

## Celebrating AVP's 50th Anniversary inside Green Haven Prison

On May 23, 2025, one hundred outside guests—AVP facilitators from the United States, Canada, Brazil, Portugal, Australia and New Zealand (Aotearoa)—joined with 61 AVP facilitators and participants at Green Haven Prison and NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision staff to celebrate 50 years of AVP that began inside Green Haven Prison.

*Here are some reflections on the day:*



Thank you so much for including me in Friday's historic celebration of 50 years of AVP at Green Haven. I wanted to express my heartfelt appreciation to the entire Green Haven AVP crew:

Blessed Buddha, Joy Jay, Miraculous Malak, Marvelous Madrid, Peace Pablo, Calculated Castro, and so many others. You guys are a blessing, and I am proud that you guys took up the torch.

Returning was a surreal and deeply moving experience—seeing my brothers still holding the fort and persevering with such strength and dedication meant more than words can capture. The level of maturity, presence, and skill demonstrated by the facilitators in coordinating the event was truly inspiring.

I'm incredibly grateful to have witnessed it all in person. That event affirmed the power of AVP and the deep impact it continues to have both inside and out.

With gratitude,

—Yull Morales (*Mindful Mo*), Former AVP Inside Coordinator at Green Haven Prison,



## 25 years of AVP inside coordination and 29 years of AVP outside coordination at Green Haven Prison!

Left to right: **Jason Quinones (Joy Jay)**, Current AVP Inside Coordinator at Green Haven Prison, **Khalil Cumberbatch (Kinetic Khalil)**, Former AVP Inside Coordinator at Green Haven Prison, 2006-2009, **Carolyn Polikarpus (Contagious CC)**, Current AVP Outside Coordinator at Green Haven Prison for the past 29 years!!, **Dominic Dupont (Terrific Tyson)**, Former AVP Inside Coordinator at Green Haven Prison, 2009-2018, **Anthony Sims (Ambitious Ant)**, Former AVP Inside Coordinator at Green Haven Prison, 2000-2005



## Celebrating AVP's 50th Anniversary inside Green Haven Prison



I'm still basking in the glow of Friday, May 23rd, when the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) celebrated its 50th anniversary with an incredibly moving event at Green Haven C. F. My deepest

gratitude goes to Superintendent Mark Miller for his immense support in hosting such a monumental gathering.

It was truly heartwarming to witness incarcerated individuals, facility administration, and AVP volunteers come together, not just to observe, but to actively participate in an AVP exercise and share powerful performances. The collective energy and shared commitment to peace and understanding from everyone in attendance made this a truly unforgettable and deeply fulfilling experience. Thank you.

—Anthony Sims (*Ambitious Ant*) AVP NY Board Vice Chair and Former AVP Inside Coordinator at Green Haven Prison, 2000–2005



As I entered the gymnasium, it was transformed with the history and future of AVP. This event was a dream come true for me and I could not imagine coordinating the biggest event of my life.

Over a year of planning and preparing for this big day, it was actually happening. For a moment, I didn't feel like I was in a prison!

I was surrounded by my AVP family. As I introduced myself to all my extended family, I was overwhelmed with the opportunity to meet so many people at once. It was amazing to me how so many people were happy to be in a maximum A prison.

However, I understood what being at the mecca of AVP feels like for individuals that heard so much about a movement that started in Green Haven. I felt like I had met everyone before because we understood what building community looks like, and







for many of us that is exactly what was happening.

I will never forget sitting at my table and looking at everything coming together and turning to my right side, my outside coordinator Contagious CC, smiling and screaming at me that we did it!!!

Also being in the presence of the former inside coordinator and my mentor, Dominic Dupont, was motivating. These men represented the “Transforming Power” and the legacy of the program. I was humbled by the presentations, speeches, and all the hard work every facilitator did to make this event special.



Another highlight was to see so many DOCCS employees show up to the event and actually participate in the Tower of Cards exercise. That moment was surprising and real. It showed me how experiential the program is to all who want to get something out of it. The administration did not have to participate but they were moved to do so and experience first hand the power of AVP.

Lastly, trusting the process was the last highlight for me. I anticipated so many things to go wrong, as things usually do at Green Haven but everything came together. We came together and made this monumental event happen. I am honored to be part of the past, present and future of the Alternatives to Violence Project and to celebrate 50 years of the movement of nonviolence. I will continue to be an ambassador for AVP and continue to lead a group of amazing facilitators at Green Haven and anywhere I go to find the good in all humanity because in the end it's a WIN/WIN for all.

