



27 Years
AIDS Community Resources

Viewpoint By Michael Crinnin
Executive Director



Unlike the 'old days', I don't have the same kind of opportunity to meet most of our clients. Our services are more home-based now: meeting clients where they live and gather. One way I do see and engage with those we serve is within the context of a larger event – in particular one of our 3 AIDS Walks/Runs (Mohawk Valley, CNY, and North Country). With each passing year more and more of our clients participate in these events, and again, unlike the 'old days', people living with HIV/AIDS are now pretty much indistinguishable from the general throng. It's a wonderful surprise to have people excitedly approach me during the Walks and identify themselves as working with one of our staff/participating in one of our programs.

All this to say, as I hustled from a (far!) parking lot at Hamilton College (on my way to registration for our recent Mohawk Valley AIDS Hike For Life), I found past images come hurtling back. I was rapidly gaining on the (very) slow progress of two individuals, one of whom, a thin young man, was using a walker. I knew immediately I was about to meet the 'Cover Boy' of our agency 2009 calendar: Dayne

Right off I have to say, Dayne is 'a trip'! I'm not sure how else to put it... I've known about him for years: diagnosed HIV/AIDS at 5 years old, just after his mother died of AIDS (he recently turned 22), Dayne has been playing touch and go with death for the last decade. But I am ahead of my story. I caught up with both Dayne (and the woman, who turned out to be a health aide) and introduced myself. Neither Dayne nor I missed a beat: apparently he knew about me for years as well. Formalities dismissed. Slow and steady, like the tortoise, his words and his steps. Not a bashful bone in his body as far as I could discern, talking about the upcoming event and his pleasure at being part of it. This was a first for him: the last two years he was too sick to participate.

Continued on page 3

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Madison,
Oneida,
Onondaga,
Oswego,
St. Lawrence
Counties



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.

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Newsletter Editor
Jean Kessner

Our Platoon on the march

ACR employees and TATF members can stand down! The 'Adopt a Platoon' campaign, which began last fall and was to have lasted a year and a half, is over. Development Director Carrie Large received this email message from 1LT Dennis Keslar in Iraq: *All the guys are doing great and really appreciate the support. Due to a time of transition we can no longer receive packages. I will keep you informed as much as I can. Again, I would like to thank you for everything.*

"We had tremendous support from the community for 'our' soldiers. I can't thank everybody enough," said Ms. Large. Fort Drum said they'd let ACR know when the 32-member 2nd Platoon, A Company, 4-31 Infantry Battalion returns. "We hope to be there to greet them," said Ms. Large.

October 7, 2009, Indian River—TATF students met ACR's adopted platoon. Indian River is one of many TATF chapters in ACR's nine county service area to participate in the platoon project.



Age Strong! Live Long! Play Safe!



AIDS Community Resources is joining the nationwide "Older Americans" celebration this month with a special reminder that **HIV does not discriminate and age is no protection.** This year's Older Americans Month theme is *Age Strong! Live Long! (we added Play Safe!)*

At ACR, 36% of persons receiving Support Services are aged 50 and older. Never practice unprotected sex with a partner whose HIV status you do not know – no matter what your age. For more information contact Mary Doody at 1.800.475.2430.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports:

In 2005 persons aged 50 and over accounted for

- 15% of new HIV/AIDS diagnoses
- 24% of persons living with HIV/AIDS
- 35% of all deaths of persons with AIDS

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

I had to slow down as well – my hearing and my walking - if I was interested in any kind of connection. Surprisingly difficult and humbling – a reversal of the ‘natural order’: the old guy waiting up for the young guy/the young guy teaching the old guy – about patience, determination, optimism, dreams...

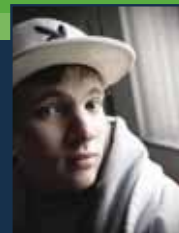
In the course of his living with AIDS Dayne suffered multiple seizures that left him paralyzed and in a nursing home for almost two years. Dayne’s funeral arrangements have long been made. He knows first-hand what it’s like to have no mobility - no speech... On one hand the resources available to Dayne, on multiple levels, are very limited. Dayne however is busy spinning gold from straw, and in that short walk we took with one another, I experienced the wealth of his resourcefulness.

Dayne moved into his own apartment in January. He now controls his own money. Along with keeping at his many therapies, finding a girlfriend is high on his list of priorities. Being ‘part of the (HIV) solution’ is high on his list of priorities. That’s what he was doing there that cold April day (the presence of coeds notwithstanding...).

Dayne is a reminder and a promise: the crippling potential of HIV and the resilience of the human body fired by a determined spirit...

Dayne, as they say, ‘walks the walk’ as well as ‘talks the talk’... at a pace designed to engage and connect and heal...

My suggestion: always park in the far lot...



2009

26 years
AIDS Community Resources

1983 - until it's over

“Dayne is a reminder and a promise: the crippling potential of HIV and the resilience of the human body fired by a determined spirit...”

