



Chicago HIV Groups Mark Milestones

Howard Brown Health and AIDS Foundation Chicago hosted galas to celebrate.

June 23, 2025 By Laura Schmidt

The Chicago-based HIV service organizations Howard Brown Health and AIDS Foundation Chicago (AFC) both marked major milestones in April with festive fundraiser galas.

To celebrate 50 years of lifesaving work, [Howard Brown](#), one of the nation's largest LGBTQ health organizations, hosted an anniversary gala on April 26 at Chicago's Theater on the Lake. The nonprofit has been rooted in LGBTQ liberation since 1974, when four medical students expressed a desire to help Chicago's gay community.

Today, Howard Brown provides primary medical care, behavioral health care, HIV and sexually transmitted infection prevention services and more to over 40,000 Chicago adults.

The gala's theme, "Let's Grow Old Together," highlighted the numerous ways Howard Brown helps improve the quality of life of many LGBTQ people in Chicago.

On April 5, [AIDS Foundation Chicago](#) celebrated 40 years of HIV community support with its gala fundraiser, AFC40, at The Geraghty hotel in Chicago.

Since its inception, the foundation has fought for equity and justice for people living with and at risk for HIV and other chronic conditions. The organization provides HIV services, housing, case management, food, emergency financial assistance and more to over 8,000 people each year.

AFC's gala honored the organization's history while renewing its commitment to the Getting to Zero Illinois initiative, which aims to end the state's HIV epidemic by 2030.

Chicago native Craig Johnson received the Lori Kaufman Volunteer Award at the gala. A nationally recognized leader in LGBTQ health care, HIV care and health equity, Johnson, who has been living

with HIV for two decades, has held numerous leadership roles at the foundation and other organizations.

“It’s an amazing honor, first of all, to even be considered. It’s just incredibly moving, personal and humbling,” Johnson said in an AFC news release. “To know so many people living with HIV and to have lost so many others who never made it out of their 20s, who never made it out of their 30s, who were in the prime of their life. For me, their lives, their spirit, their legacy helps to motivate me.”

The gala, which raised \$770,000, featured live music, performances and an auction featuring such prizes as a boat cruise through Burgundy, France, custom art and a two-night stay at Claridge House, a boutique hotel in Chicago’s Gold Coast neighborhood.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/chicago-hiv-groups-mark-milestones>