Brotherly Love

Daniel D. Driffin speaks about HIV at the DNC.

September 26, 2016 By Trent Straube

Atlanta advocate Daniel D. Driffin got a chance to shine in the national spotlight when the Clinton campaign tapped him to speak about HIV at the Democratic National Convention (DNC).

“I’m living with HIV, and so many others are,” he told the audience in Philadelphia. “Who is most at risk? Young, gay black men. Men like me. In fact, one in two black gay men will be diagnosed in their lifetime if the current rates continue. And…I’m sure black transgender women are more at risk, too…. So what do we do to fight HIV/AIDS today?… As an organizer, as an advocate, as a black man, as a gay man, as a man living with HIV, I ask you: Go get tested, and then go vote.”

We caught up with the POZ 100 honoree after his speech.

What was the message of your DNC speech?

HIV is not a thing of the past, and through a coordinated approach of ensuring that people living with HIV are offered antiretroviral therapy and that people at risk for HIV are offered pre-exposure prophylaxis [PrEP], we can truly achieve zero new infections here in the USA.

What feedback have you received so far?

Many people—especially brothers and sisters living with HIV—have sent me the most heartfelt messages of support and gratitude for my being able to speak publicly for so many who don’t have the opportunity to talk about their HIV status. That is truly the unreal part. That evening, while still at the DNC, more than 30 people stopped me and just hugged and provided thanks. Since then [I’ve been getting friend requests on Facebook], and many consist of folks who have accessed the video and wanted to say thanks and wish me the best of luck.

Any word from Clinton?

Yes. The Clinton team and Democratic Party have sent well wishes and thanks.

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