# Wind Beneath My Wings

This special issue on women showcases SisterLove's 30 years of helping women living with and vulnerable to HIV in the South and beyond.

February 24, 2020 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

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I am blessed to have strong women in my life—for starters, my mom and my sister. Their perseverance through challenges (such as dealing with me!) is priceless.

Of course, countless other female relatives I admire are no longer with us. Arguably the one who made the greatest impact in my life was my maternal grandmother. She lived with us until I was 9 years old. She could be stern but always had open arms for me.

Then there are the women I've come to know through my years here at POZ. They are among the most genuine people I've ever met. Whether living with HIV or not, they demonstrate time and again their strength as advocates and fellow humans.

Organizations such as Positive Women's Network–USA (PWN-USA) and The Well Project have prepared many women living with HIV to become advocates. POZ was pleased to highlight the women and work of PWN-USA in our December 2017 issue as part of our annual POZ 100 list.

In this special issue on women, we revisit the work of PWN-USA by catching up with Pat Migliore, current cochair of the group and a founder of the BABES Network in Seattle. Click here to read more.

We're also spotlighting the work of The Well Project. Krista Martel, the executive director, shares her journey as an HIV advocate and what's next for her organization. Click here for a Q&A with her, and click here to learn about the group's latest survey.

For our cover story, we're excited to showcase the work of SisterLove, which is based in Atlanta. In 2019, the group marked 30 years of helping women living with and vulnerable to HIV across the South and around the globe.

Clockwise from top left, the women on our cover are Dázon Dixon Diallo, Kim Canady-Griffith, Linda Scruggs, Nadine Ruff and Phyllis Malone. Dázon is the founder and president. The other women are distinguished members of the group. Click here to learn more about SisterLove.

One of the undeniable upsides of living in the era of effective HIV treatment is that, put simply, if

we adhere to our medications, those of us with the virus should enjoy virtually normal life spans. That’s no small thing.

However, such success has come with unforeseen challenges. As people living with HIV get older, we not only face many of the usual effects of aging but also less usual outcomes. In simple terms, it seems as if we are aging faster than HIV-negative people.

Research on aging with HIV is increasingly being conducted. The catch is that for much of this time the research was mostly on men.  Research on women aging with HIV is finally getting its due. Click here for more.

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