Iris House Celebrates 25 Years of Service With Masquerade Ball

The New Orleans–style event also honored three HIV advocates.

October 12, 2018 By Alicia Green

On October 10, Iris House staff and more than 150 supporters donned their fanciest attire and masquerade masks to celebrate the organization's 25th anniversary.

Held at Stage 48 in New York City, the New Orleans–style masquerade ball featured live music, specialty cocktails and a silent auction.

The event also honored Marc Meachem (head of external affairs for ViiV Healthcare North America), Johanne Morne (director of the New York State Health Department's AIDS Institute) and Sukey Wagner (a founding member of Iris House) for their commitment to fighting HIV.

"Over the last two and a half decades, Iris House has helped to save lives through comprehensive support, prevention and education for women, families and underserved populations affected by HIV/AIDS and other health disparities," said the organization in a press release.

Iris House, which opened its doors in 1993, was founded to provide family-focused services to women of color living with and affected by HIV. It was named after Iris De La Cruz, an AIDS activist who was passionate about raising awareness about the needs of women with HIV. (She died shortly before Iris House opened.)

The organization serves 5,000 individuals annually. It provides services that promote prevention, education and awareness as well as practical services that address the day-to-day real needs of people living with HIV. Other services include nutritional counseling, meal programs, support groups and scattered site housing.

"Now more than ever as we move to end AIDS in America, Iris House stands at the forefront and ready to advance our mission and our programs to ensure that the voices of those who are disproportionately impacted by HIV as well as other health disparities are heard," said executive director Ingrid N. Floyd. "We are ready to end HIV/AIDS not just for specific communities, but for all communities."



Courtesy of Iris House

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