The 2023 POZ 100 A–B

This year’s POZ 100 celebrates the collective effort to end the HIV epidemic.

November 13, 2023 By Alicia Green, Jennifer Morton , Tim Murphy , Laura Schmidt and Trent Straube

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Action Front Center at Action for a Better Community

abcinfo.org/action-front-center

Based in Rochester, New York, Action Front Center (AFC) is one of several programs offered by Action for a Better Community, a community-based agency that provides various opportunities for low-income individuals and families to become self-sufficient. AFC provides evidence-based HIV, sexually transmitted infection (STI) and hepatitis C prevention and testing services as well as linkage to health care and supportive services for people living with or at risk for HIV. All services are free and available in English and Spanish. The program offers educational prevention groups, individual risk-reduction counseling and information about and access to pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV. AFC trains people living with HIV to deliver peer-led outreach and education services, distributes free condoms, starts conversations about eliminating HIV and offers

customized outreach and services for men of color.

ADAP Advocacy

adapadvocacy.org

ADAP Advocacy was formed to help improve access to care for people living with HIV and AIDS. It works to promote and enhance the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP), which provides medications for HIV treatment to those who cannot afford them. ADAP Advocacy works closely with patients, advocates, health care providers and others to raise awareness, offer patient education and expand community collaboration. The nonprofit centers the voices of individuals living with HIV; indeed, half of its current board is living with the virus. The ADAP Directory is a one-stop online resource that links people to the information and medical care and treatment

options they need to lead healthy, productive lives.

Advocates for Youth

advocatesforyouth.org

Advocates for Youth aims to ensure that the rights of all young people are respected and that they have the necessary tools and information to protect themselves from HIV, STIs and unintended pregnancy. Its website offers resources for various sexual health issues, including HIV, honest sex education, contraception access, and HIV and LGBTQ health and rights and features dozens of educational fact sheets. The group's Youth Activist Network includes 75,000 individuals on 1,200 campuses in tens of thousands of U.S. communities and more than 120 countries. Advocates for Youth coordinates a series of events and activities for National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day, observed annually on April 10. The organization also partners with Trojan condoms on The Condom Collective, an annual program that provides 1,000 college students a box of 500 condoms each to distribute to anyone who needs them.

The Afiya Center

theafiyacenter.org

The Afiya Center works to transform the lives of Black women and girls in Texas. The reproductive justice organization was formed in response to a lack of programs for poor, marginalized women, who face an increased risk for HIV. The Afiya Center believes that reproductive justice plays an important role in reducing HIV transmission among women of color. Since 2016, the organization's Texas Black Womxn's Reproductive Justice Summit has convened Black women in Texas to lead the conversation on issues regarding Black women's reproductive health. The center also promotes HIV education and programming that addresses the socioeconomic disparities that Black women living with and at risk for HIV face. Its trauma-informed, peer-led Living Out Loud: With a Purpose project offers Black cisgender and transgender women living with HIV a safe space to share their stories.

AIDS Education and Training Center

aidsetc.org

Funded under Part F of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, AIDS Education and Training Centers (AETCs) transform HIV care across the nation by providing locally based, tailored education,

clinical consultation and technical assistance to health care providers who serve people living with or affected by HIV. The AETC training program targets providers serving marginalized communities with high incidence and prevalence rates of HIV, including unhoused, incarcerated and LGBTQ people. The AETC has two national centers, eight regional centers and more than 85 local sites and offers interactive training activities that allow providers to work directly within communities in need alongside local HIV experts. There's even an app to support health care providers with point-of-care tools for HIV screening, prevention and care.

AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania

aidslawpa.org

Founded in 1988, AIDS Law Project of Pennsylvania, which serves residents of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, is the nation's only independent public-interest law firm dedicated to providing free legal services to people living with HIV and those vulnerable to acquiring it. The organization helps people facing legal issues concerning housing, benefits, immigration, discrimination, HIV privacy and criminalization and more. For example, a 2018 case brought against Aetna for violating customers' HIV privacy ended with the health insurer having to pay a $17 million settlement. AIDS Law Project also educates the public about AIDS-related legal issues, trains case managers to be better advocates and works to achieve fair laws and policies at all levels of government. For the past 25 years, it has published "Good Counsel," a semiannual newsletter.

