Using New Media in HIV Prevention

August 31, 2009 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

The CDC's 2009 HIV Prevention Conference in Atlanta was inspirational. From the opening session (which included a wonderful speech by Regan Hofmann, *POZ*'s editor-in-chief) to the closing session, I saw a great mix of people dedicated to finding new methods for HIV prevention.

Using new media in HIV prevention was a theme throughout the conference, including a social media lab where people could drop in for hands-on peer-to-peer tutoring on using new media (I was a volunteer tutor). On Tuesday, August 25, Michelle Samplin-Salgado, new media strategist at AIDS.gov, moderated the session that I was a panelist on titled "Voices from the Public and Private Sector on Using New Media in Response to HIV/AIDS."

My fellow panelists included: Erik Ireland from the San Francisco AIDS Foundation (SFAF), who described the ins and outs of podcasting and The SFAF Podcast; David Novak from Online Buddies, Inc., which owns the gay social networking site Manhunt, who explained their STI partner notification initiative called Manhunt Cares; and Andy Woodruff from ISIS, Inc., who detailed two of their HIV prevention text-messaging campaigns, SexInfo and Hookup.

In the photo, from left: Samplin-Salgado, Ireland, me, Novak and Woodruff.

I talked about the new media strategies we use here at *POZ*, including POZ TV and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. I spent most of my time talking about lessons I learned in my first year as a blogger for the POZ Blogs.

We had a full audience for our panel and the social media lab was constantly busy while I was there. I hope that attendees to both found our suggestions useful.

Thanks to all of the folks at the CDC and at AIDS.gov for making my experience as a panelist so enjoyable!

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