

Viewpoint

By Michael Crinnin
 Executive Director



“Silence is broken... like a new morning.”

Reading/hearing/being assaulted by all manner of ‘2007 In Review’: I shall not add to that noise... Instead, how about ‘2008 In Anticipation’?!

For AIDS Community Resources, Inc., 2008 marks the beginning of our 25th Anniversary... and we do have all manner of activities scheduled to highlight the growth and development of services to HIV infected/affected within our 9 county service area (with even a bit of newsletter format redesign thrown in for good measure!). It is however, first and foremost, a sobering reminder of the tenacity of HIV and the continued bane of AIDS.

Recently, as I was being interviewed by the Syracuse Post Standard, regarding our 25th, the reporter asked me where I saw the agency in 25 years...? I’m not easily shocked by a question, but I found myself genuinely rattled by her inquiry: a collision of emotions combined with sounds vaguely resembling words in a completely random sequence followed... I finally collected myself enough to utter something along the lines that there was absolutely nothing inside of me that believed there would be an agency in 25 years...!

I also quickly realized (and told her so), that had she interviewed me 15 years ago, and asked me where we would be in 10 years, I would have believed the same - with the same conviction. It’s a good thing gambling holds no appeal for me...

Interviews can tell you a lot about what you believe and those you harbor in your heart – at least I’ve found that true. I’m one of those folks who talks to think – I often have to hear myself, out-loud, to examine my thought on a particular matter: how I’m wired. As her questions came so did the memories and faces and plans that have been crystallizing: within and without.

I’m confident that those who have been lost to AIDS - especially those of 10, 20, 25 years ago - would be completely dumbfounded and scandalized to know that HIV/AIDS is still with us: “bigger and badder” than ever - with staggering global numbers and rising infection rates in the US; I know

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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.

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Newsletter Editor
Jean Kessner

Major Gift for Q Center

It happened at one of those holiday lunches friends enjoy in the crowded hours between Christmas and New Year's Day. AIDS Community Resources Executive Director Michael Crinnin made time for a quick lunch with friends of the agency. At mid-meal the two, described only as small business owners who want to remain anonymous, handed Crinnin a check for \$65,000. "I was totally stunned," said Crinnin. "It was extremely humbling and I just choked up." It was the largest single donation AIDS Community Resources has ever received.

The gift came with no strings attached, but with a suggestion that the money be used for the Q Center, AIDS Community Resources' meeting place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. ACR's Board of Directors had previously begun negotiations to buy the building that houses the Q Center, with the idea of giving the center a permanent home. Look to see a major capital campaign begin soon.

“We want the young people who use the center, and their families, to know that we are not going to let them down.”

"If this were to be a truly permanent place," said Q Center Director Dr. Elizabette Payne, "the psychological impact for youth and staff would be immense." Dr. Payne said the young people need to know that the Q Center will not disappear. In many communities, centers for LGBTQ youth move locations as funding dries up. Dr. Payne and the ACR Board want the community and LGBTQ youth to know that the Q Center will be permanent and that programs and opportunities will grow.

Michael Crinnin said ACR is seriously invested in the Q Center – the space and the program. "We want the young people who use the center, and their families, to know that we are not going to let them down."



May, 2007:

Dr. Elizabette Payne speaks at opening ceremonies for the Q Center. At right is Frank Lazarski of the United Way. The Q Center has received support from numerous community groups including the United Way, Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth, the Gifford Foundation, and the David Bohnett Foundation.

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they would be astonished at the tenacity and fluidity of the virus; I know they would be furious to discover that the wars we engage in and the money we spend on them, have nothing to do with battling this disease...

I also know that despite their distress, they would be amazed at the level of services that do exist throughout this country/our region (so few for so long...). And I know that they would marvel at the current level of community awareness and acceptance. Although a long way from perfect, 25 years ago there was a 'Grand Silence' around this rapidly spreading and debilitating disease (that seemed to strike only the young and the strong) – a silence that killed. Images of **ACT UP** activists with their banners of black and pink, "**Silence = Death**", come quickly to mind. They were right then and they are right now.

During the aforementioned interview, the reporter noticed ACR's (first ever attempt) 2008 calendar: 12 HIV Positive community members going on record, sharing not only their status but a bit of their story... She was fascinated, and rightly so, never having seen anything like it.

She asked for a copy and indicated her desire to do a story on it/the folks who participated.

These 12 are the present and the future. They stand on the shoulders of those early activists – perhaps not as angry but surely just as resolute. They are the new faces of AIDS – determined to live well and to live openly, determined to serve as the next wave of role models, determined to see no need for an agency like ours in 25 years.

Silence is broken... like a new morning.
Happy New Year.

“I'm confident that those who have been lost to AIDS would be completely dumbfounded and scandalized to know that HIV/AIDS is still with us: 'bigger and badder' than ever”

How about a *serious* New Year's resolution?!