—Jason Quinones (Joy Jay) AVP Inside Coordinator, Green Haven Prison



Smiling faces were everywhere and the atmosphere was full of positive energy. When speaking with people it was impossible to distinguish those who were incarcerated from those from the outside.

—Rose Allender (Radiant Rose) AVP Hong Kong



## Celebrating AVP's 50th Anniversary where it began inside Green Haven Prison, NYS

Out of the grey and aged concrete walkways we entered this big hall where there was light and tables, table cloths and name tags on paper and people were gathered, mingling, interacting, chatting and laughing. There was a palpable air of 'celebration' in this big airy bright room!—so different from the darkness of the concrete entrance ways of the prison we had walked through to get to the big hall.

I saw and heard Transforming Power present in Green Haven not only fifty years ago but on this day!

The visit for me seemed surreal when at every workshop we talk about Green Haven where it all started and then I am actually there! It was incredible and so very grateful to have had my moment of history among many who had and still are spreading the AVP seed in Green Haven and the world!

—*Esther Cowley-Malcolm (Exciting Esther) AVP Aotearoa / New Zealand*

I was really moved by the vast number of inside facilitators and returning citizen facilitators, all absolutely filling the huge room in a large circle, and all of them speaking so positively about AVP. In one-on-one conversations and in the large circle, I heard over and over such moving testimony of the impact of AVP on their lives.

Ambitious Ant's presentation was particularly impressive. I loved how he spoke to the incarcerated people directly and told them how hard he had worked towards getting out as soon as he got in.

I also loved how the Commissioner spoke of "my incarcerated friends" and said that "redemption is possible" and prison is a stumbling block, not a dead end. I also loved how the higher ups stayed all day and even practiced AVP with us! It was an amazing day.

—*Em McManamy (Extraordinary Em) AVP Rhode Island*

Find more photos at:  
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/qGiczABYuRqQuTDW6>

To the whole AVP organizational team: Thank you for uplifting an entire room of people and showing us what sustained commitment to transformation looks like. From every logistic: food, hospitality, the displays, the artwork, the history timeline — you all delivered a home run and took your place in the long, long legacy of AVP's storied history, not only as Green Haven being the origin point of the organization, and further than merely maintaining a vibrant current chapter of AVP at GHCF; beyond that, you all took part in continuing to tell and share the larger story of AVP as a global organization and force for good. I think of something that has been meaningful in my life, the traveling AIDS Quilt that has traversed the country and world, keeping the story of that human crisis alive; so too, you all of GHCF AVP have taken up your role and righteous place in continuing to share the story of what and why AVP is — and in so doing you have become a link in that chain — the good and beautiful kind of chain that does not bind but connects and tells a story of endurance and fortitude — and transformation.

—*Paul Fitzgerald, Rehabilitation Through the Arts*

The entire experience was conducted with professionalism and attention to detail. The incarcerated individuals went above and beyond to ensure that everyone's time was spent meaningfully. The program was rich with poignant stories of rehabilitation, which were confirmed through interactions with the insiders.

—*Robert Barsky (Real Robert) AVP New York*

You [the inside team] were welcoming and encouraging, treating us visitors as if we were already known and loved members of your community. The day's speeches, poetry, artwork and shared meal profoundly honored the long history of our beloved organization. I know I feel changed by the experience

—*Eleanor Novek (Elevating Eleanor) AVP New Jersey*

Since participating, completing and becoming an AVP facilitator in 2019, my experience with AVP has been enlightening and helpful. Nonetheless, AVP's 50th Anniversary event here at Green Haven Correctional Facility stood out as one of the greatest experiences of my incarceration.

Meeting so many people from different states and countries, all moving and working toward a common goal, really set my ambitions in overdrive. I never knew so many strangers could care about people like me.

Despite my lengthy sentence I believe in my inevitable release, and I'm looking forward to joining the worldwide AVP family as a free man. Thank you AVP for the humbling and the superb experience of knowing what AVP truly is.

—*Jose Rodriguez (Justo Jose) AVP Facilitator, Green Haven Prison*

I was uplifted and motivated by the opening of our visit in the gym at Green Haven. I learned about respect from the emcee, Todd Sinclair (Terrific Todd) as he lifted up his AVP brothers, sisters, New York corrections commissioner, and Green Haven correctional leadership with sincere respect and affirmation.

