



# 2010 Person of the Year: Bob Bowers

January 1, 2011 By [Shawn Decker](#)

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**I really believe that my HIV status has made me a better human being. Early in life, it taught me a lot about discrimination, which shaped my views on race, misogyny and homophobia as I entered my teenage years and adulthood. At 20, which I spoke out about being HIV positive, I immediately was welcomed into a new “family” of friends, most of whom happened to share my HIV status.**

 became aware of Bob Bower’s work when Poz magazine profiled him in 2006. In recent years, I’ve become cyberpals with Bob, though we haven’t met in person yet. I know so many people who do such great things, singling out just one makes me a bit uneasy, but Bob really inspires me with his dogged determination and I know the rest of my positoid family agrees. His focus on non-HIV issues such as discrimination/homophobia and his overall attitude on life is awe-inspiring. And, though he goes by the nickname “One Tough Pirate”, that toughness is only directed at things that deserve an ass-kicking, like HIV. For anyone looking for information, on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or in person, Bob is more like “One Very Approachable Pirate” and I’m proud to be one of his 3,000-plus followers on Twitter.

2010 saw some unexpected health concerns for Bob, and I’m hoping that- like last year’s cancer-fighting Person of the Year, Ethan Zohn- he sees a much more healthy 2011 ahead of him. So, Bob, thank you so much for all the love and good energy you send out into the universe, of which I know you get back. I love ya my positoid brother, and I’m thankful for the work that you do and how you inspire everyone to stand up to HIV.

Positively Yours,  
Shawn

**Check out Bob’s incredible HIV Awareness poster contest for teenagers, “What If It Were You?”, by clicking on the photo below.**



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Website: [ShawnandGwenn.com](http://ShawnandGwenn.com) Also check out the lovely [Gwenn's Fashion/Coffee Blog](#)  
***My CD, Synthetic Division, A Symptom of Life, is [on iTunes!](#)***

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