

Jennifer A. DeBower, LMSW

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Education

Ph.D. Student, Social Welfare, Silberman School of Social Work **2016-Current**
Hunter College, CUNY Graduate Center

Research interests: Teaching and addressing white discomfort and fragility in the racial justice social work classroom, Social justice youth development, LGBT youth issues, Youth organizing for gender and racial justice.

M.S., Social Work, Columbia University **1998**
Concentration: Advanced Generalist Practice and Programming

B.A., Philosophy, University of Wisconsin **1991**
Concentrations: Logic and Women's Studies

Teaching Experience

Adjunct Appointment, Political Advocacy and Social Work – SSW796 **Summer 2018**
Core course for Community Organizing, 20 students
Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College

Adjunct Appointment, Community Organizing, Planning & Development – SSW741 **Fall 2017**
Core course for Community Organizing, 20 students
Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College

Adjunct Appointment, Community Organizing Field Advisor **Fall 2014-Spring 2016**
Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College

- Lead group learning sessions, perform assessments, site visits, and student advisement.

Adjunct Appointment, Sex and Sexuality – HE241 **September 2002 – December 2003**
Core course for health and human services majors, 45 students
City University of New York – York College

Program Coordinator/Training and Technical Assistance **December 2002 – August 2003**
New York State, Center for Excellence, Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center

- Provided training, and technical assistance to over 50 agencies funded by NYS Dept. of Health.

Professional Experience

Director of Programs and Evaluation **November 2012-Present**
The Center for Anti-Violence Education

- Design programs, campaigns, and trainings to confront, interrupt and heal from violence, especially intimate partner violence, anti-LGBT violence and gender-based violence.
- Founded the Survivors Action Network Support to develop the creativity, leadership, voice and organizing skills of survivors to confront and interrupt the cycles of violence.

- Created online toolkit, www.safeandproud.org, a safety website for LGBT youth and providers.
- Co-wrote grant proposals and acquired over \$400k in new foundation funds.
- Identify and address technical assistance needs of partner organizations, develop trauma-informed workplace trainings for social services providers in violence prevention, conflict mediation, and family strengthening.
- Needs assessment, planning and implementation of RisingStrong empowerment program for middle and high school girls of color to build skills in preventing, interrupting and healing from violence.
- Coaching, mentoring, and managing of all program and administrative staff and instructors.
- Work closely with stakeholders to develop performance measures and evaluation tools
- Assist Executive Director with HR administration, budget management, grant-seeking and writing.

**Interim Director of Continuing Education
& Interim Vice President of Education**
Brooklyn Botanic Garden

April 2011 – November, 2012

- In role of Interim Vice President, developed a management team of 5 to operate as strengths-based, informed and committed leaders and educators.
- Provided management of Continuing Education programs; certificates, and internships.
- Manage the departmental budget and ensure profitability in addition to quality program delivery.
- Coordinated all staff, instructors, and operations for a minimum of 50 classes and programs per semester.
- Built coalitions and partnerships with external stakeholders such as Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move initiative; elected public officials; University partners; and invested community stakeholders.
- Led an interdepartmental work team to select and operationalize a new database system to allow live online registration and user interaction for education programs.

Director of Youth & Family Services
LGBT Community Center

August 2007 – October 2010

- Developed, led, and evaluated innovative health and wellness programs for adolescents.
- Mentored and trained a staff of 15 ensuring that all programming was rooted in best practices in the fields of substance abuse, positive youth development and family resilience.
- Co-founded the LGBT Foster Care Project to set standards for LGBT cultural competence with the NYC Administration for Children’s Services.
- Wrote program design and entire grant proposal securing \$1.5 million new funding for program.
- Pioneered the engagement of families and parents as key stakeholders in the youth program.
- Implemented robust staff training program ensuring cultural competence of programs and staff for quality work with youth and families from diverse socioeconomic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.
- Presented complex ideas in a clear and compelling manner to multiple constituencies such as Board, clientele, parents, teachers, and media.

Director of After School Programs November 2003 – July 2007
Hetrick-Martin Institute/Harvey Milk High School

- Led nationally recognized program serving 1000 youth and their families per year.
- Responded to national and international requests for technical assistance.
- Oversaw budget and ensured contract compliance, accurate reporting, and quality assurance.
- Co-wrote grant proposals and secured funding from the CDC, Robin Hood Foundation, NYSED, and MHRA.
- Created and implemented evaluation and research projects to assess quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

- Trained and evaluated staff on program development, prevention strategies, and evaluation.
- As part of senior management team, led overall agency strategic planning, fundraising, marketing initiatives, and media relations.

Coordinator of Clinical Services & Social Work

September 1997 – December 2002

LGBT Community Center - New York, NY

- Short and long-term mental health support services for LGBT youth.
- Performed needs assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of substance abuse, HIV, and suicide prevention programming.
- Co-created youth organizing programs to pass school safety measures and Dignity for All Students Act.
- Hired, trained and provided supervision to program staff, volunteers, and social work interns.
- Created model for clinically-infused community work with adolescents.
- Implemented intake, client file, and follow up documentation system.

Teen Programs Coordinator

June 1995 - August 1996

Northwest Wisconsin AIDS Project - Eau Claire, WI

- Created the Teen AIDS Prevention Program (TAPP), a peer education program.
- Trained and educated teens on HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, and sexuality..
- Provided training and educational workshops on HIV/AIDS to various community groups and facilities.

