AIDS United Awards Grants to Eight Leaders Tackling HIV in the South

The eight grantees comprise the fourth cohort of the Southern HIV Impact Fund Leadership Development Program.

August 27, 2021 By AIDS United

This Southern HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, AIDS United is proud to announce the fourth cohort of the Southern HIV Impact Fund Leadership Development Program. This initiative trains leaders in the South to respond to the unique impacts of the epidemic on the region and supports the long-term sustainability of the leaders themselves, their organizations and the HIV movement.

> We're so inspired by the work our 2021 Southern HIV Impact Fund Leaders have done to #StopHIVTogether. https://t.co/WmWsE3WEN1 pic.twitter.com/j5Af6ACXJZ
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> — AIDS United (@AIDS_United) August 22, 2021

The South is the epicenter of the national HIV epidemic. Black communities in the South are disproportionately impacted by HIV. Responding to the epidemic must involve building the capacity of leaders in these communities.

"This work requires strong, creative and resilient leaders to continue to turn the tide of the HIV epidemic in the region and ultimately our nation as a whole," said AIDS United President and CEO Jesse Milan Jr. "We are incredibly grateful for the continued partnership of Funders Concerned About AIDS and the support of our funders, without whom this program would not be possible."

The 2021 leadership development cohort consists of eight staff members from AIDS United grantee partner organizations. Southern HIV Impact Fund grantees are working to effectively address the prevention, care and support, and advocacy and leadership needs of individuals and communities affected by HIV in the South.

Meet the leaders of the 2021 cohort:

- Justine Ingram (she/her), Southern AIDS Coalition; Birmingham, Alabama
- Jered Croom (he/him), Positively Living (Choice Health); Knoxville, Tennessee
- Cerita Burrell (she/her), The Afiya Center; Dallas, Texas
- Chad Morris (he/him), Frontline Legal Services; New Orleans, Louisiana
- Kristen Gonzalez (she/her), Southwest Louisiana Area Health Education Center; Lafayette, Louisiana
- Shundria Black (she/her), WeCareTN; Memphis, Tennessee
- Raymond Velazquez (he/him), Western North Carolina AIDS Project; Asheville, North Carolina
- Nzinga Hall (she/her), SisterLove; Atlanta, Georgia

Each leader's organization receives $3,000 to offset any staffing or other costs associated with participation in the cohort, as well as to support continuing professional education, conference attendance, certifications and more.

"In the age of COVID-19, we have not allowed the pandemic to hinder the pursuit of the Southern Fund to grow the personal and professional capacity of leaders for HIV in the South," said AIDS United Senior Program Manager Marvell L. Terry II. "I believe that we will be able to end all new transmissions of HIV in the United States by first equipping the HIV workforce."

Southern HIV/AIDS Awareness Day offers an important reminder for us that the work to stop HIV must involve cultivating the leadership of communities in the South to stop HIV together.

For more information about the program, please visit www.southernfund.org.

The Southern HIV Impact Fund is a first-of-its-kind collaborative of the nation's leading private and corporate funders of HIV-related programming and funders from intersecting issue areas interested in supporting HIV work.

Convened by Funders Concerned About AIDS in 2017 to coordinate and expand philanthropic efforts in the U.S. South, the Southern HIV Impact Fund is managed by AIDS United and receives support from Gilead Sciences, Ford Foundation, ViiV Healthcare, the Levi Strauss Foundation and a generous anonymous donor.

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