NYC YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

Wednesday, August 30

#NYCYouthMentalHealth
communityaccess.org/YouthSymposium
Dear Friends,

Welcome to our first Youth Mental Health Symposium! I am hopeful that this forum will be a springboard for progress in the vital area of adolescent, teen, and young adult mental health.

Community Access has worked for decades to create a mental health system that respects the inherent worth and dignity of all people. We have made important progress: training a peer workforce, providing housing to thousands, advocating for reforms in how we treat people in crisis, and more.

But it is clear that the most important work before us today is to help our young people. Providing young people with the support they need makes our whole society stronger, while reducing the likelihood that they will need treatment in the future. Today, one out of every five Americans aged 13 to 28 lives with a mental health condition. Ten percent of college students and 18% of high school students reported having had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year.

What services currently exist for these young people? Where are there gaps? These are the pressing questions we will address today.

With partners like you in the field, I have no doubt that we can make life better for young people who need us, and build a better, stronger health care system for all of New York.

Sincerely,

Steve Coe
Chief Executive Officer
**Youth Mental Health Symposium Bios**

**Mary Adams, LCSW**  
*The Door*  
Mary is a social worker with over 20 years of experience working in, developing and managing programs that serve children, adolescents, families and adults in New York City. Today Mary is the Managing Director of Mental Health and Wellness at University Settlement/The Door overseeing the integration of mental health and wellness practices and services.

**Justin Barron**  
*Blueprint Supported Education (Community Access)*  
Justin is the founding Director of Blueprint Supported Education at Community Access, a new service supporting the education goals of current and prospective students with mental health conditions. He has seven years of leadership in community-based mental health services, including previous roles in alternative to hospitalization crisis respite care in San Francisco. He received a Master of Arts in Sexuality Studies from San Francisco State University in 2010.

**Kelly Clarke**  
*NYC Well*  
Kelly has 10+ years of experience working within mental health in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. First trained as a psychologist in Australia, her expertise includes work with veterans, individuals in crisis, and forensic populations. In 2016 she joined the Mental Health Association of New York City, and is the Program Director of NYC Well, which assists New Yorkers to navigate the vast and complex behavioral health treatment and social supports network. Kelly is also a member of the National Association of Crisis Organization Directors.

**Clinton Green, LMSW**  
*ThriveAtWork*  
Clinton has over ten years of experience working with adults with mental health challenges. He has been a member of the Community Access team since April 2015. He started as Assistant Program Director at East Village Access (EVA) and is now the Program Manager for new peer specialist program ThriveAtWork.
Bob Heeney  
Mental Health Commission of Canada  
Bob is a mental health and anti-stigma expert who works to implement programs for the Mental Health Commission of Canada. He is a graduate of George Brown College, where he earned a Child and Youth Counsellor diploma, in the social sciences.

Chelena Hopkins  
Community Access  
Chelena joined Community Access in 2016 as the Program Director for a youth-centered supportive housing facility. She has more than 15 years of experience working in the human services sector, and more than 10 in nonprofit management, specializing in youth development and leadership programs. As a manager for an alternative to incarceration (ATI) program, a 160-bed domestic violence shelter, and workforce training programs for youth, she has a wide range of experience in youth development. She is passionate about working with the community – especially youth whose needs are often overlooked – and is a strong advocate in self-determination and person-centered practice.

Micheal Pietrus  
Mental Health Commission of Canada  
Micheal is the Director of the Mental Health Commission of Canada’s international award-winning anti-stigma initiative, Opening Minds. Under Micheal’s leadership, the Commission launched Opening Minds, the largest systematic effort to reduce the stigma of mental illness in Canadian history.

Dr. Victor Schwartz  
The Jed Foundation  
Victor has 25+ years of experience as a psychiatrist working in college mental health. An original member of the American Psychiatric Association’s Presidential Taskforce on College Mental Health, he is a Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at NYU School of Medicine, and has served as medical director of NYU’s Counseling Service. He is the Chief Medical Officer for The Jed Foundation.

Randi Silverman  
The Youth Mental Health Project  
Randi is the co-founder and CEO of The Youth Mental Health Project and an award-winning screenwriter and producer of the feature film No Letting Go. As a national public speaker and presenter on the topic of children’s mental health, Randi sparks meaningful conversations that provide insight into the challenges faced by families with a loved one who struggles with mental health concerns.

Nixie Strazza  
High School of American Studies  
Nixie is a 15 year old actor, dancer, and singer who has appeared on stages in New York, in film, and on television and radio. As a member of Broadway Dance Center’s elite Arts In Motion (AIM) Company, she has performed throughout the nation and in New York at Carnegie Hall, Alvin Ailey Theater, the Kaye Theater, and MMAC. A sophomore at High School of American Studies at Lehman College, Nixie hopes to pursue a career in political journalism.

Brett Sharett, LMSW  
The Ali Forney Center  
Brett is a Licensed Master Social Worker and graduate of NYU’s Silver School of Social Work. He is currently a Mental Health Specialist at the Ali Forney Center, providing individual therapy to homeless LGBTQ adolescents ages 16-24. He has experience working in inpatient and outpatient settings throughout New York, including Bellevue Hospital and South Beach Hospital. In Fall 2017 he will begin post-graduate training at PPSC.
Even if there were twice as many real mental health stories being told, it still wouldn’t be enough. So: Lead the conversation. Fight stigma. Change some minds.

The Changing Minds Young Filmmaker Competition is a chance for you to share your uplifting/unique/unprecedented/out-of-the-ordinary/vital mental health story through film.

communityaccess.org/changingminds