



627 West Genesee Street
Syracuse, New York 13204

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August/September 2011

28 Years AIDS Community Resources



Viewpoint By Michael Crinnin Executive Director



A very long process it's been: I am however, pleased to report that AIDS Community Resources has just received a waiver from the NYS Department of Health to begin a "Syringe Exchange Program" (SEP) in the Syracuse region – a program that will allow us to distribute clean syringes (needles) to those who inject drugs (legal and illegal) in exchange for their used syringes, which we will then safely dispose of.

Decades of studies and statistics around the globe have unequivocally demonstrated that HIV infections (as well as Hepatitis C infections) within injecting drug using populations decrease dramatically with the introduction of syringe exchange programs: if clean needles are available, those who inject will choose to use them. This may seem more than apparent and come as little surprise to you, but not so for many politicians (vs. physicians) who have clamored against such programs with all manner of rants stubbornly refusing to fund them: facts be damned. People who inject drugs have always been perfect targets for political bluster about morality and depravity. The same people who believe giving condoms to teens will cause them to have sex, believe making clean syringes available will create intravenous drug users: I disagree...

CNY is the last region of the State to be covered by this vital prevention initiative. I will not bore you with the politics that kept this initiative from being introduced here 17 years ago. Instead I honor the local political/

Continued on page 3

Serving
Cayuga,
Herkimer,
Jefferson,
Lewis,
Madison,
Oneida,
Onondaga,
Oswego,
St. Lawrence
Counties

A new weapon
in the fight
against AIDS.
Turn to page 5...



www.aidscommunityresources.com



IF YOU WISH TO UNSUBSCRIBE FROM THIS NEWSLETTER, CALL 800.475.2430

Or e-mail: information@AIDSCommunityResources.com

Or mail in the back of this newsletter to:
AIDS Community Resources • 627 West Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 9, 2011
eQuality Film Fest '11 Doors open 1:00 p.m.
Palace Theater 2384 James Street, Syracuse
www.AIDSCommunityResources.com

October 16, 2011
12th Annual First Frost AIDS Walk/Run
5K fundraising walk/run at Thompson Park Zoo in Watertown.
www.AIDSwalkCNY.com

October 20, 2011
A Time to Remember
Saranac Brewery, Utica, 5:30-8:00 p.m. For tickets call
1.800.475.2430 or www.AIDSCommunityResources.com

December 1, 2011
World AIDS Day
Remembrance service at 7:30 a.m. at LeMoyne College's
Panasci Chapel.

November - December 2011
Holiday Angels
Join us as we brighten the holiday season for those affected
by HIV and AIDS by providing needed items for our clients.
Call 800.475.2430 for more information.

November - December 2011
2011 Commemorative Holiday Ornament
15th anniversary edition titled "Joy and Wonder Fill the Sea-
son," a stunning design of a stocking stuffed with presents.
Call 800.475.2430.

January 21, 2012
Sled for Red
Cardboard Sledding Derby at Four Seasons Golf and Ski
Resort. Register by calling 800.475.2430

February 3-5, 2011
Heart to Heart Tennis Event
Call 451.5050 to register your team to play.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION FORUMS

All are welcome. The forum provides HIV education to members of the community and those interested in becoming volunteers. Events are held monthly in both Syracuse and Utica. To sign up for Syracuse, call 475.2430. In Utica, call 793.0661.

LGBTQ YOUTH SUPPORT GROUPS

SYRACUSE YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS: Q Center • 617 West Genesee Street • Syracuse, NY 13204

LGBTQ [ages 13-18]: Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
TRANSYOUTH [ages 14-24]: 1st Wednesday, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
TRANSPARENT : 1st Wednesday, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Q KIDS [ages 8-12]: 2nd Wednesday, 4:30-6:00 p.m.
CONVERSATIONS OF COLOR [ages 13-22]: 3rd Wednesday, 4:00-6:00 p.m.
STEPPIN' OUT [ages 19-22]: Thursdays, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
COLAGE [for children of LGBTQ parents] [ages 8-12]: 4th Monday: 4:00-6:00 p.m.