Slur **PLASTERED** over HIV message on billboard

Vandals spray-painted the word “FAGS” over the HIV prevention message on a billboard in the Valley section of Syracuse in early May.

AIDS Community Resources volunteer Kathleen Westers spotted the vandalism as she drove by. “I just think this is mean,” Ms. Westers said. “Why would anybody want to put such a slur on a billboard?”

Upon learning about the defaced sign, AIDS Community Resources Development contacted the billboard company, and by the next morning, the billboard had been replaced. “I was surprised and grateful at how fast they took care of the problem,” said AIDS Community Resources Development Director Carrie Large, who had made the call to Lamar.

The vandalism comes at a time when Onondaga County officials are trying to get the word out about the spike in HIV cases in young gay men. Derogatory comments about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons are nothing new to those who work in the field of HIV prevention. The stigma that only gay men get HIV is misleading. Anyone who has unprotected sex or shares needles is equally at risk of acquiring HIV/AIDS.

Vandals deface HIV awareness billboard at Valley Drive and Cortland Place in Syracuse.



In the Mohawk Valley... Hamilton Hospital

From the moment volunteers started collecting money and handing out crowns (awarded for raising \$500 or more) they knew the 12th Annual AIDS Hike for Life, presented by Empower Federal Credit Union, would be a fundraising success. The biggest AIDS event in the Mohawk Valley, held at Hamilton College in Clinton on Sunday, April 25th together raised \$40,462 – up \$8,000 from last year's total and an amazing feat in tough economic times. "I'm thrilled and amazed. Even the weather cooperated with AIDS Community Resources," said ACR Development Director, Carrie Large. Though rain had been forecast the AIDS Hike for Life and the awards ceremony afterwards were high and dry.

Along the 5K trail that snaked through the beautiful Hamilton College campus, runners and walkers read a "Burma Shave" series of information signs. Did you know, the signs read, that:

- 56,300 people are infected with HIV every year in the U.S?
- Young people 13-29 years of age account for 34% of new HIV infections?
- Half of those newly infected with HIV are under the age of 24?
- Half of sexually-active young people will contract an STD by age 25 – and most won't know it?
- One in four teenaged girls has an STD?
- Most young people are infected with HIV through sexual activity?



Bank of New York Mellon takes top fundraising honors with \$5,897 on the day of the event.



Cowboys Angels, Tamara Delgado's team, was third highest fundraising team with \$1,654.



Green Hikers is the second highest fundraiser. They also won the prize for the team with the most...



Alan Nower, top individual fundraiser for the AIDS Hike for Life with \$2,152, and Cynthia Lewis, Alan's sister.



Tin Foil Aliens wins the "Most Creative Team" designation for the second consecutive year.



Brian Noonan got a jump start on fundraising with a \$1,000 donation from Wal-Mart. His grand total was \$1,265, making him the second highest fundraiser.



Top fundraising Hamilton College...

Community wins the day – ACR *benefits*



5k Winners

Fastest Female Runners: Elsie Love, Janine Zenzillo, Ashlee Styles
 Fastest Male Runners: Andrew Pape, Mark Garcia, Keith Willner

AIDS Community Resources wants to thank our sponsors for their invaluable assistance:

Title Sponsor: Empower Federal Credit Union

Jogger Sponsor: GLAM at MetLife

Walker Sponsor: The Hartford

Friend Sponsors: Oneida Savings Bank & Price Chopper

Trail Marker Sponsors: BNY Mellon Prism, Nower Family, Rome Memorial Hospital, SM Marketing

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Media Sponsors: KISS FM 97.9 & 105.5 and Bug Country 101.1 & 99.7.



...ng team with \$3,818.
 ...e most members – 21.



Jennifer Woodman says BNY Mellon employees supported the team through the purchase of a week of casual dress and a 50% Company match. She raised \$1,144 making her the third highest individual fundraiser.



Clifton Fine TATF wins second place, fundraising \$292.



...ge team, Ferg 207, raised \$3,863.



Alyssa Peters and Mিকেle Fungari tied as top TATF individual fundraisers with \$100 each.



Canastota's Teen AIDS Task Force chapter took home top honors with \$500 total fundraised. See page 6 for a behind the scenes look at their fundraising strategy.



Jeannine Murtaugh, Career Center team captain, turned in \$1,393, becoming the second highest fundraising college team.

Fundraising strategies for TATF



March 36, 2010~The Canastota Teen AIDS Task Force worked very hard to raise enough money to win the Top TATF Trophy at the AIDS Hike for Life. This photo was taken the day they held a school dance. Advisor Stacey Stagnitti says the dance was fun – and educational. TATF teens interrupted the dance on several occasions to present HIV local and global statistics and prevention information.

