NMAC to Hold 2021 U.S. Conference on HIV/AIDS In Person

USCHA—the United States Conference on HIV/AIDS—will take place in Washington, DC, from October 28 to 31.

May 4, 2021 By Paul Kawata

Join USCHA 2021 for a Live "Homecoming"

Homecoming, the annual fall ritual that brings so many together, will take on new meaning this year because NMAC has decided to make a run for it and hold the 2021 United States Conference on HIV/AIDS in person. Mark your calendars for Oct 28-31, 2021 in Washington, DC at the Marriott Marquis.

Go to the website for information on:

- Call for Abstracts
- Scholarship Application
- Registration
- Hotel Reservations
- Exhibit Hall

Some of you may think we are overly optimistic to think USCHA can happen in person this October. We know that circumstances may force us to change to a virtual meeting if things get worse anew, but right now we're hopeful and need to start now to make the late October date. Like everyone, we will closely monitor the situation, and follow all hotel, CDC, and DC rules for large gatherings. We will fully refund registration fees for anyone who asks for a refund by Oct. 8, 2021.

We understand that for some it is too soon and, of course, we respect that. Now that I am fully vaccinated, I am itching to travel, see friends, and have fun. Nonetheless, we know that not everyone will be fully vaccinated by October. To keep everyone as safe as possible, getting vaccinated is the critical first step to in-person participation at USCHA. Having said that, it is impossible to guarantee safety. Attending USCHA usually requires a plane, train, bus, or subway ride. It also means staying at a hotel. These things are far less safe if you are not vaccinated.

So why is USCHA rushing back? It is important that the Biden/Harris administration meet the HIV community, look us in the eye, and share their visions for ending the HIV epidemic in America. In our work with the White House, I know they are committed to ending HIV. How they make it happen is the real test. I hope President Biden's executive order for racial equity across government gets incorporated into our work to end HIV.

COVID put a giant pause on parts of our work. Like so many movements, our efforts to end HIV have stalled in many places. It's no one's fault. We rightfully prioritized COVID. By this fall, more things will return, but will it be like before? USCHA is a great place to kick-off and recommit to ending HIV.

New programming this year includes Constituents Day on Thursday, Oct 28th. Instead of the usual opening, the first day of the conference will be an opportunity for constituents to hold satellite meetings. NMAC will provide the space for free on a first come first serve basis. Our goal is to give colleagues free space to have Homecomings with their constituents. Think about how long it's been since you've seen everyone. If you would like to reserve space, please email Conferences@nmac.org. NMAC will forward information on these meetings via our listservs, website, and social media. We particularly hope our government partners will host updates for the community on their ending HIV plans.

Homecoming is so evocative of dances, football, and coming together with old friends. Since USCHA is Halloween weekend, remember to bring your costumes. There will be a ball and we want everyone to walk! After the year we've had, we deserve fun. We deserve to laugh and remember the joy of being with friends. I really hope we get to see each other. We pushed the meeting back by 60 days to give everyone more time. I completely understand if it is too early for some. COVID has traumatized all of us. Our goal is to make the 2021 United States Conference on HIV/AIDS the start of our healing and the road back to ending the HIV epidemic in America.

Yours in the struggle,

Paul Kawata

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.