The 2019 POZ 100: Celebrating Transgender, Gender-nonconforming and Nonbinary advocates

This list recognized the work of TGNCNB advocates both HIV positive and negative.

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

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Transgender people have always been included among POZ 100 honorees, but this year felt like the appropriate time to give them the spotlight. Transgender, gender-nonconforming and nonbinary (TGNCNB) people were finally being recognized in mainstream media—notably in the FX series Pose, which starred transgender actresses and featured HIV storylines, and through entertainers like Queer Eye star Jonathan Van Ness and actress Alexandra Billings, both of whom are living with HIV and sharing their experiences with the public.

Sadly, transgender people also made headlines for more concerning reasons: The Trump administration launched efforts to allow discrimination against transgender people in the military and in health care. And an alarming number of transgender women, primarily trans women of color, were murdered. What's more, HIV rates among transgender women remained disproportionately high: About 14% of all transgender women and about 44% of Black trans women have HIV.

But as honorees on the 2019 list illustrated, the TGNCNB community is resilient. Its members fight not just to end the HIV epidemic but also to educate and inspire and to raise awareness about transgender and nonbinary people and the issues important to them. These advocates help people secure housing, receive proper health services, obtain correct gender markers on official documents and more.

A happy coincidence transpired October 2019 with the first National Trans Visibility March on DC, which provided wonderful photo opportunities for the POZ 100. Two years earlier, at the annual United States Conference on AIDS, a group of transgender advocates stormed the stage to demand that the HIV community be more inclusive of TGNCNB people—especially with regard to research and employment. We were honored to raise the voices of these advocates, both HIV positive and negative, and their stories are inspiring for all times.

Catching Up With…

Tiommi Luckett

Tiommi LuckettCourtesy of Tiommi Luckett

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

My advice for anyone doing advocacy work is to be kind to yourself. You do not have to do everything or be a part of everything. You must take time for yourself because the fight will continue. Fatigue and burnout will happen if you do not pace yourself in advocacy.

Arianna Lint

Arianna LintJonathan Timmes

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

Visibility is everything. Use every opportunity you can to speak publicly or contribute your knowledge and power. The more visible we are, the more we chip away at the stigma surrounding HIV. I'd also recommend having a self-care plan. Our work can be stressful and challenging, and it's important that we take time to recharge and center ourselves.

Giuliani Alvarenga

Giuliani AlvarengaJeff Singer

Why do you advocate for people living with HIV?

I’m an advocate because laws are in place that oppress folks living with HIV.

2019 Medical Milestone

Surgeons at Johns Hopkins Medical Center in Baltimore performed the first kidney transplant between two people living with HIV in the United States.

The 2019 POZ 100

Julisa Abad

Giuliani Alvarenga

Jacob Anderson-Minshall

Alexandra Billings

Blossom C. Brown

Keiva Lei Cadena

Joaquín Carcaño

Dee Dee Chamblee

Elia Chino

Cecilia Chung

Thomi Clinton

Jamie Collins

Billie Cooper

Tori Cooper

Alex Corona

JD Davids

Dietz

Teo Drake

Terry Dudley

Kiala Emmons

Ashley Figueroa

Cecilia Gentili

Masha Gessen

Caleb Mikayla Goins-Robinson

Kellen Gold

Kayla Gore

Andrea Harrington

George Henry Hastie

Kris Hayashi

Luna Hernandez

Achim Howard

Yasmyne Hunter

Dominique Jackson

Sy’ria Jackson

Aricles “Wulf” James

Mackenzie Jianelli

Courtney Johnson

Tamika “Devinity” Jones

Evonné Kaho

Kelly Kline

Aryah Lester

Octavia Y. Lewis

Arianna Lint

Adrian Lowe

Devin Michael Lowe

Nikki Araguz Loyd

Tiommi Luckett

Monique Mackey

Jeffrey Marsh

Jevon Martin

Gia Martinez

Morgan Mayfaire

Jesse Medina

Marissa Miller

Dharma Mirza

Janet Mock

Indya Moore

Bobbee Trans Mooremon

Socorro “Cori” Moreland

Lailani Muniz

Our Lady J

Johanna Padilla

Alex Palacios

Channyn Lynne Parker

Alexis Powell

Morey Riordan

Bré Anne Rivera

Alexa Rodriguez

Mj Rodriguez

Maria Louise Roman-Taylorson

Angelica Ross

Sabastian Roy

Nadine Ruff

Hailie Sahar

Bamby Salcedo

Amirage Saling

Daniela Simba

Danez Smith

Valerie Spencer

Kiara St. James

David Strachan

Jasmine Tasaki

Kayden Taylor

Gabrielle Thomas

Jack Thompson

Racquelle Trammell

Dianne Michelle Trinidad-Ramos

Jonathan Van Ness

Malaysia Walker

Ja’Mel Ashely Ware

Kim Watson

Lucas Wehle

Sasha Wengler

Dana White

Reagin Wiklund

Mulan Williams

Tyree Williams

Mara Naomi Williamson

Katie Willingham

Jessica Xavier

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