



Cornell University

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**Mathew Kleiner “Create Change: Health Leadership Award” 2018 Awardees:  
JACK BURGER '19 & MADDIE FELDMAN '19**

Cornell Health is pleased to announce the 2018 recipients of the “Create Change: Health Leadership Award”: Jack Burger and Maddie Feldman. Jack and Maddie were honored for their ongoing campus leadership in addressing the stigma surrounding mental health by promoting the open discussion of mental health among their fellow students.

The “Create Change” award was established to honor and carry forward the legacy of Mathew A. Kleiner '93. It is awarded to Cornell University students who demonstrate the courage and commitment to create change that will enhance the health of the Cornell community, as Matt Kleiner did as a student leader at Cornell.

Jack and Maddie have been visible student leaders as co-presidents and founders of the organization Reflect at Cornell. Reflect at Cornell is a student-run organization which aims to destigmatize caring for one’s own mental health. The organization provides free dinner once a month to students, who break into small groups and discuss what is going on in their lives across various topics. Reflect at Cornell topics have included: Stress, Relationships, Jobs & Internships, Religion, Campus Climate, Drinking Culture, Diversity and Self-care to name a few.

Through this organization, Jack and Maddie aim to normalize and promote talking about one’s own mental health. Reflect at Cornell creates a low-pressure peer-to-peer environment where students can openly discuss whatever is on their mind. Jack and Maddie comment that, “At Reflect [at Cornell] dinners, students don’t have to worry about what will happen if they show what is underneath their social media profile because everyone there is doing it. We create a space where this is possible by making mental health ‘cool’, and making everything entirely student-run, which reduces stigma.”

Reflect at Cornell has had an impressive reach within the Cornell community. Up to 200 students attend any given dinner and over 75 trained student facilitators assist in the discussion groups. Approximately 60% of attendees identify as being part of an ethnic minority group. Additionally, the student leadership of Reflect at Cornell conducts feedback surveys after every dinner, and the comments they have received have been resoundingly positive. Reflect at Cornell also contributes to a variety of campus mental health initiatives in seeking to be a positive resource and experience for as many Cornell students as possible.

Jack and Maddie offered this tribute to Matt Kleiner: “Some qualities of Matt Kleiner that Reflect at Cornell emulates are breaking the silence on a hushed topic and working to improve the community. Matt originally brought the oft-ignored issue of HIV/AIDS discussion to light. Similarly, mental health is often not appreciated to the extent it should, and though it is starting to be taken more seriously nowadays, there is still a huge stigma around it. Reflect at Cornell is continuing Matt’s legacy by bringing mental health into the spotlight and working to improve the community, just as he did.”

Catherine Thrasher-Carroll, MA

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Diversity and inclusion are a part of Cornell University’s heritage. We are a recognized employer and educator valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities.