$20K in Holiday Hug Grants Awarded to 10 Florida HIV Groups

Grantees can use the Campbell Foundation funds as they see fit—for example, to provide food, shampoo and COVID-19 tests.

December 17, 2021 By Trent Straube

'Tis the season for The Campbell Foundation, which funds HIV research globally, to award end-of-the-year Holiday Hug grants to organizations in Florida that serve people living with HIV. This year, 10 groups will each receive a $2,000 grant. They can use the funds however they see necessary, such as to provide food assistance to clients struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As we enter our 27th year of funding HIV/AIDS research, The Campbell Foundation is proud to have been able to lend financial assistance to these organizations. They play such an important role providing everything from HIV and COVID-19 testing, food and housing assistance and mental health services, among others," said Bill Venuti, trustee of The Campbell Foundation, in a press release. "Without these organizations," he added, "many people with HIV/AIDS would fall through the cracks."

The following organizations were awarded the 2021 Holiday Hug grants:

- AH Monroe, Key West
- Broward House, Fort Lauderdale
- Care Resource, Fort Lauderdale/Miami
- Children's Diagnostic & Treatment Center, Fort Lauderdale
- Compass, West Palm Beach

- Empath/EPIC, St. Petersburg
- Latinos Salud, Wilton Manors
- McGregor Clinic, Fort Myers
- Poverello, Wilton Manors
- SunServe, Wilton Manors

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many HIV organizations had to provide services to more clients than usual—and with less funding. For example, Poverello, which offers nutritious food to people with HIV and other chronic conditions, had to shutter its thrift stores last year, ending a source of revenue. And this occurred at the same time that more people than ever reached out to the group for food assistance.

“The annual Holiday Hug from The Campbell Foundation is a lifesaver to cover the costs of simple items we all take for granted, such as shampoo, soap, razors and basic living essentials,” Poverello’s CEO Thomas Pietrogallo, said in the press release. “We can’t thank The Campbell Foundation enough for supporting our program participants through this funding.” The organization has received $80,000 in grants since 1996.

Latinos Salud executive director Stephen Fallon said his organization will use the funding to help expand its Wellness Clinic and add free services at its locations. Since last spring, Latinos Salud has been offering free COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters.

Based in Fort Lauderdale, The Campbell Foundation has funded nontraditional laboratory-based HIV research since 1995. It has provided Holiday Hug grants since 1996 and has given away nearly $1.5 million to date. In its efforts to support HIV research, it has awarded over $11.5 million.

To read more about Campbell’s research grants, check out the following POZ articles:

- “What About Those Mysterious RNA Molecules Created by HIV?”
- “Long COVID and ‘Gut Leakiness’ in People Who Have HIV”

- “Creating an App to Help Caregivers Better Prescribe HIV Meds”
- “Exploring New Ways to Prevent HIV and STIs in Women”
- “Identifying People With HIV at Higher Risk for Heart Disease and Stroke”
- “Can a Single Vaccine Injection Functionally Cure HIV?”

In February 2022, The Campbell Foundation will celebrate its 27th anniversary.

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