Westhill High TATF members take responsibility for the next generation

“Sneetches” is a story that demonstrates how it feels to be left out, put down, and bullied by others. The children of Cherry Hill elementary school were ecstatic when Westhill Teen AIDS Task Force members performed “Sneetches” for them. The children clearly loved the play and interacting with the older kids. “I have never seen that many kids enjoying themselves together and I have to give a credit and a very special thank you to Debbie D’Angelo who organized the whole event,” said TATF Educator Jana Gaeta.

After the skit, TATF members helped the fourth graders brainstorm answers to why people bully, what should people do when they see bullying or are bullied themselves, who should people tell when they are bullied and what are the signs of bullying. TATF teens handed out “warm fuzzies” while explaining that by complimenting others and showing appreciation for the qualities of others, everyone can feel better about who they are. Teens shone like stars and did a phenomenal job, said Ms. Gaeta. “For everybody who was in the room that day it was obvious that Westhill students enjoyed their roles as teachers. I am very fortunate for having a chance to work with such a dedicated person as TATF Adviser Debbie D’Angelo who organized one of the best events of the year.”



Westhill High School Teen AIDS Task Force members performed “Sneetches” by Dr. Seuss at Cherry Road Elementary School on Friday, March 12th, 2010 for four groups of about forty children each.

GET INVOLVED! No one should walk alone!

Form a team, raise lots of money and wear a crown at the AIDS Walk/Run. See you at Beaver Lake Nature Center June 6. AIDSwalkCNY.com



Women *empowered* to seek sexual health and safety

While Onondaga County has seen a spike in HIV infections in men under the age of 25, African-American and Hispanic women face continued threat from HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. At AIDS Community Resources' "A Feast of Empowerment" on Saturday, April 24, Denise Welch provided women of color with information they need to stay sexually safe and healthy.

"I talk to them woman to woman," said Ms. Welch, COC Coordinator/HIV Prevention Specialist at AIDS Community Resources. "I am a woman of color and I understand that low levels of self esteem, self confidence, and self worth can make a woman not want to change. They fear that they will lose what they believe to be the best and possibly the only partner they can get."

"Feast of Empowerment" is a service of AIDS Community Resources' Communities of Color program.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports:

- Black women account for 66% of AIDS cases among women 13 and older, though they represent only 12% of the population.
- Latinas account for 15% of AIDS cases, but represent only 13% of the population.
- New York has the highest number of women living with AIDS: 22,532.
- AIDS was the leading cause of death for black women (including African American women) aged 25–34 years (2004).
- 64% of women with HIV/AIDS have annual incomes below \$10,000.

The informational forum for African American women at the Bob Cecile Community Center in Syracuse provided a day of lessons on empowerment from prominent local women of color representing the faith ministries, healthcare, advocates for victims of domestic violence, and disease prevention specialists.

Three who enjoyed the day, left to right: Monica Tripp, Amber Miller, and Diane Miller.



FIND OUT IF YOU HAVE HIV!



Health officials are implementing a "sustained effort" to raise community awareness and educate young people about the dangers of HIV infection from unprotected sex, following a spike in HIV cases among young people aged 25 and under in Onondaga County earlier this year. While there have been no new reported HIV cases related to the earlier outbreak, health officials have noted an increase in calls from the public and demand for HIV counseling and testing services. To arrange for a test call:

AIDS Community Resources – 475.2430

Onondaga County Health Department – 435.3685

New York State Department of Health – 800.562.9423



627 West Genesee Street
Syracuse, New York 13204

ACR offers its services to anyone without discrimination based on age, race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, political affiliation, marital status, handicapped status, or mode of transmission.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

June 3, 2010

Happy Hour Collection

Come to Syracuse Suds, turn in your fundraised money, then eat and drink FOR FREE from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. 320 South Clinton Street, Syracuse.

June 4&5, 2010

AIDS Walk/Run Pre-Event Collection

Register yourself and your team to avoid lines on June 6. 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. on June 4 and 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. on June 5, at ACR Headquarters, 627 West Genesee Street, Syracuse.

June 6, 2010

18th Annual AIDS Walk/Run

5K fundraising walk, 10K timed run at Beaver Lake Nature Center.
www.AIDSwalkCNY.com

October 17, 2010

11th Annual First Frost AIDS Walk/Run

5K fundraising walk and 5K timed run at Thompson Park in Watertown.
www.AIDSwalkCNY.com

PEER/VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Orientation sessions for new peers and volunteers are held twice monthly in both Syracuse and Utica. In Syracuse, call 475.2430. To sign up in Utica, call 793.0661.


SUPPORT GROUPS

SYRACUSE YOUTH GROUP MEETINGS:

LGBTQ [ages 13-18]: Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
TRANSYOUTH [ages 14-24]: 1st Wednesday, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
STEPPIN' OUT [ages 19-22]: Thursdays, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
For location and further information: qcenter@AIDSCommunityResources.com

UTICA LGBTQ YOUTH GROUP:

New Time, New Location. Thursdays 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
For locations and further information, contact Mary Doody at 315.701.2422 or glbtqyouth@AIDSCommunityResources.com

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