
Lessons From the Life and Death of Alice Carter

August 25, 2020

A case study by Street Sense Media for the Office of the D.C. Auditor



PHOTO BY GERRY SUCHY.

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August 24, 2020

The Hon. Muriel E. Bowser
Mayor of the District of Columbia
The John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington D.C. 20004

The Hon. Phil Mendelson, Chairman
Council of the District of Columbia
The John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington DC 20004

Dear Mayor Bowser and Chairman Mendelson:

I am pleased to share with you our new case study, **Lessons From the Life and Death of Alice Carter**. Based largely on District government documents and social agency staff interviews, the study puts a human face on the incarceration policies and practices in place for D.C. residents, the services available to individuals who suffer from substance use disorders, and the challenges of carefully serving individuals in both of those capacities.

This study is the companion piece to our new report, ***Everything is Scattered...The Intersection of Substance Use Disorders and Incarcerations in the District***, and was written for ODCA by Street Sense Media, a nonprofit organization with a mission to end homelessness in the D.C. area. The study's subject is the complex life of Alice Carter, from her tumultuous childhood to her ex-periences as an adult—including sexual assault, physical abuse, and homelessness—to the challenges of being a transgender woman with a substance use disorder (SUD), mental illness, and numerous encounters with the justice system.

We hope that by understanding how Carter came to drink herself to death on a freezing D.C. sidewalk just shy of her 36th birthday after hundreds of professionals tried to help her with housing, medical care, and legal support, we might help others who struggle as she did.

My thanks to our Street Sense Media partners for a moving and comprehensive case study, and to the D.C. Department of Corrections, the D.C. Superior Court, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, as well as community providers, for sharing records and other information during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic in the District.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathleen Patterson
District of Columbia Auditor

cc: Betsy Cavendish, Executive Office of the Mayor

“I have reasons to live and will at least be 50 years old.”

—ALICE CARTER

Alice Carter—a woman who struggled with substance abuse, mental illness, and homelessness—shared those words with one of the many case managers with whom she worked during her lifetime. Alice did not live to be 50; she passed away on December 18, 2019, in Washington, D.C., days before what would have been her 36th birthday.

Alice was beloved by those who knew and worked with her. “I remember her infectious smile and her infectious joy,” says Willie Schatz, who facilitates the writer’s group at Street Sense Media, a D.C. homeless advocacy group, that Alice regularly attended. Alice was a highly creative person, with passions for everything from rap music to writing poetry. “I think that’s really what she would want to be remembered for, is her art,” said Colleen Cosgriff, who worked closely with Alice as a Street Sense Media case manager.

Reverend Ben Roberts at Foundry United Methodist, where Alice worshipped, said her death demonstrates that those who seek to help the homeless “fail as often as we succeed.” He noted that “as a full community and as a city, we probably could have done more, and we probably could have done it better.”

While living in Washington, D.C., Alice was regularly engaged with service providers that helped her obtain housing, engaged her in mental health treatment, and delivered medical care. Alice often found herself caught up in the D.C. criminal justice

To prepare this case study, Street Sense Media received permission from Alice Carter’s next of kin—her mother—to review records from District government agencies and community service providers and use the information for publication of this report. We greatly appreciate their assistance. Unless otherwise stated, all information herein comes from those records. The Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), a federally funded agency, declined to provide access to their records. This case study was written by Clara Hendrickson.

system. She faced numerous arrests by members of law enforcement, appeared before D.C. Superior Court judges presiding over her criminal cases, and found herself behind bars and on probation dozens of times. Alice’s arrests often resulted from her drug use and mental health challenges. And the charges against her in court led to frequent periods of incarceration. This case study will examine Alice’s journey through these systems as well as the behavioral health and drug treatment services delivered to her.

A review of Alice’s family history, mental health, medical diagnoses, and housing status reveals

an individual who was incredibly vulnerable. Ruby Corado, executive director of the social service organization Casa Ruby, observes that “Alice is not the only one.” Every year, individuals who struggle with the kinds of challenges Alice faced lose their lives, Corado says. This case study tells the story of all that was done to help Alice and poses the question to those working to serve individuals like her: what more can be done to allow them the opportunity to thrive?

Childhood and Teen Years

Alice Carter was born on December 26, 1983, as Allen Scott Carter III, in Hollywood, Md., to Deborah and Allen Carter, Jr. Two years later, Deborah Carter gave birth to Alice's younger brother. When Alice was a child, her mother received a death threat after testifying about a crime she had witnessed. This prompted the family to move to Ohio to live with Alice's maternal grandparents. Alice's father planned to join his wife and two children at a later date upon completing his military service. However, during this time, he was convicted of rape and served 11 years for the crime. During the early part of his incarceration, Alice's parents divorced.

When she was 5 and living in Ohio, Alice was diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and was prescribed Ritalin, a drug that can help increase attention and decrease impulsiveness and hyperactivity. After Alice's father was released from prison, her parents remarried. Alice's father was in and out of jail during this period and her parents divorced a second time.

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The Church didn't agree with my ways.

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Alice reported that she realized her gender differed from her assigned sex when she was a child. Growing up, she was bullied for her gender expression. She reported smoking a pack or two of cigarettes a day starting at age 9. When Alice was a teenager, she and her brother went to live with her father.



Alice and her younger brother in Ohio.

While living with him, Alice began experimenting with other drugs. She started using marijuana and then began using cocaine, crack, alcohol, and cough medication. As a teenager, Alice and a girlfriend had a daughter together; the child currently lives in Ohio with her biological mother.

After graduating from high school, Alice began working at a Burger King in Bowling Green, Ohio, and when she was 19, she began openly identifying as a woman. At this age, Alice reported attempting to hang herself following the loss of her best friend. Alice reported being asked to leave home

because her family was not supportive of her gender identity, but Alice's mother denies ever kicking Alice out of the home.

While working in Ohio after graduating from high school, Alice became involved with a religious community and moved to Detroit with some of its members. Alice said, "The Church didn't agree with my ways" and left the community. While living in Detroit, Alice contracted HIV from a man who was infected but did not tell her. She eventually made her way to Washington, D.C., engaging in survival sex for transportation, food, shelter, and clothing.

Early Life in D.C.

When Alice was 22, she first became a patient at Whitman-Walker Health, a community-based health services organization in Washington, D.C., specializing in LGBTQ and HIV care. The earliest record from Alice's time as a patient at the clinic is dated July 2006 when Alice was tested for HIV and her result came back positive.

As a source of income, Alice engaged in sex work, which led to her arrest in October 2007, when she was charged with sexual solicitation after naming a price for performing oral sex on an undercover police officer. She was incarcerated for three days at the end of the month after the charge was filed in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and was held at the Central Detention Facility (CDF) of the Department of Corrections (DOC), which houses the District's male inmate population. Alice noted that she feared for her safety in the general population and, following a housing review meeting, Alice was housed alone in her own cell in protective custody "due to him going through the process of having a sex change and having female features," DOC records note. The judge released Alice from CDF and ordered her to engage in weekly drug testing and participation in Project Power, a diversion program for defendants charged with sexual solicitation. At her status hearing in late November 2007, Alice was ordered by the court to remain in the Bridges Program, the Pretrial Services Agency's in-house intensive outpatient program.

In January 2008, Alice began hormone therapy through Whitman-Walker. While Alice had identified openly as a woman for several years by this point, this appears to be the first time she took

hormones. A few months later, the sexual solicitation case against Alice was dropped by the government during a diversion status hearing.

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Alice was housed alone in her own cell in protective custody “due to him going through the process of having a sex change and having female features,” DOC records note.

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On November 3, 2009, Alice was arrested for assault with a knife. There is little information about the nature of the arrest but the incident report from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) declares “no papered,” which usually means that the police decided not to press charges. That seems to be what happened since there is no associated court case against Alice for the assault.

2010–2011

Getting Treatment Through Community Connections

In late May 2010, Alice was hospitalized for two weeks at the Psychiatric Institute of Washington (PIW) following an incident in which she picked up a pitchfork and began pointing it at cars. Alice regularly had delusions that rappers wanted to kill her and were sending her death threats through license plates.

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Alice regularly had delusions that rappers wanted to kill her and were sending her death threats through license plates.

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Soon after her discharge from PIW, Alice was hospitalized at George Washington University Hospital for overdosing on over-the-counter cough medication. PIW had referred Alice to Community Connections, which describes itself as a provider of behavioral health, residential services, and primary health care coordination for individuals who are coping with challenges including mental illness, addiction, and the aftermath of trauma and abuse. During Alice’s first meeting with a representative from Community Connections, Alice’s boyfriend at time, Jeff Taylor, told her to “trust these people. They aren’t going to hurt you. Alice underwent an initial psychiatric intake at Community Connections’ office, during which she was diagnosed

with schizoaffective disorder and polysubstance dependence.