AIDS/LifeCycle

aidslifecycle.org

545 miles. 7 days. 1 mission. AIDS/LifeCycle is an annual fundraiser in which cyclists ride through some of California’s most beautiful countryside from San Francisco to Los Angeles in an effort to help stop HIV. Since 1994, the event has raised more than $300 million to fund HIV testing, prevention and care services for the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and the Los Angeles LGBT Center. The weeklong ride is fully supported by more than 600 volunteer roadies who serve meals and provide medical support, bike support and more at rest stops along the route. Throughout the year, organizers help cyclists train and fundraise, and community partners offer discounts on bikes, gear and other support.

AIDS United

aidsunited.org

Although AIDS United wasn't officially formed until 2011, its roots in policy and advocacy work date back to the earliest days of the HIV epidemic. The group's road map to end the epidemic consists of six action pillars: commit to ending the U.S. HIV epidemic and eliminate health disparities; ensure broad and equitable access to effective HIV care and treatment; prevent new HIV transmissions; address social and structural barriers to effective HIV prevention and care; maintain U.S. leadership in lifesaving research; and support the meaningful involvement of people living with and vulnerable to HIV. AIDS United also organizes AIDSWatch, which annually convenes hundreds of people living with HIV and their allies in Washington, DC, to learn about the latest policy issues and to lobby members of Congress for HIV- and AIDS-related funding.

AIDSVu

aidsvu.org

Created by Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health in partnership with drugmaker Gilead Sciences and the Center for AIDS Research at Emory, this 11-year-old interactive site features new data releases, maps, educational resources, infographics and more to help users better understand the HIV epidemic. The site culls data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), local health departments and other sources to offer users a perspective of the epidemic at the state, county and ZIP code levels. AIDSVu's maps illustrate HIV-related data by race/ethnicity, sex, age and mode of transmission. The site also allows users to locate services for HIV prevention, testing and care and lists HIV trial locations funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). A recent data update showed an unmet need for PrEP to prevent HIV among African Americans, Latinos and people living in the South.

amfAR

amfar.org

Since 1985, amfAR's mission has been to end the global HIV and AIDS epidemic through innovative research. One of the world's leading nonprofits dedicated to supporting AIDS research,

HIV prevention, treatment education and advocacy, amfAR has invested more than $635 million in its programs and has awarded more than 3,500 grants to research teams worldwide. In recent years, it has invested nearly $53 million in 109 cure-focused projects in 15 countries, including those using cell and gene therapy, “shock and kill” techniques and posttreatment control.

APLA Health

aplahealth.org

Founded in 1983 (as AIDS Project Los Angeles), APLA Health offers free and low-cost primary care to the LGBTQ community, including access to PrEP and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and specialty care for folks living with HIV. It runs HIVE (HIV Elders), which offers an array of social activities for gay and bisexual men over age 50 living with HIV. APLA Health has seven locations throughout Los Angeles, including its latest center in West Hollywood, named for pioneering HIV doctor Michael Gottlieb, MD. The group also offers dental care and tailored services for women and transgender people. It is a leading advocate for HIV and LGBTQ issues and for HIV funding on the city, state and federal levels.

Arkansas Black Gay Men’s Forum

arbgmf.org

The Arkansas Black Gay Men's Forum is a local network dedicated to providing services that address health, social and economic disparities. Formed in 2017, it runs the Utopia LGBTQ Health and Wellness program, which focuses on reducing HIV transmission—through increased HIV testing and access to PrEP—and increasing the number of HIV-positive people who are virally suppressed. The program also offers culturally competent primary health care for Black and Latinx LGBTQ individuals. The Forum holds a weekly support group and a spiritual event titled Sacred Ground that's held every fourth Sunday. It also hosts events during Little Rock Black Pride. Its executive director, Antoine Ghoston, recently traveled to the White House to participate in the half-day forum Communities in Action: Building a Better America.

Association of Nurses in AIDS Care

nursesinaidscare.org

Knowledge, collaboration, advocacy, diversity and support are the core values of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC), which has local chapters spanning the globe. Through continuing education and certification programs, webinars, conferences and advocacy tool kits, ANAC ensures that nurses and related health care professionals are armed with the latest knowledge and best practices concerning quality care for people living with HIV. Educational courses and resources cover such topics as brain health, aging with HIV, prevention (including PrEP), inclusive spaces, criminalization, mpox (previously known as monkeypox) and more. Thanks to ANAC, nurses are better able to support and care for their HIV patients.

