The POZ 100: C-G

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Introduction | A-B | C-G | H-L | M-O | P-R | S-W

Juan Calderon
Chicago, IL | 28
HIV Negative
When he was 21, Juan Calderon became the director of the HIV testing program Vida/SIDA at the Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago. Recently named COO, Juan has since brought the organization to fiscal stability, vastly expanded its services and helped create the only transitional housing shelter in Chicago dedicated to LGBT youth. Juan has also led efforts in the Latino community to address the issues of homophobia and transphobia; in 2009 he traveled to Puerto Rico with state legislators to denounce the hate crimes being committed there. Juan sits on the State of Illinois Human Services Committee and is a member of the Illinois Public Health Association. He also works with the Illinois HIV Care Connect program, which extends HIV treatment and prevention across the state. His advocacy may be motivated by friends and family members with the virus, but the entire community benefits from his efforts.

Caressa Cameron-Jackson
Fredericksburg, VA | 27
HIV Negative
Caressa Cameron-Jackson lost her uncle to AIDS when she was very young. To deal with the loss, her family created the Fighting the AIDS Crisis with Education and Support (FACES) Project. As a result, Caressa recognized early on that HIV education needed to be a priority in the South, and she wanted to spread HIV awareness on a national level. She got her chance when she was crowned Miss America in 2010. Caressa traveled the country on her personal platform, “Real Talk: AIDS in America.” For her efforts, she was awarded the Whitman Walker Partner for Life Award and the President’s Volunteer Service Award, and was presented with a Congressional Honor. Caressa recently served as a national spokesperson for the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, and she works as the coordinator of youth services for FACES.

Korey Anthony Chisholm
Brooklyn, NY | 27
HIV Positive

Originally from Guyana, Korey Anthony Chisholm first got involved with HIV/AIDS issues when he was 16 years old, assisting youth—and their families—living with and affected by HIV. He has been involved in cultivating youth activism in the Caribbean and around the world ever since. Korey served as a consultant for the United Nations' International Youth Council, a facilitator for United Nations Development Programme Barbados and an advisor to the Global Forum on MSM & HIV, among many other achievements. He contributed to the sexual minorities movement in Guyana and recently moved to Brooklyn for a position as the executive assistant to the president/CEO and COO of Housing Works, a nonprofit group seeking to end the dual crises of homelessness and HIV/AIDS. Korey also serves as a youth advisor at the Global Network for People Living with HIV/AIDS.

Brandon Corbin
Takoma Park, MD | 25
HIV Negative
Brandon Corbin is the main organizer for the FUKiT program at the DC Center for the LGBT Community. The grassroots, community-based prevention program aims at stopping the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections through safer-sex kits and an educational website. Brandon was recently awarded a Community Advocate Award from the center for his efforts. He has been a part of the center's HIV Working Group for more than five years and rarely has missed a volunteer opportunity during that time. Whether he's doing outreach, education about HIV or assembling safer-sex kits, Brandon fosters a sense of community with all of the center's volunteers.

Alyssa Crawford
Tallahassee, FL | 22
HIV Positive
Alyssa Crawford is a senior at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) majoring in respiratory care. Born with HIV in 1992, Alyssa often kept her status a secret out of fear of being ostracized. Through interactive therapeutic dialogue at Camp for All (a camp for HIV-positive youth), she came to accept her HIV diagnosis. Alyssa also attended Camp Hope where she later became a counselor. She started speaking at her university, public schools and other community events. In 2012, she ran for FAMU's royal court and was named Miss Junior Attendant; she used her platform to further increase HIV awareness. Alyssa serves as the president of Respect Yourself, Check Yourself, Protect Yourself, a movement dedicated to HIV awareness, prevention and testing. She has partnered with local health organizations to create activities for students including FAMU's participation in International Condom Day flash mobs and World AIDS Day events.