For further information: qcenter@AIDSCommunityResources.com

AUBURN LGBTQ YOUTH SUPPORT GROUP:
1st and 3rd Wednesday, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. • 315.701.2422 or auburnyouthgroup@yahoo.com

UTICA LGBTQ YOUTH GROUP:
Thursdays 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
For locations and further information, contact Mary Doody at 315.701.2422 or glbtqyouth@AIDSCommunityResources.com

WATERTOWN AREA GAY YOUTH GROUP:
Tuesdays 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. • For information, call Angela, 386.4493 x 151, or Bill 529.4096

This newsletter is printed with soy ink

AIDS COMMUNITY RESOURCES

is a not-for-profit, community-based organization, supported by both public and private funds, bringing information, education, direct services, referrals, and advocacy to everyone in our nine-county region who needs help with HIV/AIDS.

MICHAEL CRINNIN
Executive Director

JASON CENTOLELLA
Chair

JOHN KING
Vice-Chair

JERENA BARKINS
Secretary

SUZANNE KONDR-DEFURIA
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CARI MCAVOY
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Utica, NY 13502
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230 Franklin St.
Watertown, NY 13601
315.785.8222 • Fax 315.836.0033

ACR in Canton
101 Main Street – 3rd floor
Canton, NY 13617
315.386.4493 • Fax 315.386.2530

ACR in Auburn
34 Wright Avenue
Auburn, NY 13021
315.282.0005 • Fax 315.282.0002

ACR in Oswego
10 George St.
Oswego, NY 13126
315.343.7778 • Fax 315.343.4663

Newsletter Editor
Jean Kessner

Summer "Camps" a BIG hit at the Q

The Q Center @ ACR offered workshops this summer in filmmaking, theater, and photography. In the last, professional photographer Paul Riccardi helped eight budding shutterbugs hone their photography skills and train a new eye on their world.

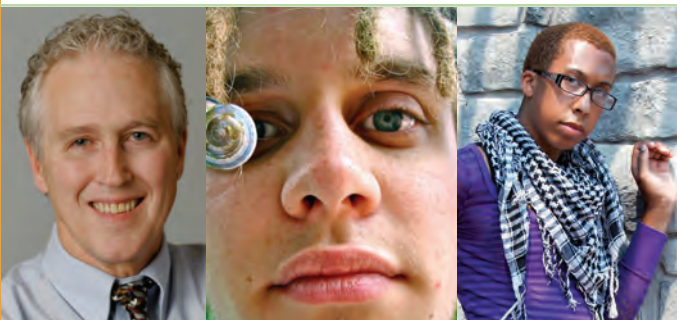
Their first expedition was in essence a scavenger hunt in downtown Syracuse with assignments to find something wet, or red, or weathered, or shiny. Once they adjusted their sights, the eight learned to focus on elements they'd missed, which enabled them to turn very ordinary items into engaging art. Those shoes - that cup - that streetlight - were all a new take on everyday objects.

It's a useful exercise, according to their mentor. "I look at the world differently through a camera lens," Paul said. "Without it, I see the big picture; with a camera I see details."

Their second day assignment was more introspective: tell a story about who you are and illustrate it by taking pictures of what you see. Deshawn was new to photography, preferred posing for other photographers or using a tripod for self portraits, he absorbed Paul's message. "When you change the angle of the camera, the picture takes on a whole different perspective. It's like what the Q Center did for me."

Brennen chose to shoot the world around him and was not the least interested in self portraits. "Brennen has a very a unique perspective," said Mr. Riccardi. "He sees the things other people take for granted, and he highlights the beauty in them. He's very good." Brennen is an art major in college and has been a Q Center regular for a number of years.

Paul Riccardi said most people walk through life and either don't notice their surroundings or just taken them for granted. There's a lot of unexpected beauty waiting just around the corner, he said, and that's what eight youth from the Q Center learned at summer camp.



Left to right:
Paul Riccardi spent three days teaching the art of photography at the Q Center.
Brennen, studying a potential photo.
Deshawn preferred being on the other side of the lens.

OUR MISSION

The Mission of AIDS Community Resources is three-fold:

- To prevent the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases;
- To provide support services to those who are living with HIV/AIDS; and
- To promote sexual literacy and improved medical outcomes.

Continued from page 1

government support we currently receive: from the Mayor, from the County Executive, from the Chief of Police, from the County Commissioner of Health – to name a few. Numerous human service agencies including the United Way (who for years has provided funding for our outreach services to IV drug users) support and celebrate the introduction of this strategic service. Common sense and enlightenment have foot holds within Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse. Credit is due.

