



GPF FOUNDATION

# ANNUAL REPORT

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2020

## ***Saving Lives through Awareness.***

The GPF Foundation is committed to saving lives by supporting education, appropriate treatment and overall awareness of the dangers related to recreational drug use.

# GPF FOUNDATION

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**Belle Tsetilin**  
GPF Summer Intern

**Tianna Beilke**  
GPF Spring Intern

**Esther Kim**  
Documentary  
Outreach Intern

**Uche Okeke**  
Documentary  
Outreach Intern

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# MEDICAL

**Dr. James Dolan**  
GPF Foundation Board Advisor  
& Medical Initiative Architect

**Dr. Jerrold  
B. Leikin**  
Disease-A-Month  
& Advisor

**Dr. Michelle Sergel**  
Medical Simulation  
& Advisor

**Dr. Ashlea Winfield**  
Medical Simulation &  
Emergency Medicine

**Dr. Michael Witkovsky**  
Psychiatry & Emergency  
Medicine Advisor

**Dr. Steven Aks**  
Toxicology Director  
& Advisor

**Dr. Michael Nelson**  
M.D. Emergency Medicine

**Dr. Joseph Kennedy**  
Medical Fellow

**Dr. Marit Tweet**  
Medical Fellow

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**Dr. Ronald Himmelman**  
M.D. Emergency Medicine

**Dr. Leslie S. Zun**  
Medical Director at Lake County Health  
Department and Community Health Center

**Dr. Michael S. Wahl**  
M.D. Emergency Medicine

**Dr. Ernie Wang**  
M.D. Emergency Medicine

**2020**  
**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**&**  
**GPF FOUNDATION**

**2021**  
**GOALS**

2020

**EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE**

2021

# EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM LAUNCHED TO ADDRESS “MODERN DAY RUSSIAN ROULETTE”

**2020 saw the concept of a GPF Foundation Educational Program become a full-fledged reality!**

In an early conversation with Lake Forest College, one of their vice presidents described students’ recreational drug use as “modern day Russian roulette.” To address this situation, at the end of 2019 the first group of GPF Foundation Fellows, in consultation with Dr. Joseph Palamar of New York University, had assembled about a dozen peer-reviewed articles relating to MDMA, and written a first draft of a two-page script.

By April of 2020 these foundational documents had been developed into an hour-long interactive multimedia experience designed for remote participants, including: breakout discussion groups, live polls, chatbox responses, multiple videos, graphics, photos and pre- and post- tests and surveys

to quantitatively and qualitatively measure learning and feedback.

This rapid development of the program was the result of intensive efforts by a dynamic and growing group of contributors such that as we enter 2021 the Educational Program is the subject of an IRB-approved longitudinal study intended for peer-reviewed publication led by Dr. Steven Miller at Rosalind Franklin University.

It has also been presented to groups at Lake Forest College, Lake County States Attorney’s Office, Rosalind Franklin University, Tri-Delta Sorority, College of Lake County, and is poised to reach students across the fourteen-college-strong Associated Colleges of the Midwest, national Tri-Delta chapters, and well beyond.



Images from the Educational Program on Zoom

# INTERNSHIP PROGRAM LAUNCHED

Reflecting the deeply engaging and meaningful mission of the GPF Foundation, its work, and the power of our vision to move Greg's Path Forward, the Foundation's first intern, **Belle Tseitlin** of Lake Forest College (LFC), reached out of her own volition to see how she could get involved with the Foundation's work, after viewing a GPF presentation to LFC faculty, leadership and students.

In a sense, it can be said that the GPF Foundation Internship Program launched itself with Belle's inquiry. Belle has proceeded to work intensively on nearly every aspect of the Foundation's activities as part of both the Educational and Medical Initiatives. Her interest and passion for the Foundation's work is such that she has remained regularly engaged for more than 10 months since March of 2020, and continues, to this-day, to play active roles in the IRB-approved study at Rosalind Franklin, and the Disease-A-Month authorship, even after her official internship term has concluded.

Her commitment and dedication have set an excellent standard and firm foundation for

subsequent interns. In November 2020 she started working with **Tianna Bielke**, also of LFC, to take over main responsibilities and activities. Since December, Tianna has moved into the role with aplomb and brought her own set of excellent skills and relationships as a leader based on her leadership roles within Tri-Delta and as a Student-Athlete and Orientation leader.

