I Need to Apologize

NMAC made a mistake and we will fix it.

July 20, 2017 By Paul Kawata

To the board, staff and clients of the Red Door Foundation,

I'm sorry, NMAC made a mistake and we will fix it. Two days ago, NMAC announced a new campaign to fight the federal HIV budget cuts. We used the moniker SOS (Save Our Service/#HIVSOS). Unfortunately, that is the same moniker that the Red Door Foundation has used for many years for their annual conference, SOS (Saving Ourselves Symposium). This was not an intentional oversight, and once we found out about our mistake we withdrew the moniker and have chosen to rename the campaign. All SOS references have been removed from our web site and social media channels.

I had a tough conversation with Marvell L. Terry II, the founder of the Red Door Foundation, and he made the impact of this error known, particularly when he said, "why is it that large agencies feel like it's OK to step on smaller organizations." While I don't believe NMAC is a large agency, his words stung truth. How can NMAC lead with race and not support an agency for Black Gay Men? Black Gay Men's lives matter and NMAC stands in solidarity with your work.

Additionally, I need to apologize to my staff. Between the impossible health care debate and the potential cuts to the federal HIV budget, I've pushed them too hard. Together, we have spent too many sleepless nights trying to figure out the best course of action to take. I am sorry for the impossible demands and proud of their adaptability and resilience.

NMAC is still concerned about the cuts, but the House Appropriations Committee has given us hope by maintaining most of the 2017 funding levels for HIV programs. However, we are very concerned that they eliminated the Secretary's Minority AIDS Initiative Fund and cut over $17 million to SAMHSA's Minority AIDS Initiative programming. Now is not the time to cut funding that supports people of color, especially since we make up the majority of people living with HIV in American. We look forward to seeing everyone at HIV/STD Action Day.

To the board, staff and clients of the Red Door Foundation, know that NMAC's door is always open to you. I look forward to working together. NMAC staff will definitely be at your conference next year and I hope we can sponsor this important meeting. Your fight for the lives of Black MSM is important and NMAC wants you to know that you were and will continue to be heard.

Yours in the struggle,



Paul Kawata
Executive Director
NMAC
leads with race

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