

## Xavier Amador, Ph.D.



*Dr. Xavier Amador is Co-Founder of the LEAP Foundation and Founder of the LEAP Institute, which has trained tens of thousands of clinicians, family caregivers, law enforcement, justice officials and legislators worldwide on the evidence-based LEAP® method. Dr. Amador is an internationally renowned clinical psychologist, forensic expert, sought after speaker and leader in his field. He is also a family caregiver of two close relatives with schizophrenia and another with bipolar disorder.*

From 1989 to 2002, Dr. Amador was on the medical school faculty at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. In 2002, he resigned a tenured faculty position at Columbia University and as Director of Psychology at the New York State Psychiatric Institute to honor his commitment to families that asked him to help educate mental health practitioners, family caregivers, and others about anosognosia and science-based practices proven to help persons with serious mental illness. He was also responding to his frustration as a clinical researcher who saw much needed knowledge stranded in professional journals rather than in the hands of clinicians, families, law enforcement, judges and legislators attempting to address the needs of persons with severe and persistent mental illness.

Keeping his promise, he served as Director, Center for Research Education and Practice at the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI), where he founded NAMI's Scientific Council, nationally launched Family to Family, Peer to

Peer and In Our Own Voices, as well as NAMI's national initiative on Assertive Community Treatment (ACT). After his tenure on staff, he resigned to serve on the Board of Directors.

In 2008, Dr. Amador founded the LEAP Institute and in 2017, co-founded the LEAP Foundation for Research to Practice, a non-profit 501(c)(3) providing anosognosia education and evidence-based training on the LEAP (Listen–Empathize–Agree–Partner)® method, designed to create trusting relationships with people suffering from mental illness that can lead to treatment and recovery.

**Dr. Amador is the author of 8 books, including the Best Seller, “I AM NOT SICK, I Don’t Need Help!”** Written for both professional and lay readers, he shares research and practical advice on how to help engage persons with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder in treatment. His books, authoritative clinical research, worldwide speaking tours and extensive work in schizophrenia, bipolar and other disorders have been translated into 30 languages.

Additionally, he authored over 120 peer-reviewed scientific papers and served as a section Co-Chair of the only peer-reviewed text revision of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM), the authoritative diagnostic manual used by mental health professionals world-wide.

Dr. Amador has worked on over 80 death penalty cases in the United States and his expertise has been called upon by government, industry and media, where he has appeared as a frequent expert for CNN, ABC News, NBC News, Fox News, CBS 60 Minutes, New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today, Wall Street Journal and other national and international news outlets.

## Margie Balfour, M.D., Ph.D.

Margaret Balfour, MD, Ph.D, is the chief of quality and clinical innovation at Connections Health Solutions, which provides 24/7 access to mental health and substance use care throughout Arizona and helps clients around the country improve their behavioral health services. She is a psychiatrist and national leader in quality improvement and behavioral health crisis services. Dr. Balfour was named the Doctor of the Year by the National Council for Behavioral Health for her work at the Crisis Response Center in Tucson where she led an organizational change initiative that greatly improved the quality and timeliness of care. She is also an associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Arizona and frequently publishes and speaks on topics including outcome measurement, emergency psychiatry and law enforcement responses to mental illness. She is a co-author of the book *People with Mental Illness in the Criminal Justice System: Answering a Cry for Help*. She serves on boards of directors for numerous organizations including the American Association of Community Psychiatrists, the American Association for Emergency Psychiatry and the National Alliance on Mental Illness Southern Arizona and she is a member of the American Psychiatric Association Council on Quality of Care. Prior to joining Connections, Dr. Balfour directed the quality program for behavioral health within the public safety-net health system for Dallas, Texas. She received her medical degree and doctorate in neuroscience from the University of Cincinnati and completed residency and fellowship in public psychiatry at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.



