

# WE RISE INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER SUMMER/FALL 2019



## Announcement

In its first U.S. based project, We Rise International is partnering with Eastern Mennonite University and the LMC Legacy Foundation to increase U.S. Faith Communities' ability to support individuals and families experiencing mental illnesses and addictions. Projects on other health topics are in the works.



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## Celebrating our Technical Advisory Team!

As a small non-profit with global reach, We Rise Int'l benefits greatly from the knowledge, guidance, and work of our health technical advisory team. This team -- a group of global experts, some of whom serve as contract We Rise Int'l staff, bring extensive expertise in chronic illnesses, mental health and addictions, and global public health to our work! Hailing from around the world, they've lived and worked in countries across Africa, Asia, North America and the Caribbean

You can check out the "Our Team" page on our website to read their incredible full bios, but we also wanted to name and celebrate them here!!

<https://weriseinternational.org/our-team>

Thanks for being part of We Rise International!

- Tracy Kaye, MPH
- Janel Lehman-Long RN, MA
- Tresor Medju, MPH, MA
- Dr. Rosalba Santana, MD
- Selena McCoy Carpenter, MEd
- Edith Rodriguez Melendez, BSN, RN, MHSA
- Jacqueline Hill, RN
- Dr. Katrina Wiyse, MD
- Dr. Bobbie Legg, MSW, LCSW, PhD

With Technical Advisory Team members specializing in the fields of mental illnesses and addictions, global health, public health, women's health, internal medicine and sustainable development, We Rise Int'l is poised to partner with communities around the world.



**INTRODUCING  
WE RISE INTERNATIONAL  
a U.S.-based 501C3  
global nonprofit founded with  
the mission to Empower the  
World with Health and Hope.**

**Founding Board of Directors:  
Amy Vercler, JD  
Karin Shank, MS, MLS  
Beth Good, RN, PhD**

**Founding Executive Director:  
Janelle Bitikofer, MSW, LCSW**

## CHANGE THE WORLD WITH YOUR OLD LAPTOP!



We Rise international is growing! Thanks to the Streetlights Project we're in need of three quality used laptops for new part-time staff and interns. Donated laptops help keep our overhead costs low. If you have a used laptop to donate, contact [janelle@weriseinternational.org](mailto:janelle@weriseinternational.org) Thank you!

# Special Thanks!

TO MEMBERS OF THE TEAM

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## MICHAELA

A big thank you to 2019-2020 Intern Michaela Thomas from Franklin and Marshall College, for her work in videography on the Streetlights Project.



## JACKIE

A huge thank you to Technical Advisory Team Member Jacqueline Hill, RN, for providing wisdom from 30 years of addictions and mental health professional experience to strengthen the Streetlights Project!



## JANEL

Also huge thanks to Technical Advisory Team Member Janel Lehman-Long, RN, MA for contributing insights from her 20+ years of nursing and public health experience, to help develop educational resources for the Streetlights Project.



# The Streetlights Project Takes Off!

1 in 5 people in the U.S. suffers from a mental illness, and 1 in 7 will experience an addiction in their lifetime. These numbers have not been shown to be significantly different in churches than they are in the general population. But many Christians and church leaders say they need more knowledge and resources to help them provide effective support to individuals and families in their churches, families, and communities who are experiencing these struggles.

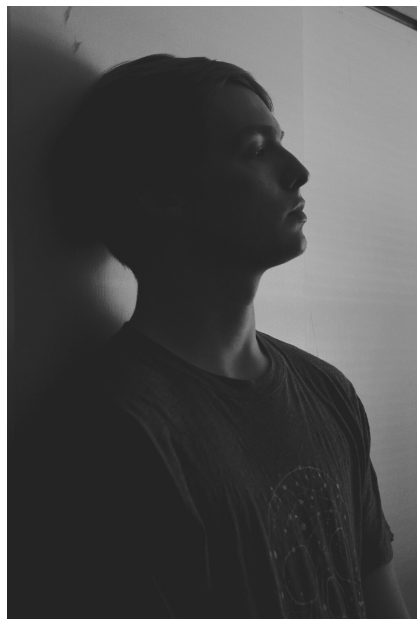
In consultation with Christians experiencing mental illnesses and addictions and their families, pastors from PA, NY, and NC, and mental health and addictions treatment providers, We Rise International's first U.S.-based project, the Streetlights Project, will address these needs through the Faith Communities Improving Outcomes in Mental Illnesses and Addictions program.

This training and support program will educate and prepare Christians, Christian leaders, and entire churches with training, resources, and hands on support to meet this need. The program, conducted in partnership with Eastern Mennonite University and the Lancaster Legacy Fund, will also train mental health and addictions professionals on ways that incorporating faith



h community support can help improve medical and social outcomes for individuals and families experiencing mental illnesses or addictions..

“25% of individuals experiencing a mental illness say the first place they sought help was not in a counselor’s office or hospital. It was in a local church.”.



## Join Us -- Five Ways to Get Involved with We Rise International:

1. Stay informed! Sign up for our bi-annual newsletter, at <https://weriseinternational.org/home>

2. Refer a college or graduate student you know to apply for We Rise Int'l internships – a great way to get involved and build their resume!

3. Volunteer yourself! We Rise International loves retirees and volunteers of any age! See pg 2, and our website, for current opportunities, some of which will even allow you to travel!

4. Encourage church leaders, and mental health and addictions professionals you know in PA, and NY City to sign up for the trainings and support on mental illnesses and addictions that will be offered through the Streetlights Project.

5. Support We Rise International financially through an individual or business donation any time of year, or by helping organize an event in your community during our annual “fun”draising drive. We Rise Int'l is a U.S. 501C3 and all donations are tax deductible.

