

RIKERS ISLAND AND MENTAL HEALTH: DATA, LIVED EXPERIENCE, AND COMMUNITY-BASED ALTERNATIVES

Meet our Speakers

*Yonah Zeitz, New York Director of Advocacy, Katal Center for
Equity, Health, and Justice*



Yonah Zeitz is the New York Director of Advocacy with the Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice. Through advocacy, communications, policy work, digital and community organizing, and coalition building, Yonah works to strengthen grassroots movements and build people power.

His work focuses on building leadership and organizing capacity to transform the criminal legal system and create community-led solutions that focus on resources and healing, not cages.

Kellyann Bock, Data Specialist, Data Collaborative for Justice



Kellyann is a Data Specialist at the Data Collaborative for Justice. She is on the Technical Assistance Team providing assistance to the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ). Prior to joining DCJ, Kellyann served as a Legal Analyst and Paralegal for small boutique law firms that focused on supporting groups that have been disproportionately impacted by the legal and criminal justice system.

She has dual Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and in Criminology/Criminal Justice from the University of Maryland, and graduated with her Master's of Science in Criminal Justice, with a concentration in Crime Analysis from Boston University in August 2024.

Michael Rempel, Executive Director, Data Collaborative for Justice



Michael Rempel is Executive Director of the Data Collaborative for Justice at John Jay College. He previously served as Director of Jail Reform at the Center for Court Innovation and, before that, spent many years as the Center's Research Director.

His interests and recent publications concern efforts to safely reduce New York City's jail population; bail and discovery reform; racial disparities in prosecution; felony case delay; and jail trends since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. He previously served as staff to the Lippman Commission and coauthor of its 2017 report calling for the closure of the infamous Rikers Island jails; and in 2021 coauthored a second report with the Commission offering a data-driven roadmap for minimizing the city's future reliance on jail.

In the past, he frequently studied adult drug courts, court responses to intimate partner violence, and formal risk assessments. He has long been interested in bridging the gap between the worlds of research and policy and, in his earlier research work, participated in evidence-based training and technical assistance initiatives in New York, nationally, and internationally (the latter in partnership with the Organization of American States).

Tracy Barber, Administrative Assistant



Tracy Barber is an administrative assistant living and working in Manhattan.

She loves cats and has been a vegetarian for over 30 years. After a period of incarceration at Riker's Island she believes in the expansion of access to Mental Health Courts across the state.

She has studied psychology and human services and is working on obtaining a peer counseling certification.

*Stephanie Bazell, Senior Policy Attorney, New York County
Defenders*



Stephanie Bazell is Senior Policy Attorney at New York County Defenders. She previously served as Senior Policy Director at the 5BORO Institute and as Chief of Staff and Policy Counsel for State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal.

Prior to this, she held a number of positions at the Executive Chamber including Assistant Counselor to the Governor.

*Melanie Dominguez, New York Organizing Director, Katal
Center for Equity, Health, and Justice*



Melanie Dominguez is the New York Organizing Director at the Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice.

Her organizing is grounded in community and focused on amplifying the leadership of directly impacted people to build collective power and dismantle oppressive systems.