



25 Years  
AIDS Community Resources

# Viewpoint

By Michael Crinnin  
Executive Director



Too much coming at us (at everyone!) with 'the bad' crowding out 'the good' (There is always good stuff...). What happened to the days when we would spend our time developing and delivering services to those living with HIV/AIDS in nine counties (way more than a full time job as it was!)...?

Now a big part of everyday for a lot of us here is about how to maintain core services as funding gets slashed. Once again we are on the chopping block due to the NYS budget deficit. As it is, we trim; we eliminate; we offer part-time; we garner available volunteers; we call, and write and meet with legislators; we seek other funding sources; we write grants; we pitch proposals to foundations; we participate in the United Way activities of 3 counties; we bust our butts to plan and conduct fundraising activities in all 3 of our regions; we testify at hearings; we keep our fingers crossed that 'gridlock' loosens on both the State and Federal level so promised funds will finally flow... There is no end point.

What follows is the text of a letter I recently sent to our state representatives (and then again as testimony to the NYS Ways and Means Committee) FYI: Albany dropped two bombshells on us last week. The first was the enclosed press release from New York State's Health Commissioner with the headline: HIV/AIDS Continues to Take Tremendous Toll on New Yorkers; More People Living with HIV/AIDS in New York than in any Other State. The second was Governor Paterson's Deficit Reduction Plan, which would cut AIDS Community Resources (Again!) and all Community Service Programs (CSPs) by 10% this year and 10% next year.

It is astounding to, on one hand, report the glaring and continuing

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

They were voted  
"most creative  
team."  
Turn to page 4  
to find out why.



## 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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Executive Director

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Newsletter Editor

Jean Kessner

In Central New York...

## MacKenzie-Childs contest raises **\$9,000** for ACR

Last summer, the Aurora MacKenzie-Childs store held a month-long Table-Top Design Event. Five designers were invited to create "tablescapes" showcasing MacKenzie-Childs dinnerware and home furnishings. Visitors to the store were invited to vote for their favorite tabletop design. Each designer selected a charity that would benefit - receiving 15% of the store's proceeds on the day of the event, if that designer was the winner. Winning designer Katie Hess of Belle Interior Designs selected AIDS Community Resources as her charity and that 15% amounted to \$9,000. Congratulations and thank you Katie Hess!



July 12, 2009, Aurora, New York~ Lee Feldman, CEO Mackenzie-Childs, Katie Hess of Belle Interior Designs, Winning Designer; Pam Porter, Aurora Store Manager, and Jamie DeVault Director of Retail Stores and Trade Development.



In Central New York...

## Wal-Mart store *Supports* youth programming

Wil Murtaugh thanks Ashley and Jill from the Cicero Wal-Mart. The store's \$1,000 contribution came at just the right time to help keep AIDS Community Resources' Adolescent Prevention Programs like the Teen AIDS Task Force and the Q Center strong in these tough economic times.



## 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 wise sexual decision making.

*Continued from page 1*

threat posed by HIV/AIDS in New York State, followed by the same budget proposal and cuts to HIV/AIDS time and time again from the Governor. We acknowledge that New York State is facing difficult economic times. With that said, it is disingenuous to put forth a budget proposal that slashes funding for HIV/AIDS programs, for the third time in two years, and then continue to talk about shared pain and sacrifice. ...?!

There is plenty of wasteful spending on ineffective programs, patronage jobs and public authorities. The Governor simply refuses to target these items and has instead decided to be politically expedient with this very short-sighted proposal.

AIDS Community Resources along with upstate CSPs have had dozens of meetings over the past 18 months where we explained the difference between our core infrastructure funding and our other contract funding. After all the people we met with from Department of Budget and the Governor's office nodded their heads, and said that they understood and that future cuts would be made with precision rather than across the board, we get the same uncreative, harmful approach to budget reduction.

This approach will result in cutting staff and services, period. We simply cannot sustain more cuts to our core infrastructure contracts.

State regulations require us to gather endless statistics and keep exhaustive records. It is a cowardly way-out to make across-the-board slashes that maintain poor programs and cripple good ones. We have shared the pain. On behalf of all those we serve, protect AIDS Community Resources from bleeding to death with further cuts.

Your continued support keeps us going in more ways than you could imagine. Many of you reading are a big part of 'the good stuff' that is so consistent. Thank you.



## Fort Drum: AIDS Community Resources "adopts a platoon"



*October 7, 2009*

Indian River~TATF students meet ACR's adopted platoon. Indian River is one of many TATF chapters in ACR's nine county service area that will participate in the platoon project.

AIDS Community Resources is sponsoring a 32-member platoon from the 10th Mountain Division. ACR staff and Teen AIDS Task Force chapters, and anyone else who wants to help, will send monthly care packages to the 2nd Platoon, A Company, 4-31 Infantry Battalion for the next year to 18 months while they are stationed in Iraq.

