The 2012 POZ 100: Accelerating the End of AIDS

This list recognized people who made a significant contribution to speeding up the end of AIDS.

November 16, 2020 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr., Joe Mejía , Jennifer Morton and Trent Straube

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The third POZ 100 list celebrated people working to accelerate the end of AIDS. In 2012, the idea of a cure started to feel much more attainable. Building on the announcement of Timothy Ray Brown, the first person cured of HIV, additional cure news was discussed in Washington, DC, at the XIX International AIDS Conference, which was held in the United States for the first time since 1990.

At the time, it was believed that Brown might no longer have been the only person cured of the virus, as scientists hinted at two more possible cases. But today, there has only ever been one other person widely considered to have been cured of HIV.

At the conference, researchers also revealed data on 14 people living with HIV who had been treated with antiretroviral therapy early in their infection and had achieved “viral controller” status. In other words, they appeared able to control the virus without remaining on medication. Those cases gave researchers hope in finding a “functional” cure, meaning the virus still lives inside the body but does little or no harm. That compares with a “sterilizing” cure, when the virus is eradicated from the body.

To honor these scientific advances, the 2012 POZ 100 list recognized people who made a significant contribution to speeding up the end of AIDS. They included scientists making the groundbreaking discoveries inching us closer to a cure and researchers exploring ways to prevent others from getting HIV as well as advocates, politicians and celebrities fighting on the front lines to end AIDS.

Catching Up With...

Kali Lindsey

Kali LindseyMackenzie Stroh

What advice do you have for people doing HIV advocacy work today?

Try not to take anything personally, and give yourself as much grace as you can. We can become distracted by losses rather than celebrate our victories. Progress doesn’t come in an instant, and your only competition is in your mind. Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.

Judy Auerbach

Judy AuerbachCourtesy of Judith Auerbach

How do you empower others?

Much of my HIV focus has been on women, who remain a neglected population in the HIV response in the United States. As a sociologist who operates in the biomedical science arena, I try to leverage my standing to lift up emerging scholars and community members—especially women of color—interested in HIV science. I try to step back and let these younger and early-career people take the floor and the podium and assume leadership positions.

Matt Sharp

Matt SharpCourtesy of Matt Sharp

Why do you advocate for people living with HIV?

I have always advocated for people living with HIV/AIDS from the moment I knew I could join the fight. Advocacy and activism are in my bones, and I can’t imagine not supporting others and fighting HIV for the rest of my life. It’s simply what I wake up to do every day.

2012 Medical Milestone

Istock

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first use of antiretrovirals as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Adults who do not have HIV but are at risk for infection can take PrEP to reduce their risk of contracting the virus through sex.

The 2012 POZ 100

The Seekers

Brigitte Autran

Françoise Barré-Sinoussi

Monsef Benkirane

Ben Berkhout

Scott Cairns

Nicolas Chomont

Tae-Wook Chun

Melissa Churchill

Steven Deeks

Michele Di Mascio

Christine Katlama

Alain Lafeuillade

Alan Landay

Michael Lederman

Sharon Lewin

Frank Maldarelli

David Margolis

Martin Markowitz

Javier Martinez-Picado

John Mellors

Santiago Moreno

James Mullins

Una O’Doherty

Sarah Palmer

Marie-Capucine Penicaud

Matija Peterlin

Guido Poli

Anna Laura Ross

Jean-Pierre Routy

Christine Rouzioux

Guido Silvestri

Mario Stevenson

Amalio Telenti

Carine Van Lint

Eric Verdin

Ann Woolfrey

John Zaia

The Hunters

Joseph Alvarnas

Richard Ambinder

David Baltimore

Paul Cameron

Paula Cannon

Daniel Douek

Julian Elliott

Koh Fujinaga

Hiroyu Hatano

Frederick Hecht

Timothy Henrich

Keith Jerome

Hans-Peter Kiem

Mathias Lichterfeld

Katherine Luzuriaga

Mike McCune

Robert Murphy

Douglas Nixon

Deborah Persaud

Lawrence Petz

Quentin Sattentau

Rafick-Pierre Sekaly

Robert Siliciano

John Tilton

Linos Vandekerckhove

Bruce Walker

John Young

The Defenders

Judy Auerbach

Jared Baeten

Deborah Birx

Susan Buchbinder

Dennis Burton

Connie Celum

Myron Cohen

Barton Haynes

Albert Liu

Margaret McGlynn

Nelly Mugo

Zeda Rosenberg

Mitchell Warren

The Soldiers

Bob Bowers

Timothy Ray Brown

Gus Cairns

David Evans

Anthony Fauci

David France

Thomas Frieden

Kevin Frost

Jim Himes

Richard Jefferys

Sir Elton John

Kate Krauss

Stephen LeBlanc

Representative Barbara Lee

Kali Lindsey

Greg Louganis

Jim Pickett

Jamar Rogers

Paul Semugoma

Matt Sharp

Jeff Sheehy

Sean Strub

Michael Tikili

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