I've learned a lot about injecting drug users since taking this job. Perhaps, better said, I've learned a lot about my own biases against those who inject. I've learned about how little I know, and I've learned to listen: a work in progress. Our clients who list injection drug use as their route of HIV infection (approx 16% of our nine county caseload) also happen to be our most 'adherent' clients: they are diligent in taking their HIV medications (critical when it comes to the drugs' efficacy). Who would have guessed: clearly against a stereotype. I suspect with the initiation of SEP we as an agency will learn a great deal more about this oft demonized demographic. I look forward to it.

Briefly, our program will be mobile and twofold: 1. a specially equipped van will park in targeted high incidence neighborhoods on a routine basis to exchange needles and 2. 'peers' (former and/or current IV users) with backpacks of syringes will, through word of mouth or first-hand experience, walk targeted neighborhoods to engage with lone individuals and/or those in 'shooting galleries' to exchange clean syringes for used syringes.

More to share as the program gets going. For now we're happy to be part of a health initiative long overdue to a population long dismissed.

Michael King

Final tally reaches **\$197,895** for
19th Annual AIDS Walk/Run

Final figures from AIDS Community Resources' 19th Annual AIDS Walk/Run now total \$197,895 – an increase of more than \$11,000 from the total announced at the end of the event at Beaver Lake Nature Center June 5, 2011 (\$186,598).

ACR Development Director, Carrie Large, credits the dedication of the participants working hard to raise more money than they ever have and encouraging the friends and family to join them at the event. A record ninety people earned their way into the exclusive \$500 Club, making them eligible to attend an all-expenses-paid, prize-filled luncheon sponsored by Outback Steakhouse of Clay.

Another contributing factor of success was that the 19th Annual AIDS Walk/Run, presented by Empower and UPS, occurred on the same day as a key AIDS milestone: June 5 signified 30 years since publication of the first medical article about the disease eventually known as AIDS.



July 23, 2011, Clay ~

Many thanks to the crew of Outback Steakhouse near Great Northern Mall: Dan Streeeter, Rebecca Harmon, Kristen Woods, Crystal Thomas, Brad Woodard, Dan Zimmerman, and Chad Reidy for the great service and scrumptious food at the \$500 Club party. Working hard but not pictured: Megan Granteed, Alecia Geno, and Ken Stauffer.

New Programs **EXPAND** work of AIDS Community Resources

Criminal Justice Initiative: new jobs for the North Country

AIDS Community Resources has launched a new Criminal Justice Initiative, funded with \$306,205 state and federal dollars, to provide comprehensive HIV, STD, and Hepatitis prevention programs for inmates. When fully staffed, the CJi will have created six new jobs, with four of them located in the North Country.

The program teaches individual and skills building group prevention services to individuals housed in eight New York State Department of Corrections facilities in the Watertown and Elmira HUBS. "It is important that incarcerated men have an understanding of behaviors that place them at risk for HIV, hepatitis and other STDs," said ACR's Director of Prevention Services, Wenona Wake. "Some men are engaging in unprotected sex (condoms are not available) and some are getting tattoos, both of which place them at high-risk for the transmission and/or acquisition of HIV, viral hepatitis, and other STDs."

SERVICES OFFERED INCLUDE:

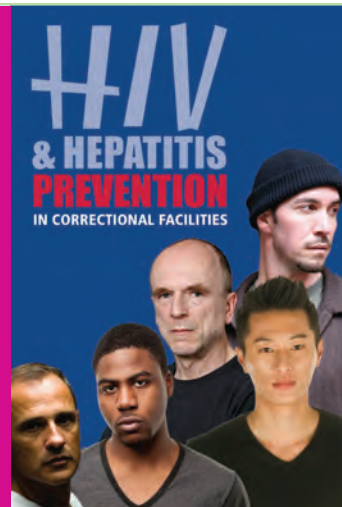
- Educational presentations on the topics of HIV, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), Hepatitis, and contributing co-factors.
- Comprehensive peer trainings to provide skills, knowledge, and tools necessary to perform HIV/STD presentations.
- An advisory board which provides an opportunity for inmates to give feedback and suggestions for improving and modifying the program's services.
- Individual prevention counseling that encourages safer and healthier lifestyles through educating about HIV/AIDS, STDs, Hepatitis A, B, and C, behavior modification, substance abuse prevention, self esteem building, and improving communication skills.
- Transitional planning to assist individuals living with HIV/AIDS who are returning to the community.
- Healthy relationships training to assist with issues surrounding disclosure of their HIV positive status and coping skills.
- HIV counseling and testing.



