

# Main Statement

# Statement on the Firing of Sera Davidow

Produced 8/29/25 by a coalition of Wildflower Alliance team members

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## What is Happening

On Wednesday August 20th Wildflower Alliance co-founder and Director, Sera Davidow, was fired by the [Western Mass Training Consortium](#) (WMTC). We believe this action is one of a series by WMTC to take control of Wildflower Alliance. We also believe that it represents an overall shift away from a more values-based approach and toward a corporate framework and attitude.

These moves, which are continuing to happen in real time, existentially threaten our continued operations as a [leading harm reduction peer support organization](#) with a local, national, and global reach. We anticipate that the impacts will be felt by thousands of people who receive support and connection through Wildflower Alliance spaces, groups, bridging, consults, and training.

We believe WMTC fired Sera Davidow in direct retaliation for Wildflower Alliance senior leadership doing research and planning toward starting an independent non-profit and separating from WMTC. We also believe that another contributing factor was retaliation for Sera's attempts to hold the line against the Consortium's culture of transphobia and other forms of oppressive behavior, and their chipping away at Wildflower Alliance's autonomy.

## Anti-Oppression Context

We believe that oppression such as transphobia, racism and ableism have been persistent at WMTC, with recent increases that constitute a culture of transphobia among WMTC leadership and spaces. These instances of discrimination appear to have sharply increased following the lead-up to the 2024 U.S. presidential election, during which trans people were routinely targeted and attacked leading to increased transphobic hate and the erasure of trans rights nationwide. This timeline has also aligned with what we have experienced as a steep increase in corporate practices that have deprioritized many marginalized voices and included statements directly devaluing people with psychiatric history.

Furthermore, decisions by WMTC that we have experienced as taking away autonomy from Wildflower Alliance and its employees also come at a politically auspicious time for such disruptions. Peer-led, harm reduction, and anti-carceral supports such as those created and offered by Wildflower Alliance community and team are under attack by the Trump

Administration. We strongly believe that the decisions made by WMTC erode and destabilize the independent nature of one of the world's leading peer-led harm reduction organizations.

## About WMTC

Wildflower Alliance began with an independent organizing group, the Guiding Council of Western Mass (GCOW), that was responsible for developing the vision and Defining Principles for what would become Wildflower Alliance, originally known as the Western Mass Recovery Learning Community. Sera Davidow built and coordinated this original GCOW. This group interviewed 4 different potential non-profits to host Wildflower Alliance and selected the Consortium based on their expressed values and commitment to the autonomy of Wildflower Alliance. Since Wildflower Alliance was first funded in 2007, WMTC has been the Wildflower Alliance's "host" organization. This has meant WMTC handles back-end functions such as legal, HR, fiscal, facilities, and IT.

Aside from the above services, WMTC has **not** played any significant role in Wildflower Alliance's founding, leadership, Defining Principles, training material, employee guidelines, harm reduction peer support model, grantwriting, fundraising, social media, or day-to-day practices of Wildflower Alliance supports and community.

According to its website, WMTC ostensibly believes in "Nothing About Us Without Us" and other concepts of supporting independence of marginalized people and undoing forms of oppression.

The original funding proposal for Wildflower Alliance was primarily written by Sera with input from GCOW. In this proposal, WMTC leadership explicitly documented that they were "[deeply committed](#)" to Wildflower Alliance being "consumer-run" and/or becoming independent one day.

## Context of Sera's Firing

We are grateful for the many positives of working with WMTC. And, over the past few years, this relationship has begun to strain. Our belief is that collaboration with WMTC has resulted in increased control over and retaliation against Wildflower Alliance employees. This has generated serious costs to the Wildflower Alliance team and community in time, energy, stress, and resources, while simultaneously providing less values-aligned support and communication than ever. These concerns include but are not limited to:

- Glaring, unaddressed transphobia especially in HR as well as from other staff and WMTC leadership. This includes the distribution of confidential information such as employee [deadnames](#) on many occasions.
- Words and actions rooted in racism, ableism and sexism. These have included WMTC employees expressing suspicion about employees based on race, pressure on neurodiverse employees to participate in office politics and socializing, disregard for accommodations requests, and WMTC staff commenting that they prefer to hire men.

