Meet the HIV Activist Who'll Lead MPact, a Global Gay Men's Health Group

Andrew Spieldenner, PhD, is the new executive director of MPact Global Action for Gay Men's Health and Rights.

February 19, 2021 By Trent Straube

Longtime HIV activist Andrew Spieldenner, PhD, will be the new executive director of MPact Global Action for Gay Men's Health and Rights, effective March 1. An associate professor in the department of communications at California State University San Marco, Spieldenner, who is gay and living with HIV, has extensive experience in the nonprofit and advocacy worlds.

He's currently the vice-chair of the United States People Living With HIV Caucus, an advocacy group known for the annual lobbying event AIDSWatch, and he is the North American delegate to the coordinating board of the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS). He's also a POZ blogger.

We are thrilled to welcome our new executive director Andrew Spieldenner!

Read the full press release here:

https://t.co/M0IeO6xZyZ

— MPact (@mpactglobal) February 17, 2021

Spieldenner has worked within the HIV community for over three decades, including senior-level positions at the Latino Commission on AIDS, the Black AIDS Institute and the New York City health department. He now brings that experience to the global stage.

“I have long admired MPact’s role as a champion for the health and rights of gay and bisexual men around the world,” Spieldenner said in an MPact press release. “As a gay man living with HIV, I know how important it is to have advocates fighting on behalf of our communities at the global level. I am honored and thrilled to follow in Dr. George Ayala’s footsteps and to work with the board and staff to lead MPact’s next chapter.”

“Andy is an inspiring and energetic leader,” added MPact board chair Don Baxter. “His passion for elevating the voice of the global LGBTI community and his intersectional approach to public health policy has earned Andy the esteem of advocates around the world. The board and staff are excited to work with Andy as our new executive director and confident that MPact will be well positioned under his guidance to thrive in the years to come.”

Join us next month at #AIDSWatch2021 for a series of amazing virtual sessions! Registration is open now! @AIDS_United https://t.co/C0SEACb424

— MPact (@mpactglobal) February 19, 2021

Spieldenner is noted for approaching sexual health and human rights through the lens of racial justice. Since 2012, he has taught LGBTQ studies at the college level. In his new role, he will lead MPact as it develops plans to serve the global gay community.

“When I became a part of the people living with HIV community, I really understood how some rooms were built to exclude us, and that’s done purposefully,” he told POZ in a May 2020 profile. “As the epidemic has gone on, I’ve noticed that our voices have become less important to organizations.”

His latest POZ blog post is titled, “A Tough Start to 2021: Goodbye to Carmen Vazquez and Joe Sonnabend.”

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