As we head into 2021 we are fortunate to welcome three more fantastic interns with their own fields of speciality:

**Uche Okeke** of Lake Forest College - Documentary Film & Outreach Intern

**Alyssa Kwiatkowski** of College of Lake County - Graphic Design & Visual Communication Intern

**Esther Kim** of Lake Forest College - Documentary Film & Outreach Intern

With this robust team in place we are growing the capacity to more fully realize the reach and potential of our Educational and Medical Initiatives.



Belle Tseitlin



Tianna Bielke



Alyssa Kwiatkowski



# FIRST & SECOND CLASS OF FELLOWS

Building off an auspicious first group of GPF Foundation Fellows who completed their term in 2020, the new group has brought with them a unique set of skills and ideas about how to realize their work and the Foundation's mission.

## 2019-20 Fellows are:

**Hamad Hussain, Lexie Kessler,  
Andrew Romero, Alexander Woods**

## 2020-21 Fellows are:

**Marianne Chirica, Taylor Macaulay,  
Samuel Vincent and Dagmara Zajac**

Three of the four new fellows are pursuing advanced degrees in Psychology: Marianne, Sam and Taylor, with Dagmara working toward hers in Pharmacology. The tools and knowledge they've acquired in their studies have meshed incredibly well with the activities of the Foundation.

Specifically, they've helped play essential roles, along Intern Belle Tseitlin, in the development of pre- and post- tests for the educational program, analyses of the results, and content development

touching upon the impact of drug use. In addition they're all part of the authorship team for Disease-A-Month.

Above and beyond all of their accomplishments and ongoing contributions, especially noteworthy is their genuine enthusiasm for working collaboratively and their concern for the work of the Foundation to save lives. This is evident in their already-expressed interest to continue working with the Foundation beyond the original timeframe of their Fellowship. This dedication to continuity in their efforts sets a high bar and strong example for future Fellows.

This enthusiasm has also prompted us to initiate a bi-annual GPF Foundation Fellows Council Meeting welcoming all current and past Fellows. We look forward to holding our first Councils in 2021 to continue building long-lasting and mutually supportive relationships and activities through these meetings.



Samuel Vincent



Marianne Chirica



Dagmara Zajac



Taylor Macaulay

# ROSALIND FRANKLIN IRB-APPROVED STUDY OF GPF FOUNDATION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Given the relative youth of the GPF Foundation's educational programming, it is nothing less than remarkable to have the longer-term efficacy of this program to be made the subject of an IRB-approved longitudinal study whose results are intended for peer-reviewed publication. The possibility for having an outside researcher conduct this investigation came from dialogue about the programming, and our intense dedication to an objective evidence-based approach, with this year's remarkable group of GPF Foundation Fellows.

The realization of this study has been spearheaded by Dr. Steven Miller of Rosalind Franklin University who has formulated its design, and will be overseeing its implementation. In short, the study will investigate whether and, and to what extent, participating in GPF Foundation educational programming improves knowledge and awareness about harm-reduction related to MDMA immediately after participation, three weeks after participation and, in comparison to comparable students who do not participate in the educational program.

The power of this study is at-least twofold for the Foundation. First, regardless of the findings, it provides a unique opportunity for GPF Foundation Fellows, and Interns Belle Tseitlin and Tianna Bielke to have significant participation in an IRB-approved social science investigation directly about the work and aims of the Foundation. This presents an extraordinary educational and career opportunity, and imbues them with experiences and knowledge they will carry with them into their professional careers in psychology, medicine, pharmacology and human resources.

In short, the sheer fact of their participation is an investment in, and achievement for, the Foundation's goals to spread awareness, and change the practice of medicine related to recreational drugs. Second, as the findings and analysis for results come through in 2021 the Foundation will have a gold-standard scientific evaluation of its programming to guide us in our future offerings.

