RIAA & MSF Galas 2023

The gala raised $568,000 to support critical programs and resources, while honoring Billy Porter, Chasten Buttigieg and more.

January 8, 2024 By Joe Mejía

On October 19, the Treatment Action Group (TAG) honored some of the brightest scientists, activists and leaders in the fight to end HIV, tuberculosis (TB) and hepatitis C virus (HCV) at its annual Research in Action Awards (RIAA) in New York City. An offshoot of ACT UP, TAG formed in 1992 to speed up AIDS research, advocate for increased funding and ensure that people with HIV and at risk for the virus have access to treatment and prevention. In 2002, TAG expanded its mission to include the eradication of TB, which was affecting people with HIV in the developing world and remains a leading cause of death among children globally; soon thereafter, HCV became a target of its work as well.

On October 14, the Matthew Shepard Foundation (MSF), which in 2023 commemorated its 25th year, held its annual gala in Denver. Started in 1998 by Judy and Dennis Shepard to honor their son Matthew after he was attacked for being gay and left to die at age 21, MSF advocates for the LGBTQ community on numerous fronts. In 2009, MSF helped pass the country's first federal hate crimes legislation: the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. The gala not only highlighted Judy and Dennis Shepard's many accomplishments as LGBTQ advocates but also raised $568,000 to support critical programs and resources, while honoring Billy Porter, Chasten Buttigieg and Be a Friend, an organization of students who fight bullying.



Guillermo Chacón, president of the Latino Commission on AIDS, was honored for his longtime service to the Latino community. On hand to present him with his RIAA was another Latino HIV hero, Jesús Aguais, of AID for AIDS.Treatment Action Group/Facebook

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