

**Capital Region ETE Steering Committee Meeting
Zoom Call May 18, 2021**

Attendees List:

1. Amanda Ahrens – Benefits Counselor, Legal Aid Society of NENY
2. Amy Palma, Unity House of Troy
3. Ashley Smith, Peer Advocate, Albany Medical Center
4. Brittni Gulotti - Public Affairs & Volunteer Coordinator Upper Hudson Planned Parenthood
5. Diane DeGroat, Senior Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY
6. Donna Muller – PreP Coordinator, Albany Medical Center
7. Jeannie Haller, Ellis Medicine, Project Coordinator
8. John Hartigan, AIDS Institute, Bureau of Community Support Services
9. Kate Thorpe – SCCAYA, Albany Medical Center
10. Kaylee Mahoney, Intern NY Links
11. Lauren Quinn Albany Med Specialized Care Center
12. Lyndsi Wickert- Albany Damien Center, Employment Pathways
13. Megan Green, RN Albany Medical Center
14. Meghan Thompson, Retention Adherence Specialist, Ellis Medicine
15. Melissa Carbone, Hudson Headwaters Health Network
16. Morgan Williams – Enrollment Specialist Alliance for Positive Health
17. Randy Viele – Alliance for Positive Health
18. Scott Daly – Consumer & Peer Educator, Ellis Family Health
19. Steve Sawicki – NY Links, NYS DOH
20. Suzanne Beattie – Associate Executive Director of Programs, Albany Damien Center

Call to Order – Donna Muller welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

A motion to accept the minutes of April 20, 2021 was made by Kate Thorpe and seconded by Donna Muller. Added Ashley Smith to minutes as she was in attendance last meeting.

Legislative Update – Scott

Nothing to report but Scott did add that he is so happy to see that the 340B was delayed for 2 years.

Committee Updates

Youth Committee – Lauren Quinn

- Last meeting was on 4/22/21, 2 youth attended. Still trying to recruit some youth and community members. Meeting went well. Finalizing flyers for recruitment this month. Next meeting 5/27/21. Also discussed the NYS AIDS Institute Syphilis Strikes Back Document that they sent out which was good information because the people on the call have not heard of that information.

Agency Updates

NY Links – Steve Sawicki

- NY Links has several upcoming webinars, if you are on email list
 - Friday, May 21st at 12p – Meditation
 - Monday, May 24th at 11am – Zoom Fatigue
 - Thursday, May 27th – ETE Dashboard – interactive data function, you can get down to the zip code level for data
- Hoping to get back to in person meetings in the Fall
- Kaylee Mahoney is an Intern for NY Links for the summer.

**Capital Region ETE Steering Committee Meeting
Zoom Call May 18, 2021**

PrEP Committee – Donna Muller

- Meet this Wednesday at 4pm virtually, you can email Donna if you would like to attend the WebEx call.
- They will be setting 2 goals, where we want to go moving forward
- AMC & Whitney Young have seen an increase in positives really speaks to the fact that PrEP needs to be out there. PrEP is so important, they need to get back in the community.

Albany Damien Center Employment Pathways- Lyndsi Holmes-Wickert

- Anyone who needs assistance with employment can contact Lyndsi or Geri at 518-641-9195. Lyndsi is working remotely and Geri is primarily at the office.
- Nutrition is still look for new participants
- Pharmacy is still open, members can come in get their meds
- Also Grab & Go lunch & dinners are still available
- When making appointments we try to schedule them around lunch or dinner so they can also get a meal while they are there
- This week's Working Wednesday subject is How to use a Flash Drive

Legal Aid Society – Diane DeGroat

- Doing drop off/pick up paperwork
- Albany office – returning to office mid-June
- Moving all Albany staff to 95 Central Ave
- Services are in person as necessary
- Housing Eviction Moratorium is extended to August 31, 2021. Hardship declaration for financial or medical reasons needs to be completed
- Anyone that wants to see if they are eligible can call Diane
- NYS COVID Emergency Rental Assistance Program (not open in NYS, will be open online soon. Outstanding rent, utilities, etc. This link may only be open for a couple of months once it opens.
 - Link for Albany County <https://www.albanycounty.com/departments/social-services/covid-19-emergency-rental-assistance-program>
 - Link for NYS <https://otda.ny.gov/programs/Emergency-Rental-Assistance/>

Legal Aid Society Benefits Counseling – Amanda Ahrens

- Amanda is taking calls regarding returning to work and receiving benefits

Albany Med – Donna Muller

- Open Positions (can apply on amc.edu)
 - PrEP Case Manager
 - Part C Case Manager
 - Behavioral Health Specialist
- AMC is business as usual, hoping to be able to have groups meet in the near future.

Albany Med Adult Clinic – Ashley Smith

- Lori Hansel, Mental Health Specialist will be leaving the clinic on June 4, 2021.

Albany Med – Kate Thorpe

- Still open for HIV testing, treatment & prevention services
- Free testing for ages 13-24 this week, can walk in or call ahead
- Dedicated exam room for adolescents

Capital Region ETE Steering Committee Meeting
Zoom Call May 18, 2021

- Doing a lot of virtual outreaches with local colleges, other schools and residential facilities

Unity House of Troy, Amy Palma

- Still closed to guests and consumers
- Outside of the building they are doing grab & go lunches Monday – Friday
- Food Pantry & Medical Pantry are open

AIDS Institute – John Hartigan

- John wanted to acknowledge the passing of Bill Faragon a few weeks ago and extend his condolences to the Alliance for Positive Health. Bill was such a leader and this is a big loss in our community.

Ellis Medicine – Scott Daly

- Next Wednesday he will be doing is next Peer Group Meeting. Topic – Preparing yourself for your upcoming doctor visit.
- Long Term Survivors Day – June 7th Statewide PWLA call topic of discussion

Alliance for Positive Health – Morgan Williams

- Open positions – Enrollment Specialist Position & Outreach Specialist Position
- Still processing enrollments and referrals. Business as usual.

Alliance for Positive Health – Randy Viele

- Business as usual. Prescreen before appointment, screening when arrive for appointment
- Getting testing van out starting Thursday
- All programs are enrolling

New Business

- Scott brought up the New Mask Guidelines.
 - Lyndsi from Damien Center stated that Perry sent an email saying we will continue having all staff wear masks and meeting with clients we wear masks. Nothing is going to change at this point. Seeing members by appointment only.
 - Morgan/Randy from Alliance stated they are not changing any protocols at all at this point in time. They will still be wearing masks and gloves when appropriate. Too soon to jump with any changes. Need to discuss further, it will be a while. Seeing people by appointment only for all services.
 - Donna stated those that work in the Medical field are required to remain with the mask mandate.
 - Brittini from Planned Parenthood stated they are not changing anything. Hoping to very slowly get back to business as usual.
- Steve brought up that the state is pushing the Excelsior Pass. You download the app and put your vaccine information in it and there will be a bar code that is scanned if someone needs to know if you have been vaccinated.
 - They talked about the segregation and being tracked vax vs. not vax
 - Jeannie from Ellis talked about a link where you can check vaccines down to county and region level.
<https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-tracker>

Meeting adjourned at 10:10am

ETE Capital Region Meetings are from 9 AM to 10:30 AM on the 3rd Tues of each month

Next ETE Meeting is Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Contact information

**Capital Region ETE Steering Committee Meeting
Zoom Call May 18, 2021**

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ETE Webpage at <http://www.albanydamiencenter.org/capital-region-ete.html>