Counselor/Educator

June 1994 - July 1996

Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin - Eau Claire, WI

- Arranged in-services for staff on such issues as gangs and risk behavior for HIV/AIDS and teen pregnancy.
- Educated and counseled patients one-on-one regarding nutrition, decision-making, healthy sexuality, contraception, STD's including HIV, AODA issues, and parental involvement.

Professional Publications

Ortega-Williams, A., Wernick, L., **DeBower, J.**, & Brathwaite, B. (2018). Finding relief in action: The intersection of youth-led community organizing and mental health in Brooklyn, New York City. *Youth & Society*. Prepublished online. DOI: 10.1177/0044118X18758542

DeBower, J. (2018) Resilience in transgender and gender non-conforming young people. Manuscript in preparation.

DeBower, J., Brathwaite, B., Ortega-Williams, A., & Wernick, L. (2018). Youth organizers: Navigating the tension between current reality and hoped-for future. Manuscript in preparation.

Cniro, D., Surko, M, Bhandarkar, K., Helfgott, N., Peake, K. & Epstein, I. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, sexual-orientation questioning adolescents seeking mental health services. Co-published simultaneously in *Social Work in Mental Health*, 3:3; and in Peake, K. and Epstein, I. (eds.), *Clinical and research uses of an adolescent mental health intake questionnaire: What kids need to talk about* (215-234).

Binghamton, NY, Haworth Social Work Practice Press, 2005.

“The authors would like to acknowledge the contributions of **Jenny DeBower, MSW.**”

Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center, Center for Excellence. (2003). *A Guide to Positive Youth Development*. New York, NY: **DeBower, J. (Ed)**.

Presentations

DeBower, J. *Finding and raising your voice in the #metoo era*, invited speaker, Summit on Promising Practices: Labor and Community Fighting Sexual Harassment, The Worker Institute Cornell University and the Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, CUNY, 2018, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Social justice youth development: Practices and principles*, invited speaker and facilitator. Healing the Hurt Conference, Mental Health Association, NY, 2015, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Survival sex and LGBT youth: Research and implications for practice*, invited speaker at Hetrick-Martin Institute, 2015, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Preventing secondary trauma in work with LGBT homeless youth*. invited speaker and facilitator, Ali Forney Center and the Staten Island LGBT Center, 2015, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Creating a safe holding environment in drop-in programs for homeless youth*, invited speaker and facilitator, Ali Forney Center and the Metropolitan Community Church of NY Emergency Shelter, 2015, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Crisis de-escalation in residential settings for IPV survivors*. invited speaker and facilitator, Safe Horizons, 2014, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. and Cadet, J. *LGBT youth and relationship violence*, invited speaker and facilitator, Ali Forney Center, 2014, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Community Alliance Against Violence Project (CAAV): A promising practice for violence prevention with LGBTQ homeless youth*. Poster session presented at Robert Wood Johnson Annual Conference, 2013, St. Louis, MO.

DeBower, J. *Life space interviewing techniques after critical incidents with clients*, invited speaker and facilitator, Metropolitan Community Church of NY Emergency Shelter, 2014, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Emotional intelligence at work*, invited speaker and facilitator, Staten Island LGBT Community Center, 2014, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Theoretical and research foundations of positive youth development and prevention strategies for work with LGBT youth*, invited speaker and facilitator, LGBT Youth Worker Training Institute, LGBT Community Center, 2010, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Using a force field analysis to assess readiness for change on LGBTQ issues in Tanzania*, invited speaker, International Organization for Adolescents, 2002, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. *Multicultural competence and work with immigrant populations*, invited speaker and facilitator, Archdiocese of New York, 2002, New Paltz, NY.

DeBower, J. *Women and HIV/AIDS*, invited speaker, AIDS & Adolescents of New York Conference, 2001, New York, NY.

DeBower, J. and Yeung, M. *Using technology to engage LGBT youth*, invited speaker and facilitator, Department of Social & Health Services, 2000, Seattle, WA.

DeBower, J. and Hunter, J. *Train the trainers: Working it out, HIV prevention curriculum, Working It Out*. Invited co-trainer by Dr. Joyce Hunter, Staten Island AIDS Task Force, 2000, New York, NY.

Research & Program Evaluation Experience

Principal Investigator **January 2018-Present**
CUNY Graduate Center, Hunter School of Social Work
Funded by a grant from the Doctoral Student Council, \$600
Resilience in Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Young People

Data Analyst **October – December, 2016**
NYC Administration for Children’s Services Collaborative Quality Improvement Initiative
Perform data analysis and write summary report of self-assessment data from 40 child welfare orgs.

Co-Investigator **June 2015 - Present**
Dr. Laura Wernick, P.I., Fordham University, Graduate School of Social Service
Funded by Fordham University, \$2500
Youth Leading Community Change: Exploring the Intersections between Community Organizing, Mental Health, and Wellness.

Co-Investigator **September 2015 – Present**
Dr. Binta Allen-Greene, P.I., Fordham University, Graduate School of Social Service
Funded by Fordham University, \$2200
The Effectiveness of A Human Sex Trafficking Educational Program For Middle School Girls and LGBTQ Youth In New York City.

Advisory Board Member **2007**
Research project commissioned by OCFS and completed by WESTAT
New York Prevalence Study of Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth

Licensing, Membership and Certificates

New York State Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW), License #72059223

Field Instruction (SIFI) Certification, Columbia University, 2001.

Member, National Association of Social Workers

Certificate in Grant Writing, The Grantsmanship Center Training Institute, Los Angeles 2007

Certificate in Non-Profit Leadership, Columbia University Institute for Not-for-Profit Management 2004

Certificate in Conflict Mediation, LGBT Community Center Mediation Services, 2000.