

15 years of fighting

to fit the punishment to the crime and the individual



1986

Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which establishes new federal mandatory minimums for drug offenses.

Len Bias dies after overdosing on cocaine and Congress passes the Anti-Drug Abuse Act

1988

Omnibus Anti-Drug Abuse Act establishes additional federal mandatory minimums for drug offenses.

1990-1991

FAMM inaugural year

In *Harmelin v. State of Michigan*, U.S. Supreme Court rules Michigan 650 lifer law does not violate Eighth Amendment right against cruel and unusual punishment.

▶ Jeff Stewart convicted of growing marijuana, is catalyst for FAMM.

▶ FAMM is formed after Eric Sterling, president of the Criminal Justice Policy Foundation, and H. Scott Wallace, then director of National Legal Aid and Defender's Association, help Julie Stewart hold meeting with 30 families.

▶ FAMM establishes



Early FAMM rallies

Washington, D.C., office, publishes first newsletter, holds first rallies, and receives first media coverage.

▶ FAMM membership by end of 1991: 2,500



Julie Stewart testifying before Congress



First FAMM workshop, coordinators



Lollapalooza display



Justice Day

1992

Bill to repeal federal mandatory minimums – first of several unsuccessful bills over the years – introduced.

▶ Julie Stewart appears on Phil Donahue Show, quoted in Playboy, Rolling Stone, LA Times and USA Today.

▶ FAMM stages rallies held in 13 U.S. cities.

▶ FAMM membership: 4,100, FAMM establishes first five chapters.

1993

LSD dosage weight standardized under U.S. Sentencing Guidelines. FAMM led campaign for change.

▶ Stewart testifies at first federal hearing on mandatory sentences

▶ FAMM co-sponsors crack cocaine symposium held on Capitol Hill, broadcast on C-SPAN.

▶ FAMM launches first state project in Pennsylvania and holds first workshop for 65 FAMM coordinators.

▶ FAMM membership: 21,101

1994

Congress enacts safety-valve provision allowing federal judges to exempt certain nonviolent, first-time drug offenders from mandatory minimum penalties. FAMM led campaign for change.

Congress passes law granting one year off for prisoners completing federal drug treatment program.

▶ FAMM educates thousands at Lollapalooza and Horde festivals, stages "Justice Day" rally held at U.S. Capitol, and holds FAMM art auction.

▶ FAMM media includes Maury Povich show, MTV, NBC Today Show, USA Today, Chicago Tribune, Details, Rolling Stone, Atlantic Monthly, Washington Post, Newsday.

▶ FAMM membership: 26,043

1995

Marijuana plant weight standardized under U.S. Sentencing Guidelines. FAMM led campaign for change.

U.S. Sentencing Commission recommends equalization of crack and powder cocaine sentences, Congress rejects it and federal prisoners riot.

▶ FAMM involved in first U.S. Supreme Court case, *Neal v. United States*; launches projects in Michigan and South Carolina.



FAMM members Bill Boman and Arthur Curry flank Julie Stewart at Sentencing Commission hearing on crack cocaine.

▶ FAMM membership: 29,100

1996

▶ FAMM hires first general counsel, and holds membership workshop in Washington, D.C.

▶ FAMM membership: 31,517

1997

Judges speak against mandatory sentences at Congressional symposium.

▶ FAMM gains extensive media coverage of JeDonna Young's story, which highlights injustice of MI 650 Lifer Law, and holds member workshop.

▶ FAMM membership: 35,029



JeDonna Young

1998



Laura Sager (c) and Michigan members at legislative training

Michigan legislature repeals state's 650 lifer law after successful FAIM-led campaign. Nearly 200 lifers become eligible for parole after 15-20 years in prison. JeDonna Young paroled after nearly 21 years in prison.



Kemba rally

► FAIM, Kemba Smith Foundation and NAACP Youth division sponsor "Youth at Risk" tour and youth rally in Washington.
 ► 60 Minutes II anchor Dan Rather interviews JeDonna Young and Laura Sager; Emerge magazine has cover story on federal prisoner and FAIM member Kemba Smith.
 ► FAIM membership: 17,798 (after database cleanup)



Dan Rather

1999

► FAIM joins New York Rockefeller drug law campaign. Panel of political leaders and appointees who were incarcerated highlight FAIM's workshop.
 ► PBS Frontline airs "Snitch," featuring FAIM members.
 ► FAIM membership: 19,676

Pat Nolan, Julie Stewart, Ernie Preate and Webb Hubbell at FAIM workshop



President Clinton



FAIM member Frances Rosemeyer testifies before Congress with Bill Moffitt and Wade Henderson



2000

Supreme Court decision in *Apprendi v. U.S.*, rules that any fact, except for prior offenses, increasing the maximum sentence beyond a crime's statutory maximum must be submitted to a jury and proved beyond a reasonable doubt.

President Clinton commutes federal drug sentences of two FAIM members.