—*Kevin King (Curious Kevin) AVP Texas*

The beauty of the poetry and visual artwork and the power of the performances thrilled me. The caring and generous service at the luncheon touched my heart. Building a Tower of Cards with Department of Corrections officials gave me the chance to see their patience, caring, collaborativeness, and ingenuity.

—*Sabrina McCarthy (Serene Sabrina) AVP Maryland and D.C.*

The logistics and agenda were spot on. I laughed, I cried, and most importantly, I connected with people I might never have otherwise met. I feel deeply enriched by what was shared and by the sense of common humanity and meaning we discovered in our interactions.

—*Lucy Steinitz (Lively Lucy) AVP Maryland*

## Celebrating AVP's 50th Anniversary where it began inside Green Haven Prison, NYS

My first experience with AVP was when I was 17 years old, I was a girl who was hurt and marked by different types of violence. Today, and thanks to you, AVP has not only transformed my life and that of my family, but it has also crossed the sea and arrived in Mozambique and Portugal. I am writing this with great emotion, tomorrow (02/06) we will start another basic workshop here in Portugal. As always, I will talk about you, but now with a fuller heart, with each face and commitment in my heart, with a photo of our meeting so that everyone can see them and recognize the immense and beautiful purpose that we have in common. I feel blessed and privileged to have met you and even more excited to share AVP on every path I walk, on every ocean I cross. Once again, all of this is thanks to what began there and what you continue to nurture. Your voices and commitment echo today also across the seas.

—*Helena Schimitz (Enchanting Helena) AVP Brazil and Portugal*

The 50th AVP anniversary was a bash! So many of the AVP family showed up from all over the world, it was excellent. Its one thing to hear about the other AVP families, but to see them and hear their stories firsthand is another. Between the lives transformed and communities we built in the process, our work shows me why AVP is so important and how much of an impact we make.

It also shows me that we have a bright future. Just to think that something that went internationally viral, started right here in Green Haven—with someone who society considered a threat is epic. It actually captures what transforming power looks like and the fruit that it bears. This Anniversary helped me realize that we have the ability—not only to change ourselves, but the narrative as well. And it is what gives me confidence when I tell my participants that we are not valueless, we are game changers, we just have to start thinking like one. On a Count of Three... AVP!

—*Daniel Forte (Humble Hamza) AVP Green Haven*

For me: The experience of the boundaries of walls and distance falling away so that we could recognize those most important parts of us that unite us. For a few hours, it was visible and palpable. And though we have left physically and the walls still stand and many of us will soon travel far away, maybe we will sustain the consciousness that we really remain very much woven together — knit by our shared values and devotion and practice; I don't have to see my friends at Green Haven to know they continue living into the same future that I have chosen, myself. And they, similarly, don't need to see me to be certain that I and we are still very much with them on this path.

—*Chris Campbell (Capable Chris) AVP Massachusetts*

When I heard that AVP was celebrating its 50th Anniversary with a visit to Green Haven, I had to sign up and make the journey from Ireland to pay homage to all who have made this incredible programme possible. Thirty years ago, my mother, Helen Haughton, who died last year, brought AVP to Ireland, and I owed it to her and the wider AVP communities. With every single workshop that we hold in the eight prisons in Ireland and in communities, we name Green Haven, as that is where it all began.

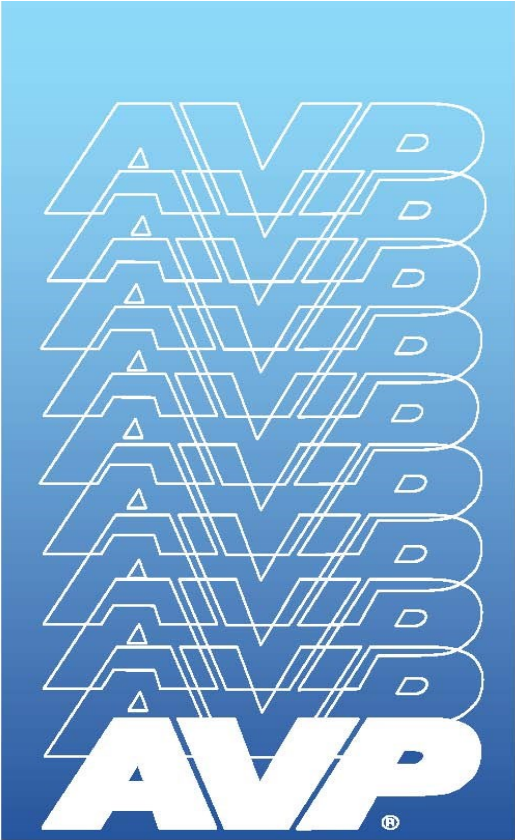
Last Friday's visit lived up to and beyond all expectations. I spent the day sitting beside Anthony, who later spoke to us all about how AVP has changed his life. I believe that for those precious moments, we were like brother and sister, and I hope one day to welcome him to Ireland. Thank you.

