Queen Hatcher-Johnson Is Breaking Down Stigma in Georgia

"There's nothing that I can't do if properly trained," says the transgender HIV advocate.

March 25, 2020 By AIDS United

As a peer advocate both personally and professionally, Queen Hatcher-Johnson works to connect community members with resources and speak on the importance of staying healthy.

Hatcher-Johnson serves as a prevention specialist at Positive Impact Health Centers in Georgia. There, she educates and empowers others while striving to remind her peers that it is "okay to laugh about something" and embrace the joyful moments within the movement.

She is a part of AIDS United's first-ever cohort of the Fund for Resilience, Equity and Engagement and the Transgender Leadership Initiative Leadership Development Program. These leaders were chosen through AIDS United's grantee partner organizations as representatives of transgender and gender-nonconforming people and Black gay, bisexual, queer and same-gender-loving men—populations in our communities most disproportionately impacted by HIV.

Hatcher-Johnson, a transgender person living with HIV, is dedicated to breaking down the stigma that trans people are not capable of doing the work.

"The number one challenge in organizations is the stigma attached to transgender populations that because the degrees are not present, we don't qualify" she says. "However, there's nothing that I can't do if properly trained."

Having participated in various leadership development opportunities, Hatcher-Johnson notes, "If I'm the only one at the finish line, then my work continues."

We caught up with Hatcher-Johnson to learn more about her story and how she works to mobilize her community to stop HIV together.

How did you get into this field?

I became involved in the work by a statement I heard years ago: "Hurt people hurt people." This made me want to present a resolution, which is that "healed people help people." This is exactly what made me want to be involved. Also, I wanted others to know that it's OK to laugh about

something.

How do we start to reduce the barriers preventing transgender women of color from accessing care?

The number one barrier I believe is fear, then stigma and finally shame. All come from a place of traditional values that we subconsciously keep handing down through generations. This causes generational trauma to be prevalent in a major unspoken way.

What are some of the challenges preventing trans women of color from being in executive leadership roles? What are some of the solutions to addressing those challenges?

The number one challenge in organizations is the stigma attached to the transgender populations that because the degrees are not present, we don’t qualify. However, there’s nothing I can’t do if properly trained.

The stigma is that we are stupid. The only way I see us addressing this is to get whatever the qualifications are to get these positions or simply find a mentor at your organization. Be diligent about your success; take advantage of opportunities. Google, google for opportunities.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.