Two days after her initial psychiatric evaluation at Community Connections, Alice was arrested after she jabbed a broken beer bottle several times at the torso of a man in Scott Circle. A couple of days later, Alice was charged with possession of a prohibited weapon and simple assault in the D.C. Superior Court. On the day these charges were filed against Alice, she was in the hospital. The next day, at her arraignment hearing, Alice pled not guilty to the charges against her and she was committed to the D.C. Jail pending disposition. While in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service at the courthouse, Alice’s lawyer recalls Alice relating an account of her being forced to the ground and having a knee pressed to her head. Upon the recommendation of Alice’s lawyer, Alice and her case manager from Community Connections went to the MPD’s First District Station after Alice was released from jail to file a police report against Alice’s mistreatment by the U.S. Marshals Service.”

After she was released from jail, Alice’s case manager from Community Connections helped move Alice into Options Housing, a program for persons in recovery that required residents to maintain sobriety.

At her sentencing hearing in late July, the judge imposed a sentence of one-year supervised probation through the Mental Health Unit of the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency

(CSOSA) and ordered her to participate in mental health treatment with Community Connections. A week following her sentencing hearing, Alice saw the psychiatrist at Community Connections after she told a member of her treatment team that she wanted to die. Alice denied any suicidal or homicidal ideations and the psychiatrist did not pursue involuntary commitment, concluding that if Alice continued to use drugs and become more paranoid to the point that she started considering taking action against people she believed were after her, the next step would be for an FD-12, an order to commit an individual for involuntary psychiatric assessment. In August, Alice received her first injection of Haldol, an antipsychotic drug that decreases excitement in the brain, at Community Connections to treat her schizoaffective disorder. She continued with Haldol injections for the rest of the year.

At Options Housing, Alice struggled to maintain sobriety. On one occasion, she arrived at the house intoxicated. Alice admitted to taking more than 20 capsules of Coricidin cough medication and drinking two bottles of cough syrup, and she was locked out for the night. In early August, Alice stopped staying at Options Housing and missed her scheduled drug test because she knew her urine would be dirty. Alice appeared for her next scheduled drug test and tested positive for PCP, marijuana, and cocaine. Her probation officer referred Alice to Safe Haven, a residential drug treatment program in Washington, D.C., but Alice left just four days after beginning the 30-day treatment because she said she was “bored.” The court was informed that Alice had violated her probation and ordered a show cause hearing, which provides an opportunity for those who fail to comply with the terms of a summons to explain their failure to report as originally scheduled. When Alice failed to appear at her show cause hearing, a bench warrant was issued for her arrest. Alice self-surrendered to the court.

The judge presiding over Alice’s case did not send Alice to jail and instead mandated drug treatment for her. With the help of Community Connections, Alice enrolled in the drug treatment program at Regional Addiction Prevention in October 2010. Alice, however, left the program days after she enrolled. As a result, her probation was revoked and Alice was sentenced to a 30-day period of incarceration.

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Alice admitted to taking more than 20 capsules of Coricidin cough medication and drinking two bottles of cough syrup, and she was locked out for the night.

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She found herself again at the CDF, this time separated from the general population and housed with other transgender inmates. After Alice was released from jail, she went to stay with then-boyfriend Jeff Taylor.

Alice continued to live with Taylor through 2011, but Taylor began expressing concerns about Alice continuing to live with him. Alice had behaved aggressively toward his neighbors and Taylor’s landlord requested that Alice no longer stay at his apartment. But she continued to stay there.

By the end of 2011, Alice began refusing her Haldol injections through Community Connections. During a December appointment, when Alice refused the Haldol injection, the nurse discussed the consequences of not complying with the medication. Alice replied, “That won’t happen to me.”

2012

Disengaging

At a January 2012 appointment, Alice refused her Haldol injection again and stated, “Only crazy people get that.” In April 2012, Alice was involuntarily committed by Community Connections and sent to Seton House, the behavioral health unit at Providence Hospital. Alice had refused food for several days and was consistently drinking cough syrup. She spent seven days there. When Alice was discharged from the hospital and picked up by a Community Connections staff member, Alice expressed a negative view of the Community Connections doctor who had involuntarily committed her. Alice stayed with Taylor after she was discharged but soon began sleeping on the streets and did not want to engage with the Community Connections team.

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Alice said she broke the window of the car because she believed its license plate had letters and numbers that were “out to get her.”

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For several months, Community Connections staff attempted outreach to try and re-engage Alice. During one encounter, Alice’s case manager noted that Alice indicated no longer wanting assistance from Community Connections.

In May 2012, Alice shattered the rear windshield of a car with a hammer and then fled the scene. Alice

was identified a month later by the complainant and arrested. Alice said she broke the window of the car because she believed its license plate had letters and numbers that were “out to get her.”

A destruction of property charge was filed against Alice in court in June. Alice was ordered to report to D.C. Pretrial Services for placement in a drug treatment program and to stay away from the man whose car window she broke and his home.

That same month, Alice was arrested for indecent exposure for performing oral sex in an alley on a man Alice later identified as her boyfriend at the time.

During a court hearing for her property destruction charge, Alice’s attorney requested that Alice undergo a competency screening. When Alice failed to show up for her competency screening, a bench warrant was issued. Two days later, Alice was arrested on the bench warrant, charged with violating the Bail Reform Act for failing to appear for her competency screening, and sent to jail. The next day, Alice underwent her competency exam in the D.C. Superior Court’s cell block. The psychologist noted that when Alice was asked about her psychiatric history, she denied ever engaging in mental health treatment. The psychologist determined that Alice was competent to stand trial, but the court ordered another competency exam to be conducted on an outpatient basis, and Alice was released from jail.

Following her release, a staff member from Community Connections found Alice panhandling

downtown without shoes and wearing a soiled dress. Alice said she had been occasionally smoking crack at night.

When she was encouraged to stay in touch with the Community Connections team, Alice said, “You guys think I’m fucking crazy.” She eventually agreed to meet but failed to show up at the agreed upon location at the scheduled time.

In early September, the case against Alice for indecent exposure was dropped, but she still had the property destruction charge before the court for destroying the car window. When Alice failed to show up for two different scheduled outpatient competency examinations, the court sent Alice to Saint Elizabeths Hospital, the District’s public psychiatric facility, for a full evaluation. At Saint Elizabeths, Alice was diagnosed with gender identity disorder and polysubstance dependence. She was found competent to stand trial. In November, Alice pled guilty to the property destruction charge. She was not sentenced to a period of incarceration. Instead, a six-month supervised probation was imposed, and she was ordered to undergo drug testing and complete a drug treatment program. On two different occasions, when Community Connections attempted outreach to engage Alice and found her, Alice walked away.

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A staff member from Community Connections found Alice panhandling downtown without shoes and wearing a soiled dress. Alice said she had been occasionally smoking crack at night.

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2013

Being Arrested and Going to Jail

In early January 2013, Alice's case manager from Community Connections tried to find Alice but was unsuccessful. By the end of the month, Alice's probation officer sent a probation violation report to the court and a show cause hearing was scheduled. Alice failed to appear, and a bench warrant was issued for her arrest in late February. A week after the bench warrant was issued, Alice was picked up and arrested. In March, the court revoked her probation and sentenced Alice to a 30-day period of incarceration at CDF. While incarcerated, Alice saw a psychiatrist, whom she told, "I don't have mental health issues" and said she was "not with Community Connections anymore." A representative from Community Connections met with Alice while she was incarcerated and attempted to re-engage her in treatment.

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Alice began threatening her doctor, saying she would kill herself if she was not given her hormones.

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During this period of incarceration, the mental health clinician who saw Alice upon intake noted Alice had recently attempted suicide by overdose, though Alice denied any history of attempting suicide at this appointment. It is unclear how the mental health clinician at CDF learned about this

suicide attempt, but Alice later that year shared information regarding a suicide attempt by overdose with a member of her treatment team at Community Connections.

After she was released from jail, Alice again stayed with Taylor and returned to Whitman-Walker for an appointment to try and restart her hormone therapy after being off it for four months. Alice's doctor would not prescribe her hormones until Alice re-engaged in mental health care. Alice began threatening her doctor, saying she would kill herself if she was not given her hormones. Alice was offered an urgent mental health consultation at Whitman-Walker but stormed out of the clinic. When Alice returned to the clinic in June, she was told once more that she could not receive her hormones until she re-engaged in mental health care and had a case manager to accompany her to visits. Alice left the clinic and did not return to Whitman-Walker for two and a half years.