## Leslie Carpenter

Leslie is a serious brain disorders advocate who is working to improve the quality of care for people with brain disorders all along the continuum of care locally, in the state of Iowa and the country. She has retired from her 34 year career as a physical therapist early in order to focus her time on this mission. She also teaches NAMI Family to Family, Provider Education and serves on her local NAMI Johnson County affiliate's Board of Directors. She and her husband, Scott, have been advocating for improved reimbursement rates for mental health professionals and direct care staff, treatment facilities, supportive community housing, and ending the IMD exclusion. They, with the help of the Treatment Advocacy Center and Iowa State Senator Joe Bolckom, successfully improved Iowa's Commitment Law in 2018. Since then, they have been working with a team of key people to establish Iowa's first Civil Mental Health Court and associated Assisted Outpatient Treatment Team.



Leslie and Scott have 2 adult children, one of whom has a Schizoaffective Disorder combined with Anosognosia. They have witnessed just how traumatic and difficult it can be for someone with a serious brain disorder to get medical treatment, and want to work for improved collaboration between the patients and providers, and amongst the people involved at all levels of treatment.

## **Bill Cassidy, M.D.**

Dr. Bill Cassidy is a United States Senator for Louisiana.

Bill is married to Dr. Laura Cassidy and they have three children. They attend church at the Chapel on the Campus. Bill grew up in Baton

Rouge, Louisiana and attended Louisiana State University (LSU) for undergraduate and Medical School. For nearly three decades, Bill has provided care for uninsured and underinsured patients in Louisiana's charity hospital system.

During this time, he co-founded the Greater Baton Rouge Community Clinic, a clinic providing free dental and health care to the working uninsured. Bill also created a private- public partnership to vaccinate 36,000 greater Baton Rouge area children against Hepatitis B at no cost to the schools or parents. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Bill led a group of health care volunteers to convert an abandoned K- Mart building into an emergency health care facility, providing basic health care to hurricane evacuees.

In 1990, Bill joined LSU Medical School following his tenure at Earl K. Long hospital, where he taught medical students and residents while treating the uninsured.

Bill was elected to the Louisiana State Senate in 2006. In 2008, he was elected to the United States House of Representatives to represent Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District. In the US House, Bill served on the Energy and Commerce Committee and supported a conservative agenda.

Bill was elected to the United States Senate in December, 2014. He serves on the Energy and Natural Resources, Health Education Labor & Pensions (HELP), Finance, Veterans' Affairs and Joint Economic Committees.



## **Pete Earley**

Pete Earley is a storyteller who has penned 13 books including the New York Times

bestseller *The Hot House* and the 2007 Pulitzer Prize finalist *Crazy: A Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness*.

After a 14-year career in journalism, including six years at *The Washington Post*, Pete became a full-time author with a commitment to expose the stories that entertain and surprise.

His honest reporting and compelling writing helped him garner success as one of few authors with "the power to introduce new ideas and give them currency," according to *Washingtonian* magazine.

When Pete's life was turned upside down by the events recounted in his book *Crazy*, he joined the National Alliance of Mental Illness to advocate for strong mental health reform on the public stage.

This new advocacy has taken him to 46 different states and multiple countries around the globe where he delivers speeches to rally against the troubled mental health systems and for the mentally ill.

## **Jeffery Geller, M.D., M.P.H.**

Dr. Geller is President of the American Psychiatric Association and Professor of Psychiatry and Director of Public Sector Psychiatry at the University of Massachusetts Medical



School. He has served numerous APA leadership positions, including as Area 1 Trustee and Vice President of the APA Board of Trustees; member of the Committee on Psychiatric Diagnosis and Assessment, the Council on Advocacy and Public Policy and the APA Foundation Library and Archives Advisory Committee; and Book Review Editor and Column Editor for Psychiatric Services. Geller also serves on the SAMHSA National Advisory Council, as Vice President of the World Federation for Mental Health and on the boards of the American Association of Community Psychiatrists and the Treatment Advocacy Center.

