Learning to Fly

Our April/May cover story focuses on Latino youth.

April 2, 2018 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

I enjoy the opportunities to connect with our readers in person. Whether at a conference, a panel discussion or a chance meeting, I appreciate the honest feedback that I get. Thankfully, most of it is complimentary.

However, some of it is disapproving. I completely acknowledge that our efforts may fall short from time to time. We are human, after all. But whenever we don't live up to certain expectations, I assure you that it's not for lack of trying. We are always striving to do our best.

The most common criticism I hear is that we haven't covered a particular topic or demographic. The reality is that we rarely have never covered something, but maybe it has been too long since the last time we did or we haven't covered it enough. I appreciate being reminded.

Another reason I like meeting our readers is that I get to engage them in conversation. Call me old-fashioned, but I believe that actually talking with someone face to face is still the best way to communicate. The combination of sounds, silences and body language just can't be replaced.

Many of our most interesting feature stories arise from these interactions. Our cover story focusing on Latino youth is a wonderful example. I want to thank longtime advocate and former POZ cover guy Moisés Agosto-Rosario for promoting the topic of youth leadership.

I also want to thank youth leaders Edric Figueroa and Xander Pacach for expanding the conversation. (And while I'm thanking folks, a shout-out to Kali Lindsey, another longtime advocate and former POZ cover guy, for reconnecting me with Edric and Xander for this article.)

It takes a village to make things happen, and it's no different when it comes to journalism. Click here to read how advocates like Moisés, Edric and Xander, as well as our current cover subject, Giuliani Alvarenga, are seeking support for youth leaders to better address HIV among Latinos.

This special issue on youth also includes a feature article on the uncertain future of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) among youth under 25. Click here for the story. We also spotlight the efforts of Louie Ortiz-Fonseca. He facilitates efforts for National Youth HIV & AIDS Awareness Day. Click here for more.

Someone who really knows a lot about youth leadership is Lee Storrow. He is the 28-year-old executive director of the North Carolina AIDS Action Network. In addition to holding other management roles at nonprofits, Lee spent four years as a local elected official. Click here to read his advice for young leaders.

Many young people living with HIV today have much to be optimistic about, but it's also true that some do not feel that way. Nearly 7,000 people—young and old alike—still die of AIDS-related illness each year in the United States. To read a thought-provoking essay by Mark S. King about this topic, click here.

Please go to POZ.com/youth for the latest updates on youth and HIV.

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