# PSA & MORE THAN 10 OTHER VIDEOS FOR COMMUNICATING MESSAGE

**As an organization dedicated to using awareness to save lives our communication tools are central to our mission.**

In line with this, our use of video to share with, educate, and emotionally reach our audiences is essential. This perhaps came alive most publicly, and vividly, during our 2020 Annual Event where videos helped long-time and new supporters alike gain a more direct understanding and insight into the work we do. However, even when not as central a component as at our Event, the power of the moving image is being harnessed by the Foundation in nearly every aspect of our work.

At the heart of the Educational Initiative is our interactive Educational Program which utilizes a broad variety of videos in consistent and powerful ways to reach people. These include Nancy and Ross sharing Greg's story and our collective mission to save lives, young people using MDMA

at Lollapalooza, DEA Agents in the Laboratory, students reflecting on the longer-term impacts of MDMA, doctors and professors sharing their knowledge, and our own Fellows talking about how they reach their peers.

The collective knowledge and passion of our supporting experts in medicine, law enforcement, education and science, along with the voices of everyday people, sharing their experiences through video has brought our message of awareness credibility, depth, and most importantly, a relatable human face. As we continue to create the Medical Simulation in 2021 we'll be drawing upon this work to enable a dynamic application of video to further harm reduction and awareness.



Dr. Ashlea Winfield in the GPF Foundation's PSA Video

# DIGITAL MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

The Foundation’s use of digital media and communication channels is still relatively nascent. We continue to develop these tools to build broader awareness and engagement with our work. The core challenges in this area are two-fold:

- 1) Stimulating initial engagement through these channels
- 2) Converting channel-based engagement into the achievement of the Foundation’s mission

In late 2020 we started to implement more targeted and interactive messaging and posts on Instagram which have started to build our audience beyond previously existing supporters and followers.

At this time, YouTube is primarily a repository of video content, and is serving this function well as the backend for video on the website.

Our Facebook presence has remained constant, but not undertaken strategic long-term efforts to grow audiences.

In short, while these channels serve as a basic presence for the Foundation, in ways that have come to be expected for contemporary non-profits, they are not currently central to our outreach, or achievement of our mission of awareness. Potential in these areas remain, and the right organic fit and coordination with

our central Educational and Medical Initiatives remains to be more fully realized.

Our e-mail newsletter has the longest consistent run in the area of digital communication and our open and click-through rates are above average for non-profit organizations. Growing through this channel is at this point primarily focused on adding people to our mailing list through other forms of engagement i.e. educational programming, and people reached through collaborative partnerships with medical, law enforcement, social service and public health entities.

As a central hub for information about the Foundation our website has maintained and slightly grown traffic in 2020. The recent initiation of an analytics account will allow for more targeted and sophisticated efforts to drive traffic through keywords, and the addition of content to support SEO, as well as the use of A/B testing on the site.

Overall, we have a well-rounded digital presence which does a good job fulfilling baseline expectations of our supporters. Coordinating this presence with core activities for our mission in ways that enliven both is an area with many opportunities for growth.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

2 million people ages 18 to 25 are estimated to have used MDMA (ecstasy/molly) in the past year.

[Learn more at www.GPFFoundation.org](http://www.GPFFoundation.org)

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HOW  
ARE YOU  
FEELING?

Text-A-Tip near you.



**Saving Lives  
Through Awareness.**

# GROWING THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM'S REACH

With nearly a year of experience, testing, and work having gone into the Educational Presentation, we stand poised to greatly broaden its reach. There are two significant dimensions to realizing this goal:

- 1) The very straight-ahead, though still challenging, work of engaging with our target audiences to participate in interactive presentations about MDMA.
- 2) Taking serious stock of opportunities to reach audiences that may only be available by meeting their broader needs around recreational drug use i.e. addressing other substances in addition to MDMA.

Taken one at a time:

First, to date, we have found the current iteration of our presentation has the greatest success in getting people to participate when they are approached by their peers. Taking this experience to heart, we have grown the college-aged members of our team fourfold since the start of 2020.

There are now four talented and creative college students dedicating at least ten hours a week to creating materials for, and engaging in, peer-to-peer outreach on behalf of the Foundation's Educational Program. In short, we are significantly ramping up our ability to reach our target audience, which may also include highschool students in 2021.

Second, as we have started doing this, hearkening back to feedback we received from administrators at two different colleges, we have heard repeated requests for programming that goes beyond a single substance, and that allows young adults to engage in a harm-reduction approach to the multitude of recreational drugs they are encountering.