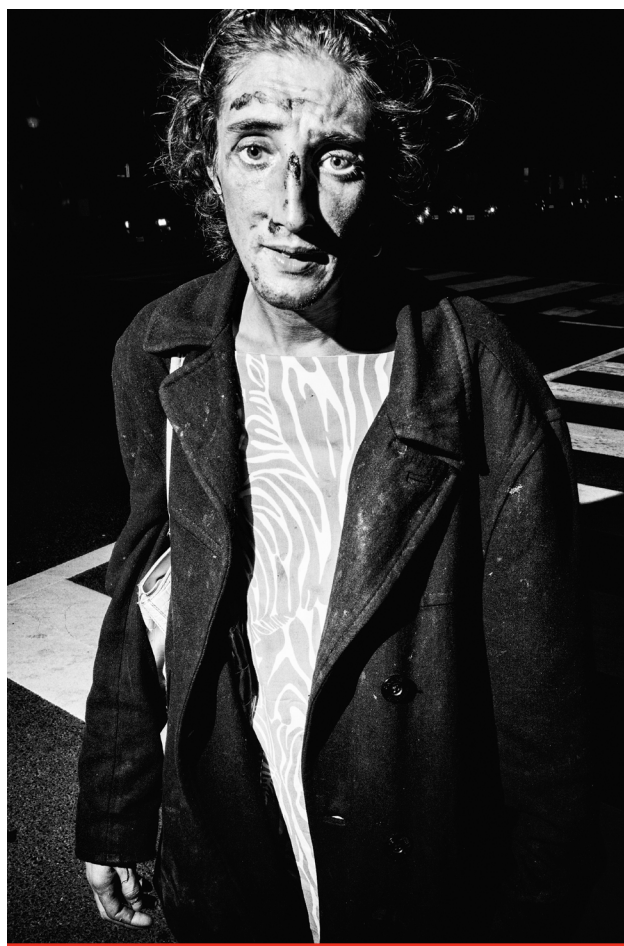
While outreach efforts made by Alice's case manager from Community Connections proved unsuccessful, Alice met on and off with numerous employees from Pathways to Housing DC who provided support. Alice told one case manager at Pathways that she had been raped multiple times. But when the case manager tried to engage Alice in mental health treatment, Alice refused.

On July 7, 2013, Alice entered the Starbucks at 1455 K Street N.W. What followed would lead to her longest period of incarceration.

A man inside the store observed Alice acting disorderly and approached the manager about his concerns. According to the manager, Alice locked herself in the bathroom and yelled, “I was wiping my ass. I can’t wipe my ass?!” Alice then came out of the bathroom and said, “All of y’all are hating, why are you hating?” Alice became angry, began waving around a box knife at the man, spat on the man’s girlfriend, and threatened her with the box knife. Alice started to walk away but stopped, raised her arms, and said, “Come on.” She then left the Starbucks and crossed the street before returning to stand outside the store, waving the box knife, waiting for the man to come outside, and motioning to cut the man’s neck. An MPD officer canvassing the area stopped Alice. Alice took the box knife out of her bag and placed it on the ground. Alice said, “It was self-defense, that’s legal and I’m allowed to have this because they sell it in stores.” Alice told the officer she was upset because “He is a hater and he is always trying to hate on me.” She told the officer she pulled out the box knife, and Alice was arrested.

Alice was committed into the custody of the D.C. Jail the next day by the D.C. Superior Court. She was incarcerated for nine days. When she was incarcerated, Alice noted her preference to be housed according to her gender expression and requested a hearing before DOC’s Transgender Committee. It does not appear that Alice was ever transferred. During this period of incarceration, the court granted the request made by Alice’s at-

torney to submit Alice to a 24-hour forensic screening. Alice was found competent to stand trial and released under the conditions that she stay away from the man she threatened with the box cutter and the Starbucks at 1455 K Street N.W., and that she report to Pretrial Services for assessment and possible placement into mental health services.



Alice on the streets in D.C.

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Alice became angry, began waving around a box knife at the man, spat on the man’s girlfriend, and threatened her with the box knife.

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After her release, Alice severely injured her foot. When she walked into the Community Connections office injured, Alice said she had antibiotic and pain medication prescriptions but did not fill them because she did not have insurance. When Alice’s case manager at Community Connections

urged Alice to go to the hospital and fill her prescriptions, Alice refused.

On August 16, 2013, Alice failed to appear to her scheduled felony status conference (criminal threats can be charged as a misdemeanor or felony offense) and a bench warrant was issued for Alice's arrest. Four days later, Alice was arrested in Virginia and placed in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service, brought back to D.C., and put in jail. During a court hearing the next day, Alice stated, "I want to kill myself," according to a note from officers at the D.C. Superior Court. Following this statement, a psychiatrist at CDF recommended placing Alice in the mental health unit for behavioral observation. That same day, the judge in Alice's case sent a signed commitment order to the Superintendent of the D.C. Jail recommending that Alice be placed at the Central Treatment Facility (CTF), which houses D.C.'s female inmate population, separate from all other inmates and in protective custody. The judge also sent a medical alert to the DOC, indicating Alice was HIV-positive, had human papilloma virus and was diagnosed with gender identity disorder.

Over a month later, Alice had not been transferred to CTF. When Alice's case manager from Community Connections met Alice in jail, Alice expressed that her rights were being denied as a transgender inmate. In late September, the judge in Alice's case made a second recommendation advocating for Alice's placement at CTF.

In early October, Alice's attorney requested a reconsideration of her release conditions on behalf of Alice, noting "Because of her identification as a female, the jail has not been able to accommodate her and is treating her differently from other inmates. Needless to say, she is having a difficult time at the D.C. Jail and has complained of harassment due to her identity." Alice requested to be released to live with Taylor and noted she could

be monitored by Community Connections and the Special Supervision Unit for mental health treatment. Alice was held at CDF for another 20 days. During this time, the judge in Alice's case ordered a competency screening that found Alice competent to stand trial.

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About a year later, Alice mentioned an incident in which she took more than 60 “Triple C” cough medicine pills to prove another homeless man wrong in a bet.

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At her court date at the end of October, Alice pled guilty to the attempted possession of a prohibited weapon and simple assault charges against her. She was released from jail under the conditions that she stay away from the man she threatened and the Starbucks on 1455 K Street N.W., report to the Pretrial Services Agency daily, and report to Community Connections by 4 p.m. the next day. At her sentencing hearing a week later, Alice was sentenced to supervised probation conditioned on undergoing a mental health evaluation, complying with all treatment recommendations, continuing to engage with Community Connections, and participating in drug testing and treatment as ordered.”

In November Alice was banned from Bethany Women's Center, a drop-in day program where she often took showers, because she was verbally aggressive toward staff. At the end of the month, Alice was found passed out on the street after overdosing on 64 antihistamine pills and taken to GW Hospital. About a year later, Alice mentioned an incident in which she took more than 60 “Triple C” cough medicine pills to prove another homeless man wrong in a bet. This appears to be the inci-

dent to which Alice was referring. During this hospitalization, Alice's Community Connections case manager told the social worker at GW that Alice was homeless and refused to stay at shelters. The social worker agreed to tell Alice's case manager when Alice would be discharged. Alice later left the hospital, explaining she had plans to visit her family in Ohio for Thanksgiving.

The next day, the court committed Alice to the D.C. Jail where she was held until June 9, 2014, for her longest period of incarceration. In early December, the court again recommended Alice's transfer to CTF where she would be housed with the female population and according to her gender expression.

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The officers conducted a pat down during which Alice shouted, “I have a hammer for protection.” A hammer was recovered from Alice's coat pocket, and she was placed under arrest.

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Several days later, Alice was arrested while on probation in her felony case. According to a witness, Alice followed pedestrians on the 1600 block of 17th Street N.W. The pedestrians entered the CVS on 17th Street N.W. and asked for help. Alice advanced toward the pedestrians and the witness with a box cutter knife, but Alice was grabbed and prevented from attacking the individuals. Her box cutter was wrestled away from her. MPD officers arrived on the scene and approached Alice as she was being restrained by the witness. The officers conducted a pat down during which Alice shouted, “I have a hammer for protection.” A hammer was recovered from Alice's coat pocket, and she was placed under arrest. At the Second District Station, an additional search was conducted, and Alice had a metal push rod and a metal cylinder with copper Brillo stuffed in one end and burnt metal on the other end, a makeshift crack pipe.

