Strong Enough

July 2, 2014 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

The July/August 2014 issue of POZ magazine is online.

Here's an excerpt from my editor's letter:

HIV stigma--and the discrimination that often results from those negative and unfair beliefs--challenges all of us living with the virus to find the strength to live our lives with dignity and hope. The good news is that we all can strive to find that strength.

The story of Antonio Muñoz is an excellent example. After being fired from his job at a hotel, he filed an HIV discrimination lawsuit against his former employer. A jury awarded him $500,000 as a result. His story is exemplary, but he's far from being the only person to succeed against stigma.

Click here to read how Muñoz, Greg Daniels, Sarah

Franke-Bowling and others fought back against illegal HIV discrimination. You can also review major milestones in the struggle against such discrimination and get tips on how to file your own lawsuit.

Although there are many ways to combat discrimination that results from stigma, to stem stigma itself seems more elusive. Much of the public remains uncomfortable with HIV-positive people, despite decades of education efforts. Some advocates even argue that stigma is worse today than ever.

Stigma messes with our heads and hearts, but it can harm much more than our health. Taken too far, stigma can sometimes cause us to lose our income, housing, family and friends. Click here to read how each of us can help fight the flames of HIV stigma.

To read my complete letter from the editor, click here.

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