Before deploying, the soldiers met with TATF chapter members at Indian River High School, a school district where many students' parents are in the army. "For the TATF members to have the opportunity to actually have one-on-one dialogue with the platoon before they deployed was AMAZING!" said TATF educator Angela Foster. The event gave the members the opportunity to make a personal connection with the soldiers and get the chance to ask what their favorite snack is, what books they want to read, and who their favorite sports team is; and it gave the soldiers a connection to the youth by allowing them to ask about TATF, how and why the members do what they do, and where they want to go with the education that they are receiving through the program. "What the event offered was the chance for soldiers to feel a personal connection to home and the youth involved, a connection to the adult community, and the world at large," Ms. Foster said. "We can't wait to start sending letters and goodies and hope to have the chance to get everyone together again when the platoon returns from Iraq!"

Needed items include hand sanitizer (small travel size), Ziploc bags, magazines, phone cards, hand held games, batteries, fans, individual packets of powdered Gatorade or soups, nuts, and gum. To help us sponsor a soldier, contact Carrie at 800.475.2430 or [clarge@aidscommunityresources.com](mailto:clarge@aidscommunityresources.com) for more information.

# North Country First Frost AIDS Walk/Run

Fantastic autumn weather attracted a huge and enthusiastic crowd Sunday, October 18 for the 2009 First Frost AIDS Walk/Run. Total amount raised now stands at \$39,147. First Frost proceeds were pumped up by a huge fundraising effort on the part of the Friends of Carmen team which brought in an amazing \$10,281.

The strong turnout at the First Frost AIDS Walk/Run remains an essential part in keeping HIV and STD prevention services strong in Northern New York. 366 walkers/runners and volunteers participated in the 5K timed run or walk through the New York State Zoo at Thompson Park.

Success at the 10th Annual First Frost AIDS Walk/Run, presented by Empower Federal Credit Union, took on new significance this year, as AIDS Community Resources is threatened with massive cuts from New York State. "The North Country came out in a big way today," said Wil Murtaugh, ACR's Director of Special Projects/Development. "This community is always very generous supporting programs that help their young people stay safe."

All money donated in the First Frost AIDS Walk/Run supports emergency client services and effective youth prevention programs like the Teen AIDS Task Force in Northern New York. TATF works with schools and community groups to prevent infections of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases in youth.



Watertown High School members dressed as seven dwarves with the theme: "Dwarf AIDS." 3rd highest TATF fundraiser - \$815



Top female runners.



Indian River - top TATF fundraiser



Top Individual Fundraiser - Carmen Sweet - \$7,880.



#2 Fundraising Team - Clueless - \$2,376.



#3 Top Individual - Ethel Soukey - \$1,630.



#3 Top Fundraising Team - SMC HI fundraiser

# AIDS Walk/Run raises \$39,147!



AIDS Community Resources wants to thank our sponsors for their invaluable assistance in making the First Frost AIDS Walk/Run possible:

Title sponsor, Empower Federal Credit Union, Kinney Drugs Foundation, Samaritan Medical Center, Oneida Savings Bank, Price Chopper, Starbucks, Stewart's Shops, Hannaford Supermarkets, and the New York State Zoo at Thompson Park. Our media sponsors are 7 News, 790 WTNH, Fox 28, Froggy 97, WNER 1410, and Z93.

### Run Results - Men

- 1- Jeffrey Fowler (19:23.4)
- 2- Jon Dickens (19:24.0)
- 3- Nick Conrad (21:29.2)
- 4- Joseph Wetterhahn (22:01.7)
- 5- Nick Maccharulo (22:43.5)

### Run Results – Women

- 1- Kate Callahan (21:53.5)
- 2- Stephanie Herring (25:25.1)
- 3- Michelle Savage (25:29.0)
- 4- Michelle Stepien (26:26.1)
- 5- Jennifer Banazek (26:47.6)



Fundraiser - \$1691.



Top TATF Students, Telia Mosher and Brittany Sholett.



Clifton Fine TATF - 2nd highest TATF fundraiser - \$1391.



- \$2,310.



#2 Top Individual Fund-raiser – Dr. Marylene Duah - \$2,045.



Team Orange Aid, who helped with everything.



Top male runners.

## *Holiday Angel* program off to an early start Generous grant will fill holiday baskets

Utica, December, 2008

Four Angels pooled their resources last year to sponsor a family with several members, including twins Jazmine and Desmond.



The Holiday Angel program received a huge boost from Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS of New York City. Their generous donation of \$5,000.00 to AIDS Community Resources will be used to buy food for food baskets during the Holiday Season for ACR clients and their families.

The grant from Broadway Cares greatly enhances the ability of our clients to put a nice, healthy meal on the table for their families during the holiday season and feed children who are home from school during Christmas break and provides them with comfort and humanity on a very basic level. Such support reaffirms the importance of ACR's work in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Central, Northern, and Mohawk Valley regions of New York.

