



POZ Awards 2024 / Best Reason to Keep Acting Up

Read about the nominees, then scroll down to vote for your favorite!

October 1, 2024

Welcome to the 9th Annual POZ Awards, spotlighting the best representatives of HIV and AIDS in media and culture.

The POZ editorial staff selects the nominees, but POZ readers choose the winners.

Eligible nominees were active or were presented, published or produced between October 1, 2023, and September 30, 2024.

VOTING IS CLOSED

BEST REASON TO KEEP ACTING UP

[Mpox](#)

While mpox first made headlines when global health organizations warned of an outbreak in 2022, the virus made a comeback in 2024 as a new strain brought a resurgence in some African countries. Though health officials did mobilize an mpox response first time around, it was very clear that LGBTQ community organizing, many of which were based in networks put in place during the AIDS crisis, was [what saved us](#). Now, as concerns mount once again, it will most likely be the LGBTQ and HIV communities who will lead the charge.

[Trans Rights](#)

Trans rights has the unfortunate reality of being nominated for the POZ Award for “Best Reason to Keep Acting Up” two years in a row, after winning this category last year. However, the anti-trans agenda is still busy at work, with [658 bills](#) targeting trans people filed in 43 statehouses across the United States. What’s unsettling to many advocates is not just that Republicans are going hard on anti-trans rhetoric, but that Democrats seem to have put down the mantle, with many trans advocates pointing out that trans rights were largely absent from this summer’s [Democratic National Convention](#).

[Long COVID and Mask Bans](#)

As we continue to navigate this stage of the COVID pandemic, a new threat has emerged: local legislatures. Some lawmakers are advocating for banning the use of masks, which many people wear either because they are immunocompromised or to protect the health of immunocompromised people, as well as to slow the continued spread of COVID. New York's Nassau County was the first locale to [pass a mask ban](#), arguing that people who wear masks are doing so to engage in crimes. Many other cities and states are [weighing bans](#), as well. Shortly after Nassau County's ban, Susan Gotteherer, regional director of the county's New York Civil Liberties Union, said that the ban is a "dangerous misuse of the law to score political points and target protesters."

[Project 2025](#)

If you haven't heard of Project 2025 — an overarching vision to reimagine and dismantle the federal government in the event that Donald Trump is re-elected to the presidency — take a moment to search it online now. (We'll wait.) There is almost no marginalized group of people that won't be negatively affected by this vision of the government, which would endanger the health of all people, workers' rights, reproductive freedom, LGBTQ rights. There's a lot to it, but [some highlights include](#) consolidating presidential power, reducing spending on fighting poverty, and eliminating the Department of Education.