



627 West Genesee Street  
Syracuse, New York 13204

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December 2011

# 28 Years AIDS Community Resources



## Viewpoint By Michael Crinnin Executive Director



New Years' resolution, "Don't forget": streamlining my expectations. I'm not referring to the forgetting that folks (including myself!) blame on age. I'm talking about the forgetting that occurs because of the clutter of chatter life serves up daily, and letting that noise crowd out room for remembering/for reflection – the kind of reflection needed to keep what's most humane in the forefront of decisions and subsequent behaviors...

It was this past World AIDS Day (Dec 1st) during our early morning service when I first felt a bit of anger welling up – annoyed that I was forgetting far too often – forgetting all those upon whose shoulders this agency stands - and that it took this day and this remembrance service to remember... I wasn't happy with myself.

Soon thereafter I attended a peer recognition event hosted by our Prevention Department. I had forgotten (speaking of...) the date and was feeling the crunch of the holidays as I left work and hurried to the dinner reception that would include recognition of both Utica and Syracuse peers (Peers being volunteers who share a similar background to those they would be interacting with as they worked with ACR staff on street outreach activities). I figured I would stay only long enough to meet informally with all the peers and offer a few opening remarks. Once there I found myself staying - and 'that made all the difference'.

After dinner each person introduced themselves, but each peer stood up to share a bit of their story and how they happened to be participating in our peer program. It would be more than an understatement to say that it was a gratifying, humbling, and sobering experience to witness. Person after person shared a journey of poverty, poor choices, struggle, and finally "grace". Life stories are compelling, and I was riveted. Regardless of the story, each and

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

Get ready  
to rumble!  
Read all about  
the Sled for RED  
competition  
on page 7...



### UPCOMING EVENTS

**January 21, 2012**

#### Sled for Red

Cardboard Sledding Derby, Tubing, and Food and Drink Sampling at Four Seasons Golf and Ski Resort. Register by calling 800.475.2430

**January 26, 2012**

#### Bohnett Cyber Center Grand Re-opening

4:30-6:00 p.m. at the Q Center @ ACR

**February 3-5, 2012**

#### Heart to Heart Tennis Event

For beginners to professionals.  
Call 451.5050 to register your team to play.

**February 12, 2012**

#### Dessert Reception and Matinee Performance

of *Caroline, or Change* at Syracuse Stage.  
events@AIDSCommunityResources.com

**March 2-18, 2012**

#### Q Center Fundraiser: Reaching for Marsby,

a new play by Jeff Kramer, at the Bevard Room at the Civic Center.  
Tickets \$20-\$22, call 315.435.2121.

**April 29, 2012**

#### 14th Annual AIDS Hike for Life

5K fundraising walk and timed run at Hamilton College.  
AIDSwalkCNY.com

**June 5, 2012**

#### 20th Annual AIDS Walk/Run

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

### 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 14-22]: 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.  
YOUTH 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

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or e-mail: information@AIDSCommunityResources.com



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## 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**  
Treasurer

**GINA TONELLO**  
**ANDREW LONDON**  
**CARI MCAVOY**  
**LAURA MURGIA**  
**KIM RIEPPEL**  
**KELLY WHEELLESS**

**AIDS Hotline**  
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**ACR in Watertown**  
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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**  
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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

## ACR Staff receiving State-wide award: ONE DECISION campaign

A group of hard-working individuals from AIDS Community Resources and other Central New York organizations was honored, as part of New York's observance of World AIDS Day in Albany, for their outstanding contributions to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.



Lewis Watts of Southwest Community Center, Marissa Rice, Director of Youth Services and Carrie Large, Development Director of AIDS Community Resources, Andrew Mathis who helped spread the word about ONE DECISION, and Umberto Cruz, Director of AIDS Institute. Not pictured: Dina Williams of the New York State Health Department based in Syracuse, Leader of the Central New York HIV Social Marketing Workgroup.