Criminal Justice Initiative (CJI) Team, left to right: Jerry Pearson, CJI Coordinator Tim Connor, Bonnie Towles, Derek Villnave, and Dale Woolson.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES SERVED:

- Auburn Correctional Facility**
Auburn, New York
- Butler Correctional Facility**
Red Creek, New York
- Cape Vincent Correctional Facility**
Cape Vincent, New York
- Five Points Correctional Facility**
Romulus, New York
- Gouverneur Correctional Facility**
Gouverneur, New York
- Ogdensburg Correctional Facility**
Ogdensburg, New York
- Riverview Correctional Facility**
Ogdensburg, New York
- Watertown Correctional Facility**
Watertown, New York



Syringe Exchange Program: lower infections rates for CNY



After more than a decade, AIDS Community Resources has been cleared to operate a groundbreaking Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) on the streets of Syracuse, a program designed to reduce the number of HIV and Hepatitis C infections, and possibly shepherd injection drug users into treatment programs. New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) deemed SEP necessary to public health, and is investing \$235,000 (including the purchase of a mobile unit) to counter a serious health threat in Onondaga County.

- More than 600 AIDS cases have been reported that included injection drug use as risk factor.
 - Out of all persons living with HIV/AIDS in this region, more than 300 have a history of drug injection, and make up 18% of all living cases.
 - 398 Hepatitis C infections for Onondaga County occurred in 2008.
- "Getting syringes into the hands of injection drug users would immediately lower the infection rates of both hepatitis C and HIV," said ACR Executive Director, Michael Crinnin, who predicted the Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) will establish itself quickly in Syracuse as it did in Buffalo, Ithaca, and Rochester.

ACR received strong support from Central New York elected leaders and police agencies in its application to NYSDOH. The SEP is designed to educate injection drug users, indigent diabetics, steroid and hormone users, who are at highest risk of contracting or transmitting HIV through unsafe injection practices. The program will offer injectors, their sexual partners and family members a bridge to health care, social services, mental health programs, HIV counseling and testing, detox, drug and alcohol treatment and other services. Trained SEP volunteers will distribute syringes from a SEP mobile unit and backpacks as they meet people in their own neighborhoods, providing a consistent non-threatening forum for syringe exchange, HIV education, and referral to other needed services.

ACR wants community feedback and is establishing the ACR/SEP Community Advisory Board. We'll have more on that later as this exciting SEP program ramps up in the coming weeks.

Health Care Reform and you: the Affordable Care Act.

You have questions ? We have answers !

AIDS Community Resources is offering a new service, Community Health Advocates Training, to bring New Yorkers up to date about changes due to the new federal health care law.

Although the federal **Health Care Reform and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)** does not fully take effect until 2014, some changes affecting health insurance and health care have taken place already.

Through these community trainings, learn the rationale behind health reform, how it impacts all New Yorkers, and the changes in health insurance rules for families, children, young adults, seniors and women's health. This one-hour informational session may help dispel some misinformation and help you educate your friends, family and co-workers about this landmark decision.

For more information, contact AIDS Community Resources at 800.475.2430 or information@AIDSCommunityResources.com.



Who knew

what volunteering

would lead to?

Newlywed couple met while volunteering at ACR

On August 5, two good friends of AIDS Community Resources were married. They had already selected the date and planned to wed in another state, but when New York adopted marriage equality, they moved their ceremony home to Syracuse so they could include more family and friends. One important friend on the guest list was Mary Doody, the person who, by happenstance, set the love affair in motion.

In the deep winter of 1999, the Stonewall Committee was holding February Flicks - LGBT themed movies - on Friday evenings and Marnie Annese was looking for something meaningful to occupy her time. She volunteered that movie night to help AIDS Community Resources at a silent auction to raise money for its LGBT youth group (later the Q Center). ACR Director of Volunteer Services, Mary Doody, wanted two at the table and asked another young woman, Annemarie Deegan, to help.

"Annemarie caught my eye immediately," Marnie said, "but there was another young woman in close proximity and they were chatty and friendly, so I thought they were together." Still, Annemarie intrigued her and when Marnie went home that night she emailed her friends about the "young woman" she had just met. Annemarie was attracted by the bold orange jacket and the fact that that Marnie was so "out there." Annemarie was always a little more shy. "I really have to thank Mary for helping facilitate the beginning of Marnie and my relationship," said Annemarie. "I'm not always so bold about things like dating so it was very helpful for me to have Mary there."