Aunt Rita’s Foundation

auntritas.org

True to its tagline, Aunt Rita’s Foundation serves as the connector of Arizona’s HIV community. Since 1988, the nonprofit has provided millions of dollars to HIV programs. Along with its many community partners, the Phoenix-based group distributes free home HIV test kits through GetTestedAZ.org and provides vouchers for confidential clinical testing at 100 Safeway and Sonora Quest locations statewide. Its signature events include AIDS Walk Arizona and RED is the Night, a glam annual fundraising event. The organization also works with the state health department to increase awareness of HIV and AIDS through HIVAZ.org, which also functions as a bilingual one-stop directory for HIV and AIDS resources and services in Arizona, including PrEP, HIV case management, harm reduction and much more. On top of all that, it lobbies the state legislature for laws and policies supporting the fight against HIV.

Auntie Helen’s

auntiehelens.org

It’s best known as a beloved thrift store and HIV charity, but there’s more to Auntie Helen’s than retro threads and cute knickknacks. The San Diego–based nonprofit launched in 1988 as a fluff-and-fold laundry service for people with AIDS, who at the time were often discriminated against in laundromats or physically unable to wash their own clothes; to this day, the service is available to eligible clients. Today, in addition to providing clothing and blankets for clients, Auntie Helen’s volunteers collect donated food and deliver food packages to nearly 1,600 families. Under its current leadership, Auntie Helen’s is expanding to offer Alcoholics Anonymous and other recovery meetings, meditation sessions, nutritional classes and more.

AVAC

avac.org

AVAC is an international advocacy organization founded on the belief that HIV prevention is a pathway to global health equity. The organization advocates for a comprehensive response to the HIV epidemic that includes testing, antibody-related research and vaccines for prevention. AVAC also pushes for multipurpose prevention strategies that simultaneously address more than one sexual and reproductive health concern. In 2020, AVAC launched PrEPWatch, an interactive online tool that allows users to explore global data and info on PrEP. AVAC's strategic partnerships and projects are a testament to the group's commitment to supporting communities most affected by HIV and developing long-term solutions for ending the epidemic.

Black Ladies in Public Health

bliph.10web.me

Started in 2016, Black Ladies in Public Health is a network of more than 16,000 Black female public health students, community partners and professionals. The group specializes in maternal health, mental health, cardiovascular disease, women's health and HIV. It promotes advocacy, education, community engagement, research, policy development and more. The group recently partnered with HIV drugmaker ViiV Healthcare to present Black Girls Spring for R&R!, a community-developed and -led initiative designed for and by Black women to disrupt disparities in HIV care and treatment. In March, 48 Black women gathered at Tuskegee University in Alabama to kick off the initiative.

Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS

broadwaycares.org

Drawing upon the talents, resources and generosity of the American theater, Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS (BC/EFA) helps provide health care, lifesaving medications, nutritious meals, support and emergency financial assistance to people living with HIV. The red buckets used during BC/EFA's annual in-theater fundraising campaign are a familiar sight to most theater aficionados. Since 1992, BC/EFA's annual burlesque show, Broadway Bares, which features Broadway performers baring their stuff, has raised millions of dollars. BC/EFA provides yearly grants to more than 450 HIV and family service organizations across the country. Since 1988, the organization has raised more than $300 million for essential services for people with HIV and other serious health conditions. In October, its annual Broadway Flea Market and Grand Auction, which gives fans countless opportunities to meet their favorite stars and purchase theatrical memorabilia, raised a record-breaking $1.2 million for the organization.

BU Wellness Network

buwellness.org

BU Wellness Network was originally formed as a support group for Black same-gender-loving men at the height of the HIV epidemic. Today, the Indianapolis-based nonprofit provides free services to 35% of all Black people living with HIV in Indiana, making it the largest Black-focused HIV service organization in the state. BU Wellness offers HIV prevention services as well as nonmedical case management, emergency rent and utility assistance, medical transportation and other supportive services. The organization's food and nutrition program Eat and Thrive (EAT) promotes healthy eating and features a monthly YouTube video in which a nutritionist and a staffer cook a healthy meal. BU Wellness also offers free fresh produce three days a week.

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