

October 15, 2020

Katal Weekly Update

Katal Center for Equity, Health, and Justice



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In CT: #FreeThemNowCT House Party



Friends and family join for a physically distanced house party at Katal volunteer Tricia's home.

While our usual methods of engaging with people have changed due to the pandemic, we have adapted our tactics to ensure that we are continuing to meet people where they are. Recently, we held two House Parties on the issue of COVID-19 in prisons and jails! The first, hosted by our volunteer **Morgan**, was a virtual House Party on Zoom that focused on #FreeThemNowCT and #FreeThemNowNY. Our NYC Community Organizer **Melanie** gave a breakdown on how the pandemic has impacted incarcerated New Yorkers, and our Apprentice Community Organizer **Alycia** discussed the work our [members](#) have engaged in to ensure our incarcerated loved ones are cared for. Attendees engaged in a robust conversation around incarceration, COVID-19, and participated in our Incarcerated Communities Exercise (done virtually for the first time!).

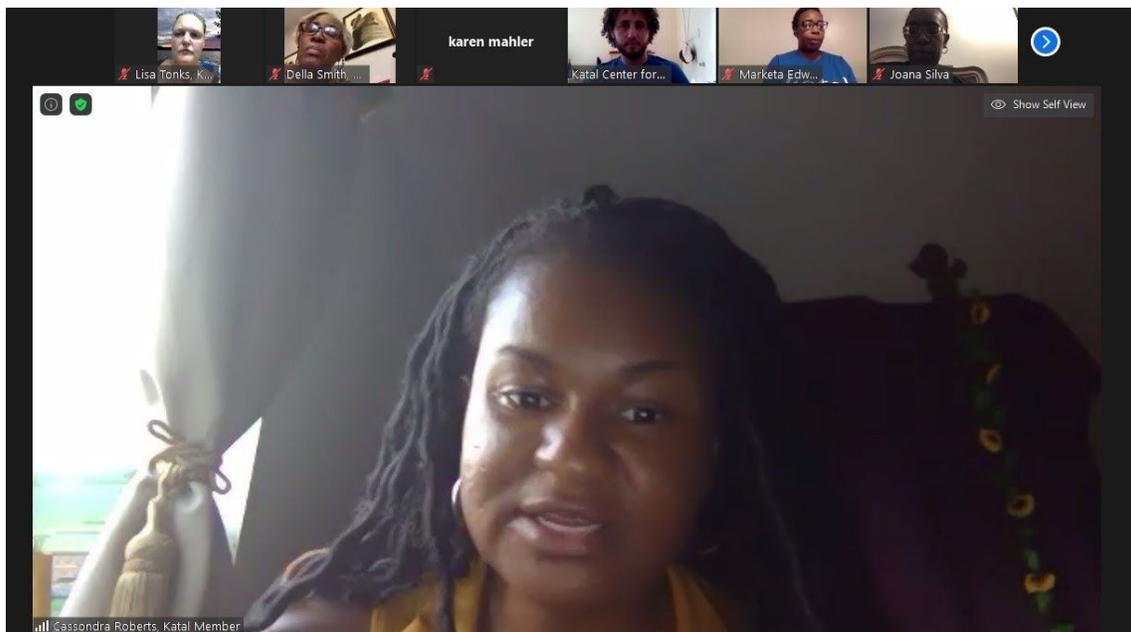
The second, hosted by our volunteer **Tricia**, was a physically-distant #FreeThemNowCT House Party in Hartford. Attendees gathered around a fire on a Friday evening to discuss decarceration, the lasting impacts of the war on drugs, and our [demand](#) for Governor Lamont to develop a comprehensive and transparent COVID-19 plan for incarcerated people in Connecticut. The House Party ended with attendees discussing ways to take action, including using our [online action tool](#), and meeting with their elected officials to demand action.

Want to host a House Party?

Our members and organizers are continuing to host virtual and physically-distant House Parties throughout Connecticut and New York. Hosting a house party is a great way to get your friends and neighbors involved in understanding the issues and organizing for justice.

Contact Kenyatta Thompson at kthompson@katalcenter.org to learn more about our work and for more information on hosting a house party in CT or NY.