The group conceived and fulfilled a Facebook campaign called "One Decision" which encourages young people to think about the decisions they make and how those decisions can impact the rest of their lives and share them on Facebook, thereby encouraging their peers to think about sexual safety. The Central New York HIV Social Marketing Workgroup consisted of: Lashia Perkins, Andrew Mathis, Korie McGann, Justin

Lynch, Xiomy Cordero, Amanda Hibbard, Marissa Rice, Carrie Large, Bernard Alex, and Lewis Watts.

ONE DECISION aims to keep individuals from becoming infected with HIV or an STD. The campaign kicked off with billboards, posters, junior billboards, bus and bus shelter ads in addition to Facebook, using images that reflect the target population. ONE DECISION billboards and bus shelter ads are gone, but its Facebook presence is alive, still encouraging young people to be tested for HIV, to be screened for STDs, and protect themselves by always using a condom and talking to sexual partners and friends about being safe.



**The Facebook campaign came in response to 2009 reports about increased HIV infections in young men in Onondaga County. In December 2009, over a four month period, ten men 25 and younger tested positive for HIV. Three teenagers were among the ten men identified.**

## 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.

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everyone who spoke, "Thanked God for ACR: saved my life..."

I had forgotten – forgotten what a pivotal and vital resource, AIDS Community Resources can be for so many who so often have so little – how critical our investment and belief in these volunteers is, and just how much heart and soul our staff puts into the lives they touch.

I don't have a sure-fire solution for my 'forgetting' – for how to shut out the clutter of chatter that leaves room for 'remembering' (short of entering a monastery - a thought that has often crossed my mind...!): it's part of the 24/7 tech world we inhabit. Regardless I make my New Year's resolution, and give thanks for the situations that pull me back, and for the so many people, past and present who have blessed my life with their stories: many of you who read these words. Thank you, and Happy New Year!

In the Mohawk Valley...International company signs up as NEW

## Holiday Angel

Fourteen employees of ICON Development Solutions banded together to provide new, wrapped gifts for ACR's Holiday Angels program. They provided gifts for six individuals enrolled in AIDS Community Resources' Case Management Services who have emergency needs during this holiday season.

ICON is a worldwide company with a division in Whitesboro that does diagnostic testing on many different drugs including some specifically to treat HIV, AIDS, and hepatitis. For ICON, being Holiday Angels was a perfect fit. **"Sometimes we forget – we work in a lab, we put on our lab coats, we do our thing and we go home,"** said Paula Jar-dieu, Senior Vice President & General Manager, Bioanalytical Services. **"We can forget the benefit that patients derive from what we do and this is a great reminder."**



December 9, Whitesboro~ Front Row - Toni Amodio, Penny Willman, Kristin Swarts, Jacqui Johnston (ACR), Jessica Jones, Caryn Foote, and Cherie Huey. Back Row - Nancy Everettes, Sharon Maraio, Tara Rosato, Tina Stivali, Michael Fancher, Lisa Tower, and Dr. Paula Jar-dieu.

Not pictured: Rachel Rossiter, Monica Poccia, Mary Thomas, Sandy McGlynn, and Patricia DeRosa.

Look for a complete listing of all 2011 Holiday Angels with many new pictures in our next newsletter

# World AIDS Day

## A DAY OF HOPE, REMEMBRANCE, AND RESOLVE

People under the age of thirty have never lived in a world without AIDS, yet they are shocked when they hear the stark stories of death caused by AIDS in the early years. People over thirty will never forget how AIDS robbed us of friends and family, and hope to live to see a world once again, without AIDS. With that as a backdrop, AIDS Community Resources commemorated World AIDS Day across the Central, Northern, and Mohawk Valley regions of New York on December 1, 2011.



**In Syracuse...** a service of Hope and Remembrance is held, as always, in the midst of seasonal advent flourishes and the somber inspirations of AIDS Quilts decorating the Panasci Family Chapel at Le Moyne College. The group is joined by old friends like the Gay and Lesbian Chorus, now celebrating twenty years of service to Syracuse...

And good friends from MAC Cosmetics from Macy's at Carousel, who have adopted the cause of AIDS and rallied around AIDS Community Resources, helping to lead this service of Hope and Remembrance.



