12 Awesome Tweets and 1 Video That Recap the U.S. Conference on AIDS

Protesters storm the stage! Mother Elektra slays! POZ films it all!

September 10, 2019 By Trent Straube

The federal plan to end HIV got top billing at the United States Conference on AIDS (USCA), but activists and the HIV community stole the spotlight. Click on the POZ on Location video above to see for yourself.

We rounded up a dozen tweets that capture the magic and mayhem of USCA, which took place September 5 through 8 in Washington, DC. Held in a different city each year, the conference is spearheaded by NMAC, formerly the National Minority AIDS Council. As you'll see, the event includes workshops, panel discussions, big-room speeches, networking, poster presentations, booths, films and even some runway.

> HAPPENING NOW: @MSNBC's @JoyAnnReid is moderating @NMACCommunity's first plenary at the #2019USCA on ending the HIV epidemic. pic.twitter.com/yOo9uyb4RD
>
> — MSNBC Public Relations (@MSNBCPR) September 5, 2019

The subject of the opening plenary—as well as many of the workshops—was the Trump initiative "Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America." MSNBC's Joy Reid moderated a discussion with federal health leaders, including Robert Redfield, MD, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Anthony Fauci, MD, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

“Over twenty states and US territories criminalize people living with HIV.”@nainadevi, Executive Director of the Positive Women’s Network speaks on the criminalization and tracking of people living with HIV. #2019USCA #EndTheStigma pic.twitter.com/FSTxR92ZCv

— Lillian Lennon (@mslillianlennon) September 5, 2019

As is tradition at USCA, a protest erupted onstage during the opening plenary (a powerful but respectful protest, it should be noted). The message? Activists voiced their concern to federal leaders about the government’s collection of HIV data and surveillance; they also demanded to be included in the government’s efforts to end the epidemic. Watch the video in the tweet above to hear Naina Khanna of the Positive Women’s Network–USA spell it all out.

The plenary session “Celebrating U=U and Its Critical Role in Ending the HIV Epidemic” also stoked excitement. The inspiring message that undetectable equals untransmittable resonated strongly with the HIV community. So did the pledges to fight stigma and spread the U=U message to all, as did the directive to hire and support trans women.

Period! I urge all my cis brothers and sisters to aspire to be this kind of ally to the #trans community. Stop tokenizing trans ppl to relive our traumas & using our likeness without compensation. Hire trans women! Hire black and brown trans women! #2019USCA #TransLivesMatter pic.twitter.com/Hv5WXenvMV

— Nya Cruz (@NyaAsiaSF) September 7, 2019

A series of workshops were offered each morning, afternoon and early evening—in total, more than 160 to choose from. Topics ranged from mental health and substance use to Black masculinity and women's prevention, and from HIV cure research to Ryan White HIV funds. The tweets below capture but a sliver of the educational and inspirational offerings.

"At 22%, Asian-Americans have the highest rate of undiagnosed HIV of any race/ethnicity, and diagnoses are increasing, within the fastest-growing minority in the U.S." From the #2019USCA session, "Krazy Poor Asians Gone Wild: Engaging the Asian Community and New Leaders" pic.twitter.com/1ncUgHQeQu

— Men's Health Foundation (@MensHealthFound) September 5, 2019

Enraging, powerful & motovating presentation on voter suppression, viral suppression and liberation with folks from @AIDSAlabama and @uspwn ???? ???? ???? pic.twitter.com/dRSDFYQSo8

— Kelly Flannery (@KellyFlannery8) September 7, 2019

participating in the community roundtable portion of the Latinx Institute of the #2019USCA pic.twitter.com/O1aSgtkfKe

— Brian Romero, LMSW (@Brianr8278) September 5, 2019

Happening Now! Breastfeeding & HIV in the Era of U=U: Research, Policy, and Lived Experiences

Our presentation includes listening session & we'd LOVE to hear directly about experiences from women living w/ HIV. Join us in Archives room ongoing through 6:15pm#2019USCA #UUUSCA pic.twitter.com/0wletBdPG8

— The Well Project (@thewellproject) September 6, 2019

In the exhibit hall, stakeholders in the HIV community set up booths and networked and chatted with attendees. POZ had a booth, as did other media, along with pharmaceutical companies, AIDS service organizations, health care groups and others.

The exhibit hall is bouncing right now! Also fresh baked cookies available! #2019USCA pic.twitter.com/zAVpnMhtHf

— NMAC (@NMACCommunity) September 5, 2019

Let’s not forget the fun! There were film screenings and a special exhibition ball—including a special appearance by Pose star Dominique Jackson, aka Mother Elektra.

When your presence has be been blessed by THE @tyraaross ????! @NMACCommunity #2019USCA pic.twitter.com/oaoUF8uvAb

— T???? (@TianaaWoah) September 5, 2019

Everyone is getting down at the #2019USCA luncheon plenary! @NMACCommunity pic.twitter.com/aa2hRlJsTg

— Nya Cruz (@NyaAsiaSF) September 7, 2019

This year’s USCA marked a milestone for NMAC executive director Paul Kawata: He celebrates 30 years at the organization fighting to end the epidemic. He received special recognition from DC Mayor Muriel Bowser. (To read POZ’s interview with Kawata, click here.)

Our leader Paul Kawata receives a special recognition from @MayorBowser for his 30 years of work. #2019USCA pic.twitter.com/MT8bnsMFu0

— NMAC (@NMACCommunity) September 5, 2019

The power of USCA doesn’t end with the last session and workshop. As Davina Conner (aka Pozitively Dee) notes, attendees take the education and inspiration back with them to their communities.

This photo from #2019USCA gives me the biggest

smile. to #EndTheEpidemic it takes a village to do this. I want to once again thank the @NMACCommunity for highlighting @PreventionAC and the #UequalsU family/ambassadors. pic.twitter.com/n8AvRMqC1Y

— Pozitively Dee Discussion (@DavinaConner) September 9, 2019

That's a dozen tweets—and it's only a tiny sampling of what you'll find on social media. Search #2019USCA and @nmaccommunity for much, much more. And here's a bonus tweet for 2020.

Thank you all for an amazing #2019USCA! We will see you all next year at #2020USCA in #PuertoRico!!! pic.twitter.com/A9MxyOpE6Z

— NMAC (@NMACCommunity) September 8, 2019

For more about this year's USCA, read Kawata's blog post "We Can End the HIV Epidemic by Working Together," and see our article "Ending the Epidemics #InTheirMemory."

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