### **Judge Oscar Kazen**

Judge Oscar J. Kazen is the Presiding Judge of Bexar County Probate Court 1 and previously served as Associate Probate Judge for Bexar County Probate Court 1, as well as Judge Presiding of Bexar County Court at Law #9. During his 16 years of judicial service, he has presided in over 100 jury trials without reversal or remand. Shortly after his appointment, in 2007, he realized his passion for helping individuals with mental illness in the justice system. Judge Kazen created, and oversaw, the implementation of the first fully-operational civil AOT court in Texas, serving as the intersection between the law and treatment of individuals with serious mental illness, in a 52-county area. This court has served as a national model, saving lives and lessening the suffering of those with serious mental illness by offering an alternative to hospitalization. Prior to his appointment as an associate probate judge, he served as presiding judge of Bexar County Court at Law No. 9 and was a managing partner of Kazen & Robberson. Judge Kazen earned his J.D. from Thurgood Marshall School of Law and his B.A. from The University of Texas. Before attending college,



Judge Kazen served in the United States Marine Corp. He is married to Melissa.

### **Robert Laitman, M.D.**

Robert S Laitman, MD, is an internal medicine physician at Bronx Westchester Medical Group in New York. He is on the Board of Directors for the [Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of America](#), and is also a board member of the [National Alliance of Mental Illness - New York](#). Over the last 10 years, he has developed a practice taking care of people with psychotic disorders after his son, Daniel, received a diagnosis of schizophrenia in 2006.



Dr Laitman, his family, and his colleague authored the book, "[Clozapine: Meaningful Recovery from Schizophrenia](#)."

### **The Honorable Steven Leifman**



The

Honorable Judge Steven Leifman is at the forefront of a public policy movement in the criminal justice system to reduce the number of people with mental illness in prison, and to develop alternative approaches that offer treatment and support for recovery. He serves as Associate Administrative Judge in the Miami-Dade County Court Criminal Division and Special Advisor on Criminal Justice and Mental Health for the Supreme Court of Florida. He is co-chair of the Council of State Governments/TAPA Center for Jail Diversion

Judges' Criminal Justice/ Mental Health Leadership Initiative, and member of the National Leadership Forum for Behavioral Health.

In 2000, Leifman created the nation's first program to divert individuals with serious mental illness who do not pose a risk to the public away from the criminal justice system and into community-based treatment and support services. The Eleventh Judicial Circuit Mental Health Project has resulted in fewer arrests and incarcerations of people with mental illness, reduced crime, reduced injuries to law enforcement officers, improved public safety, reduced cost to the tax payers and improved administration of justice.

Since 2000, Leifman has also developed specialized training for law enforcement officers as well as fellow judges to improve their ability to handle cases involving people with mental illness. It was for his groundbreaking work helping people with mental illness in the criminal justice system that Leifman was awarded the William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence from the National Center for State Courts in 2015. One of the nation's highest judicial honors, the Rehnquist Award is presented annually to a state court judge who exemplifies judicial excellence. U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. presented Leifman with the award.

Judge Leifman continues to work on behalf of the mentally ill defendants he sees in his courtroom, with his most recent project being a state-of-the-art Mental Health Diversion facility that will include short-term housing, a crisis unit, rehabilitation areas, and a courtroom slated to open in 2020.

**Tim Murphy, Ph.D.**

Dr. Tim Murphy is a psychologist in practice in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was elected twice to the Pennsylvania state senate and eight times to the U.S. House of Representatives. In Congress, he wrote and fought for the landmark Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act, signed into law in December 2016 as part of the 21st Century Cures Act.



While in Congress he volunteered for and was commissioned into the U.S. Navy Reserve for eight years as a psychologist on staff at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda in an inpatient PTSD/Traumatic Brain Injury unit. His active duty training stations included three aircraft carriers and Navy Special Warfare, eventually achieving the rank of commander. He was on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, on the staff of several local medical hospitals and in private practice. He co-authored two books: Overcoming Passive Aggression, and The Angry Child, and wrote numerous articles in scientific and lay publications. He has appeared hundreds of times on local and national media discussing a wide range of state and federal policy issues.

