# The POZ 100: A-B

November 12, 2018

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Waldon Adams

Age 57

Washington, DC

Waldon Adams

Waldon lives to run. He also lives to help others get a roof over their heads. Once homeless himself, Waldon is now a fierce advocate of the housing-first model of ending homelessness, and he credits the permanent supportive housing he received at Friendship Place (along with his love of running) with helping him achieve nine years (and counting) of sobriety. He is an advocacy fellow with Miriam's Kitchen and a member of both The Way Home campaign's steering committee and the coordinated entry team at Pathways to Housing DC. In 2010, he received the Whitman-Walker AIDS Walk Courage Award. Waldon hosts a running group for fellow HIV-positive day-program peers and last year completed his 20th marathon. For Waldon, the most important thing is to keep putting one foot in front of the other.

Stephen Addona

Age 65

Orlando, FL

Stephen Addona

Stephen is a long-term survivor who currently serves as a certified recovery peer specialist and health educator for Hope and Help of Central Florida. In 2014, he founded RE-START, the area's largest HIV/AIDS support group, after noticing a serious gap in support services for people living with HIV in Orlando. Even better? The program has expanded online with a RE-START Men's Group that boasts more than 350 members worldwide. In addition, the group encourages members of its community to prioritize their health, combat isolation and dismantle stigma in order to live longer, stronger and healthier lives with HIV.

Moisés Agosto-Rosario

Age 53

Oxon Hill, MD

Moisés Agosto-RosarioJensen Larson

In May 1997, Moisés appeared on the cover of POZ (and was labeled “the diva of treatment activism”). He hasn’t left the AIDS spotlight since. After testing HIV positive in 1986 while in his native Puerto Rico, he was prompted to move to the United States for health care. Alarmed by the lack of treatment education and research geared to people of color, he complained about the issue to the National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC). Impressed, in 1993 the organization created a position for him to address the problem. Today, he’s NMAC’s director of treatment. An editor, author, poet and activist involved in several HIV groups, Moisés continues working to help HIV communities here and abroad, in English and in Spanish.

Tez Anderson

Age 59

San Francisco, CA

Tez AndersonCourtesy of Tez Anderson

Tez shines a light on the needs of long-term survivors and the issues around aging with HIV. In 2013, he founded the group Let's Kick ASS–AIDS Survivor Syndrome (ASS) in San Francisco; the group now boasts local chapters across the nation. He coined the term "ASS" to describe the aftermath of long-term survivorship. Tez is the force behind HIV Long-Term Survivors Awareness Day, which is observed each year on June 5. (It was on that date in 1981 that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] first reported about what is now known as AIDS.) As an adviser at ACRIA, Tez has also helped research HIV in older adults and has penned papers and declarations for older people living with the virus.

Lillian Anglada

Age 60

New York, NY

Lillian Anglada

Lillian was diagnosed with HIV in 1989 and lost her husband to AIDS soon afterward. That’s when she decided to get educated about the virus. When she turned to Alliance for Positive Change (formerly known as AIDS Service Center NYC) for help, she also ended up finding her calling and a full-time career. Today, she is the president of the Alliance’s consumer advisory council but also pitches in wherever else help is needed—from food pantries to fundraisers. Lillian’s main focus is advocating for HIV-positive heterosexual women and fighting stigma among the Latinx community. She spearheads an event known as Mother’s Day of Pampering (serving 50 to 100 mothers and daughters) and assists with holiday festivities (serving nearly 400 clients). It’s no surprise that the Alliance’s newly renovated center for HIV testing, care management and connection to treatment is called the Luis & Lillian Outreach Center.

Stephen Aube

Age 58

Key West, FL

Stephen Aube

A long-term survivor, Stephen is the chairman of the consumer advisory committee of A.H. of Monroe County (formerly AIDS Help), which specializes in testing, linkage to care and housing for people living with HIV. In this role, he was instrumental in rewriting the committee's bylaws to welcome the participation of all A.H. clients, rendering it a more inclusive and representative collective. He also helped launch the initiative "Food Matters," which teaches clients how to

prepare nutritious, cost-effective meals. Through the Patient Care and Prevention Planning Group, he works with the state of Florida to improve the delivery of services to clients. But it was when Hurricane Irma made landfall in Key West in September 2017 that Stephen outdid himself. Rather than evacuate, he stayed put as a point of contact for clients during the storm and in the aftermath served as a liaison between clients and local emergency services, providing meals and emotional support along the way.

Proscovia Ayoo

Age 57

Tororo, Uganda

Proscovia Ayoo

Diagnosed in 1998, Proscovia is chair of the Tororo Persons Living with HIV/AIDS Network, which she cofounded in 2005. She does peer counseling, conducts home visits, runs community awareness campaigns and participates in rallies. She represented Uganda at the International

Community of Women Living with HIV Eastern Africa from 2013 to 2017. Proscovia was also a member of the International Rectal Microbicides Advocates and started the network Teachers Living with HIV in Uganda. A widow, mother and grandmother, she spends time educating young people about HIV prevention. She has formed several rural community-based groups of people living with HIV throughout Tororo. Currently, she is focusing on HIV prevention and treatment among sex workers.

Karla Barnett

Age 52

Newark, NJ

Karla Barnett

Karla, also known as “Auntie” to the young LGBTQ+ guests of the African American Office of Gay

Concerns (AAOGC), isn't just the program's director and coordinator of projects such as World AIDS Day events— she's also an activist. She has participated in AIDSWatch, an annual advocacy event in Washington, DC, and coordinates AAOGC's AIDSWALK team, known as the A-Team Newark. And those who work with her say she's "a wonderful human being to boot." HIV positive since 1996, Karla worked with Ellen Bey and Special Audiences before joining the team at AAOGC. There, she's made strides implementing the office's Thank Goodness I'm Fabulous! Peer Advocacy Project, among other efforts—and she's willing to share her story of survivorship with anyone who may need to hear it.