- Refusal of WMTC leadership and employees to work or communicate with, or sometimes even look at, Wildflower Alliance team members following instances where complaints were made regarding transphobia.
- Substantial increases in indirect and fringe rates, which are percentages taken by WMTC to operate Wildflower Alliance. These increased occurred without any consideration of feedback on the failure of existing benefits plans to meet the needs of trans employees healthcare, and lessen our ability to sustain our work financially
- Significant errors in HR for two years including failure to post job ads correctly, punctually, or at all, errors related to health insurance coverage causing employees to be without health care for months or unable to access necessary health care at all, significant delays in hiring and loss of hiring paperwork, exposure of private emails and incorrect names to other employees, and more.
- Creating an environment where marginalized groups are pitted against each other
- Failure to follow written policies related to whistleblowing and corrective action protocols.
- Key facilities and IT decisions previously made by Wildflower Alliance leadership being gatekept and made without input from us
- WMTC administrators overstepping in funder relationships
- WMTC use of Wildflower Alliance images and voices taking place without our choice or voice being honored, sometimes in ways that have the potential to cause harm or leave people feeling tokenized.
- WMTC leadership repeatedly encroaching upon job responsibilities and decision making freedoms previously held by Wildflower leadership. Often these disruptions have happened without following the “seek to understand”, “collaborative” and generally respectful standards WMTC leadership claim to require, including during the process of opening Anemoni Trans and Queer Peer Respite.
- Years long failure to collaborate and establish reliable workflow around our IT needs
- Gossip and inaccurate sharing between WMTC administrative employees about Sera and thing she alleged said in ways that damaged relationships and her ability to function in the environment.
- Improper hiring practices for a key WMTC administrative position that led to complaints from leadership of several organizations hosted by the Consortium.

These issues and many more have taken energy and attention away from connecting with the vulnerable people who come to Wildflower Alliance to support. Countless missed opportunities have occurred because our team members were too busy attending to the impact of WMTC’s actions.

## Impact of Firing Sera

Our Director, Sera Davidow, has now been fired after undergoing what we believe to be a litany of baseless accusations and investigations based on her engaging with the same collaborative, vulnerable, direct, neurodivergent communication she has always used. Sera’s communication style and capacity are keystones of Wildflower Alliance’s growth, success, and sustainability.

**Losing Sera would be devastating to the organization and the communities we support, as well as initiatives that stretch beyond Western Massachusetts and support under-resourced communities across the country and globe. Her loss also drastically affects the dozens of individual employees she has built individual relationships with and supported to succeed in their roles.**

**Additionally, Sera is personally responsible for countless aspects of funder relationships, enabling fulfillment of contract obligations, and grant reporting. Her sudden absence jeopardizes funding streams that both Wildflower Alliance and WMTC rely on.**

## **An Independent Wildflower Alliance**

Tensions and challenges aside, Wildflower Alliance's achievements, reach, and reputation have outgrown the locally focused WMTC. Our budget is now over \$4 million, and is anticipated to reach much higher in coming years as our training business, private donations, and contracts continue to grow. We are known and highly sought out nationally and internationally. It is time for Wildflower Alliance to be fully in control of our own operations, and for our leadership to be mutually accountable with the team members in HR, IT, facilities, operations, and fiscal roles.

An independent Wildflower Alliance would be best positioned to carry on our 20 year evolving legacy of harm reduction, values based, community focused peer support. An independent Wildflower Alliance would also be a far better fit for the communities that engage with us than whatever might happen with WMTC continuing to grab power and impose their drastically different set of values.

Therefore, Wildflower Alliance Directors intend to move forward with our planning of the process of starting an independent Wildflower Alliance non-profit corporation and applying for 501(c)(3) status. This organization will one day become the new home of all active Wildflower Alliance employees and supports. We ask that the Consortium support us in this process as agreed to in the original RLC grant documents. We agree to include Kristel and other WMTC stakeholders in amicable and collaborative meetings and updates as is required by the process.

## **Demand Letter**

On Monday August 25th, a letter signed by nearly all of Wildflower's more than 20 leadership team members was submitted to WMTC Executive Director, Kristel Applebee, and the Consortium Board.

The letter demanded that Sera be reinstated and that WMTC support Wildflower Alliance to move toward independence.

**By [signing](#), you can help us demand** that Sera be reinstated and that WMTC collaborate with our leadership and other stakeholders in the creation of a new, independent Wildflower Alliance.

**This isn't just about Sera. It's not even just about Wildflower. This is about fighting against co-optation, power abuses, and oppressive systems. This is about genuinely valuing the creativity, winsome, voices, strength, and independence of our communities.**

# Updates

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These are updates on the situation described in the original statement.

8/29/25: Kristel Applebee has taken steps that we believe further assert her control over Wildflower Alliance and\ undermine Wildflower Alliance's autonomy and leadership in the following ways:

- Appearing to assign herself as interim Director of Wildflower Alliance, despite having little connection with our work.
- Setting Sera Davidow's email autoresponder to direct questions to her, despite lacking relationships and knowledge necessary to understand and respond to email Sera receives.
- Referring to Wildflower Alliance in writing as "Consortium – Wildflower Alliance", countering nearly 20 years of work Wildflower leadership has done to establish a public reputation and credibility as a peer-run entity. This can be seen in countless national news stories, marketing materials, and WMTC's own grant documents, which often use words like "host" to describe WMTC's relationships to Wildflower Alliance.
- Using phrases like "Sera's leadership... will long be remembered" when sharing that she is no longer employed by the Consortium, leaving some with the impression that she is dead or at least very unwell.
- These decisions were made without including Wildflower Alliance's senior leadership team.