### **In the Mohawk Valley...**

The audience at the World AIDS Day Service at Mohawk Valley Community College heard a moving message from a young mother.

Hello, I'm Shannon. I am a 29 year old mother of six. About five years ago, when I was pregnant with my youngest, I went to a routine doctor's visit when the nurse called me to the back office. There were nurses there who knew me very well as I had come here with my other pregnancies. One nurse was almost in tears and the other broke the news. I was HIV positive. My mind only allowed me to hear those words "HIV positive."

I remember that day like it was yesterday. I began to cry and I remember thinking I can't tell my mother, but my heart only wanted her there. I felt ashamed and alone. I knew automatically that I had contracted the virus sexually because I am not a drug user.

It was Halloween day and I couldn't even take my kids out. My mind just kept telling me that I was going to die and leave behind these beautiful children.

I asked God why would you give me these six blessings and then this horrible virus. I didn't know then as much as I know now about the virus, so at this point all I knew was that it's a virus that kills you. It's known on the street as the monster.

So I began to live my life with this disease. I started to see a special doctor and even had to take my babies to see one. They were and still are HIV negative, due to the fact that I took medication while I was pregnant and they did after their birth.

One day I ran into someone from AIDS Community Resources at the doctor's office, and through them and my doctor I have come to learn that you can't catch this for being my friend. I learned that latex condoms when used consistently and correctly are highly effective in preventing heterosexual transmission of HIV, according to the CDC.

This is not something that anyone has to have. You have a choice. If you are a drug user, use clean needles. If you are sexually active, use protection. This isn't something that you just get, like cancer. The spread of HIV and AIDS can be prevented.

Science has come a long way in research and treatment. I take one pill every day and my levels are now undetectable. At one point through all of this I just wanted to give up, but I can't and I want to live everyday for my children. I have HIV...HIV doesn't have me. You need to protect yourself and you need to get tested.

Don't be afraid to make your partner use protection. **That moment of sexual pleasure won't last forever, but the virus will.** I made a decision that has affected my life forever. I no longer have a choice, but for those of you that do, please make the right one.

Below:  
Shannon with two of her children,  
showing quilts they received as gifts.



**In the North Country...** On World AIDS Day, Indian River Drama Club TATF presented its own addition to the AIDS Memorial Quilt, a panel dedicated in loving memory of Sam. They began by gathering memories from Jim, Sam's life partner. Through stories, pictures, mementos, and pieces of Sam's beloved artwork, they learned about Sam, and his life together with Jim. TATF youth then got together for a design session and conceptualized what images might best bring Sam's memory to life.

They spent several days after school, under the patient guidance of advisor Kristie Fuller, creating a panel to pay tribute to an artist, a son, a nature lover, and a gentle spirited man.

Sam's life partner, Jim, and best friend, Kevin, were in attendance to watch TATF members teach HIV 101 and the history of the Quilts before the Dedication Service began, and commented on "how different things are now, in a time when youth not only KNOW the facts about AIDS, but aren't afraid to SHARE what they know with others. To hear them talking openly about HIV and how important it is to use a condom is undeniably wonderful!"

Jim graciously and generously donated Sam's panel to the Names Project, hoping it will continue to be used to teach, educate, raise awareness, and tell Sam's story...like so many others.

Angela Foster, TATF Coordinator

## ACR collaborates to explain Health Care Reform...

A

**NEW  
RESOURCE**

## for understanding health care options

**Do you have questions about health care reform? We have answers.** Through Community Health Advocates, AIDS Community Resources and the Syracuse Northeast Community Center offer a service to guide groups or individuals through the maze of present day health care and the changes coming with the new health care law.

Community Health Advocate Coordinator Steve Wood of AIDS Community Resources says many don't know what health care reform means. "Because it is such a politically charged debate, many people don't have rational information on the Affordable Care Act."

### KEY FACTS

- You are not going to lose your insurance through your employer.
- You may have to buy insurance.
- Kids can stay on parents' insurance until they are 26.
- Many more people will qualify for public insurance programs, like Medicaid, Child Health Plus, and Family Health Plus, than ever before.
- Insurance companies will be less likely to deny claims as more procedures will be covered.

