



New Jersey's Hyacinth AIDS Foundation Celebrates 39 Years of HIV Service

Hyacinth's gala honored "Pose" activist Jason Rodriguez, NJ Senator M. Teresa Ruiz and HIV advocates Sal Susino and Shannon Preston.

November 5, 2024 By [Trent Straube](#)

Fierce poses were struck and HIV advocates were honored at Hyacinth AIDS Foundation's 39th gala and silent auction November 2 at the Newark Museum of Art in New Jersey. Hyacinth has been providing HIV services and advocacy in the Garden State since 1985 and currently operates in seven regional offices.

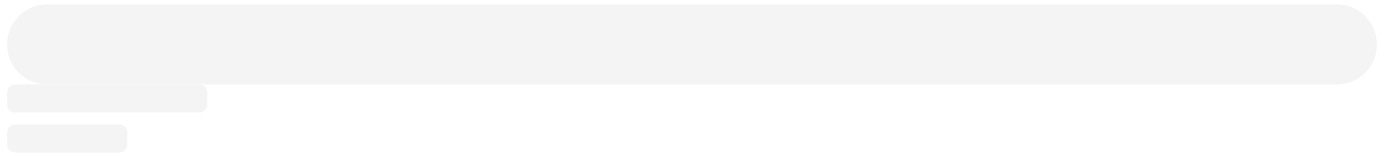


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The evening of celebration and dance also honored individuals making a difference and inspiring others. The 2024 honorees included:

- The Hyacinth Award: Presented to dancer, actor and activist Jason A. Rodriguez, known for his work in the television series Pose
- The Deloris Dockrey Community Award: Dual awards were given to HIV advocates and leaders Sal Susino, manager of special initiatives for the Prevention Resource Network at the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) Health Group, and Shannon Preston, executive director of HIV Services at the VNA.
- The Riki Jacobs Social Justice Award: Presented to New Jersey Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz, whom Hyacinth describes as “a prominent political figure known for her work in the New Jersey Senate. She has a notable reputation for advocating for education reform, social justice and community development.”

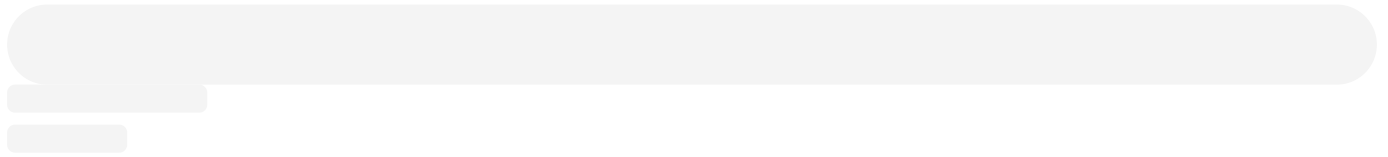


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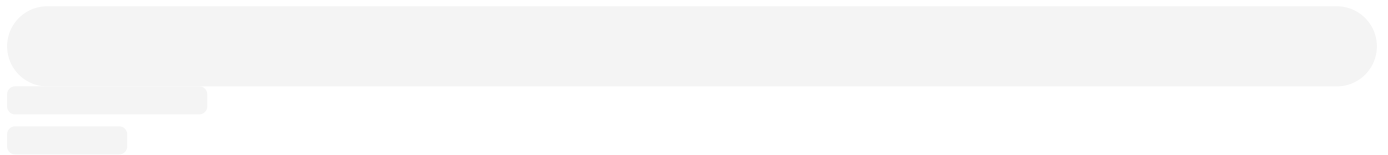
Hyacinth offers a range of HIV-related services, including medical services, testing, prevention (including pre-exposure prophylaxis, PrEP), substance abuse counseling, financial assistance, case

management, leadership training, HIV advocacy and more. Hyacinth operates in Jersey City, Paterson, Plainfield, New Brunswick, Newark and Trenton, though the offices don't all offer the same services. For more details, visit Hyacinth.org.



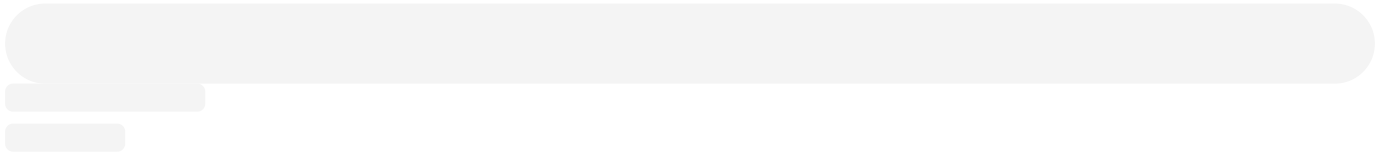
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In related news, this spring, [Rodriguez was profiled for leading a ballroom dance class](#) that also taught about PrEP and HIV history.

To read more about the Garden State, click [#New Jersey](#). You'll find [a profile on Gary Paul Wright](#), the godfather of the state's LGBTQ community; a feature on Iris House, which serves women and families facing HIV; and updates on the state laws regarding [harm reduction](#) and [HIV criminalization](#).