Brad Pond Crelia
Spokane, WA | 29
HIV Positive
Six months after learning he was HIV positive, Brad Crelia started the website Hivster.com with his friend Jesse James Kendall. Motivated by a desire to help those affected by the virus, they wanted to provide information that was relevant to their needs and lifestyle. The site still maintains a presence on Facebook, and a print magazine is in the works. In 2012, Brad went to the

International AIDS Conference as an attendee and journalist. This May, he attended the HIV Is Not a Crime conference in Iowa and gained insight on efforts to decriminalize HIV. Brad works with the Spokane AIDS Network and serves on the board of the Odyssey Youth Center. He has become active in local, state and national politics and is determined to bring progressive changes to Spokane.

Michael Eisman
Los Angeles, CA | 28
HIV Positive
Michael Eisman is the director of special projects and multimedia for the Los Angeles chapter of Impulse Group, which promotes sexual health among gay men with support from the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF). The volunteer group creates campaigns, events and online content to spread its message. Michael created the concept for the sexy 2013 public service announcement video “Knowing,” which promotes safer sex and fights HIV stigma by exploring the issues confronting a young gay serodiscordant couple. The video has racked up more than 160,000 views from around the world. Michael has also participated in the AIDS Lifecycle for the past two years.

Clint Fausett
Billings, MT | 27
HIV Negative
Thanks to his ability to connect with people both face to face and via social media, Clint Fausett turned a volunteer stint at the Yellowstone AIDS Project (YAP) into a full-time position. As the group’s prevention coordinator, he implemented the Montana Outreach Referral Education Project, which connects HIV-positive people with care and treatment. Though he recently left the organization, Clint’s efforts have inspired many to volunteer at YAP. He’s also a member of the Montana HIV Prevention Planning Group.

Brandon Fernandes
Woonsocket, RI | 25
HIV Positive
Brandon Fernandes has been an advocate for the LGBT community for more than five years. He has worked for various nonprofit organizations teaching safer sex and HIV prevention to youth and adults in the LGBT community as well as at the local youth centers. Brandon provides administrative support for the Agape Center, which is a community-based HIV/AIDS support and resource center and is a program of Community Care Alliance in Woonsocket. Brandon shares his positive attitude throughout his work. He is passionate about the importance of safer-sex education for youth and relaying messages in an engaging, genuine way.

Charlie Ferrusi
New York, NY | 22
HIV Negative
Charlie Ferrusi has been an LGBT activist for almost a decade. After earning his bachelor’s degree in three years, this whiz kid enrolled in the master of public health program at New York University

(NYU). He is also the recruitment and outreach coordinator at NYU's Center for Health, Identity, Behavior and Prevention. In 2014, he co-authored a journal study on crystal meth and HIV transmission among gay and bisexual men, and he published a blog on the Huffington Post about bridging the LGBT generation gap. Charlie is a graduate assistant at the NYU LGBTQ student center, and he is on the steering committee for the LGBT HealthLink, which aims to enhance LGBT wellness.

Cierra Foxx
Baltimore, MD | 29
HIV Positive
Cierra Foxx was born with the virus but did not find out she was HIV positive until she was in high school. As a volunteer and mentor at the JACQUES Initiative (Joint AIDS Community Quest for Unique and Effective Treatment Strategies), she shared her story candidly and listened to others without judgment. The JACQUES Initiative is a program created by the Institute of Human Virology and strives to provide a holistic care model to ensure long-term treatment success. Cierra was recently hired as a community outreach worker and is the lead facilitator for the program's support group, F.U.S.I.O.N. (Forces United Seeking Improvement On Negativity), which is a movement to create conversations about HIV/AIDS among youth.

Greg Gabbert
Birmingham, AL | 25
HIV Negative
As a youth advocacy coordinator with AIDS Alabama, Greg Gabbert works with the Alabama Alliance for Healthy Youth to promote comprehensive sex ed in schools, where the state code emphasizes abstinence outside of marriage. Greg also bolsters existing school policies regarding issues of anti-bullying, gender expression, non-discrimination and gender identity. He has worked as a peer educator at the Sexual Health Awareness through Peer Education (SHAPE) program as part of the University of Alabama at Birmingham's 1917 HIV Clinic, where he continues to volunteer as an educator and counselor. Successes in his home state earned him a spot on a panel discussion at this summer's 20th International AIDS Conference in Melbourne, Australia.