Melissa Camman of AIDS Community Resources is the Community Health Advocate for the Mohawk Valley. Community Health Advocate Dave Pasinski of Northeast Community Center provides Onondaga County with easy-to-understand one-hour presentations on what the Affordable Care Act is; what it is not; and how it benefits you, your family, and your community. "My experiences on the clinical side of health care acquainted me with the worries people have about medical coverage," said Dave Pasinski, former Sr. Chaplain with Hospice of CNY. "We are especially pleased to offer services for Spanish speaking individuals throughout Onondaga County."

Advocates provide individual help to people who need to know what options they have in regards to insurance, drug coverage, prescription benefit and discount programs, and where to find no or low cost care.

"I worked with one woman on diabetes care" said Mr. Wood, "and she was able to save \$1,200 a year."

"Advocates are a great resource for people who may be having trouble with health care regardless of who they are, what their income is, and the state of their health," said AIDS Community Resources Executive Director, Michael Crinnin. "This program is not specific to people with HIV, it is open to everyone."

Community Health Advocate services are available at no cost throughout ACR's nine-county service area in the Central, Northern, and Mohawk Valley regions of New York State.

*(More on this story on the bottom of the next page.)*



**Dave Pasinski, Steve Wood,  
and Melissa Camman,  
Community Health Advocates.**

## Sled for RED challenge *heats* up the slopes

Sled for RED, AIDS Community Resources' second annual Cardboard Sledding Derby, Tubing, and Food Sampling event at Four Seasons Golf & Ski Center in Fayetteville takes place on January 21, 2012, but competition is already heating up among four local Starbucks Teams – Fayetteville, SU, Armory Square, and Bayberry. Last year Fayetteville edged out SU when the two went head to head down the slope. Aimee Esce of SU Starbucks, says it's a friendly contest, however: "We figured out how to make our sled better than last year, aerodynamically speaking, and we're out to be the fastest Starbucks team this year!"

Each team (up to five members) may use only regular cardboard, duct tape, masking tape, scotch tape, and paint to construct the cardboard sleds. NEW this year, we are giving an award to the loudest Cheer Team, so you know each store's baristas will be there. Each sled team needs to raise a minimum of \$250 to enter the derby, but can earn more incentives if they raise more. All money raised will support AIDS Community Resources' youth prevention programs and emergency client needs.

**Register your Sled for RED team now! Call 800.475.2430 or go to [www.AIDSCommunityResources.com](http://www.AIDSCommunityResources.com).**



Fayetteville Starbucks,  
2010 Sled for RED entry.

SU Starbucks' Sled  
for RED 2010 sled.



## Community Health Advocate Services at ACR

*Continued from previous page*

### **Individual Services:**

Has a treatment, service or prescription been denied? Do you need a service that your insurance does not cover? Do you need help finding the best plan for you? Do you need help applying for hospital charity programs?

### **Prescription Assistance:**

ACR's Community Health Advocates can assist in finding the best prices on prescriptions, tell you about different discount prescription programs, and help you sign up for co-pay assistance programs.

### **Community and Professional Presentations**

#### **One hour sessions include:**

**Healthcare Reform** - Learn the rationale behind health reform, how it impacts all New Yorkers, and the proposed changes in health insurance rules for families, children, young adults, seniors, and women's health.

**Prescription Benefits** - Learn about various prescription benefit programs in New York State and what people can do if they cannot afford medications. There are many programs available to all New York State residents.

**Medicare: The Basics** - This broad overview will explain the different parts to Medicare, how individuals apply, what Medicare Advantage plans offer, how to negotiate coverage gaps and what co-pays may be involved.

**Options for the Uninsured** - Learn about various State and Federal programs that provide insurance coverage, as well as private programs that assist in insurance coverage. This session also covers different prescription discount programs available to New York State residents.

**Women's Reproductive Health and Insurance** - Learn how women and their dependent children can apply for a variety of insurance programs like Medicaid, Medicare, Family Health Plus, Child Health Plus and more. Learn what types of contraception and testing are covered as well as pregnancy termination and OB/GYN care.