2014

Abandoning Drug Treatment Again

All through the winter of 2014, Alice was held at CDF. In March, she was placed in CDF's mental health unit for behavioral observation after she appeared to have a manic episode. Alice remained there until she was released in June 2014. She struggled during her time in the mental health unit. CDF psychiatrists noted that Alice would rap all night and disrobe to display the enlargement of her breasts from hormone therapy. During meetings with CDF psychiatrists, Alice expressed that she was unhappy about being in protective custody and denied having any mental health problems. A week after Alice expressed this frustration, she was ordered to stay in her cell without privileges following an incident in which Alice threw urine on

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While the CDF psychiatric team planned to persuade Alice to take medication, none were prescribed.

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an inmate because her cup of juice was not filled to the brim. While the CDF psychiatric team planned to persuade Alice to take medication, none were prescribed.

In early April 2014, during this period of incarceration, Alice was sentenced for the attempted possession of a prohibited weapon and simple as-

sault charges against her following the incident at CVS. No additional confinement was imposed by the court, and Alice was ordered to comply with a one-year supervised probation which would include being transferred to a dual diagnosis facility where she would undergo drug and mental health treatment.

In June, Alice was released into the custody of CSOSA, and sent to the Salvation Army's Harbor Light Center for a 90-day residential treatment program. It appears that Alice did not stay in the treatment program for long. When she would have been nearly halfway through the 90-day program, Alice was observed entering the CVS at 1418 P Street N.W. and stealing two bottles of Tide laundry detergent. An MPD officer arrived at the scene, reviewed the store's security camera footage, and was informed by the manager at CVS that Alice had previously been barred from the store for theft. The MPD officer canvassed the area, found Alice, and arrested her.

Three days later, Alice failed to appear for her probation review hearing and the judge issued a bench warrant. Alice was picked up more than two months after a bench warrant had been issued.

No one at Community Connections seems to have been informed that Alice was placed in a residential treatment facility after she was released from the D.C. Jail. Alice's Community Connections treatment team consistently conducted outreach trying to find Alice during July and August, months Alice

was supposed to have been staying at The Salvation Army Harbor Light Center for her drug treatment program. One member of Alice's Community Connections team had two encounters with Alice after Alice left the program and while she had three bench warrants out for her arrest.

During the first encounter, in late August, Alice was found panhandling in front of the Yes! Organic Market in Brookland. Alice reportedly had "poor hygiene and was very thin" and "presented with depression and delusional thought process." Alice said that she was staying with a friend but "seemed depressed and anxious about her current situation." During the second encounter, in mid-September, Alice exhibited poor hygiene and presented "as somewhat agitated." During this check-in, Alice described feeling lonely, denied having a mental illness, and was not interested in receiving services.

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While held at CDF, Alice noted her preference to be housed according to her gender expression and requested a hearing before DOC's Transgender Committee. But Alice never appears to have been transferred.

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Two weeks later, Alice was picked up on a bench warrant and held at the D.C. Jail. With three cases before the D.C. Superior Court, Alice was sentenced to another long period of incarceration.

During an appointment with a psychiatrist at CDF, Alice shared that she thought she was depressed. It appears Alice did not have a follow-up with CDF psychiatrist until almost a month later. While held at CDF, Alice noted her preference to be housed

according to her gender expression and requested a hearing before DOC's Transgender Committee. But Alice never appears to have been transferred. When she met with her Community Connections case manager at the D.C. Jail, Alice read a long letter she had written on an envelope about how she was wrongly incarcerated for defending herself with a box-cutter and the Transgender Committee should have sent her to the female jail. Alice was released from CDF on December 24, 2014.

On New Year's Eve, days after Alice was released from an 85-day period of incarceration, Alice's case manager from Community Connections found Alice wrapped in a large blanket, panhandling on the corner of 17th and Corcoran Streets N.W. Alice said that she was cold but refused to be taken to a shelter.

2015

Getting Her Own Apartment

In early January, Alice's Community Connections case manager conducted outreach for Alice and found her panhandling. The case manager told Alice that she could receive assistance with housing or Medicaid recertification. In response, Alice started screaming and swearing. A couple of days later, Alice entered the emergency room at GW Hospital with abdominal pain. When a psychiatric consultation was requested, Alice refused and was discharged from the hospital. During the winter months, no one at Community Connections, Pathways, or Bethany Women's Center reports seeing Alice. But during this time, Alice returned for her first visit to Whitman-Walker after two and half years. When she was informed that she would need to treat her HIV before she could be prescribed hormones, Alice became upset and started yelling at the physician assistant treating her. She returned for a second appointment less than a month later and re-started her HIV medication.

By the spring, Alice began re-engaging with Community Connections and Pathways, and in June, Alice was accepted into Pathways's permanent supportive housing program. The summer months, however, proved tumultuous for Alice.

On one occasion, she was found vomiting outside the MLK Library and having a seizure, following a bad trip on synthetic marijuana, or K2. When Alice's case managers from Community Connections and Pathways accompanied her to an appointment at Whitman-Walker, Alice reported being diagnosed with anal warts but said she never followed up be-

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On one occasion, she was found vomiting outside the MLK Library and having a seizure, following a bad trip on synthetic marijuana, or K2.

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cause she was “scared” about the outcome. Alice was hospitalized again at GW after she was found unconscious and had suffered another vomiting incident after smoking K2.

Alice's case managers continued to work with her to complete her Supplemental Security Income paperwork and obtain government-issued identification from the Department of Motor Vehicles, but Alice did not want her housing to be under her former name and filed for a change of name request in the court. In mid-October, the court granted Alice's request to legally change her name. By the end of the month, Alice received a permanent supportive housing voucher through Pathways.

But before she was housed, Alice was arrested. An officer was flagged down by an individual on the 1300 block of 14th Street N.W. The individual reported that a passenger had just spat on the driver of a Metro bus. The officer interviewed the Metro driver who said that when Alice was asked to step off the bus to allow a rider with a disability to access the space for passengers with disabilities, Alice refused to move and said that she had paid her

fare. When asked again to step off the bus, Alice began yelling at the driver. The driver began moving the seats for the disabled passenger, and Alice spat on the driver's face and left the bus. The officer stopped Alice on the 1300 block of 14th Street N.W. and arrested her. A simple assault charge was filed against Alice in court, and Alice was ordered to stay away from the Metro bus driver she spat on.

A week later, she moved into her own apartment in Southeast D.C., and she made a plan with her case manager at Community Connections to renew her Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits the next day.

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When asked again to step off the bus, Alice began yelling at the driver. The driver began moving the seats for the disabled passenger, and Alice spat on the driver's face and left the bus.

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2016

Losing Control of Her Apartment

In January, Alice shopped for winter dresses as well as plates and cups for her new apartment, which she said she “loves.” At the end of the month, when Alice failed to appear to her scheduled status hearing for the case against her for assaulting the Metro bus driver, a bench warrant was issued for Alice’s arrest.

Before she was picked up on her bench warrant, Alice outfitted her home with new furniture to make her apartment “a home,” she said. Alice also allowed Taylor and another man she had recently become involved with to move in, which was a violation of her voucher. Alice reported greater stability as a result of being housed. While she continued to engage in substance use while housed, Alice said it was “nothing as bad” as when she was homeless, and her Community Connections case manager observed that Alice appeared to be less responsive to internal stimuli.

But just a few months after being housed following years of experiencing homelessness, Alice was picked up on the bench warrant, charged with violating the Bail Reform Act for failing to appear before the court, and sent to jail. At the end of the month, a six-month supervised probation was imposed on Alice at the sentencing hearing in her assault case.

Alice soon began drinking heavily. During one incident, she came into the Community Connections office highly intoxicated with multiple bruises on

her face. The next day at the Community Connections office, she said that she didn’t remember coming in the day before. Taylor informed Alice’s Community Connections team that there were squatters living at Alice’s apartment who recently got into a fight.

The term “squatter” is a colloquial term used in the homeless services community to describe any person residing in a public housing or voucher-based unit without being on the lease. These individuals often begin as invited guests or are in a position to compel the leaseholder to allow them inside through manipulation, coercion, or guilt. Once these individuals are in the unit, they tend to refuse to leave and sometimes do not allow the leaseholder to return to their own home.

The leaseholder is often subsequently found to be out of compliance with the terms of their lease or voucher program, which jeopardizes their housing. When confronted, Alice initially denied anyone else lived in the apartment. Alice later reported meeting the squatters while homeless and inviting them to live with her, noting that she wanted to help them since she was no longer homeless.

Alice’s case manager from Pathways to Housing learned that one of the individuals squatting in Alice’s apartment had a gun. Alice refused to call the police and her case manager called Taylor, advising him to notify Community Connections if Alice needed to be involuntarily committed for a psychiatric evaluation.