Marnie and Annemarie eventually got together - again with help. Their first date was a double date with Mary and her partner at the time. "We've been together ever since and even though I would probably have never admitted it before now, I always knew that she would be the one I would spend the rest of my life with," Marnie said. They nurtured their relationship with AIDS Community Resources as well, helping with mailings, clerical duties, and events, but that was the easy stuff. "Annemarie and I did the Boston to NYC bicycle ride in 1998," said Mary Doody. "Both Marnie and Annemarie fundraised and rode in the Empire State AIDS Ride with me in 2008 and have volunteered for AIDS Walk/Run for years."

Marnie and Annemarie feel an obligation of sorts since they credit Mary and ACR for bringing them together. "But more importantly," said Marnie, "I know that whatever small amount I can contribute in time, money, or goods, is put to good use and is appreciated."

Mary Doody says Marnie and Annemarie are a perfect compliment to each other, but she admits she wasn't thinking of them as a couple in 1999 when she assigned them to the same table. As she always tells volunteers, "Many times a person gets much more than they expect from volunteering."



Mary Doody with Marnie and Annemarie at their wedding ceremony in Franklin Square.

"Many times a person gets much more than they expect from volunteering."

Mary Doody

Annemarie and Marnie wrote their own vows and enjoyed the moment they had been waiting for for years as they made a public commitment to each other.

Syracuse City Court Judge Rory McMahon officiated at the ceremony, which was attended by a number of City of Syracuse officials. Annemarie works for the Syracuse Parks Department. Marnie is employed by Onondaga County.



A Syracuse

first!

eQuality film fest '11

The First Annual eQuality Film Fest, benefiting the Q Center, will take place at Palace Theatre on October 9, 2011 and feature the award winning documentary film *Inlaws and OUTLAWS* by Nottingham graduate Drew Emery. Emery will be at the Palace for a VIP reception and talkback following the 4:30 p.m. showing.

Film Fest goers will also have the opportunity to see a 2011 Sundance award winner *CoDependent Lesbian Space Alien Seeks Same*, before it is nationally distributed. The showing is at 7:30. Doors open at 1:00 p.m. with local favorite *Fagbug* playing at 2:00. Local filmmaker Erin Davies will be on hand with the VW bug. Photos are welcome.

eQuality film fest is the brain child of Q Center Development Director Maureen Harrington O'Neill. "I was surprised that there was no long standing gay film fest in my city, given the amazing amount of gay owned and operated businesses and strong open community that we have here in Syracuse."

Get your tickets now for an all day LGBTQ-themed film festival with three award winning films. www.AIDSCommunityResources.com • 800.475.2430
• One film \$10 • All day pass \$25 • VIP pass \$50



"The central belief to all my work is that story is transformative... and the true story has an unassailable appeal. Authenticity is increasingly being sought out by audiences - and they know it when they see it." Drew Emery

In the North Country...

First Frost AIDS Walk/Run gains new partner and advocate



Ivy Sanford Harrell is marketing coordinator for Northern Lights Chiropractic which will be doing free spinal checks at the First Frost AIDS Walk/Run October 16.

Northern Lights Chiropractic in Watertown, is devoting time, energy, and money as a new sponsor of the 12th Annual First Frost AIDS Walk/Run to be held October 16, 2011 at the NYS Zoo and Thompson Park.

Ivy Sanford-Harrell, who works at Northern Lights Chiropractic, decided to form a team after reading about the need for youth prevention education in the North Country. "I was stunned by the youth HIV and STD stats," she said, after reading information in the First Frost AIDS Walk/Run Team Captain Kit. "I kept going around the office and telling my co-workers, in shock, **how half of all HIV infections are in people under the age of 24, and that one in four teenaged girls has a sexually transmitted disease.** I just needed to do something to help stop that."

Northern Lights Chiropractic will highlight AIDS Community Resources at the Outdoor Wellness Fair, in their parking lot on Arsenal Street in Watertown, on September 17th, from noon-4:00 p.m. Come for health information and get a tour of ACR's new North Country Safety First mobile unit.

To get your Team Captain Kit for the 12th Annual First Frost AIDS Walk/Run, sponsored by Empower Federal Credit Union, call 800.475.2430 or visit AIDSwalkCNY.com. The event begins at 1:00 p.m. on October 16, with registration beginning at 11:30 a.m.

12th Annual "First Frost" AIDS Walk/Run
5K Fundraising Walk
5K Fundraising Run

presented by:

