Letters—July/August 2015

June 22, 2015

Positive Inspiration
Our April/May issue “Louder Than Words: Healing Through Artistic Activism” took an in-depth look at how artists living with HIV continue to represent the realities and complexities of today’s epidemic.

I’m sending a copy of this month’s edition to a former boss of mine, a virologist in Atlanta. She was a quietly supportive ally of my positive status for many years while I worked as her administrator. Only as I was leaving the company did I learn that early in her career, she had studied a viral infection then known as G.R.I.D. This edition will bring so much pleasure to her. I am nearing 28 years as a survivor/hero. I thank you.
Bobby Spencer

I would like to thank @pozmagazine for this month’s feature and everyone who has supported my journey thus far! #Grateful #BohemianDandelions #JustMaryBowman #POZMagazine #Poetry #HIVAdvocate
Mary Bowman
@justmarybowman

Success Story
In the op-ed “Falling Through the Cracks: My Struggle to Survive as a Homeless Youth” (April 28, 2015), Kristopher Sharp shared his story of growing up in foster care and how he overcame life on the streets to become a social worker and an advocate.

Your story brought tears to my eyes, not only of sadness at how vulnerable young people are so cruelly treated by those who should care for them but also at your resilience and courage. You will be a source of strength, insight and support to others. I hope to hear more of your story.
Todd

This is powerful, and it is the reality for so many youth with #HIV, especially in foster care. Deep.
HIV Advocate Mom @SaveRyanWhiteD

Kristopher’s story is inspiring. He’s faced so many obstacles, but continues to work to make other lives better. He is a role model not just for HIV-positive youth, foster care alumni or LGBTQ youth, but for youth period.
Morénike Onaiwu

Congrats to you! Please contact AIDS Foundation Houston if you know of others in this situation. We have a housing program for youth that allows HIV-positive individuals to have their own apartment.
Christopher Romero

Journey to a Cure
The POZ.com Treatment article "NIH Funds Research Into 'Kick and Kill' HIV Cure Strategy" (April 10, 2015) focused on the first human clinical trial that will explore a one-two punch approach to attacking the viral reservoir. The study is being funded by the National Institutes of Health's Division of AIDS and Infectious Disease Services.

How can I get into this study group? Does anyone have any information on how to get into the clinical trial?
Don

Editor's Note: For information about this and other clinical trials, visit ClinicalTrials.gov.

Far from elated, I find myself infuriated by this. $6.6 million sounds like a lot, but when we're talking about medical research budgets, it's far less than is devoted to other things that use NIH funds. This isn't progress, this is a nominal sum designed to shut us up. If this all we get, we won't be seeing a cure anytime soon.
Phil

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