Fighting for Our Lives

Like too many of you, we are doing our best to figure out new ways to educate and inspire

September 29, 2020 By Paul Kawata

Over 5,000 people have registered for this year's United States Conference on HIV/AIDS (USCHA) that will be virtual on October 19 to 21. Over the next three weeks, staff are busy working with volunteer presenters to record 85 workshops and institutes on Zoom. The exhibit hall is sold out. Yet it all feels a little unreal. While this is our 23rd year hosting the meeting, it is our first virtual conference. It is important for us to say that we don't have any experience putting on virtual meetings. Like so many nonprofits, we've had to pivot into uncharted territory. Thank you for going on this journey with us. We appreciate your understanding and patience.

Like too many of you, we are doing our best to figure out new ways to educate and inspire during COVID-19, Black Lives Matter, the economic downturn, massive unemployment, wild fires, hurricanes, Supreme Court, taxes, and a Presidential election. There are so many things that are outside of our control. It is easy to feel powerless and overwhelmed. That's why this year's meeting is so important. It is an opportunity to check-in with our HIV family virtually. While it won't be the same as an in-person meeting, it is the best we can offer while keeping everyone safe.

This year's meeting will focus on the intersection of HIV, Black Lives Matter, massive unemployment, COVID, and how HIV nonprofits can survive in a world that is out of control. I will never fully understand what it means to be Black in America. However, that doesn't mean I can't stand in support of Black Lives Matter and commit my life to fighting for racial justice and health equity. NMAC believes these fights are the pathways to ending the HIV epidemic in the United States.

CDC Funding

To help HIV nonprofits work to end the epidemic and survive these difficult times, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention just released the new RFA (PS21-2102) for directly funded CBOs. CDC will award $210 million to support 90 awards. Applications are due Nov 20th, 2020. NMAC is very excited and committed to this initiative's success. We are hopeful that CDC will fund organizations from and for the communities hardest hit by HIV. Sixty (60) CDC staff have registered to attend this year's USCHA, so hopefully this will be a good opportunity to network with your CDC colleagues.

HRSA Training

Thursday, October 1, at 1:00 PM is NMAC's webinar on how to get a federal job. This webinar will

be led by the Health Resources and Services Administration. Register here. NMAC is pushing jobs because so many people are hurting right now. Not only do we want to get people from the communities hardest hit by HIV hired at health departments and CBOs, we also want to have them to get jobs at federal agencies working to end the HIV epidemic.

NMAC believes that hiring community is the best way to reach community. Previous efforts have missed too many people in need. We are very thankful to Dr. Laura Cheever and her staff for putting together this important webinar. We encourage everyone looking for a job to attend this webinar.

iPads
We received over 250 applications for our iPad program to help address the digital divide. Our goal is to have the iPads in the mail by Oct 9th. NMAC will go public with the decisions on October 13th. So many of the applicants talked about how they were unemployed as a result of COVID-19. Unfortunately, there is much more need than money. In full transparency, NMAC will share the demographics of who got selected and tell the stories of some of the recipients in my October 13th e-newsletter.

The Denver Principles were all about the empowerment of People Living with AIDS. Thirty-seven years later these principles still ring true, only now we have COVID-19, Black Lives Matter, climate change, ICE, massive unemployment, and economic devastation. Now more than ever, we are fighting for our lives and the lives of the people we love. We will see you online.

Yours in the struggle,

Paul Kawata

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