Midnight Cowboy

Richard Holcomb created Project Weber, a harm reduction outreach program for homeless male sex workers in Providence, Rhode Island.

August 13, 2012 By Lauren Tuck

Richard Holcomb created Project Weber, a harm reduction outreach program for homeless male sex workers in Providence, Rhode Island. As recently as 2009, selling sex indoors was still legal in Providence, making the town a magnet for male prostitution. Project Weber, named in remembrance of a young male sex worker murdered in 2003, provides HIV testing, condoms, sterile injection equipment and referrals for people with addiction.

Holcomb also conducts research to shed light on male sex workers—a population that's understudied and overlooked. He hopes that every city will eventually offer the specialized services found at Project Weber.

What three adjectives best describe you?
Adventurous, passionate and sometimes neurotic.

What is your greatest achievement?
Staying clean from drugs and alcohol and rebuilding my life from scratch—which in turn caused me to create Project Weber.

What person in the HIV/AIDS community do you most admire?
My friend Jimmy, who is also a former male sex worker. He has done extensive volunteer work in HIV prevention and has been a great source of hope and support for those newly diagnosed.

What drives you to do what you do?
Not forgetting where I came from and how hard it was for me to get off the street and change my life. I am determined to make it easier for the next generation by providing male sex workers with the resources and services that were not available to me when I needed them.

If you could be any animal, what would you be? And why?
I'm always looking for different perspectives on life, so I think it would be nice to see how the world looks from a bird's eye [view].

Where do you go to relax?

Every six months I travel to Europe, which is a childhood dream come true. My favorite place is the Charles Bridge below the Prague Castle in the heart of the Czech Republic.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Holcomb-Weber-HIV-22824-9935