Advocates in Action

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June 23, 2025 By Joe Mejía

HIV advocates have been working double time these days. They've been plenty busy making noise to protest the Trump administration's proposed and enacted cuts to budgets affecting the health of people living with the virus (see here). At the same time, they continue to keep busy doing the quieter work of educating and uplifting communities and raising funds for and awareness of HIV.

In New York City, three events varying in scale and focus showcased the dedication and optimism that have been hallmarks of the HIV community since the 1980s.

On May 5, Iris House held its annual Women as the Face of AIDS Summit. Iris House offers support, prevention and education services for women, families and underserved populations affected by HIV and AIDS. Held at Bethel Gospel Assembly, the summit marked its 20th anniversary this year. On May 8, the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation (ETAF) hosted its New York fundraising dinner at Rockefeller Center's Rainbow Room honoring longtime advocates Gary Dell'Abate and Rosie Perez. And on May 19, the nation's biggest HIV fundraiser, AIDS Walk New York, marked 40 years, drawing 10,000 participants to Central Park.



1. Iris House executive director Ingrid Floyd launched the summit in 2005 with media producer Tonya Lewis Lee. This year's theme was "Legacy, Liberation, Leadership: The Evolution of Women in the Movement."Donna Aceto Photography

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