Miguel Garcia
Harlingen, TX | 29
HIV Negative
Miguel Garcia is a linkage to care specialist at the Valley AIDS Council (VAC) in south Texas. In its 15-county region, VAC is the primary provider of HIV prevention, education and testing services, as well as medical care and social services for people living the virus. In his role, he works with newly diagnosed individuals and HIV-positive people who have fallen out of care to connect them to HIV care. His co-workers have commended Michael on putting in long hours to help his clients. He is a veteran and the father of a 3-year-old son.

Lauren Gauthier
New Orleans, LA | 28
HIV Negative

Lauren Gauthier has been an advocate for adolescent health since high school. She has a master's degree in public health from Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine in New Orleans. For the past three years, she has been a project coordinator with the NO/AIDS Task Force, working specifically with "The Movement"—a project that provides HIV and STI prevention, education and testing services, as well as a safe space for young black men who have sex with men (MSM). The young activist has also worked as a Black AIDS Institute fellow to mobilize testing among young gay and bisexual men of color throughout the South, as well as with Girls on the Run International, which focuses on empowering young women and girls.

Dante Gennaro Jr.
Norwalk, CT | 28
HIV Positive
On the day he tested positive in 2012, Dante Gennaro Jr. felt like he had turned into a monster. Ashamed of his status, he withdrew from the world. But advocacy and anti-retrovirals transformed him. Today he's the event and testing coordinator for Connecticut-based World Health Clinicians and the HIV Equal campaign, where he arranges testing events with organizations and health departments across the country. He's also an active member of the Connecticut HIV Planning Consortium and the New England Alliance on Gay and Bisexual Health. Within nine months of testing positive, Dante received the news that he was undetectable and much less likely to pass along the virus. The monster had been vanquished.

David Goode Jr.
Brooklyn, NY | 27
HIV Positive
During the beginning stages of Occupy Wall Street in 2011, David Goode Jr. camped out on the bare concrete for months as an openly HIV-positive, queer man to ensure that fighting AIDS remained a vital part of the movement. He pushed for the Robin Hood Tax, which would place a small tax on high-frequency financial transactions to generate billions of dollars to fund social programs, including universal access to HIV treatment, care and prevention. In 2011, David was one of 12 activists arrested inside then-House Majority Leader Eric Cantor's office as part of a protest against funding cuts for HIV/AIDS programs that was organized by Health GAP, ACT UP Philadelphia, Housing Works and the Student Global AIDS Campaign. As an artist, David created protest pieces for Queerocracy, and he was arrested again during ACT UP's 25th anniversary demonstration on Wall Street. This is one rebel with a cause.

Cree Gordon
Portland, OR | 29
HIV Positive
As an academically gifted high school student, Cree Gordon didn't expect to drop out of college and become a homeless sex worker in New Orleans. Yet that's where he was until 2005, when he moved to Eugene, Oregon, to take advantage of its social services. After securing housing, he became an HIV educator for youth and people of color (he identifies as black). Soon, he was traveling to New York to accept the Colin Higgins Youth Courage Award at a Trevor Project gala. He also traveled cross-country with other HIV-positive youth for Operation Get Tested, and he

spoke at a congressional briefing and talkback segment for Broadway's The Normal Heart. Today, Gordon works as the outreach coordinator and a tester and counselor at the Cascade AIDS Project.

Genny Grilli
St. Paul, MN | 27
HIV Negative
The Minnesota AIDS Walk would grind to a halt without the dedication and skills of volunteers like Genny Grilli. As the route logistics captain, she oversees hundreds of other volunteers and makes sure that the vital and mammoth fundraiser goes off without a hitch. It helps that she's calm under pressure and able to solve logistical problems on the spot—all with a cheerful and infectious energy. Genny began her volunteer work 12 years ago at Minnesota AIDS Project, assembling safer-sex and harm-reduction kits. Since then, she has amassed a wealth of experience and knowledge, which she tirelessly applies to making the St. Paul community a safe and healthy place to live.

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