If, and how, we might meet this need remains to be determined. Regardless of how we proceed, it is clear, there is significant pent up demand for evidence-based, non-judgemental, harm-reduction-oriented peer-to-peer learning environments related to recreational drugs. We are well-equipped to meet this need.

2020

**MEDICAL INITIATIVE**

2021

# DISEASE-A-MONTH TEAM ASSEMBLED & WRITING BEGINS

Dr. Jerrold B. Leikin, M.D. is a superlative medical practitioner who runs one of the only dedicated comprehensive clinical toxicology programs in the country, has written the standard textbooks for toxicology used throughout the country and internationally, is one of the medical directors of the Illinois Poison Control Center, and is the Editor and Chief for the monthly primary care journal, Disease-A-Month.

Through this all he has also been an incredibly down-to-earth, accessible, and helpful guide and friend to the GPF Foundation. As part of his willingness to encourage and support our activities he had made available an offer to allow the Foundation to direct the content and authorship of an edition of Disease-A-Month. As a leading highly respected, and often referenced journal, this offer presented an incredible opportunity for the Foundation to contribute to established medical literature in a way that addresses the “blind spot” around the treatment of adverse effects to psycho stimulants.

In 2020 we have been able to assemble the considerable team of talent required to realize the potential of Dr. Leikin’s offer, and to start authorship of a GPF Foundation directed edition of the formidable journal. Leading the team is Dr. Steven Miller of Rosalind Franklin University with the participation of the full-team of 2020-21 GPF Foundation Fellows, Marianne Chirica, Taylor Macaulay, Samuel Vincent and Dagmara Zajac. Medical journalist Mary Jane Friedrich is assisting in the organization of the research and authorship efforts along with the critical organizational talents of GPF Foundation Intern Belle Tseitlin. We are also fortunate to have recently added former GPF Foundation Fellow, Lexie Kessler to the team.

With this considerable group of contributors we look forward to realizing the promise of this unique opportunity in 2021.



Dr. Jerrold B. Leikin



Dr. Steven Miller

# MEDICAL SIMULATION SCRIPT COMPLETED

The completion of a draft of the medical simulation script in collaboration with Drs. Michelle Sergel and Ashlea Winfield of Cook County Hospital and Simulation Lab marks an important milestone in the effort to create an educational tool for front line medical providers. This script was based on a choose-your-own-adventure multiple choice format written by Dr. Winfield and vetted by a group of independent doctors assembled by Dr. James Dolan.

The dramatization of these choices into a production script was created in collaboration with Frey Hoffman. We have now started to identify the production platform for an interactive video-based experience putting the viewer into the position of a doctor in charge of directing care for the patient being treated in the simulation.

Likewise, with the help of Marsha Yellen, Director of the Standardized Patient Program at the Rush Center for Clinical Skill and Simulation, we are now starting to receive applications from standardized patient actors to play roles in the simulation. As we move into 2021 we will continue to develop the project towards an interactive simulation accessible to medical practitioners from the convenience of their phones, inside a simulation training center, or as part of a broader group training plan.

In all of these instances, the core purpose of the simulation is to ensure medical providers are prepared to effectively diagnose and treat patients experiencing adverse psychiatric effects of psycho stimulants, to completion of the vital objective of saving their lives.



Dr. Michelle Sergel



# NACCT ABSTRACT PUBLISHED, VALIDATION FROM PATIENT DATA OF THE “BLIND SPOT”

After hearing of Greg’s ordeal, and attempts to get appropriate and effective medical attention and assistance, Dr. Steven Aks, Toxicology Director at the Department of Emergency Medicine at Cook County Hospital, expressed to Nancy and Ross that the practice of contemporary medicine has a “blind spot”. With this he summed up in a succinct phrase the inability of medical practitioners to diagnose and treat psychiatric symptoms and struggles related to psycho stimulants.

Nonetheless, despite the painfully clear results of this inability on the part of the medical community, there was not, at the time of his coining of this phrase, a body of empirically-based and documented evidence to substantiate this situation.

