



Dedicated to eliminating the barriers to global access to affordable life-sustaining medicines for people living with HIV/AIDS

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEALTH GAP'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Global Health Justice Awards Honor Radical Drs. Alan Berkman and David Hoos

New York, NY: At the Marseilles, located at 230 West 103rd Street, Health Global Access Project (Health GAP) will be celebrating its 10th anniversary of winning campaign victories that have made it possible for an additional 3 million people living with AIDS around the world to have access to lifesaving medications. The evening's masters of ceremonies are political radio hosts Ron Kuby (Air America Radio) and Dazon Dixon Diallo (WRFG/89.3 in Atlanta, GA).

Health GAP is presenting its Global Health Justice Award to Drs. Alan Berkman and David Hoos. Both men are two radical doctors who have combined community organizing and policy changing activism with community health.

The event profiles these 2 leaders and their personal and political journeys that inevitably led to the formation of Health GAP. Health GAP is one of the most successful global AIDS advocacy groups in the world, successfully campaigning for the formation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and full authorization from Congress for \$48 billion and robust programming to be allocated to the program formerly known as PEPFAR (now the Lantos-Hyde US Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria Act).

Dr. Alan Berkman is known in many progressive circles for his lifetime commitment to fighting for social justice. As a young student he was inspired by Kwame Toure (then Stokely Carmichael) to become politically active. He joined Students for Democratic Society and got involved in the anti-war movement. In medical school he began his lifelong commitment to providing care to people with no access to healthcare. He set up a clinic in one of the poorest counties in the United States and with his partner, Dr. Barbara Zeller, he snuck behind government lines and providing medical care to native American activists at Wounded Knee. Alan refused to testify before a federal grand jury about allegations that he had treated Marilyn Buck for a gunshot wound and had not reported her injury to the police. Marilyn Buck was a black liberation activist involved in a Brinks armed car robbery. He served 8 months for contempt and was then indicted on the same charge—the second doctor in U.S. history to be charged by the federal government for giving medical care. Alan continued as a patient advocate while he himself was in prison and this time had to fight for his life when struck with Lymphoma. Alan's mistreatment in prison was profiled on 60 Minutes and he testified about the poor prison health system before Congress. Upon release, Dr. Berkman continued to work with the poor throughout NYC and was Medical Director at one of the first skilled nursing facilities for poor people living with AIDS. Dr. Berkman was angered and ultimately inspired by a conference in preparation for the 2000 International AIDS Conference and a trip to the Dachau Concentration Camp, which linked genocide with the unavailability of AIDS treatment. See <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/01/10/nyregion/healing-on-parole-doctor-and-ex-prisoner-he-treats-others-on-probation.html>

Dr. Berkman returned to NYC and began working with Dr. David Hoos, then Associate Medical Director for the New York State AIDS Institute. The two men, joined by AIDS, fair trade and human rights activists

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worked tirelessly to expose US government policies that favored pharmaceutical industry profits over saving lives. Alan lives in NYC with his partner, Dr. Barbara Zeller. He is a proud father of Harriet and Sarah and a doting grandfather.

Dr. Hoos took the early victories achieved by his activism and then, first through a consultancy with UNICEF, and now as a Assistant Professor of Clinical Epidemiology at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health (where Dr. Berkman also works), he began working with local governments and NGOs throughout Africa to establish treatment programs and strengthen health systems. Dr. Hoos focuses on training young doctors to replenish the ranks of radical doctors.

According to young Dr. Jennifer Cohn, a member of Health GAP, the effort to inspire and radicalize doctors seems to be working, “Alan and David have been an inspiration to me as a young physician. They've demonstrated that being a doctor means so much more than good clinical care- it means changing the policies that determine the health of populations. Not only have they been successful in this pursuit, but they have helped normalize the concept of activism for physicians and health professionals.”

Dr. Hoos lives in NYC with his partner Murraray Nossel.

The Global Health Justice Awards takes place tonight at 6pm. Media access is free. The event will be a who's who of NYC's progressive social justice movement.

For more information, please see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dMnr8PIf3o>

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