Amendments to federal sentencing guidelines assure that sentences are based only on the offense of conviction and that defendants are not punished twice for the same conduct.

► FAIM members testify at Congressional hearings on mandatory sentences.
 ► FAIM featured on ABC's Nightline and Court TV's documentary, "Prisoners of Love."
 ► FAIM membership: 20,750

2001

President Clinton commutes the federal sentences of 17 FAIM members.

State legislatures begin to rethink harsh sentencing policies as ACLU poll finds most Americans oppose mandatory sentences.

► FAIM begins campaign to end other Michigan mandatory drug sentences, and in Washington honors both recent Presidential commutes and pro bono lawyers at Freedom Dinner.
 ► FAIM membership: 24,000



2001 commutes



Peter Ninemire meets Rep. Maxine Waters at the Freedom Dinner



2002

Michigan legislature replaces mandatory minimums after FAIM-led campaign, enacting the most sweeping reforms of mandatory minimum drug laws in U.S. since repeal of federal mandatory minimums in the 1970s. Effective January 2003, over 1,200 prisoners released early; 3,200 more end lifetime probation.

U.S. Sentencing Commission approves FAIM-supported drug sentence "cap" that lowers sentences for more than 1,200 low-level drug offenders each year.

► New Jersey and North Carolina FAIM campaigns launched.

► Julie Stewart recipient of Ford Foundation's Leadership for a Changing World award.

► Court TV premieres "Guilt by Association," a TV movie that brought mandatory sentences and FAIM into the homes of 2.1 million viewers.

► FAIM membership: 28,000



Lobby Day in Washington, D.C.



2003

PROTECT Act reduces ability of federal judges to depart from U.S. Sentencing Guidelines in certain cases, forcing U.S. Sentencing Commission to amend guidelines to substantially reduce number of downward departures



Justice Kennedy opposes mandatory minimums



Washington, D.C. area members visit Capitol Hill.

► FAIM publishes report, "Positive Trends in State Sentencing Reform."

► Justice Anthony Kennedy calls for repeal of mandatory minimum sentences.

► FAIM membership: 30,000.



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2004



In *Blakely v. Washington*, U.S. Supreme Court rules unconstitutional a Washington state law that permitted judges to increase a sentence based on facts not admitted by a defendant or found beyond a reasonable doubt by a jury. Decision affects sentencing guidelines in 13 states and raises questions about the mandatory application of federal sentencing guidelines.

New York legislature reforms Rockefeller drug laws by reducing mandatory minimum prison sentences for those serving longest sentences.

► NBC's "The West Wing" airs show in which the fictional president is introduced to FAMM and grapples with judicial discretion. CBS's "60 Minutes" highlights mandatory sentences.

► FAMM membership: 34,000



Ed Bradley, 60 Minutes



The West Wing

2005

In two cases, *Booker* and *Fanfan*, the U.S. Supreme Court declares federal sentencing guidelines advisory, not mandatory. Mandatory minimum laws, however, are NOT affected by the ruling.

► FAMM launches new campaign in Michigan to finish sentencing reforms.

2006

► FAMM marks its 15th year with a "Voices Gala" in Washington, D.C. honoring Rep. Bob Inglis (R-S.C.), Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.), actress Mercedes Ruehl, reporter Gary Fields and Je-Donna Young. It now has a staff of 14, 35,000 members, and offices in Washington, D.C., Michigan, New Jersey and North Carolina.

► Julie Stewart honored with Gleitsman Foundation's Citizen Activist Award.



Julie Stewart with other awardees and Alan Gleitsman (r)

The next 15 years

AFTER 15 YEARS, it doesn't seem possible that mandatory sentences still exist – but they do, and so does FAMM. Our unique blend of policy advocacy and grassroots activism, and our mission to put a human face on the injustices of mandatory sentencing laws, is more important than ever. Since our founding, FAMM has made a difference in thousands of defendants' lives and will continue to make a difference until mandatory sentencing laws are eliminated.

In the next five years, FAMM will work to become an even more powerful national force for fair and proportionate sentencing policies on the federal and state levels. We will:

DEFEAT new attempts to increase federal mandatory sentences and limit damage of new federal sentencing laws.

FOCUS reform around targeted sentencing issues, that affect large numbers of people, such as crack cocaine and school zone laws.

CONCENTRATE on extending FAMM's work in the states through full state campaigns, focusing on key sentencing issues, and supporting reform efforts that have the potential to impact many FAMM members.

BUILD FAMM membership in areas where FAMM can have more impact on federal judiciary committee members and in states where sentencing campaigns are underway.

INCREASE communications with FAMM members through a revised website, monthly e-newsletters, and regular, action-oriented legislative updates.

Your continued support of FAMM and its mission is a crucial ingredient in our progress.

"Our work is far from done, but our successes spur us to reach for – and achieve – just sentences for all defendants," says Julie Stewart. "That's what keeps us going."