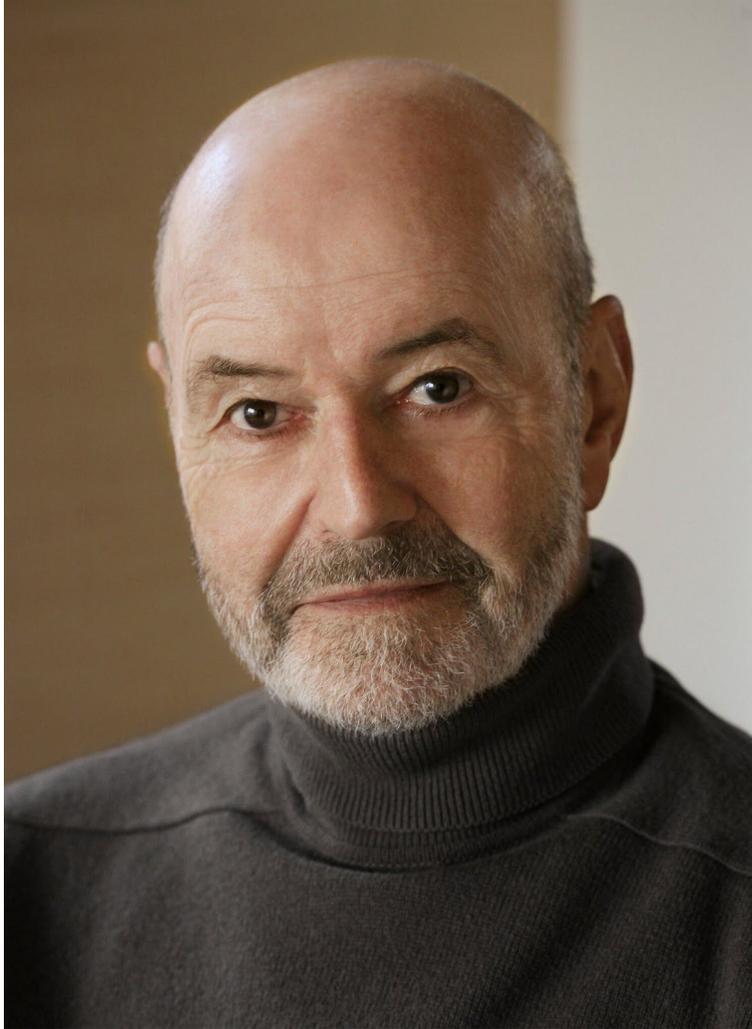
Katal Member Meetings in NY



Our NY Member Meetings are held every two weeks on Wednesdays, via Zoom. Discussions are led by Katal members about issues across New York that are impacting our communities and loved ones, and our work in the state to end mass incarceration, including our #LessIsMoreNY and #FreeThemNowNY campaigns.

In New York? Want to get involved as a member or volunteer? Contact Kenyatta Thompson at kthompson@katalcenter.org.

Remembering Henry van Ameringen



Last month, Henry van Ameringen passed away. A longtime, active philanthropist, he supported many different issues, especially LGBTQ and AIDS causes. He was also a longtime supporter of groups working in harm reduction and to end the war on drugs.

Henry also supported Katal, and was among the first individual donors to do so. When we were just starting out, Henry gave us an audience, hosting us in his beautiful home. During the brief meeting, he listened to us outline our plans to fight for racial justice and an end to the war on drugs and mass incarceration. He asked good questions, and committed his support.

We learned from our conversations with Henry that his philanthropy was deeply personal. When we met with Henry, there was no pomp or flair, no frivolous conversation. He was a deeply passionate, thoughtful person who cared about people. In a 2012 [Huffington Post](#) op-ed, he wrote, “I’ve never been very political. But in the 1980s the AIDS epidemic began, and staying

on the sidelines was simply not an option. The government was doing absolutely nothing to halt the spread of this disease nor help those who were suffering.”

Thank you, Henry, for your commitment to supporting groups working to make the world more equitable, healthy, and just, for everyone. May you rest in peace.

Read more about Henry's life in his tribute featured in the New York Times, [here](#).

Keep practicing social distancing, wear your mask, wash your hands, and check in on your neighbors. If you want to get involved, learn more about our work, or just connect, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Katal works to strengthen the people, policies, institutions, and movements that advance health, equity, and justice for everyone. Join us: web, Twitter, Facebook! Email: info@katalcenter.org. Phone: 646.875.8822.