

<p><b>S2i</b>  <b>Mental Health Strategic Impact Initiative</b></p>
<p><b>Catalyzing Change in the Nation’s Response to Mental Illness</b></p>
<p><b>VISION:</b> We live in what can be a transformative moment for the American mental health system. Currently, mental illness and the broken system intended to address it are among this nation’s dark secrets, failing tens of millions of Americans and their families. These failures disrupt education and employment, challenge family relationships, and result in over-incarceration and re-traumatization. It costs business and the health industry billions of dollars, and, far too often, it costs people their lives. If you are Black or brown, the disparities in treatment access and quality are unconscionable and compound other system failures.</p> <p>But this moment is also marked by increased public sector attention and private sector understanding, broadened general awareness and reduced stigma, and, most significantly, potential national demand for change. Given these starting points, the task ahead is to translate these seeds of change into long-term efforts that drive transformation. A broader set of strategic efforts can be developed, resourced, aligned, and tested, even as new people and groups are engaged, especially those currently marginalized and excluded. S2i believes the time to make impactful change is upon us. If not now... when?</p>
<p><b>PRIMARY GOAL:</b> To catalyze and support collective efforts that enable donors, NGOs, government and the private sector to further transformation in the systems that advance mental health for all.</p>
<p><b>SECONDARY ROLE:</b> To serve as a “disruptive think tank” that informs collective efforts to address thorny issues, including those of equity and marginalization, and integrate insights, advances, and potential allies in other sectors.</p>
<p><b>S2i’s APPROACH</b></p> <p><b>Promoting Increased Investment:</b> There is a compelling reason for major philanthropy to (re)engage in addressing the nation’s approach to supporting those facing mental health challenges. S2i will build on its strong relationships with philanthropy to inform and invite greater engagement in mental health efforts.</p> <p><b>Taking a Cross-Sectoral Approach:</b> Behavioral health issues cut across all sectors of society, and multiple policy domains and system issues are implicated. S2i will help engage various sectors to jointly identify how to broaden interventions, seek comprehensive solutions, and maximize impact.</p> <p><b>Tackling Thorny Issues:</b> In every social movement there are a set of complicated, thorny issues that challenge reform efforts and are central to the change dynamic but are difficult for traditional players in the field to take on. Because S2i is not aligned with any existing entity, we will help identify and address such issues.</p>
<p><b>OUTCOMES SOUGHT</b></p> <p>S2i seeks to strengthen existing/complementary initiatives advancing transformative change through</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Greater embedding of racial equity principles in mental health policy and practice toward the goal of eliminating racial disparities in access to mental health supports.</li> <li>● Authentic engagement of persons with lived experience in mental health policy design and practice.</li> <li>● Increased funding for NGO and other actors attempting to promote reform and change</li> <li>● More effective and efficient use of existing and additional system dollars.</li> <li>● Alignment among key players to advance deepened and more coordinated efforts</li> <li>● Consensus on gaps in capacities that are needed</li> <li>● Promising or innovative ideas worthy of seeding and development, including through technology.</li> </ul>

**INITIAL AREAS OF ACTION:**

**Criminal Justice Cross-Sectoral Engagement:** S2i believes that criminal justice reform and the remaking of our behavioral health system are inter-connected, and that this intersection exemplifies how committed attention to mental health reform can help transform punitive and dysfunctional systems that particularly harm Black and brown people. As an initial effort, S2i, with the support of the Ford Foundation, has engaged Fountain House to lead a cross-sector collaboration with the Center for Court Innovation, the Technical Assistance Collaborative, and the Heywood Burns Institute to identify and develop options regarding the next-gen policies, programs, and practices that decouple mental health crises responses from policing and the criminal legal system.

**Re-engaging Philanthropy:** S2i will help expand the range of donors, starting with those who have expressed interest in learning more about and engaging in efforts to address the nation’s mental health challenges, through joint activities to pursue potential roles, challenges, and planning opportunities for philanthropy.

