

For Immediate Release

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Carla Rabinowitz, Advocacy Coordinator, Honored with 2018 CIT Advocate/Family Member Award

– Award Given for Efforts to Have NYPD Receive Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training

(New York, NY, 8/17/18) – On August 16, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) International – a leading organization dedicated to promoting safe and humane police responses to people experiencing a mental health crisis – presented its 2018 CIT Advocate/Family Member Award to Carla Rabinowitz, the Advocacy Coordinator at Community Access.

Rabinowitz was recognized for building and leading a coalition of more than 200 agencies – Communities for Crisis Intervention Teams (CCIT NYC) – and successfully pushing the New York Police Department (NYPD) to train its officers to more effectively and humanely handle encounters with people in crisis. When the NYPD launched a CIT program in June 2015, it was the culmination of a coordinated advocacy campaign that owed much of its success to Rabinowitz’s organizational savvy, industriousness, and commitment.

To date, more than 6,500 NYPD officers have completed 40 hours of CIT training. However, recognizing that the initiation of this training did not completely put an end to people in emotional distress being shot and killed in police encounters, Rabinowitz has kept working for more change. She focuses on three related goals: ensuring that the training officers receive is high-quality and effective (by invitation, she continues to monitor CIT training sessions); encouraging the NYPD to achieve its goal of training 15,000 officers more quickly; and positioning CIT to be an important part of broader criminal justice and mental health reforms.

When the NYPD first launched its CIT program, it did so in response to an Action Plan developed by the Mayor’s Task Force on Behavioral Health and the Criminal Justice System. Just as Rabinowitz’s CCIT coalition was instrumental in encouraging Mayor de Blasio to form this Task Force, it is now holding it to account – resulting in its reconstitution, in April 2018, as the NYC Crisis Prevention and Response Task Force.

Notably, both Rabinowitz and Community Access CEO Steve Coe have been selected to serve on the Task Force.

“I am honored to receive this award from CIT International,” Rabinowitz says. “I take it as an affirmation that the work we’re doing matters, and I remain as committed as ever to fighting for a fairer, safer New York City for us all. I am grateful to all my partners in the CCIT NYC coalition. We’re not done pushing.”

About CCITNYC:

Communities for Crisis Intervention Team Training in New York City was formed in 2012 to respond to the numerous deaths and injuries of individuals experiencing mental health crises that had occurred at the hands of the police. Our members include over 85 nonprofit providers, advocates, family members, and concerned citizens, as well as 400 people who have had personal experience with the public mental health system and crisis services – the real experts.

www.ccitnyc.org

About Community Access:

Community Access' mission is to expand opportunities for people living with mental health concerns to recover from trauma and discrimination through affordable housing, training, advocacy, and healing-focused services. We are built upon the simple truth that people are experts in their own lives.

www.communityaccess.org

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