

# Cornell Center for Health Equity

## HEALTH EQUITY *Seminar Series*

FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2021 | 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

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### "The REACH Project: Experiences from a community-based, health equity organization"

#### PRESENTATION ABSTRACT

The REACH Project, Inc. (Respectful, Equitable Access to Compassionate Healthcare) is a community based, health equity organization with a focus on providing low threshold, harm reduction-informed healthcare services. We will describe our approach to delivering high quality healthcare to people who use drugs and others who face stigma in traditional settings. Specifically, the rapid implementation of telehealth in response to COVID-19 and expansion of services through an outreach team will be explored. Further, our presentation will review REACH's educational initiatives to train a trauma responsive and structurally competent clinical workforce, as well as present our research and program evaluation efforts.

#### ABOUT SPEAKERS



**Justine Waldman, MD;** CEO and Medical Director

Justine Waldman is Board Certified in Addiction Medicine, Emergency Medicine, and a Fellow of the American College of Emergency Physicians. For 15 years she practiced emergency medicine primarily in Ithaca, NY. Her interest in medicine has always been driven by access to care and health equity issues. In 2005, she spearheaded the opening of the Ithaca Free Clinic, a volunteer multidisciplinary clinic open to the uninsured. In 2014, she was part of the Harm Reduction Team that gave recommendations for the Ithaca Plan: A Public Health and Safety Approach to Drugs and Drug Policy. Since her involvement on that team, she has focused most of her work on health equity. In December of 2016, she began providing medical services at the first Health Hub at a Syringe Exchange Program in New York state at the Southern Tier Aids Program in Ithaca. At the Health Hub, Dr. Waldman provides Low Threshold Medication Assisted Therapy, Hepatitis C

treatment, and acute care to People Who Use Drugs. She is currently the CEO of Reach Medical in Ithaca, NY, a medical practice offering integrated primary care and low threshold harm reduction services for people who tend to face stigma in the current medical system. Reach Medical offers full primary care, medication assisted therapy with buprenorphine, Hepatitis C screening and treatment and medical cannabis. Reach Medical is a tax exempt PLLC under The REACH Project, a non-profit providing Respectful Equitable Access to Compassionate Health.



**Judith Griffin, MD;** Director of Research and Staff Physician

Judy Griffin completed medical school at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons and she trained at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, NY in the Primary Care and Social Internal Medicine residency program. Judy is board-certified in internal medicine and addiction medicine, and she currently works as a primary care physician and buprenorphine provider at REACH in Ithaca, NY. She also serves as the Director of Research at REACH and is the Director of the Rural Health Equity Training Collaborative

(RHETC), affiliated with Cayuga Medical Center Internal Medicine residency program and the Tompkins-Cortland Community College nursing program. Dr. Griffin also holds an appointment as a Clinical Instructor in Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College and is a member of the Criminal Justice-Alternatives to Incarceration Advisory Board for Tompkins County.