## National honor for ACR's Prevention Director

ACR's Director of Prevention Services, Wenona Wake, was one of only 31 AIDS professionals nationwide hand-picked to participate in a nine-month comprehensive, capacity building educational program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, a program for HIV prevention program managers who work in community based organizations like AIDS Community Resources.

"This institute has really increased my understanding of the importance of effective leadership," said Ms. Wake. "I was honored to be a part of such a wonderful program and gain a country wide support network," said Ms. Wake.



Wenona Wake

## ACR is teaching the teachers



June Egan, Meredith Stone, ACR's Jana Gaeta, Janet Fenner, Catherine Kline, and Ava Dinkin take a break from a morning filled with HIV/AIDS study.

Proof that AIDS Community Resources is the top resource in Central New York for HIV/AIDS information: when the Syracuse School District wanted to update health teachers on HIV infections, it asked ACR to provide the information. TATF Educator Jana Gaeta, who has a master's degree in education, conducted comprehensive HIV 101 classes during the two day Superintendent's Day trainings. Ms. Gaeta said that she provided more of the theoretical information and that the teachers brought up situations from the real life, situations they have been facing at local schools. "I had a great time and we learned a lot from each other," said Ms. Gaeta. "It was a great connection between local schools and community and they were wonderful students."



## TATF partners with “Real Life. Real Talk.”

AIDS Community Resources is collaborating “Real Life. Real Talk.” which is a new campaign in central New York that will work to support parents and community leaders to feel more comfortable talking about healthy sexuality.

Teen AIDS Task Force members were on hand at the launch of “Real Life. Real Talk.” October 8, 2009, this featured the movie, “The Education of Shelby Knox,” and an appearance by Shelby Knox herself following the movie. Ms. Knox has become a national figure since appearing in the 2005 PBS documentary a film that tells the coming of age story about Shelby, a teenage girl who joins a campaign for comprehensive sex education in the high schools of Lubbock, Texas.

“Our members really related to Shelby,” said TATF Supervisor Marissa Rice, who attended. “She inspired them to become advocates for comprehensive, sex education for all young people – not just those lucky enough to belong to TATF.”

“Real Life. Real Talk.” has focused on community building throughout 2009. The campaign developed a rich coalition of agencies, faith communities, businesses and individuals that have joined as community partners. Project Manager, Crystal Collette, recruited AIDS Community Resources’ TATF program as one of the community partners to sign on.



October 8, 2009, Syracuse

TATF Supervisor Marissa Rice, Brionne Carter, Shelby Knox, Asha Shirwa, and ThienAn Huynh pose after the movie at the Palace Theatre.

## Magic and Michael

It’s not often that a man gets to meet his childhood hero. When AIDS Community Resources’ Michael Johnson met former basketball star Magic Johnson at a national HIV conference, he came away with mixed emotions.

“Magic was an icon to thousands of kids who played and enjoyed basketball, and I was no exception. I had his poster on my wall. I imitated his moves on the court and tried not to miss his games on TV. When he came out that he was HIV positive, other players in the NBA protested him playing for fear of being infected. As I grew older and learned more about the devastation HIV/AIDS has on the infected, I was surprised when Magic sort of like disappeared. When he does appear, like at the prevention conference, he talks about what should be done, but doesn’t talk about his personal connection to HIV. Now that I’m in the field of prevention I find myself asking ‘what has he done to help stop the spread of HIV?’

“I don’t have any type of beef or ill feelings towards Magic Johnson, but he’s no longer the hero I once held him up to be. I think he could influence a lot of young people by telling his personal story; by preaching safety and smart decision-making. I always could relate to him and would have paid attention. At the conference, Magic had a sort of impersonal way of talking about his fight with the virus. This gave me a different view of my childhood basketball icon. Working with HIV positive individuals and knowing their daily struggles helped me to pick apart the not so personal account Magic related since his diagnosis 18 years ago. So to me he needs to get more real so people who view him as a ‘poster child’ will see that this Disease is real too.”





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

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### November – December 2009

Collector's Edition Holiday Ornament "Melt my heart with a smile."  
Call 1.800.475.2430 to order.

#### November – December 2009

Holiday Angel Collections  
Call 1.800.475.2430 to sponsor

#### December 1, 2009

World AIDS Day  
Community Service of Hope and Remembrance,  
7:30 a.m. Panasci Family Chapel, Le Moyne College.

#### February 5 – 7, 2010

Heart to Heart Tennis Event  
Call 800.475.2430 to register your team to play.

#### March 7, 2010

Dessert Reception and Matinee Performance:  
*Lookingglass Alice* at Syracuse Stage.  
[events@aidscommunityresources.com](mailto:events@aidscommunityresources.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.  
TRANSGENDER [ages 14-24]: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays, 5:30-7:00 p.m.  
STEPPIN' OUT [ages 19-22]: Thursdays, 7:00-9:00 p.m.  
For location and further information: [qcenter@aidscommunityresources.com](mailto: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](mailto:glbtqyouth@aidscommunityresources.com)