Phoenix Rising

This year, Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS in Phoenix marks a major milestone: a quarter-century of service. But it has many other reasons to celebrate.

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Parsons is home to Southwest Center and related services.

Last year, Cindy Hallman-Quenneville and Bruce Weiss took the helm of Southwest Center as executive director and deputy director, respectively. And the previous September, the AIDS organization moved into its brand-new home at the remodeled Parsons Center for Health and Wellness, which also houses the McDowell Clinic. Hallman-Quenneville says Southwest Center partners with the clinic so it can offer HIV-positive clients access to premier health care and support services, including behavioral health, nutritional education and medical case management. For convenience, there's even an on-site pharmacy.

A snapshot of clients and programs: About 80 percent of the center's clients are male and 33 percent are heterosexual; 45 percent are Caucasian, 34 percent Latino and 16 percent African American. "Our outreach, education and prevention programs are something we are proud of," Hallman-Quenneville says, noting that their nutrition programs can truly improve their clients' quality of life.

What's on the horizon in 2015, aside from anniversary celebrations? "I am excited to help launch new wellness programs that will enhance the overall care a patient receives," says Hallman- Quenneville. "In addition, the center is working to expand services to youth."

One of the standout programs at Southwest Center is Positive Peer Prevention (P3), which provides low-income teenagers with on-campus education about HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. This year's goal is to reach 3,000 youth. Southwest Center also provides families the chance to go to camp for a week. As Hallman-Quenneville says: "It's a time for the children to be just that: children!"

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