On one occasion, the squatters threw bleach on Taylor and tried to hit Alice. Following this incident, Alice said she filed a police report and expressed interest in moving out of her apartment. When she and Taylor began seeking emergency shelter identified by the Victim Services Branch at MPD, Alice said that she instead would prefer to return to her apartment. Taylor worried about Alice's poor decision-making and told her Community Connections case worker that Alice will "get herself killed" if she continues to act "this way." Alice's case manager told Taylor that Alice was an adult who could make her own decisions. In late July, Alice broke up with Taylor, returned to her apartment, and vowed that she would not give anyone else the keys.

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Alice was stopped by the officer, who was told by the individual that when Alice raised the wine bottle, Alice stated "I'll kill your ass" and "I'll bust you in your head." Alice was placed under arrest.

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In August, a show cause hearing was ordered by the court in Alice's assault case for failing to comply with the terms and conditions of her probation. Alice was held at the D.C. Jail for two days. After she was released from jail, the squatters returned to her apartment, armed, and Alice began sleeping outside.

Just days before the probation show cause hearing in Alice's case for assaulting a bus driver, Alice was arrested near Eastern Market Metro station. An MPD officer had observed her having an argument with an individual. The officer saw Alice throw down a metal bowl and pull out a bottle of wine from a plastic bag she was carrying. Al-

ice raised the bottle of wine above her head and lunged at the individual. Alice was stopped by the officer, who was told by the individual that when Alice raised the wine bottle, Alice stated "I'll kill your ass" and "I'll bust you in your head." Alice was placed under arrest.

Following this arrest, Alice was charged with threats to do bodily harm in court where she was released to the Pretrial Services Agency's high intensity supervision program and ordered to stay away from the man she threatened and from Eastern Market Metro station.

At her misdemeanor initial status hearing in late October, the court ordered Alice to undergo a competency screening. When she returned to her apartment to spend the night, she found that one of the squatters had changed the locks and she was forced to sleep outside in the cold.

Alice failed to show up for her scheduled competency evaluation and a bench warrant was issued for her arrest. She was picked up on the bench warrant more than a week later, charged with violating the Bail Reform Act for failing to appear for her scheduled competency exam and sent to the D.C. Jail.

In late November, a competency examination of Alice was conducted in the cell block located at D.C. Superior Court. During her examination, Alice denied being diagnosed with a mental illness. Alice was evaluated as competent to stand trial and was sentenced to 15 days of confinement with credit for time served for threats to do bodily harm.

Just a few days later during her probation show cause hearing in the case against her for assaulting a bus driver, Alice had her probation revoked and was sentenced to 15 days of confinement. Her failure to appear case was dismissed as part of a plea agreement.

Alice was released from jail on December 8, 2016. The day after she was released from jail, Alice reported successfully changing the locks to her apartment so no one would have access except for her. Alice began drinking daily and lost her keys to her apartment after she threw them in the trash while hungover. She told a member of her treatment team at Community Connections that drinking is how she deals with stress. When she was prompted to come up with other ways of coping, Alice replied, "Drinking is easy."

On her 33rd birthday, Alice had her purse stolen and was beaten up by a few men in her neighborhood while she was soliciting sex work. The fight left two large wounds on her knees.

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2017

Squatters and Unlawful Entry

When Alice arrived at the Community Connections office intoxicated several days later, she refused to see a nurse to examine her wounds. In early February, Alice was locked out of her apartment. She said a person had robbed her, stolen her keys, and cut her neck. Alice slept in the hallway of her apartment building. The next day, the man who stole her keys returned them. Even though the squatters were out of her apartment, Alice began sleeping on the streets, where she was beaten up again and left with two black eyes and a large gash on her knee. When a member of her Community Connections treatment team asked Alice if she wanted to file a police report and seek medical attention, Alice refused.

Alice began staying with Taylor, which she described as “a little vacation” from her apartment. When Alice was encouraged to stop letting the squatters stay at her own apartment by her case manager at Community Connections, Alice replied that she had “a heart.” Over the next couple of months, the squatters returned to her apartment. Alice stopped living with Taylor and began sleeping on the streets again.

In June 2017, Alice was involuntarily committed by Community Connections. A police officer brought Alice to the Community Connections office after she was seen drinking in public and walking into traffic. The officer told Amy Bukowski at Community Connections that Alice needed to be involuntarily committed for a psychiatric evaluation. Alice was sent to the Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency

Program at D.C. General Hospital. Bukowski explained to the officer that an involuntary commitment form had not been written for Alice in several years and that she had not been taking psychiatric medication. Bukowski noted that Alice displayed “extreme symptoms” she had not observed for a long time. After Alice was discharged, Alice continued to engage with the Community Connections team and her case manager at Pathways, trying to deal with the squatters at her apartment.

At the end of July, an MPD scout car was called to Ophelia’s Fish House at 501 8th Street S.E. When the MPD officers arrived at the scene, the manager of the restaurant said Alice was aggressively panhandling and harassing customers. After Alice was asked to leave multiple times, she entered the restaurant and blocked the door. The manager physi-

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Upon conducting a search, a burnt pipe and burnt black screw consistent with a crack pipe were found in Alice’s purse.

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cally forced Alice outside, at which point Alice spat on the outside window and kicked over the restaurant sign. When the officers canvassed the scene, they identified and arrested Alice. Upon conduct-

ing a search, a burnt pipe and burnt black screw consistent with a crack pipe were found in Alice's purse.

In early August, neither Alice's Community Connections' nor Pathways' case managers had seen Alice. Alice's Pathways case manager said she saw Alice a couple of weeks prior and reported that she was "not really herself."

In early August, an unlawful entry charge was filed against Alice in court. At her misdemeanor initial status hearing, Alice was ordered to stay away from the 500 block of 8th Street S.E.

In late August, at an appointment at the Community Connections office, Alice was encouraged to meet with the psychiatrist for an evaluation. Alice became angry and said, "I don't take psych meds," adding, "that's not why I'm here." She eventually became receptive to the idea and had a psychiatric appointment, but throughout September, Community Connection's efforts to find and re-engage Alice were unsuccessful, and in late September, Alice was arrested again for unlawful entry.

An MPD officer was called to respond to the Safeway at 1701 Corcoran Street N.W, where the officer was told that Alice entered the store twice. Each time Alice was asked to leave but refused. The officer was told Alice had a barring notice, and Alice was arrested. The next day, an unlawful entry charge was filed against Alice in court, and she was ordered to stay away from the Safeway on Corcoran St, N.W.

Alice's attorney requested Alice's case for unlawfully entering Ophelia's Fish House be screened for Mental Health and Drug Courts. While the fish house and Safeway cases were in court, Alice was arrested a third time for unlawful entry in late October. In this instance, MPD officers were called to respond to an incident at Hank's Oyster Bar at 1624 Q Street N.W. The officers were told that Alice, who had a barring notice, had unlawfully entered

the restaurant. The officers canvassed the scene, found Alice, and arrested her. Alice now had a third unlawful entry case against her in court.

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Four days following this arrest, Alice was arrested for a fourth time this year for spitting on and striking the owner of Lauriol Plaza.

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Four days following this arrest, Alice was arrested for a fourth time this year for spitting on and striking the owner of Lauriol Plaza. An MPD officer received a call for an assault at Lauriol Plaza at 1835 18th Street N.W. At the scene, the officer was told by the owner that Alice was disturbing customers on the patio area. Alice was asked to leave, refused, and then spat on the owner's face and struck him. While canvassing the area, the officer found Alice and brought her back to Lauriol Plaza where the owner identified her as the assailant. Alice was placed under arrest. In court, Alice was charged with simple assault and she was ordered to stay away from Lauriol Plaza.

In November, the court ordered Alice into the custody of Pretrial Services for bed-to-bed transfer to an inpatient drug treatment program. It is not known where Alice was placed and how long she stayed. Later that month, Alice told a nurse at Community Connections, "This is the happiest day of my life." Alice reported that she was finally able to move back into her apartment, but less than a week later, the squatters returned and fought their way back into the apartment and she was back on the streets.

In December, Alice failed to appear in court and four bench warrants were issued for her arrest in the cases against her. Alice was arrested the day

after the bench warrants were issued, ordered to undergo a competency screening, and remanded to jail. During her mental health assessment intake at CDF, Alice told the mental health clinician that she had attempted suicide in the past by overdose. It is unclear whether Alice was referring to the attempt reported in 2013 or a more recent one. Alice was a poor historian of her suicide history, inconsistently reporting previous attempts to the mental health clinicians who saw her when she was incarcerated.

During Alice's court-ordered competency screening, she was deemed competent to stand trial, but the psychologist who conducted the competency screening encouraged the court to ensure Alice would follow-up with Community Connections if released to the community.

