



Health Equity and Survival

Hate and rage make our work difficult, if not impossible. How do you prioritize life when the world is out of control? Where does ending the HIV epidemic fit in this insanity?

October 17, 2023 By [Paul Kawata](#)

The Middle East is breaking my soul. Another war with too many children caught in the crossfire. I'm having trouble processing all the violence and hate. Anger has become the world's go-to emotion, and nowhere feels safe. Every week there is another challenge in a too-long series of pain, loss, and sadness. That is why NMAC is bringing together 45 national organizations this week to discuss our mutual commitment to health equity and survival during these difficult political times.

Lead by Toni Newman, NMAC's director of the Coalition for Justice & Equality Across Movements, attendees include Jose Abrigo (Lambda Legal), Sean Meloy (Victory Fund), Kim Simes (Family Equality), Victoria Kirby-York (National Black Justice Coalition), Hanna Tessema (Black Women's Learning Institute), Bamby Salcedo (TransLatina Coalition), Tasha Henneman (California Black Caucus), Christian Nunes (National Organization of Women), Lexi Adsit (TransCanWork), Lisa Frederick (Black Women's Learning Institute), Malcom Greene (National Organization of Women), Stephen Lee (NASTAD), Terra Russell-Slavin (LA LGBT Center), Jesse Milan (AIDS United), Allen Morris (National LGBTQ Task Force), Leandro Rodriguez (Latino Commission on AIDS), Jennifer Tucker (ERA Coalition/Fund for Women Equality), Dr. Elijah Nicholas (100 Black Trans Men), Casey Pick (Trevor Project), Jerika Richardson (National Urban League), Jordyn White (Human Rights Campaign), Julian Johnson (SF Community Health Center), Julian Teixeira, (Southern Poverty Law Center), Ian Palmquist (Equality Federation), Rachel Deitch (National Coalition of STD Directors), Michael Ruppel (The AIDS Institute), Dr. Denard Cummings (American Medical Association), Dr. Tatyana Moaton (Black and Pink National), Karen Davis (National Council on Aging), Cecilia Chung (Transgender Law Center), Aaron Tax (Sage USA), Ellen Flenniken (American Civil Liberties Union), Ebonie Riley (National Action Network), Jaelynn Scott (Lavender Rights Project), Alex Sheldon (GLMA), Julie Golen (National Center for Lesbian Rights), and Richard Zaldivar (The Wall-Las Memorias Project).

Hate and rage make our work difficult, if not impossible. How do you prioritize life when the world is out of control? Where does ending the HIV epidemic fit in this insanity? Where do any of the missions of these national organizations fit in this explosive environment? The 2024 Presidential election will only further divide our country. People in power will galvanize their bases to vote using not-so-quiet dog whistles that weaponize all the above organizations. Our communities will be torn apart because, in the minds of the powerful, we don't matter. We are acceptable collateral

damage. NMAC believes the fight is so much larger than HIV and we must work in coalition to build a world without hate. Thank you, Gilead, for supporting this important work.

Yours in the struggle,

Paul Kawata

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