Have you seen our billboard? AIDS Community Resources has rented billboard space along highly traveled Interstate 690 to recruit team members for the ACR Spokes – our bicycle team that peddles 560 miles across New York State every August to raise money for AIDS Community Resources. The Empire State AIDS Ride only takes a week, but creates memories that last a lifetime. Come join our team – 800.475.2430.



560 MILES • 7 DAYS • CHANGE YOUR LIFE
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186 angels sponsored 355 clients and family members

*Thank you,
Holiday Angels*

AIDS Community Resources' 2007 Holiday Angel gift-giving initiative for people infected with HIV/AIDS was a resounding success. Every AIDS Community Resources' client in need and their family members received food, personal care items and gifts this holiday season. This is the second time in 13 years all qualifying clients were matched with a Holiday Angel. "The outpouring of caring generosity for our clients has been incredible this year," said David Podos, Mohawk Valley Regional Director at AIDS Community Resources. This year, Holiday Angels from schools, churches, unions, credit unions, businesses, community organizations, clubs, individuals, and families provided gifts. The impact of community generosity toward our clients was dramatic, and much appreciated by clients, staff, and volunteers.

Tom Angiolillo • Tim Annable • Anonymous • Marnie Annese & Annemarie Deegan • Eleanor Audlin • Melanie Avallone • Jo-Anne & Tony Balestra • Pat Barber • Barrientos Children
Kathleen Bartell • Susan Benedict • Anita Bertrand • William Blake • Tom Brisk • Mary Bronner • Bill & Donna Brown • Lisa Brown • Bunko Girls • Randi Butler • Elizabeth & Jeffrey Cady



Bob & Diane Caine • Mary Anne Calogero • The Campese Family • Tessa Careaga and Lynne & Jim Fitzpatrick • Nancy & Robert Carrier • Charms Club of Utica-Rome
Chittenango High School Teen AIDS Task Force • Jeff Church & David Haggerty • Colleen Clancy • Debora Clary • Clifton-Fine Central Schools Teen AIDS Task Force • David Cohen & Tammy Horr



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Hand in Hand • The Hartford • Shirley Hardter • Deborah Herbert • Jennifer Herzog • HSBC Shop City Branch • The Hudsons • Richard & Diana Iannuzzo • Indian River Drama Club
Jamesville-DeWitt Teen AIDS Task Force • Jefferson Elementary School • Irene Johnson • Kimberly Johnson • Mary Jane Kahlil & Ann Nesci-Murty • Mary Ellen Kalahar • Karen Keast

JoAnn Kennedy • Shirleyanne and Michael Kennedy • Jean Kessner • Richard King • Cari Knight • Katrina Knox • Denine Kochanek • Linda Koehne • Judy & Frank Lagasse
 Carrie Large • Lawler Family • Duke Lawton • Arriane LeBeau • Linda LeBlanc • Will Lenton & Chris Shepherd • Nancy & Martin Levine • Allison Lewis
 The Lighthouse of Love Ministries - Women's Dept. & Youth Scholarship • Barbara & Ian Lindsey • Liverpool Central School District - District Offices • Liverpool GSA • Tracy Lloyd
 Bill Louer & Wil Murtaugh • Irene Lowery • Rachele, Phil, Emily & Sophie Lurette • Beth Machan • Markie the K • Robin Marshall • Michele Maurillo
 Mental Health Association of Onondaga County • Laurie Meyers • Kathy, David & Sophie Miller • Kelly Morehouse • Donna Morgan • James and Sandra Murphy • Moors Myers



Names Project Syracuse • Kathryn Nickerson • John, Patty & Delaney Nolan • North Syracuse Baptist Church • Sandra Oakes • OCC Counseling Department • Old Navy - Carousel Mall
 Old Navy - DeWitt • Oneida Rotary Club • Oriskany Sr. High School TATF • Family of Janet Ours • Connie Palumb • Jud Pannaci • Park Central Presbyterian Church • The Pfohl Family



Dale Pierce • Dana Pierce • Pitcher Hill Community Church • Crystal Powers • Diane Price • The Q Center at AIDS Community Resources • Reformed Church of Syracuse • Paul Riccardi
 Derek, Marissa, DJ & Sebastian Rice • Kim Rieppel & Michael Saccone • Robtron, Inc. • Elaine Rubenau • St. Mary Mt. Carmel/ Blessed Sacrament Church • St. Mary's Catholic Church of Baldwinsville



Donna, Kelsey and Kaitlyn Scanlon • Suzanne Shapero, DMD • Maggie, Renny & Sophie Simone • Social Security Administration - Oswego County • Starbucks - Carrier Circle
 Starbucks - Fayetteville • Starbucks - Marshall Square • Pam, Bob, Bethany, and Courtney Stewart • Sunmount DDSO • SUNY Upstate Medical University's Employee/Student Health Office