The day after her competency exam, Alice pled guilty to assaulting the owner of Lauriol Plaza and unlawfully entering Ophelia's Fish House. For assaulting the owner of Lauriol Plaza and unlawfully entering Ophelia's Fish House, a nine-month supervised probation was imposed, and she was ordered to maintain contact with Community Connections while CSOSA was asked by the court to place Alice in a drug treatment program appropriate for her gender identification. Alice's unlawful entry charges for entering Hank's Oyster Bar and Safeway were dismissed as part of a plea agreement.

In late December 2017, Alice's father—who had been imprisoned for the majority of Alice's life—died in jail. Alice took the news very hard.

2018

Losing Her Apartment

While sleeping on the streets, Alice became sick with pneumonia and was hospitalized at United Medical Center. Following this hospitalization, Alice returned to her apartment after the squatters left and found the unit in disarray. In late January, U.S. Marshals came by Alice's apartment looking for the squatters, and Alice reported not knowing where they were.

Alice told her case manager at Community Connections that she did not follow-up with her probation officer after her urine tested positive for cocaine and alcohol. A probation show cause hearing was scheduled following a report that Alice failed to abide by the terms of her probation.

During this time, Alice was at risk of losing her housing voucher. She had failed to file recertification paperwork that is required every two years. At Alice's housing hearing in mid-February, her case manager from Pathways testified that Alice's mailbox was broken and Alice had not been receiving mail. When the presiding officer learned about the squatters, he asked how the squatters first came to the apartment and why Alice didn't tell the D.C. Housing Authority. Alice stated "I let these people who I thought were my friends spend the night and they came in and took over my place." The officer informed Alice that he believed she had good cause for missing her recertification but that she violated the terms of her voucher because she had squatters living in her apartment that she never reported to the D.C. Housing Authority. He recommended scheduling a modification hearing for in-

dividuals with mental health challenges that prevent them from being able to abide by the terms of their voucher.

Two days later, Alice informed her Community Connections case manager that she had not been meeting with her probation officer consistently, and worried that if she continued to provide dirty urine samples, she would be sent back to jail. Three days later, Alice was found passed out from intoxication following an appointment at Community Connections.

When she awoke, she talked to Denise Zapien from Community Connections about "getting a gun to shoot me." Alice agreed to go to the Community Connections for further monitoring where her mood improved. Alice was assessed for involuntary commitment, but it was determined that Alice was not at acute risk of injury to anyone and an FD-12 form for involuntary psychiatric evaluation was not written.

At a probation show cause hearing in March, Alice's probation was revoked, and Alice was sentenced to a 45-day period of incarceration with credit for time served.

A month later, Alice was released from jail and appeared for her second hearing with the housing authority. Alice was told that her voucher would be terminated because she failed to request a recertification hearing at the beginning of the year. She was informed she would have to

submit a letter requesting a hearing to reinstate her voucher to explain why she was unable to request a recertification hearing and why inspectors could not get into her apartment on the scheduled date. Alice ultimately lost her voucher, was evicted from her apartment due to voucher violations, and discharged from Pathways. She was once again homeless.

After losing her voucher, Alice began working with Street Sense Media in early May as a case management client. During her time as a case management client, Alice worked as a Street Sense Media vendor, and starting in mid-June, Alice picked up newspapers from the office to sell. Through Street Sense Media, Alice also began consistently participating in the organization's weekly writers' group. Willie Schatz, who facilitates the group, said Alice "was among the more regular attendees." He remembers that "most of the time she would come in with something written." The space, Schatz notes, makes individuals experiencing homelessness "feel worthwhile." He says "almost everyone else thinks they're a liability and almost everyone else thinks they're worthless. When they have a story in a newspaper and their customer comes to buy it, Alice can say, 'here's my poem on page eight.'" Alice published 15 poems with Street Sense Media during her life. "She was extremely proud when she wrote her first piece for Street Sense," recalls Ruby Corado of Casa Ruby. "She gave me a copy."

Soon after she became a Street Sense Media case management client, Alice was arrested for unlawfully entering Harris Teeter and second-degree theft. Alice entered the Harris Teeter at 1350 Potomac Avenue S.E. where she had been previously barred and attempted to steal merchandise. She was apprehended by an MPD officer and the store's loss prevention manager at the garage entrance where she was placed under arrest for second degree theft and unlawful entry.

In late June, Alice was arrested for a different second-degree theft. In May, Alice had entered the CVS at 500 12th Street S.E. and placed deodorant inside her bag. When a CVS employee confronted Alice and asked her to return the deodorant, Alice left without paying. Video footage later retrieved from CVS was shared with MPD officers who identified the suspect as Alice, and in July, Alice was located by an MPD officer and arrested for second degree theft.

Alice now had two new cases against her in court and would soon have a third.

On September 5, 2018, two MPD officers received a radio call to respond to an incident in front of a home on Corcoran Street N.W. between 17th Street N.W. and New Hampshire Avenue N.W. At the scene, the officers observed Alice lying down with her buttocks, anus, and genitalia exposed in front of the steps to the home, surrounded by trash and food. The officers woke Alice up and arrested her for indecent exposure. When Alice was being handcuffed, she spat on one of the officers. The next day, Alice was charged in court with assaulting a police officer.

Later that month, Alice was issued an FD-12 form for involuntary psychiatric evaluation for the third time by Community Connections for self-neglect after she came into the office with a black eye and contusion on her elbow and refused to seek medical attention. She was sent to MedStar Washington Hospital Center in a police car. At the hospital, a nurse told Alice's case manager from Community Connections that Alice's FD-12 form was poorly written. When the case manager offered to read the FD-12 form to the nurse, the nurse refused. The nurse told the case manager that it was not self-neglect to refuse to seek medical attention and said the FD-12 form would probably be thrown out, according to the note written at the time by Alice's Community Connections case manager.

Returning later, the nurse reported that the FD-12 form would be honored because it was written by a psychiatrist. Three days after Alice was involuntarily committed, a member of the Community Connections team called the hospital to follow-up and was told that Alice could not be found in the system. The member of the Community Connections team then called the psychiatric floor and was told that no one had seen Alice. During a phone call with a member of the hospital staff on a different psychiatric floor, the staff member told him she did not know what happened to Alice after she was discharged and suggested contacting other hospitals to see if Alice was hospitalized elsewhere. The Community Connections staff member wrote in a note describing this encounter that he told the MedStar Washington Hospital Center employee that Alice's treatment team might file a complaint against the hospital for failing to properly care for Alice.

Following discharge, Alice was arrested for the fourth time this year. MPD officers were called to respond to an incident at the McDonald's at 1619 17th Street N.W. There, Alice said she had come into McDonald's to use the bathroom, unintentionally fell asleep, woke up, and left. The manager at McDonald's showed the officers a barring notice for Alice and reported that she asked Alice to leave when Alice entered the restaurant to which Alice responded, "Fuck all of you" and locked herself in the bathroom. Alice was placed under arrest for unlawful entry and charged the next day in court.

Following this case, Alice's lawyer worked with Alice to transfer her cases to the Mental Health Community Court (MHCC). When Alice underwent a forensic exam, which was necessary before she could even be screened for Mental Health Court, the doctors were initially unable to determine whether or not Alice was competent, and a second screening was ordered. A couple of days later, Alice shoved a man on 14th and U Streets N.W.

and knocked his phone out of his hands. Four days following this incident, Alice failed to appear for her Mental Observation Hearing and the court issued a bench warrant for her arrest. Alice was later spotted walking on the 1400 block of K Street N.W. by an officer who was aware that Alice had an active bench warrant. Alice was placed under arrest for failure to appear as well as simple assault and destruction of property following the incident on 14th and U Streets N.W. During her bench warrant return hearing, the judge ordered Alice to be held at the D.C. Jail until her next status hearing. Two weeks later, Alice was certified for admission into MHCC. During her first admission hearing on December 10, 2018, Alice was told she needed to regain connections with mental health services and resume drug testing.

2019

Entering Mental Health Community Court

On January 3, 2019, Alice's probation was revoked in the second-degree theft case for stealing deodorant from CVS, and Alice was sentenced to 30 days confinement with credit for time served. This same day, Alice had her second admission hearing to enter MHCC, but Alice was so incoherent that she was "stepped back" for detox.

At her third mental health admission hearing, Alice declined inpatient treatment and her case was continued to ensure Alice's compliance with intensive outpatient treatment. Alice's fourth mental health admission hearing was held the day after she was released from jail, and the court allowed Alice time to connect with services and enroll in intensive outpatient treatment. At her fifth mental health admission hearing, Alice was ordered to get into full compliance to be accepted into MHCC.