**Engaging Lived Experience:** S2i will tackle the question of how to support, value, and integrate those with lived experience in the broader reform efforts, including how to advance the leadership of such individuals.

**LEADERSHIP:**

**Ken Zimmerman** is the founder and co-director of S2i. A noted policy maker, civil rights leader, and philanthropist, he has increasingly focused on how to transform the nation’s broken mental health system following the mental illness and death of his son Jared in 2016. In doing so, he builds on his lengthy experience building (and dismantling barriers to) equitable and effective policy and program related to criminal justice reform, housing and homelessness, and other social policy areas critical to creating a society in which every individual’s dignity is acknowledged and supported.

From 2012-2018, Ken served as the Director of U.S. Programs for the Open Society Foundations, where he directed over \$100 million in grants to organizations focused on equality, fairness, and justice. Previously, he served as a member of the Obama Administration’s HUD transition team as Senior Advisor to HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan. In addition, he was a litigation partner for the pro bono practice group at Lowenstein Sandler, Chief Counsel to New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine, and founding Executive Director of the New Jersey Institute of Social Justice. A graduate of Yale and Harvard Law School, Ken also serves as a Distinguished Fellow at the NYU Furman Center and teaches at NYU’s Wagner Graduate School of Public Service.

**Fred Karnas** is co-leading the S2i effort. Fred brings a long history of work in the areas of housing, health, and human services, with a special focus on addressing the needs of homeless persons, older Americans, and persons with disabilities. He has served as executive director of the National Coalition for the Homeless and at HUD in the Clinton Administration as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Needs, Director of the Office of AIDS Housing, and Director of the Interagency Council on the Homeless. He also served as a senior advisor to the Secretary of HUD in the Obama administration and in Arizona Governor Napolitano’s cabinet as Director of the Arizona Department of Housing and the Arizona Housing Finance Authority. Currently, Fred is a senior fellow at the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, having joined RMHF after serving several years in a similar position at The Kresge Foundation. He also served as President and CEO of St. Luke’s Health Initiatives in Phoenix. Fred holds degrees from the University of Virginia School of Architecture and the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Social Work, as well as a PhD from the College of Architecture and Urban Studies at Virginia Tech.

**Keris Myrick** is a co-director of S2i. Ms. Myrick was formerly the Chief of Peer and Allied Health Professions for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, and has served as the Director of the Office of Consumer Affairs for the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) of the United States Health and Human Services’ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and was the Board President of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Ms. Myrick is a leading mental health advocate and executive, known for her innovative and inclusive approach to mental health reform and the public disclosure of her

personal story (as featured in the New York Times series: Lives Restored). Ms. Myrick has over 15 years of experience in mental health services innovations, transformation, and peer workforce development. She is known for her collaborative style and innovative “whole person” approach to mental health. Myrick serves on the board of the National Association of Peer Supporters and is a Co-Editor of the Journal of Psychiatric Services “Lived Experience and Leadership” column. Ms. Myrick has a MS in organizational psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology of Alliant

International University and an MBA from Case Western University’s Weatherhead School of Management.

**Expert Advisors:** Julian Adler (Center for Court Innovation), Xavier Briggs (NYU), Rebecca Cokley (Center for American Progress) Richard Frank (Harvard Medical School), Mary Giliberti (MHA), Sherry Glied (NYU), Andy Keller (Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute), Kimberlyn Leary (Urban Institute), Stephanie LeMelle (Columbia University), John MacPhee (Jed Foundation), Kevin Martone (Technical Assistance Collaborative), Marie Monrad (consultant), Keris Myrick, Bill Smith, (Civitas/Inseparable), Ashwan Vasan (Fountain House), Sheryl Whitney (Whitney Jennings)

**Host Organization:** The Jed Foundation is generously hosting S2i and providing significant in-kind support