Carol Sweet • Syracuse Crunch Corps • Syracuse Gay & Lesbian Chorus • Syracuse LGBT Catholics • Syracuse Symphony Orchestra • Syracuse University LGBT Resource Center
 Syracuse VA-Social Work Dept. • Jennifer, Katie, Joshua & Gabriel Trexler • Thea van der Ven • Heidi Venero • Wenona Wake • WalMart #2444-Oneida



WalMart #2911-Central Square • Nancy & Kevin Walker • Watertown High School Students & Staff • Westhill Teen AIDS Task Force • Margaret Wicks • Ann Wilburn
 Jessica Wilczynski • Jeanette Wilke • Betty Williams • Evelyn Williams • The Wolkensdorfer Family • Deborah Wright • Zoo Crew

Mural Competition to Begin

In February, 2006 the mural project at the Q Center leapt from idea to done deal in just a few months. The "Hands Up!" mural is a great wall decoration for sure, but much more importantly, its creation was what every teacher craves – a learning experience that grabs and holds young people's attention.

In 2006, mural designs were created by youth from Central New York Gay Straight Alliances and LGBT groups. The sketches explored a variety of topics: invisibility, unity, gender variance and the right to a safe and supportive educational environment. Their task was to create art that communicated a message.

That will be the goal again later this spring when work begins on a second Q Center mural. Professional artist Kate Woodle will once again lead the enterprise – beginning with a workshop for interested youth between the ages of 13 and 22 who are affiliated with the Q Center or an area Gay Straight Alliance.

If you are interested in participating, contact Dr. Elizabeth Payne at 472.0260 or email at: qcenter@aidscommunityresources.com.

Spring, 2006: Student painters obscure the mural's text which reads: "All young people, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, deserve a safe and supportive environment in which to achieve their full potential." Harvey Milk



TATF sponsored a dance at Poland High School on World AIDS Day in December.



Oriskany High School's TATF participated in a blood drive for the American Red Cross.



Teen AIDS Task Force (TATF) chapters have been busy throughout our nine county area. In Oneida, TATF members at Girls, Inc design T-shirts with an HIV prevention message.

AIDS Lecture at Syracuse University

Dr. Marjorie J. Hill, the Chief Executive Officer of New York City's Gay Men's Health Crisis, will lecture at Syracuse University's Hendricks Chapel on February 26, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. on the topic of "HIV/AIDS, 25 years later." The lecture is free and open to the public. Twenty-five years after the emergence of HIV/AIDS, what does the landscape look like? Who are the most vulnerable and why? AIDS pioneer Dr. Marjorie Hill will candidly respond to these questions and evaluate progress in the fight against AIDS.

The following morning, February 27, AIDS Community Resources will host a buffet breakfast at which Dr. Hill will take questions from invited guests about her work in New York City providing HIV/AIDS services to 15,000 men, women and children. The breakfast runs from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. and is a Communities of Color initiative. To reserve for the February 27th breakfast, call 800.475.2430.

Twenty-five years
after the emergence
of HIV/AIDS, what
does the landscape
look like



Prior to her tenure at Gay Men's Health Crisis, Dr. Hill was the Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of HIV/AIDS at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene with administrative oversight for HIV prevention, treatment, research and housing programs. Dr. Hill is especially proud of the expansion of Syringe Exchange Programs, the enhanced NYC inter-agency collaboration, and the five million male and female condoms distributed annually during her tenure. Dr. Hill is a licensed clinical psychologist.

Holiday Open House at ACR

December 3, 2007:

Friends from the Designated AIDS Care Center (DAC) at University Hospital take time out of their busy schedules to stop by for food and conversation. From left, Kelley Flood, MSW, ACR's Michael Crinnin, Nurse Practitioner and DAC Program Director Judith Rees, and ACR Case Manager Martha Rodriguez





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Or mail in the back of this newsletter to:
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UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 7, 2008**
Black HIV Awareness Day
- February 8 – 10, 2008**
Heart to Heart Tennis Event
Call 800.475.2430 to register your team.
- February 16, 2008**
World's Shortest Mardi Gras Parade
Call 800.475.2430 for details.
- February 27, 2008**
25 Years Anniversary Breakfast Event
Dr. Marjorie Hill, Speaker
Call 800.475.2430 for more information.
- March 2, 2008**
Syracuse Stage Dessert Reception and Play
"Doubt" by John Patrick Shanley
800.475.2430 for tickets.

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]: 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@aidcommunityresources.com

UTICA YOUTH GROUP:

Sundays from 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
For location and information: glbtyouth@aidcommunityresources.com

TREATMENT ADHERENCE GROUPS:

Alternate Tuesdays in Utica
Alternate Wednesdays in Syracuse
800.475.2430