I have one suggestion, that upon arrival at Green Haven, there is a plaque that sits alongside the other outdoor signs (no mobile phones etc.), that says 'Welcome to Green Haven, where the Alternatives to Violence Programme began and continues to grow'.

—*Jenny Haughton (Jentle Jenny) AVP Ireland*







**AVP New York Annual Gathering**  
 September 12-14, 2025  
 Powell House Quaker Retreat Center  
 Old Chatham, NY  
 All AVP Facilitators and Participants are invited.  
 See [www.avpny.org](http://www.avpny.org) for details.

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

Note: Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT / NEW YORK			
2024 Workshop Summary Report		Note: These statistics represent the workshops reported to the AVP NY office.	
<b>ALBION Prison (Women's)</b> Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 61 Apprentices trained: 7 <b>ATTICA Prison</b> Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 12 <b>AUBURN Prison</b> Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 49 <b>BEDFORD HILLS Prison (Wm's)</b> Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 34 <b>CAYUGA Prison</b> Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 16 Apprentices trained: 6 <b>CLINTON Prison</b> No workshops in 2024 <b>ELMIRA Prison</b> Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 15 <b>ERIE COUNTY HOLDING CTR</b> Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 9 <b>FCI RAY BROOK Prison</b> Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 33 Apprentices trained: 7 <b>FISHKILL Prison</b> Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 32	<b>GREEN HAVEN Prison</b> Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 32 <b>GREENE Prison</b> Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 102 Apprentices trained: 8 <b>GROVELAND Prison</b> Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 38 <b>OTISVILLE Prison</b> Workshop count: 8 Participant count: 119 Apprentices trained: 21 <b>SING SING Prison</b> Short wksp (English) ct: 16 Short wksp part't count: 194 Short wksp (Spanish) ct: 1 Short wksp (Sp) part't ct: 11 Peace Day: 1 Apprentices trained: 14 <b>TACONIC Prison (Wmn's)</b> Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 44 Apprentices trained: 10 <b>WALLKILL Prison</b> Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 40 <b>WENDE Prison</b> Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 70 Apprentices trained: 11	<b>WESTCHESTER CTY Jail</b> Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 51 <b>WOODBOURNE Prison</b> Workshop count: 8 Participant count: 152 Apprentices trained: 20 <b>CENTRAL NY Area Council</b> Facilitator Day count: 1 Facilitator participant count: 24 <b>GENESEE VALLEY AC</b> Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 11 Mini workshop count: 7 Mini adult part't count: 40 Mini youth part't count: 35 <b>MID-HUDSON AC</b> Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 5 Apprentices trained: 5 <b>NEW YORK CITY / LI AC</b> Workshop count: 1 Youth participant count: 7 Short workshop count: 2 Short workshop part't ct: 23 Mini workshop count: 1 Mini workshop part't ct: 18 <b>NIAGARA FRONTIER AC</b> Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 27 Mini workshop count: 1 Mini workshop part't ct: 18	<b>WESTCHESTER AC</b> Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 36 Mini workshop count: 2 Mini wksp part't count: 16 Facilitator Day count: 2 Facilitator participant count: 32 Apprentices trained: 9 <b>AVP/NY PRISON WORKSHOPS:</b> Prisons served: 17 Full workshop (English) ct: 67 Participant count: 849 Apprentices trained: 104 Short wksp (English) count: 16 Short wksp (Spanish) count: 1 Short workshop part't ct: 205 Inside facilitators: 135 Outside facilitators: 41 Jails served: 2 Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 60 Outside facilitators: 4 <b>AVP/NY COMMUNITY WKSPs:</b> Community wksp: 10 Adult part't count: 79 Youth part't count: 7 Short wksp count: 2 Short wksp part't count: 23 Mini workshop count: 11 Mini wksp adult part't ct: 80 Mini wksp youth part't ct: 35 Apprentices trained: 24 Facilitator Days: 3 Facilitator Day part'ts: 56 Outside facilitators: 36