AIDS WALK NY 2026

This year’s AIDS Walk proved that people will continue to fight for those affected by HIV and AIDS.

June 29, 2026 By Joe Mejía

On Sunday, May 17, GMHC hosted the 41st annual AIDS Walk New York in Central Park. Billed as “the world’s largest and most visible HIV and AIDS fundraising event,” the walk drew 10,000 participants, who braved the day’s unseasonable heat to walk four miles to raise money to support the world’s first HIV and AIDS service organization. The event was led by actress and activist and native New Yorker Rosie Perez, who served as grand marshal. This year’s theme was “Walk Like an Icon,” a nod to the HIV community’s resilience and fierceness. The walk’s one-day haul was $1,714,522, though folks who couldn’t participate were encouraged to donate online through June 12.

Although effective antiretroviral therapy to treat HIV and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent acquiring the virus have changed the HIV and AIDS landscape, New York City nonetheless counts 132,000 people living with HIV among its residents. What’s more, 1,791 people-—a 5.4% increase from 2023—were newly diagnosed with HIV in New York City in 2024, and 42% of these individuals lived in high- or very high-poverty ZIP codes when diagnosed. It’s these folks that organizations like GMHC are dedicated to serving, especially when dependable sources of aid and avenues to treatment for people living with HIV, such as the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program and Medicaid, face devastating budget cuts.

As GMHC’s co-CEO and CFO Michael Hester said at the event, “Forty-five years ago, there was no road map. No playbook. What was there was a community—our community—who stood up and resisted silence.” On May 17, the AIDS Walk showed just how long and strong that same community will continue to fight for those who continue to be affected by HIV and AIDS.



The event’s grand total is displayed under Central Park’s Naumburg Bandshell. To date, AIDS Walk NY has raised more than $170 million.Facebook/GMHC

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