A couple of weeks later, Alice was arrested for unlawfully entering McDonald's. Two MPD officers were called on an unlawful entry assignment at the McDonald's on 17th and Corcoran Streets N.W. The officers were told that a patron had been in the restroom for over 30 minutes and had refused to leave after several verbal requests. The officers made contact with Alice after she was verbally commanded by the officers to leave the restroom. Alice had been barred from this McDonald's and was placed under arrest for unlawful entry on private property. An unlawful entry charge was filed against her two days later.

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On January 3, 2019, Alice's probation was revoked in the second-degree theft case for stealing deodorant from CVS, and Alice was sentenced to 30 days confinement with credit for time served. This same day, Alice had her second admission hearing to enter MHCC, but Alice was so incoherent that she was "stepped back" for detox.

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At her sixth mental health admission hearing in early March, Alice was ordered to be seen by the Urgent Care Unit for placement into the Psychiatric Institute of Washington. The next day, after failing to complete her ordered assessment through the Urgent Care Unit, Alice was given one last opportunity to complete the assessment, undergo detox, and get placed into a residential treatment program.

Five days later, she was arrested for stealing diapers from Safeway. An employee at the Safeway on the corner of Corcoran and 17th Streets N.W. flagged down an MPD officer patrolling the area. The employee told the officer that Alice had just stolen from the store. The officer canvassed the area and found a bag. The employee identified the bag as the one Alice used to conceal what she

had stolen, bypassing all sale points without stopping. A small aluminum crack pipe was recovered from Alice's bag. Alice was barred from this Safeway and a stay away order was requested from the 1600 block of 17th Street N.W. and from the 1600-1700 blocks of Corcoran Street N.W.

Alice wore diapers because she urinated and defecated unexpectedly, a condition that made her feel embarrassed. Years before this arrest, Alice met with a nurse at Whitman-Walker Health to obtain diapers through her health coverage. When Alice was told that only adult diapers were covered and not children's diapers, Alice refused to let her case manager drop off a form requesting adult diapers at a pharmacy, preferring instead to purchase children's diapers on her own. Alice liked to call herself "Baby Alice" and was once diagnosed with paraphilic infantilism for her reversion to childlike behavior. Once, when explaining why she wore diapers to a nurse at Community Connections, Alice began speaking in a childlike voice and said that she wears the diapers because she likes to be babied. Following this statement, Alice stopped talking in a baby voice and explained that she could not control her bowel movements because of the amount of anal intercourse she had had.

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Once, when explaining why she wore
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babied.

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The day after she was arrested for stealing diapers
from Safeway, a second-degree theft charge was

filed against Alice in court. Even though Alice never followed through on the court's order for placement into detox and residential treatment, Alice was accepted into MHCC during her eighth and final mental health admission hearing and was held in jail until the court could place her in a treatment facility. During her incarceration, Alice noted her preference to be housed according to her gender expression and requested a hearing before DOC's Transgender Committee. A request from March 2019 includes a note signed by the members of the committee which states that Alice "has a child" and "has had known sexual activity with females." The committee recommended that Alice remain at the D.C. Jail with the male inmate population.

Jonathan Willmott, Alice's attorney at the time, noted "Alice definitely wanted to be at CTF." But DOC, Willmott observed, "does not listen to judges when it comes to their internal procedures, especially placement at the jail versus CTF."

Alice would soon leave jail after the court identified Safe Haven for Alice's drug treatment. In late March, Ashley Smith, Alice's case manager from Community Connections, picked up Alice from the D.C. Jail to transport her to Safe Haven. After Smith dropped Alice off at Safe Haven, Alice ran away. Smith called Colleen Cosgriff, Alice's case manager at Street Sense Media, and asked her to keep an eye out for Alice. That day, Alice came to the Street Sense Media office where Eric Falquero, Street Sense Media's Editorial Director, found Alice in the lobby and began walking with her. Falquero insisted that he call a car to transport her to Community Connections. Falquero called Smith who informed him that if Alice made it back to Community Connections by 3 p.m., Alice would not face any consequences. Falquero and Alice parted ways. At 2:55 p.m., Falquero found Alice at the Street Sense Media office again. This time, Alice accepted Falquero's offer to order a car to transport her to Community Connections. While waiting

for the car, Alice told Falquero that she preferred the regular courtroom to MHCC, a system “she is familiar with and that cannot be exploited in the same way.” When Falquero called Smith to tell her that Alice would be arriving after 3 p.m., Smith replied, “That’s perfect.” Smith later texted Falquero to confirm that Alice had arrived. By the time Alice had reconnected with Smith, three bench warrants had already been issued for Alice’s arrest.

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While waiting for transport, Alice spat on a different MPD officer, striking the officer in the face and chest after the officer asked Alice biographical questions and referred to her by her former name. Alice was charged with assault.

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Two days later, an MPD officer saw Alice running up 17th Street N.W. When he found out that Alice had three active arrest warrants for failing to appear in court, Alice was put in handcuffs and placed under arrest. While waiting for transport, Alice spat on a different MPD officer, striking the officer in the face and chest after the officer asked Alice biographical questions and referred to her by her former name. Alice was charged with assault. Alice was removed from MHCC and sent to the D.C. Jail for what would be the last time in her life.

In an April 2019 email from CEO of Street Sense Media Brian Carome to Willmott, Alice’s attorney, Carome said he believed Alice was possibly a danger to herself. Willmott replied, “I have no specific information that makes me believe she is more of a danger to herself than seems obvious (it is obviously dangerous to be an alcoholic with untreated mental health issues living on the street).” This same day, Brian reached out to Nancy A. Noo-

nan, an attorney at the firm Arent Fox who handles Street Sense Media’s requests for pro bono legal assistance. In an email, Brian wrote, “I have concluded that [Alice] is likely a danger to herself based upon a prolonged pattern of repeated behavior that puts her at risk of harm, including death. As a non-attorney, I need assistance in determining my organization’s course of action on her behalf as it relates to her mental and physical health and her safety.” Nancy informed Brian that he should be fine legally in taking action he deemed necessary to protect Alice.

Even though Alice’s cases were diverted back to the criminal court, she would not face additional jail time. Alice ultimately had her assault on a police officer charge and two other cases dismissed as part of a plea agreement. She was sentenced to time served for the remaining charges against her and released from jail. An email from Willmott to case manager Cosgriff notes, “The judge was persuaded that there is nothing the court can do in terms of getting her help and so just sentenced her to time-served. He seemed particularly persuaded that Street Sense was more likely to help.”

Alice’s attorney agreed: After Alice’s cases were diverted from MHCC back to the criminal court, Mr. Willmott communicated to Brian, “I don’t believe that more can be done through the criminal justice system.”

After Alice was incarcerated Cosgriff successfully matched Alice to Calvary Women’s Services Transitional Housing. When Cosgriff informed Alice that the program requires residents to maintain sobriety, Alice agreed to the terms and expressed her desire to enter the program. However, Alice was intoxicated during her first weekend at Calvary. When she was told by the staff that if she continued to drink she would be referred to an outpatient program, Alice said she would prefer to stay at Calvary and would try to stay sober. At one point, the staff reported not knowing where Alice was. The

next day, Alice returned to Calvary and reported having no memory of what happened. She recalled waking up in the hospital the day before and waking up in a parking garage that day to find her shoes, money, and notebook stolen.

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“I don’t believe that more can be done through the criminal justice system.”

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At another point, Cosgriff unexpectedly ran into Alice on a Friday evening. Alice reported that there was an issue at Calvary, and she had been asked not to come back until Tuesday. Cosgriff and Alice discussed staying at a shelter, but Cosgriff was unsure what Alice ultimately decided to do. While Alice enjoyed her time at Calvary, particularly the writing and improv classes in which she participated, Calvary ultimately did not work out for Alice and she was back on the streets.

In late June, Alice entered Mr. Yogato, a frozen yogurt shop on 17th Street N.W. and was asked to leave. Alice refused to leave, and the manager called the police. Alice left before the police arrived. Alice later returned to the shop and was asked to leave again. Alice refused. The police were called again, and Alice left before they arrived. Several hours later, Alice returned to the shop. When she was asked to leave again, Alice tossed a chair and directed profanities at an employee. The police were called to the scene. When an MPD officer arrived, Alice was playing Nintendo on the game console inside the shop. The manager told the officer that he had previous encounters with Alice in which Alice directed profane language toward him and oth-

er employees, tried to consume products without paying, and frightened him with aggressive behavior. Alice was placed under arrest for misdemeanor stalking and unlawful entry. Alice was barred from the establishment by the manager for five years and transported to the Second District police station. The next day, an unlawful entry charge was filed against Alice in court.

