



## **Volunteer Job Description for Healthy Minds Initiative - Metro NY Organizer**

*Coordinated by Plant Powered Metro New York*

The [Healthy Minds Initiative \(HMI\)](#) is a national organization committed to powering the global brain vitality revolution through partnerships with local communities. HMI was founded by acclaimed neurologists Dean Sherzai, MD, PhD, and Ayesha Sherzai, MD, co-directors of the Alzheimer's Prevention Program at Loma Linda University Medical Center in California. The doctors found that involving the community through the entire process of lifestyle change -- from investigation, to research, to intervention -- empowers people to make significant changes. Ultimately, these changes can significantly reduce diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, strokes, and dementia. Through HMI's technology-driven and community-based approach, the Drs. Sherzai mobilize communities, fund new research, and spread the message that prevention is possible.

The Sherzais have written extensively and spoken around the country about the "NEURO" protocol, summarizing the following key vectors for dementia prevention:

- **N**utrition - specifically low-fat, plant-based diets
- **E**xercise
- **U**nwinding - stress management
- **R**estorative Sleep
- **O**ptimizing cognitive activity - actively using the mind

**Plant Powered Metro New York (PPMNY)** guides the local movement for vibrant health through whole food, plant-based nutrition, empowering people to take control of their health through the food they eat. PPMNY will serve as the local coordinator of the next pilot community: HMI Metro NY, a local chapter that will be administered and run by PPMNY on the ground, in concert with HMI Global. HMI Metro NY will aim to reach people without cognitive impairment, before they begin to experience cognitive decline, using three interventions:

1. Social media engagement and campaigns on brain health and prevention of cognitive decline.
2. Community-based research projects (CBPR) and/or courses led by the Sherzais.
3. (Added by PPMNY) Educational programming and systems-change interventions focused either on a specific partner or on a group of partners working in collaboration.

*Over the long term*, HMI Metro NY will seek to:

- Change the local narrative toward one of cognitive resilience, offering hope and empowerment that cognitive decline is not an inevitable part of aging.
- Engage New Yorkers in a wide variety of research initiatives, as well as educational and supportive programming produced by PPMNY and partner institutions, to help

them learn about the evidence and recognize how achievable lifestyle changes can be in support of lifelong cognitive health.

- Engage the “grasstops” -- leaders of influential community-based organizations who have leverage to affect the disease progression of their constituents, both by offering forums for community education and also by supporting institutional changes that foster true health (e.g., changes to cafeteria menus, access to exercise equipment and movement breaks, in-house stress management tools, and more).

### **About the Volunteer Position**

PPMNY will engage a volunteer organizer who works collaboratively with HMI and PPMNY leadership. The position will be supervised by PPMNY’s Network Director and work closely with HMI, including the Sherzais and their Chief Operating Officer. *The HMI organizer must be willing and able to represent both organizations reliably and with integrity, both in person and online.*

*In the near term*, the HMI Metro NY Organizer will take on three key roles:

1. Manage HMI Metro NY social media in a dedicated Facebook group (already existing), and on Twitter and Instagram. Working with HMI Global’s Head of Outreach, the organizer will carry out social media, marketing, and community management tasks in addition to posting educational content and publicizing local HMI activities.
2. Recruit and manage a small cohort of coaches who will be trained by the Sherzais to educate others using evidence-based data on cognitive health.
3. Build partnerships with a few local organizations that serve adults or seniors to offer quarterly (or more frequent) educational programming with PPMNY, inspiring people to consider the power of food as medicine for lifelong cognitive health.\*

\*Initially, HMI Metro NY’s local partner organizations will be asked to:

- Participate in HMI campaign activities and social media efforts.
- Present either internal or public programming about dementia/Alzheimer’s prevention, branded as part of HMI Metro NY.
- Publicize to their constituents other relevant HMI Metro NY educational programs.

When funding is available for community-based research projects, the organizer will also help to recruit participants through PPMNY’s new HMI networks, and provide on-the-ground support for each project. A specific scope of work will be determined.

A bigger vision for HMI Metro NY is to work with more partners in a more concerted coalition that touches many more people. PPMNY seeks to raise funds to properly staff an effort of this scope and welcomes a capable volunteer to lay the groundwork.

### **Volunteer Qualifications**

- Experience and comfort in building and managing communities on social media, especially Facebook.

- Attention to detail, particularly to ensure integrity and consistency with HMI Global's national campaigns.
- Experience in building and maintaining collaborative partnerships, or willingness to learn.
- Experience in organizing educational events with partner organizations, or willingness to learn.
- Passionate about the role of nutrition in health, with basic knowledge and personal experience with a whole food, plant-based lifestyle
- Able to reliably commit 10-15 hours/month to volunteer responsibilities, including twice monthly meetings with HMI leadership.

**To Apply**

Interested volunteers are invited to submit both a brief letter of interest and a basic resume to Lianna Levine Reisner, PPMNY Network Director, [lianna@ppmny.org](mailto:lianna@ppmny.org).