### **Timothy Noonan**

Timothy Noonan is the Deputy Director for Health Information Privacy, at the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), United States Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Information Privacy Division administers and enforces the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy, Security and Breach Notification Rules and the Patient Safety and



Quality Improvement Act and Rule through investigations, rule-making, guidance, and outreach. Previously, Tim served in OCR headquarters as the Acting Associate Deputy Director for Operations and the Acting Director for Centralized Case Management Operations. Tim joined OCR as the Southeast Regional Manager in November 2013. Prior to joining OCR, Tim was a Supervisory General Attorney for the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and a shareholder in a Michigan law firm. Tim is a graduate of Michigan State University and Wayne State University Law School.

She's provided testimony in multiple forums including the Institute of Healthcare Improvement, the National Quality Forum, and an event on Capitol Hill advocating for The Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act. The Bay Area Newsgroup recently recognized Pasquini for her local mental health advocacy during 2017's Women's History Month. Most recently, Pasquini released a White Paper, [https://hth.tinet.com/Housing\\_That\\_Heals\\_2020.pdf](https://hth.tinet.com/Housing_That_Heals_2020.pdf), with another mom, Lauren Rettagliata. Their paper is a "call to action" for a "health care system that includes a tiered array of Housing That Heals as part of a full continuum of psychiatric care..."

## Teresa Pasquini

Teresa Pasquini advocates for reforming and improving the nation's mental health system. As a family member of a son and brother living with serious mental illness, her 45-year personal experience drives her passion. As a nine-year member of the Contra Costa County Mental Health Commission, she was an outspoken champion for all. Ms. Pasquini is a founding member of the Behavioral Healthcare Partnership at Contra Costa Regional Medical Center, a safety-net hospital. Ms. Pasquini is a cofounder of Mental Illness FACTS/Right 2 Treatment, a grassroots campaign focused on quality standards and equity in care for serious mental illnesses.



## Drew Pinsky, M.D.

Dr. Pinsky is a practicing physician, Board Certified in Internal Medicine, and Board Certified in Addiction Medicine who spent most of his career working in a psychiatric hospital. "Dr Drew", as he is commonly known in his role as a radio show host and in media, is passionate about the homeless crisis in L.A. County that impacts his psychiatric patients:



*"I've done this work for thirty years and I never thought I would see my patients dying in the streets. I am morally uncomfortable that I live in a state where this is allowed to go on."*

[Dr. Drew spoke recently at the White House Summit](#) on homelessness, drug abuse, and a

concise history of the systemic mistakes that led to the United States' mental health crisis. At the summit, President Trump announced increases in funding to address the mental illness to stem back the homelessness and incarceration pipeline.

*He explains from the book, [American Psychosis](#), how psychiatrist Dr. Robert Felix, who had spent one summer working in a state mental hospital, influenced President Kennedy to close all state mental hospitals in favor of community health centers. This continued on through several administrations and by the time Ronald Reagan became Governor of California, half the state hospitals had been closed. Due to the total failure of the community centers, which were designed to prevent mental health "problems" with no directive on treating psychiatric disorders, Reagan had them closed.*

*Pinsky, who believes the majority of schizophrenics are now on the street says, "Because there was no provisions or plan in place, patients were pouring out of the hospitals by the hundreds of thousands and were going to the nursing homes, prisons and the streets to die."*

*One of the many things Pinsky talks about are the "resistant cases," the transients who refuse services, shelter and treatment. He believes these cases represent about sixty to eighty-five percent of the homeless population, and one of the biggest reasons for this is anosognosia, a condition in which the person is unaware of having a disability. This deficit in self-awareness, which blocks the brain to a person's insight, affects patients with dementia, stroke, psychiatric illnesses and drug addiction. <https://californiaglobe.com/section-2/the-only-plain-to-end-homelessness/>*

## Laura Pogliano



Laura Pogliano was the Founder and Executive Director of Parents For Care, a 501(c)3. Laura is a training and education consultant in Baltimore, MD. She was the primary caretaker of her son, Zaccaria, who was stricken with schizophrenia at age 17. She is a tireless advocate for those with the most serious brain illnesses and the SARDA Maryland State Chapter Leader.

