



Unlocking Minds. Unlocking Possibilities.

Reading Between the Lines Announces New Executive Director



The Board of Directors of Reading Between the Lines is thrilled to announce its appointment of Agustin M. Torres to serve as Executive Director. Torres, an experienced Chicago-area social justice reform advocate, succeeds Joan Shapiro, the organization's founder and executive director since its inception in 2017. Reading Between the Lines is a non-profit organization that engages incarcerated and formerly-incarcerated adults in discussions of literature to develop the critical thinking skills needed for successful reentry into society.



"We are very excited about the passion, not-for-profit acumen, and lived experience Augie brings to this job." RBL board chair Ken Berry said. "Augie's entrepreneurial spirit and management experience make him the strong leader we need to build on Joan's remarkable accomplishments."

As a justice-impacted person who navigated the reentry landscape, Augie understands the value of RBL to support people while incarcerated and as they transition back to society. Augie most recently worked as Director of Programs at Acclivus, Inc., a

violence prevention and intervention program serving seven south side communities along with five hospitals in Chicago. Previously, he served in different capacities at READI Chicago, a program of the Heartland Alliance, and Edovo. Augie currently sits on the Illinois Sentencing Advisory Council (SPAC) which reports directly to the Governor, the Illinois Supreme Court, and the General Assembly. Augie is also studying for a master's degree from the University of Chicago's Crown School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice.

Augie appreciates how far RBL has come and how much more we can accomplish. "In five short years, Reading Between the Lines helped to change the trajectory for many men and women reentering society. I look forward to extending our impact and developing key relationships to continue to elevate our participants' voices and experiences and promote systemic change. I can't wait to get started."

"The past five years have been incredibly gratifying as we've expanded to five sites including Cook County Jail and engaged over 2,500 participants," Shapiro said. "When an organization's founder steps down, the priority is finding a successor who can sustain momentum with bold ideas, a willingness to discover, and an unswerving dedication to mission. I am excited these are the qualities Augie will bring to Reading Between the Lines."



Augie takes over from Kelly Kleiman, Interim Executive Director, on March 1, 2023. The Board of Directors thanks Kelly for her leadership and hard work during the organization's transition period.

Please join us in welcoming Augie as Executive Director by [making a donation](#) and supporting Reading Between the Lines.