At the prompting of the GPF Foundation, under the leadership of Drs. Michael Nelson, Marit Tweet, Joseph Kennedy, Michael Wahl, Steven

Aks, through the auspices of the Toxikon Consortium, NorthShore University Health System and Illinois Poison Control Center, they worked together to review regional poison control center cases of reported MDMA use to look for evidence in the medical records.

Their findings were published as an NACCT Abstract in 2020 and have started to build a basis, in peer-reviewed scientific and medical literature, for changes in the diagnosis and provision of psychiatric care among patients reporting MDMA use. This work is not only a testament to the role of the GPF Foundation in advancing the state of science and medical practice, it is also helping to build the body of evidence that will be required for the GPF Foundation’s creation of an adaptive dropdown menu to directly assist in clinician provision of care.



Dr. Steven Aks



2020

**INVESTMENT & GROWTH**

2021

# AN EVENING OF INSPIRATION

The 2020 Annual Event provided a considerable opportunity to communicate to long-time supporters, and new alike, the significant progress of the Foundation in achieving on the ground, and with a bevy of new active partners, what only a year before had been primarily a framework of goals.

In fact, it was in many ways the same partnerships and experience enabling this growth, despite the ongoing worldwide pandemic, which helped the Foundation put on an overwhelmingly successful event, despite it being entirely remote and virtual. Affirmation of the event's success, in communicating what the work of saving lives through awareness means in practice, came through numerous emails, text messages and phone calls from a broad spectrum of attendees.

***“Best and most engaging, touching zoom meeting event I’ve been to [...] an informative and inspiring night”***

Extensive teamwork and collaboration between more than fifteen members of the GPF Foundation

Team working literally coast-to-coast (with key participants in Seattle, Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York) produced a powerhouse event.

With over three hundred people in attendance, Nancy and Ross were able to communicate with heartfelt profundity the meaning, importance, and progress of Foundation’s work to reduce harm and save lives related to recreational drugs, States Attorney Mike Nerheim received the inaugural GPF Foundation Harm Reduction Award, Dr. Michelle Sergel of Cook County Hospital shared the invigorating presence of the Foundation in her life and work, N.Y Times Bestseller Gabrielle Bernstein inspired and guided embracing our powerful internal resources always at-hand, including many immediately useful practices, and magician-to-the-stars, Dan White, left everyone with a palpable sense of wonder and possibility.

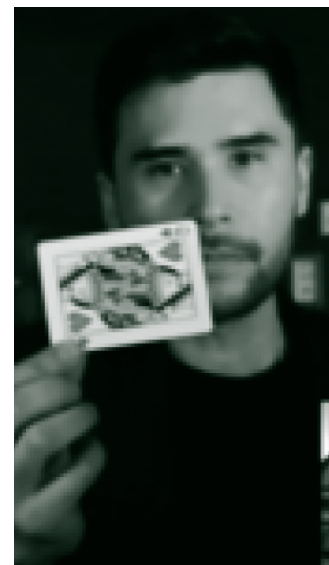
In short, as a fundraising and awareness-raising gathering, and a powerful communication of the Foundation’s progress, capabilities, and goals for the future, the event fulfilled its promise to provide a genuine experience of inspiration.



Ross & Nancy Friedman from the virtual event



Gabby Bernstein



Dan White

# MULTIPLE GRANT APPLICATIONS

**2020 saw applications for funding to The Grainger Foundation, The Fink Foundation, Healthcare of Foundation of Highland Park and Savills Landlord Challenge.**

These applications provided an opportunity for reflection and thoughtful communication about the Foundation's activities and goals. Across all of them the essential component of providing medical or educational community services and awareness that would otherwise not exist, was a dominant theme.

While we received funding from them in the past, per their funding schedule, we await a response from Healthcare Foundation of Highland Park for the current funding cycle. We have already received generous and significant support from The Fink Foundation, Savills and The Grainger Foundation. These investments in our growth and activities are not only essential to our scope, but represent important votes of confidence in our mission, values and approach.

This support provides a strong foundation for our ability to garner further investment, and beckons us to expand our efforts to do so. In short, these successes act as vital signs to other interested and potential funders, of all sorts, that the work of the GPF Foundation has personal relevance within their communities as well.

As we continue to expand our efforts on multiple fronts in 2021 these successes provide significant encouragement for growth.



Ross & Nancy Friedman from the Savills event