

Safe, Equitable, and Fair Pretrial Systems

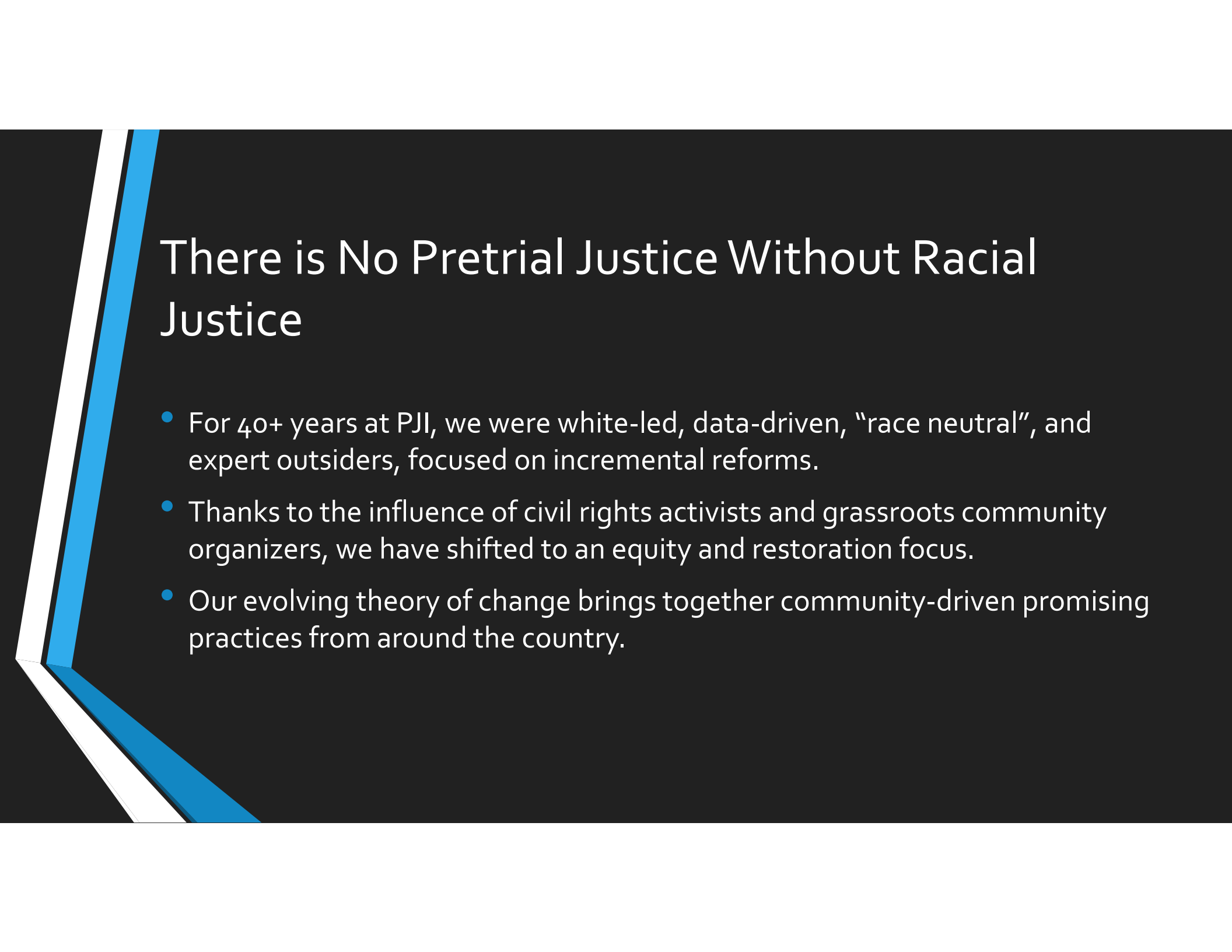
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There is No Pretrial Justice Without Racial Justice

- For 40+ years at PJI, we were white-led, data-driven, “race neutral”, and expert outsiders, focused on incremental reforms.
- Thanks to the influence of civil rights activists and grassroots community organizers, we have shifted to an equity and restoration focus.
- Our evolving theory of change brings together community-driven promising practices from around the country.

Rejecting a Racist Binary

- Over the last 10+ years, there has been growing recognition that our wealth-based bail system is ineffective, and it disproportionately harms people of color.
- The popular alternative is a “risk-based” system, which uses risk assessment tools and release conditioning—and also disproportionately harms people of color.
- The argument for pursuing a risk-based approach is that it is the lesser of two evils
- We need to stop debating the less racist choice and pursue an Option C that is centered on equity.

What If?

- Option C is theoretical, but it is built on community-centered ideas that are taking hold across the country. What if...
 - local partners were committed to ending mass incarceration and advancing equity?
 - people in crisis had options other than 911?
 - activities related to health and basic human needs were no longer arrestable offenses?
 - law enforcement officers used citations and summonses for most charges?

What If?

- judicial officers :
 - released everyone who was not statutorily eligible for detention?
 - only considered the risk of fleeing prosecution and committing a serious violent offense when considering detention?
 - only set conditions of release that were directly related to an individual's circumstances?
- supervision or surveillance were only used if proven to be effective?
- community supports were available to get people to court?

Defining Success

- Safety for all, not just the generic “public”
- Focus on risk of flight from prosecution, and facilitate court access
- Liberty is not synonymous with release from jail
- Apply an equity lens at each step of the process

Where Do We Go From Here?

- A culture that presumes INNOCENCE and defaults to pretrial LIBERTY
- State policy that eliminates money bond and other racially disparate practices
- Community-driven local system change
- A holistic approach; multi-system partnerships