“HIV Is Not A Crime IV” Sets Its Sights on Ohio in More Ways Than One

Save the date: The training session will take place from May 30 to June 2, 2020, at Ohio State University.

July 8, 2019 By Caroline Tien

The HIV Is Not A Crime IV (#HINAC4) National Training Academy will take place at Ohio State University in Columbus from May 30 to June 2, according to a press release from the Sero Project, which oversees HINAC programming.

The 2020 event is cosponsored by Positively Trans, THRIVE SS, the Positive Women’s Network—USA and the US PLHIV Caucus. Participants will stay in campus housing and meet at the Ohio Union for the conference plenary and breakout sessions.

HINAC, which operates under the principle that two (hundred) heads are better than one, has been bringing together people living with HIV (PLHIV), public health officials and policymakers every other year since 2014. Over the course of a single weekend, attendees learn skills related to advocacy, grassroots organizing, coalition building and campaign planning to enable them to change HIV-criminalization laws at the state level. HINAC has previously been held at Grinnell College in Iowa, the University of Alabama in Huntsville and at Indiana and Purdue Universities in Indianapolis, where its programming inspired “successful reforms” in other states, according to the press release.

Bryan Jones, a member of the Ohio Health Modernization Movement steering committee, hopes the streak will continue with Columbus.

“We have been working for years to modernize our law,” Jones said. (As of 2018, Ohio is one of 19 states that still criminalizes nondisclosure of one’s HIV-positive status prior to having sex, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). “I think this will heighten awareness in the state and hopefully bring more advocates and allies to our table.”

The venue, which beat out locations in Nevada, Missouri and Minnesota, was chosen for its ability to offer “safety and comfort” in terms of campus culture, racial diversity, crime stats on and off campus and proximity to medical facilities.

“It was a tough decision,” said Tami Haught, the Sero Project’s organizing and training coordinator,

“but we are heartened by so [much interest] in hosting HINAC IV.”

To read POZ’s feature story on the first HINAC, click here. And to read Mark S. King’s blog post about the most recent one, “Checking Privilege at ‘HIV Is Not A Crime’ 2016,” click here.

To read a chapter about HIV criminalization from the book The War on Sex, click here.

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