Some of the PWR team before our annual needle clean-up in September 2020
Throughout the challenges of 2020, I had the honor of working alongside the resilient and dedicated Project Weber/RENEW team. Providing our community support in light of the increased risks of the pandemic was a challenging, but obvious, decision.

Our staff, many of whom are immuno-compromised themselves, chose to remain out in the community, providing services. An outreach worker may drop off 10 Narcan kits at midnight and still transport someone to treatment immediately afterward. For the people we serve, our uninterrupted street outreach was one of the few supports available.

I am constantly inspired and awed by our dedicated team at Project Weber/RENEW, and yet we cannot do this alone. Support from our community shows that stigma does not determine who deserves dignity and care, and provides direct material and social support to those most impacted by the crises of the overdose epidemic, systemic racism, and COVID-19.

With gratitude,
Colleen Daley Ndoye
WHAT WE DO

We provide a full range of harm reduction services through street outreach and at our two drop-in centers in Providence and Pawtucket.

Harm reduction is a collection of strategies and approaches to alleviate the risks associated with vulnerable circumstances. Harm reduction is both individual and systemic.

We meet people where they are, presenting the people we serve with opportunities to protect themselves and make healthier choices.

In addition to direct support, we advocate for policy and social change to reduce stigma and improve the lives of the people we serve.

POLICY & ADVOCACY
Staff represent PWR at the BLM RI Protest
06/2020

HARM REDUCTION
Rich and Sid distribute Naloxone
03/2020

PEER SUPPORT
Our “Beyond” Group looking fabulous
08/2020

RESEARCH & SYSTEMS CHANGE
Dennis and Ashley at the Rally for Recovery
09/2020

CASE MANAGEMENT & RESOURCES
Though we may encounter challenges, we never give up on our clients
02/2020
We provide welcoming and quality harm reduction outreach and linkage to health care to people who experience numerous structural barriers to accessing these services.

In 2020, PWR staff continued to provide resources and support, plus additional services to help our clients protect themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2020 by the Numbers**

Over 4,600 interactions with people we serve.

85% of staff who serve clients and half of management are peers to the people we serve.

A 100% increase in funding allowed us to hire TWICE as many people to engage in direct, peer-based outreach.

2020 Funding Sources
- Government grants: 83%
- Corporate & foundation grants: 12%
- Individual contributions: 5%

Outreach Efforts
- 1,400+ people served
- 2,700+ naloxone units distributed
- 22,000+ condoms given
- 275+ HIV and Hepatitis C tests conducted
- 650+ fentanyl test strips provided

2020 Program Expenses
- Outreach: 60%
- OD Data: 5%
- Case Management: 21%
- Housing: 5%
- Health Screenings: 5%
- Trainings: 4%
"COVID-19 doesn’t stop overdoses."
—Rich Holcomb, Project Weber Manager

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our outreach team did not stop: they continued to meet individuals where they are. Project Weber/RENEW (PWR) used outreach vans to meet people and provide vital services.

As a peer-led organization, staff have similar histories to the people they serve. Many have compromised immune systems, chronic conditions, and/or are in long-term recovery.

During these tough times, the PWR team offered intensive case management services, distributed PPE, and helped people navigate COVID-19 testing and emergency housing systems.

Becoming frontline workers during a pandemic requires courage, strength, and perseverance. Our PWR team stepped up to provide services when people had few places to turn.

384 Rhode Islanders died from drug overdose in 2020, making it the deadliest year on record.
Source: preventoverdoseri.org

Rich (left) and Ashley (right) in the PWR outreach van

Jesinya helps unload supplies for a client
Racism Is a Public Health Crisis

PWR has always been committed to dismantling systems that harm our communities.

In 2020, George Floyd’s murder moved our staff to speak out against anti-Black racism in Rhode Island.

#BlackLivesMatter #AmplifyMelanatedVoices

“I feel that fear and ignorance are at the heart of this, and until we let go of the fear of people that don’t look like us and the ignorance that has been ingrained in people, I fear this hateful behavior will continue.”

-Lily, Assistant Director

“I dream of a society for future generations where Black families have safe and affordable housing, where Black children are given quality education, where we have seen an end to the ‘War on Drugs’ in our communities, where Black trans folks are celebrated, and Black Americans can live without fear of violent police in our neighborhoods.”

-Sid, Trans Program Coordinator

“Protest after protest after protest is fantastic and we’ve made a great deal of progress, but true top-to-bottom systemic CHANGE is what is missing!”

-Dennis, Outreach Director
Partnerships
We know the importance of collaboration in meeting the needs of the people we serve.

GOVERNOR’S OVERDOSE TASK FORCE RACIAL EQUITY WORK GROUP
This group was formed to address the lack of representation of People of Color in the Governor’s Overdose Task Force, as well as to highlight the need to have racial equity at the forefront of Rhode Island’s overdose response.

HARM REDUCTION RI WORKING GROUP FIGHTS COVID
In response to the pandemic, we organized the group to share resources with other outreach, harm reduction, and recovery organizations. We created COVID-specific resource sheets and a set of COVID-related precautions for people who use drugs.

WORKING TO ADDRESS CRIMINALIZATION
The people we serve are unjustly criminalized in many ways. We created a document for various agencies highlighting our concerns about law enforcement’s treatment of our communities, including their failure to uphold the Good Samaritan Law and to administer naloxone.

INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY
August 31, 2020, was the largest day of naloxone distribution in Rhode Island’s history! We worked with over 60 organizations to distribute over 1,400 doses of naloxone across the state in under 24 hours.

PROJECT BREAK
In partnership with Miriam Hospital, Project BREAK offers peer support and case management, psychological services, and rental assistance to Black and Latinx men, as well as nonbinary and transgender people who use stimulants.

“Working during COVID presented a whole new host of challenges with trying to provide basic needs, support, and empowering services for the folks in our community. With so many services closed or limited, trying to keep folks connected to food stamps, emergency housing, health care, and recovery support was so difficult and required us to build closer relationships with providers and other community organizations.” —Nya Reichley and Kamila Garay
We believe in providing peer-based harm reduction and recovery services so the people we serve can live better lives...but we need your help!

Click the link below to support Project Weber/RENEW

DONATE NOW

PWR Staff

Colleen Daley Ndoye, Executive Director
Lily Rivera, Assistant Director
Dennis Bailer
Luke Brookner
Rich Holcomb
Cheryl Robinson
Lisa Daluz
Tyrone McKinney
Jesinya Sousa
Ashley Perry
Sidney Lane Smith
Dennis Berganza
Annajane Yolken
Nya Reichley
Kamila Garay
Evan Timbo
Robin Greene
Haley Carbonneau
Clare Boyle
Matt Elliott
Savaree Hazard-Chaney
Mikel Wadewitz
Braulio Ortiz
Mariana Narvaez

640 Broad Street
Providence, RI 02907
(401) 383-4888
info@weberrenew.org

Follow Us @weberrenew

Board of Directors

Neville Bedford, Esq; Co-Chairperson
Valerie Zabala, PhD; Co-Chairperson
Kathryn Boots, MBA; Treasurer
Linzi Rae Matta, LICSW; Secretary
Lindsay Bryden
Philip Chan, MD
Ralph Chartier
Sabrina Clark
Azila Plynton, LICSW
Sophie Sprecht
Abigail Stenberg
Cara Zimmerman, MD, MBA

Project Weber/RENEW is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization made up of a committed and diverse group of individuals.