staff has from the very real public backlash that occurs when people speak out about civil rights. This is hard work for everyone, hard for us, hard for our cooperating attorneys, but hardest on our clients. So as a parting request, I ask that you look for opportunities to reach out to our clients that are litigating difficult cases and let them know that you support them and that they are not alone. As many of you know, it can be a lonely path for them to walk. All the best to everyone in the fight for civil rights and liberties and the ongoing struggle for justice.

**Q: You have a lot of resources from winning attorneys' fees, right?**

**A: No.** While it is true that we sometimes win attorneys' fees when we win a lawsuit, it is rare and the dollar amount we receive is never equal to the resources we put into the case. We never file lawsuits expecting to get money back; rather we file lawsuits to seek systemic change.



The ACLU of Montana's membership has grown three-fold since the presidential election. Here are the stories of two of our new members in their own words.



## DANNY WOOD

My wife and I, both young-ish attorneys licensed in California and Montana moved to Montana in February for

what we believe will be a higher quality of life and amazing place to start a family and settle down permanently. But we both felt the strong calling to give back following the election, knowing immediately then what was to come with the new administration and its inevitable assault on fundamental rights. We feel compelled to do good in our new home/community so that it's one we feel great starting and raising a family in.



## RON SZABO

Although I have held progressive political views most of my life, I only joined the ACLU in the aftermath of the November

election. The victor in that election won because he tapped a reservoir of hate, fear, and greed that was deeper, wider and more virulent than most of us knew. We mistakenly believed our country was beyond that. We were wrong. We have put in power a regime that is authoritarian and dictatorial; that threatens our very basic beliefs in our democratic institutions, free speech, free press, and individual dignity. Apparently the concept of the "greater good" has been lost. I am afraid this is an open battle between forces of ruthless self-interest and willful lies and the fundamental democratic principles upon which this country was founded. If our institutions don't protect us now we will have failed our heritage and the belief that "a government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth." To do nothing at a time like this is tantamount to treason. Understanding that this fight will be long and fought on many fronts at the same time, my wife and I have joined many groups and committed as much time and energy as we can. I know the ACLU will be a leader and an effective organization in this struggle. We will support the ACLU as best we can. Our grandchildren deserve no less.



# CELEBRATION OF LIVES

*The ACLU family recognizes several Montanans whose lives reflected their deep commitment to civil liberties and who have passed away in the past several years. Following are snippets and anecdotes submitted by loved ones.*

## **Jim Armstrong**

Jim first experienced the terrible effects of “back alley” abortions on women's lives as a medical student in New York City. He carried those experiences with him into his family practice in Kalispell where he performed abortions. In the winter of 1994, his office was destroyed by arson, but he did not give up advocating for women's reproductive rights. He defended those rights in legal suits before the Montana Supreme Court, the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court. In 1995, he was the recipient of the ACLU of Montana's Jeanette Rankin Civil Liberties Award. Jim was a tireless advocate for civil liberties and will be missed greatly by all who knew him.

## **Judge Gordon R. Bennett**

A child of the Depression, Gordon grew up in northeastern Montana during what he called the “Dirty Thirties.” His family gathered around the radio to listen to FDR's fireside chats, looking to their president for hope. He saw the value of government and what it could do for people during hard times in terms of educating people and putting them to work. His widow, Norma Tirrell, described him as bright, intelligent and engaged. He valued public education and held strong convictions grounded in firm values. “He did not blow with the wind,” she said. He loved his tenure on the bench as district judge, First Judicial District, from 1970 to 1988. In 1997, the ACLU of Montana awarded Judge Bennett with the Jeannette Rankin Civil Liberties Award for his public service in government and the judiciary. In 2007, the State Bar of Montana recognized him with its highest honor, the William J. Jameson Award, for distinguished legal service and professionalism.

## **Charles Caughlan**

During his 98 years, Charles maintained a steadfast passion for social justice and civil rights. While attending college during the early 1930s, he observed the struggles and violence against the workers attempting to unionize the timber industry. These events solidified his liberal political agenda and his work for peace and justice for the rest his life. After retiring from MSU, he devoted much of his time to his passion for civil liberties and human rights, including leading a weekly radio talk show. In 2006, he was the recipient of the ACLU of Montana's Jeanette Rankin Civil Liberties Award (his brother John received the ACLU of Washington's equivalent award in 1989). Charles' four children and many grandchildren remain extremely grateful for the legacy he gave to them in his passion for social justice and human rights.





## Justice Karla Gray

Karla served as the first female Chief Justice of the Montana Supreme Court. During her time as a Justice, and afterwards, she promoted issues including access to justice, abolition of the death penalty, improving the selection of judges, improving services to dependent and neglected children, and generally fostering refinements to the civil and criminal justice systems and the judiciary. A line from a note that Gloria Steinem sent to Karla stands out: "Each other's lives are our best textbooks."

## Justice Bill Hunt, Sr.

Justice Hunt served on the Montana Supreme Court from 1985 - 2000. At age 16, he dropped out of high school, joined the military where he participated in the Allied invasions of North Africa, Sicily, and Normandy. He later obtained a GED and an associate's degree before attending law school at the University of Montana. These experiences helped form a strong belief that the judicial branch of government exists to protect individual rights against the government and powerful corporations. The Montana Trial Lawyers Association awarded him its Public Service Award and Career Achievement Award in 2000 and its Citizens Award in 2007. Justice Hunt received the ACLU of Montana's Jeanette Rankin Civil Liberties award in 2009.