Robbie Bergman

Age 63

Flagstaff, AZ

Robbie Bergman

Since his diagnosis in 1987, Robbie has worked to improve the lives of those living with HIV and to increase public awareness of the virus. He helped to found AIDS Outreach of Northern Arizona (now Northland Cares) and served on its board of directors for the first few years. Robbie was also responsible for starting Getting to the Heart of HIV/AIDS, a weekend retreat that ran for 23 years, and an HIV-positive support group that lasted 20 years. He is a devoted educator who currently teaches HIV sessions at Northern Arizona University and the ASIS School of Massage. In addition, Robbie volunteers as a massage therapist at the HIV retreat Strength for the Journey and is involved in scientific research on HIV elite controllers, a group of people who maintain an undetectable viral load without treatment.

Randy Boyd

Age 56

Long Beach, CA

Randy Boyd

Inspired by Magic Johnson, Randy revealed his HIV status in his first published essay, “Just Like Magic,” in 1991. Since then, he has continued to use writing as a platform to share his story of living with HIV. Randy’s work has appeared in POZ, Frontiers Magazine, A&U magazine and The Washington Blade as well as two anthologies. His four published novels, all of which have been Lambda Literary Award finalists, feature main characters who are Black, gay and living with HIV, echoing his personal life. Randy also uses his two blogs, Randy Boyd’s Blocks and Funky Black Poz Jock, to discuss HIV and sex in the age of AIDS. His fifth and upcoming novel is a medical mystery and sci-fi thriller involving a group of people living with HIV.

Wanda Brendle-Moss

Age 64

Winston-Salem, NC

Wanda Brendle-MossJensen Larson

As a “seasoned woman”—she hates the word old—Wanda takes special interest in issues related to aging and women living with HIV. Although the former nurse is now a familiar face at HIV/AIDS conferences, on social media (as a blogger for The Well Project) and in HIV groups (too many to mention), she didn’t immediately jump into activism after her diagnosis in 2002. At the time, she was living in a shelter for abused women; several years later, after leaving another violent lover, she lived out of her car. Depressed, Wanda stopped taking HIV meds and became very ill. When the local AIDS Care Service offered help, she found a new calling in advocacy and hasn’t stopped since. These days, she likes to say she’s “HIV positive living healthily with AIDS.”

Chris Bridges

Age 62

Los Angeles, CA

Chris Bridges

Like so many long-term survivors, Chris became an activist in the early 1980s, at the time of his own diagnosis. He spent years advocating for access to treatment and spending considerable time in psychotherapy to address the trauma. In his late 40s, Chris went back to school to become a therapist himself and now works for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health serving people diagnosed with, affected by or at risk for HIV. Chris’s own experiences as an AIDS survivor prove absolutely integral to his job, allowing him to work with unparalleled wisdom and experience through issues like trauma, linkage and adherence to care, HIV prevention, disclosure, aging with HIV, family challenges, body image, loss and grief, and career formation.

William Brochinsky

Age 62

Weaverville, NC

William Brochinsky

William, a nursing educator for Kaplan Test Prep, was named Kaplan’s May 2018 feature employee partly because he has committed to dismantling myths around HIV and long-term survival (he believes he contracted HIV in 1984). William is also an adjunct professor at Mars Hill University, where many students are impressed by his ability to articulate his journey with HIV through the decades. He is an actor, writer and director and is currently working on a show titled Walking the Line. His goal is to promote HIV education so that future generations may understand the struggle endured by those diagnosed during the early years of the epidemic.

Reginald T. Brown

Age 66

Brooklyn, NY

Reginald T. BrownJensen Larson

Reginald (who prefers the pronoun “they”) serves on the board of directors for VOCAL-NY, a grassroots organization that builds power among low-income New Yorkers affected by HIV/AIDS, mass incarceration and the war on drugs. They were a campaign leader in the group’s “30% Rent Cap” campaign, successfully advocating for increased access to affordable housing for people living with the virus. Reginald is now helping to enact New York state’s plan to end AIDS by 2020 and leading efforts on a citywide affordable housing campaign and a national campaign to decriminalize HIV. The social justice warrior has a master’s degree in education and is active in the Unity Fellowship of Christ Church Movement, which was founded 36 years ago to serve gay/queer/gender-non-conforming Black people dying of AIDS-related causes when their families and churches turned their backs on them. A member of People’s Action Institute National Training

Team, a national network of grassroots community advocates, Reginald also volunteers weekly at a local public television station.

Marilyn Burnett

Age 75

Laurel, MD

Marilyn Burnett

Diagnosed in 1991, Marilyn soon realized that “you’re only as sick as the secrets you keep” and began speaking out about living with HIV. A graduate of Morgan State University, she overcame

drug addiction and subsequently became a mentor to other women aiming to do the same. In 2004, she cofounded Older Women Embracing Life (OWEL), a nonprofit committed to supporting older women, primarily of color, living with HIV/AIDS. The group has hosted many social and educational events in Washington, DC, and Baltimore. Marilyn has been cited in many articles and news segments as well as the book Sex After…Women Share How Intimacy Changes as Life Changes. Although in recent years her health conditions have led her to cut back on her work, she stays in touch with the women of OWEL and maintains her fabulous fashion sense!

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