Join amfAR's Star-Studded, Free Fundraiser to Fight HIV and COVID-19

Watch Anthony Fauci, Glenn Close, Billy Porter, Kelly Clarkson, Magic Johnson and more raise funds for amfAR's HIV and COVID-19 efforts.

March 2, 2021 By Trent Straube

Ever want to attend one of those glitzy, Celebrity-filled HIV fundraisers? Now's your chance—and you can do it for free without leaving your living room. This Thursday night, March 4, amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research will hold its first virtual gala benefit, which will raise money for the amfAR Fund to Fight COVID-19.

Titled "A Gala for Our Time," the fundraiser honors Anthony Fauci, MD, and actress Glenn Close for their contributions in fighting HIV/AIDS. As the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the National Institutes of Health, Fauci has led the nation's efforts against HIV since the epidemic emerged four decades ago. He's also key in the fight against COVID-19.

You won't want to miss amfAR's free virtual gala happening this Thursday and featuring special appearances by @...

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Award-winning actress Glenn Close has not starred in productions about HIV/AIDS, such as Angels in America, but she's also used her celebrity to raise awareness of such issues as LGBTQ equality, mental illness and the AIDS epidemic.

Close and Fauci will be presented with the amfAR Award of Courage "for their exceptional

contributions to improving and enriching our lives," according to an amfAR statement on the gala.

The gala promises to be a fast-paced, celebrity-packed affair, with presenters Bette Midler, Julia Roberts and Billy Porter plus performances by Kelly Clarkson, Ava Max and Rita Ora. Other boldface names will pop up on-screen as well, including Magic Johnson, Olly Alexander (star of the AIDS drama It's a Sin), Boy George, Chelsea Handler, Nathan Lane, Lydia West and many others.

The gala livestream begins at 8 p.m., Thursday, March 4. For more information and to view the event and donate, visit amfARVirtualGala.org. What's more, a group of amfAR trustees has agreed to match all donations to the gala up to a total of $100,000.

Best known for funding cure research for HIV, amfAR launched its COVID-19 fund last year to support research into the new coronavirus and its intersection with HIV. In the video above, from last spring, amfAR CEO Kevin Frost explains amfAR's involvement in COVID-19 science.

For more details about the fund, see the POZ article from July "AIDS Group amfAR Awards Two Grants to Research COVID-19." It includes a video from a series exploring the two diseases. The fund's latest grant, from earlier this year, helps researchers answer the question "Does the Coronavirus Affect the HIV Reservoir?"

"I hope you can join us for 'A Gala for Our Time'! It's shaping up to be a festive, highly entertaining and informative evening," Frost says on the event's website. "This virtual gala has the advantage of being free and open to guests from any location. So we hope to extend a warm welcome to you, wherever you happen to be.

"As the coronavirus continues to ravage the nation and the world, we are intensifying our efforts to develop safe and effective treatments through the amfAR Fund to Fight COVID-19. Proceeds from the gala will support the fund and accelerate this critical work. It is our hope that we can soon turn the tide on COVID-19 and return to focusing exclusively on a cure for the 38 million people living with HIV. Until then, stay safe and healthy, and thank you for your support."

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