## Kenneth Paul Rosenberg, M.D.

Dr. Kenneth Paul Rosenberg is a clinical associate professor of psychiatry at the Weill Cornell Medical College and New York Presbyterian Hospital, and he is



a member of the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry, the Society for Sex Therapy and Research, and a distinguished fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. Since 2001, Dr. Rosenberg has been listed every year as a Top Addiction Psychiatrist in New York Magazine's "Best Doctors" issue, and is listed as a U.S. News Top Doctor in U.S. News and World Report. He has produced films for PBS and HBO to educate the public about medicine and psychiatry, for which he is the recipient of a George Foster Peabody Award and has been recognized by both the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences.

Dr. Rosenberg is also the co-editor of a Elsevier Press psychiatric text, *Behavioral Addictions*, and the author of the Hachette book, *Infidelity: Why Men and Women Cheat*. While maintaining an addiction psychiatry practice in Manhattan, Dr. Rosenberg directed and produced the acclaimed [Sundance Film Festival](#) documentary [Bedlam](#), which was broadcast on [PBS](#) last April and he wrote the Penguin Random House [book Bedlam: An Intimate Journey into America's](#)

*Mental Health Crisis.* (He will show clips from his film at the session.)

Dr. Rosenberg has appeared widely in the medical and popular [media](#) to discuss America's failing mental illness delivery system. Dr. Rosenberg has spoken about our broken system from not only a professional perspective, but as a brother of a sister with schizophrenia and explains, "[My family's tragedy is an American tragedy. My family's shame is America's great secret.](#)"

### **John Snook, J.D.**

John Snook, J.D. serves as executive director of the Treatment Advocacy Center, widely recognized as one of the most influential mental health advocacy organizations in existence today.



More than half of the states have reformed their mental health laws as a result of the Treatment Advocacy Center's advocacy, and its original research on issues such as the criminalization of mental illness has reshaped the national narrative on the treatment of severe mental illness.

Mr. Snook brings the organization more than 15 years of policy and advocacy experience at both the federal and state levels. Prior to joining the Treatment Advocacy Center, he worked on policy issues at the Mortgage Bankers Association (MBA) and at Habitat for Humanity International. At Habitat, he grew the nascent state and local advocacy network into a driving nationwide force for affordable housing policy. Mr. Snook also co-led Habitat's response to the foreclosure crisis, ultimately resulting in thousands of new Habitat homes and more than

\$350 million in new funding to address foreclosed properties.

Mr. Snook's true passion has always been mental health reform. His focus on the issue began in law school, as he saw a loved one struggle with untreated mental illness. He championed mental illness reform, working first with the West Virginia Supreme Court on mental health issues and then at the Treatment Advocacy Center as an advocate for state mental health reform. His return as executive director represents a homecoming to these important issues. Mr. Snook received his juris doctor from the George Mason School of Law and his bachelor of arts from Washington & Jefferson College.

### **Marvin Swartz, M.D.**

Marvin S. Swartz, M.D., is Professor and Head of the Division of Social and Community Psychiatry and Director of the Duke AHEC Program. Dr. Swartz has been extensively involved in research and policy issues related to



the organization and care of mentally ill individuals at the state and national level. He co-led a North Carolina study examining the effectiveness of Psychiatric Advance Directives and the NIMH funded Clinical Antipsychotics Trials of Intervention Effectiveness study. He is currently a co-investigator of a study of implementation of Psychiatric Advance Directives in usual care settings, an evaluation of implementation of assisted outpatient treatment programs and a randomized trial of injectable, long-acting naltrexone in drug courts. Among many awards, most recently, Dr. Swartz was the recipient of the 2015 Isaac Ray Award from the American Psychiatric Association for career contributions to forensic psychiatry.



## Bethany Yeiser

Bethany Yeiser is a motivational speaker and the author of *Mind Estranged: My Journey from Schizophrenia and Homelessness to Recovery* (released



May 31, 2014). Bethany was a scholarship winner, researcher and violinist before she became severely mentally ill and homeless her senior year of college, 2003. Bethany established the [CURESZ Foundation](#) with Dr. Henry Nasrallah in July, 2016. CURESZ stands for Comprehensive Understanding via Research and Education into Schizophrenia. Bethany also maintains a blog called "[Recovery Road](#)" on [PsychologyToday.com](#).