## Justice John C. "Skeff" Sheehy

Justice Sheehy served on the Montana Supreme Court from 1978 – 1991. His Supreme Court opinions were characterized by compassion, passion for fundamental civil rights, and a mastery of language that brought new clarity to the law. In his later years on the court, he became outspoken on the indefensibility of the death penalty, and after his retirement he advocated for abolition of the death penalty in every legislative session. Sheehy was the first recipient of the ACLU of Montana's Jeannette Rankin Civil Liberties Award in 1991.

## Mignon Waterman

Former state legislator and community advocate, Mignon dedicated her life to public service. Her family shared a fitting anecdote: A woman who works as a translator and guide for individuals visiting from the former Soviet Union was asked to have a group she was guiding meet with a person knowledgeable about civil and human rights in Montana and the United States. Someone told her that she should talk to Mignon. The individuals from the Soviet Union were very impressed by Mignon's leadership and her willingness to gather individuals who could speak about both the successes and the challenges we have confronted in working to extend human rights and justice to everyone. From then on, whenever the woman needed someone to put together a gathering of people knowledgeable about civil and human rights, Mignon was the person she went to for help and guidance.



# WELCOME, NEW STAFF!



**ALEX RATE**  
Legal Director

Alex Rate is the ACLU of Montana's new Legal Director. Taking the place of Jim Taylor, who held the position for the last four years, Alex will oversee the ACLU's litigation program.

Alex has been in private practice with Rate Law Office, P.C., for eight years. His practice has been dedicated to protecting the rights of individuals against corporations, insurance companies, government bureaucracies, and employers. He is a member of the State Bar of Montana, the U.S. District Court for the District of Montana, and the Montana Trial Lawyers Association.

Alex was born and raised in Homer, Alaska. He received his undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of California – Berkeley and moved to Montana with his wife in 2006. In 2009, he earned his Juris Doctorate from the University of Montana School of Law. In his free time, Alex enjoys hiking the mountains and floating the rivers of Montana with his family and dogs.

## **Q: When I donate to the ACLU will my name will be published like when I make a political donation?**

**A: No.** Just like most other non-profits, the ACLU Foundation is a 501c3 organization and the Union is a 501c4 organization. Gifts to such organizations are in a different category than political donations and do not need to be reported. In fact, the ACLU has very strict confidentiality protocols in place. To sum up these protocols, the ACLU will follow standards of professional practice and codes of ethical principles, including but not limited to: handling donor information with respect and confidentiality; recording data accurately; recording only information that is relevant for fundraising purposes; and using security measures to protect donor information.



## KATIE BEALL

### Communications Strategist

A Helena native, Katie graduated from Carroll College with B.A.s in History and French in 2009 and graduated in 2016 from the University of Denver with an M.A. in International and Intercultural Communication, specializing in Strategic Communication and Multicultural Journalism.

Katie's professional experience spans educational outreach, historical research, political messaging, legislative research and strategic communications. After living abroad and out-of-state, she is excited to be able to once again officially call Montana home. Katie described working for the ACLU as "a dream come true."

In her spare time, Katie feeds her soul in the Montana outdoors, especially running trails, skiing, and backpacking. Potlucks with friends and family are her other source of sustenance.

Working with the entire staff, Katie will manage our communications work -- media relations, social media, newsletters, and more -- to amplify the impact our legal, policy advocacy, and community organizing work has on behalf of all Montanans.

## ON OUR READING (AND WATCHING) LIST

*Here are some books and films recommended to us by our supporters and board members. We welcome your own recommendations: email us at [aclu@aclumontana.org](mailto:aclu@aclumontana.org).*

### BOOKS

Select books and publications by Walter Fleming, PhD – Professor and Department Head for Native American Studies, Montana State University:

- *A History and Foundation of American Indian Education Policy*
- *Visions of an Enduring People*
- *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Native American History*

*An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States (ReVisioning American History)*, by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

### FILMS

*Unconstitutional: The War On Our Civil Liberties*, by Robert Greenwald  
*State of Surveillance*, by VICE





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**ACLU OF MONTANA**

**STATEWIDE TOUR**

<b>TUESDAY SEP. 5</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY SEP. 6</b>	<b>THURSDAY SEP. 7</b>	<b>FRIDAY SEP. 8</b>
HELENA GREAT FALLS HAVRE	KALISPELL MISSOULA	HAMILTON BUTTE	BOZEMAN LIVINGSTON
<b>TUESDAY OCT. 3</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY OCT. 4</b>	<b>THURSDAY OCT. 5</b>	
RED LODGE	GLENDIVE BILLINGS	COLUMBUS	

CIVIL LIBERTIES HAVE BEEN FRONT, CENTER AND UNDER THREAT IN 2017. THIS FALL, THE ACLU OF MONTANA IS HITTING THE ROAD TO MEET WITH MONTANA COMMUNITIES. JOIN CAITLIN BORGMANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AS SHE SHARES DETAILS ABOUT THE ACLU'S STRATEGIES TO PROTECT CIVIL LIBERTIES ACROSS THE STATE AND NATION.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR A DISCUSSION ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES AND HOW THE ACLU OF MONTANA IS WORKING TO DEFEND AND PRESERVE INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS IN MONTANA. JOIN THE CONVERSATION AND LEARN HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED!

**FOR MORE DETAILS, VISIT [WWW.ACLUMONTANA.ORG/EVENTS](http://WWW.ACLUMONTANA.ORG/EVENTS)**