Seven Amazing Community Groups That Support Transgender People

They're all AIDS United grantees uplifting the importance of HIV testing.

April 17, 2020 By AIDS United

National Transgender HIV Testing Day, which is observed every April 18, uplifts the importance of HIV testing within trans and gender-nonconforming communities. We know that the TGNC community—in particular, Black and Brown trans women—are disproportionately affected by HIV.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that HIV prevalence is 14.1% for trans women, 3.2% for trans men and 9.2% for the trans community as a whole. With prevalence for U.S. adults falling below 0.5%, there is no doubt that trans communities need resources, access and advocacy to knock down barriers to prevention and care. Cost, stigma, implicit bias, noninclusive polices and more form barriers to vital health care services for TGNC people across the nation.

AIDS United partners with a range of community organizations who work day and night to increase access to HIV testing, reduce widespread stigma and increase support networks to ensure that TGNC people are receiving the care they need.

Today, we are highlighting a few of these organizations who work to end the HIV epidemic in their local communities through HIV screenings and programs.

Arianna's Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Founded by Arianna Lint (she/her/hers), this organization knows well that HIV testing is vital for the TGNC community. In South Florida, Arianna's Center delivers "broader and more significant services than any existing provider" with a distinct focus on reaching trans individuals. As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds, the organization continues to demonstrate their dedication to community by conducting a trial run of home testing kits (wherein a client administered the test in their place of residence with a provider outside on the phone).

Attic Youth Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Attic's mission is to "create opportunities for LGBTQ youth to develop into healthy, independent, civic-minded adults within a safe and supportive community." A key part of this mission is providing TGNC youth access to support groups that educate and promote resources related to HIV-prevention. In addition to comprehensive counseling services, case management

and support groups such as Young, Trans and Unified, the organization offers free, confidential HIV testing to its community.

Casa Ruby, Washington, D.C.

Casa Ruby, led by founder Ruby Corado (she/her/hers), has been dedicated to providing HIV-related services to the city for nearly 30 years. Recently, the organization has partnered with local health care providers to provide onsite HIV testing in its 24-hour drop-in center. Hosted by Whitman Walker, HIV testing is offered to TGNC clients for free, helping break down a key barrier to testing and prevention within the community.

Positive Impact Health Centers, Duluth, Georgia

With a mission to provide "client centered care for the HIV community to have a life worth loving," Positive Impact Health Centers prioritizes those affected by HIV in their work. As a part of AIDS United's Fund for Resilience, Equity and Engagement, or FREE, initiative, the organization provides culturally sensitive and appropriate HIV testing services to the local trans community. In addition, the organization runs an innovative GED and job readiness program, which strives to assist trans people living with HIV in becoming employed to reduce the rates of poverty faced by the community.

Project Weber / RENEW (PWR), Providence, Rhode Island

Through its Transgender Outreach Project, PWR strives to advocate for and enhance the agency, health and well-being of high-risk trans people in Rhode Island. The organization, which is primarily centered around harm reduction and recovery services, provides rapid HIV testing at their drop-in center, street-based outreach events, residential programs and more. This is accompanied by the peer-led program, Beyond The Understanding of Gender, which offers support groups, transition support and case management for the TGNC community.

Translatin@ Coalition, Los Angeles, California

Guided by trans activist Bamby Salcedo (she/her/hers), Translatin@ Coalition has been at the forefront of advocacy and policy change for the trans community. As an immediate response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization has partnered with the Latino Commission on AIDS to "respond to the impact of the COVID-19, HIV, hepatitis and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in our diverse communities, especially those most vulnerable and less engaged in prevention, care and support services." This includes vital screenings, education services and other community wellness projects.

Translatina Network, New York City, New York

Started by a core group of trans Latina volunteers, the Translatina Network has delivered key services and resources to the community since 2007. Since that time and under the leadership of founder Cristina Herrera (she/her/hers), the organization has expanded to reduce a wide range of inequalities faced by TGNC people. A key resource that the organization offers is linkage to testing sites and TGNC-friendly clinics. Through appointment, they also offer free community HIV testing

at their center in New York City.

The Fund for Resilience, Equity and Engagement (FREE) is a national three-year $11 million initiative supported by the Elton John AIDS Foundation and managed by AIDS United. FREE prioritizes organizations led by and serving trans and gender-nonconforming (TGNC) communities as well as Black gay, bisexual, queer and same-gender-loving (GBQ/SGL) men. To learn more about all 34 grantees of the FREE initiative, please click here.

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