In early July, a man reported to an MPD officer that he was standing outside the Safeway on the corner of Corcoran and 17th Streets N.W. when Alice threw a small broken glass bottle at him but missed him.

The man also reported that Alice threatened him by giving him the middle finger and stating, “I will kill you.” Two MPD officers canvassing the area found Alice unconscious in a nearby parking lot. The man who reported the incident was brought to the scene and identified Alice as the assailant. Alice was reportedly “extremely aggressive towards the victim, officers, EMS, and other innocent individuals in the area.” Alice was placed under arrest for simple assault and threats to do bodily harm. The next day, Alice was charged in court with assault and attempted threats.

But good news was around the corner.

Following these charges, Alice moved into Miriam’s House at 1300 Florida Ave N.W. with the help of Cosgriff, her Street Sense Media case manager. “She has her own room and bathroom and they’ve set her up with bedding and toiletries. There is no curfew and she does not need to be sober, she just cannot bring any substances, including alcohol, into the building,” Cosgriff told Alice’s Community Connections treatment team. Alice would be able to stay here for the rest of her life.

After she moved in, Alice wrote a poem, entitled “Superstar,” expressing the hope she felt being housed. It was [published](#) in Street Sense:

Superstar

by Alice Carter

A complete one-eighty
I’ve turned my life around
I have a place to live
I have a bed to sleep in
I have clothes to wear
I have plenty of food
I guess you have to go through the bad
To get to the good

In early September, Alice’s unlawful entry charges were dismissed as part of a plea agreement, and a nine-month probation was imposed on Alice for attempted threats to do bodily harm. This sentencing hearing would be the last time Alice appeared in court.

Her Final Months

At her appointment at Whitman-Walker in late September, Alice discussed pursuing vaginoplasty surgery. She was told she needed to quit alcohol and drug use prior to surgery, but Alice showed no interest in cutting back. At this appointment, Alice was living in her own apartment at Miriam's House. She was feeling healthy and taking her HIV medication every day.

“

During another encounter, Alice... expressed anger toward her family for rejecting her and making her feel “like a freak.”

”

In mid-October, Alice was temporarily suspended from the Street Sense Media office. During the Writer's Group, Alice played music and sang loudly, disrupting the meeting and workspace. Following multiple requests to stop and refusing to do so, Alice was asked to leave. She began screaming profanities at Street Sense Media staff members. This incident followed ongoing issues with disruptive behavior in the Street Sense offices, including failing to use headphones in the vendor lounge, a rule for those using the common space. Alice was temporarily suspended from Street Sense Media classes, the offices and lounge, and from using the phone. This incident occurred just weeks before Cosgriff's departure from Street Sense Media. In an email to Alice's Community Connections treatment team, Cosgriff wrote, “I think [Alice] will need a lot of support.”

After Alice had been barred from the Street Sense Office in mid-October, Lissa Ramsepaul, the organization's clinical director, had a brief encounter with Alice at the end of the month to introduce herself. Ramsepaul and Alice met again a couple of times in November. During one encounter, the two discussed Alice's relationships, alcohol use, and early life. During another encounter, Alice appeared to be sober but told Ramsepaul she had been drinking the previous night. Alice expressed anger toward her family for rejecting her and making her feel “like a freak.” Alice was open to meeting again.

At Community Connections, Alice was assessed for involuntary commitment a final time in November. The psychiatrist at Community Connections who evaluated Alice did not believe she met the criteria for involuntary commitment at the time. In early December, a nurse at Community Connections conducted a medical evaluation of Alice who reported drinking four pints of alcohol a day and using cocaine, PCP, and K2. Alice said she did not want to engage in substance use treatment or start medication. During this appointment, Alice shared that her boyfriend at the time had beaten her up the night before. The nurse noted that Alice's treatment team would continue to monitor Alice.

Ramsepaul saw Alice for the last time following these appointments. Alice opened up to Ramsepaul about the challenges she had coming out as transgender to her family and instances of physical and sexual assault that occurred during her adolescence. Alice told Ramsepaul it was hard not to be able to have her boyfriend stay with her at her

room at Miriam's House. During this meeting, Alice said she would "do some different things" to change her life.

On December 17, 2019, a rehabilitation specialist from Community Connections found Alice sitting in front of the McDonald's at 1619 17th Street N.W. The two spoke for 45 minutes during which Alice reported that the previous night, she was found passed out and was taken to GWU Hospital. While Alice could not identify any problem with her drinking habit, the rehabilitation specialist told Alice that ending up in the hospital because of alcohol is not something Alice should take lightly. Alice said that she planned to come to Community Connections sober the next week.

An hour and a half later, Alice was found unconscious. Concerned individuals in the area flagged down nearby MPD officers who found Alice lying on the ground, not moving. At the scene, an MPD officer began performing CPR on Alice while another made a call to D.C. Fire and Emergency Medical Service Department (DCFEMS). Upon arrival, a member of the DCFEMS team began performing CPR on Alice and successfully resuscitated her. Alice was transported to Howard University Hospital for further evaluation where she passed away the next day. Alice's death certificate shows her cause of death to be alcohol intoxication. Other significant conditions noted on Alice's death certificate include pneumonia and HIV.

Conclusion



Alice's Street Sense Media badge photo.

Alice Carter had an incredibly difficult life, from her tumultuous childhood to the many terrible experiences she encountered as an adult, including sexual assault, physical abuse, and homelessness on top of the challenges of being a transgender woman and dealing with a substance use disorder (SUD) and mental illness. There were many times when Alice was harmed by herself and others, and there were times when she harmed other people. Alice more often than not refused to acknowledge her challenges and accept treatment.

It is impossible to know if something had been done differently, Alice could have been saved. Even so, there are lessons to be learned from Alice's life and death and examining her painful journey through the D.C. public health and criminal justice systems could help other people like her have a

different outcome. By studying and understanding how Alice came to finally drink herself to death on a freezing sidewalk just shy of her 36th birthday after countless encounters with hundreds of professionals trying to help her obtain housing, engage her in mental health treatment, and deliver medical care and legal support to her, perhaps different endings can be achieved for others who struggle as she did.

Issues for further discussion to help prevent someone like Alice from spending her life making repeated trips through the revolving door of arrest, judicial proceedings, incarceration, release, and re-arrest include:

- More regularized review of high-risk individuals for potential need for guardianship.
- Provision of additional supports for especially vulnerable populations including:
 - » Shelters for transgender individuals experiencing homelessness.
 - » Consistent criteria for working with transgendered individuals in the forensic system, including application of policies to housing transgender inmates.
 - » Intermediate shelter solutions that eliminate discharging homeless individuals to the street from hospital care.
 - » Increased capabilities for community providers to initiate involuntary commitment procedures, and better operationalize DC's standards for "danger to self or others" as less than "imminent risk".
 - » More widespread training in trauma-informed care in all forensic settings.

- Safe socialization spaces for newly housed individuals.
- Development of a taskforce of community providers to review HIPAA law and propose necessary adjustments as they pertain to chronically homeless individuals, vulnerable adults, and homeless youth populations that allow for coordination of care outside of immediate emergency situations.

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Appendix A

SOURCES

Casa Ruby

Clara Hendrickson interview with Ruby Corado

Community Connections

Annual Assessments, treatment plans, multi-service progress notes, group progress notes, correspondence, informational notes, supervisory consultations, teaming notes, and monthly notes

D.C. Superior Court

Case summaries and court documents

Deborah Ann Smith

Toni Tileva interview with Deborah Ann Smith and Lissa Ramsepaal interviews with Deborah Ann Smith

Department of Corrections

Booking history, medical records, incident reports, intake forms, and housing forms

Jeff Taylor

Toni Tileva interview with Jeff Taylor

Jonathan Willmott

Toni Tileva interview with Jonathan Willmott, unpublished op-ed, emails with Street Sense Media staff, and email correspondence with Clara Hendrickson

Metropolitan Police Department

Offense reports

Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

Death certificate

Pathways to Housing DC

Clara Hendrickson interview with Christy Respress

Saint Elizabeths Hospital

Medical records

Street Sense Media

Case management notes, staff email, Clara Hendrickson interview with Willie Schatz, Clara Hendrickson interview with Colleen Cosgriff, and Avi Bajpai, "Alice Carter, poet and performer, dies at 35," Street Sense Media, February, 19, 2020.

Washington Blade

Lou Chibbaro Jr., "Failure to mandate treatment for Alice Carter was 'death sentence'," February 5, 2020.

The Washington Post

Justin Wm. Moyer, "'She's just one more missing voice': D.C. says 117 homeless people died here this year," December 20, 2019.

Whitman-Walker Health

Whitman-Walker Health progress notes and lab results

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