



NYC Stepping Up in Faith for HIV and AIDS HIV and AIDS 2010

2nd Annual NYC Week of Faith in Action Events July 11– 17, 2010

New York City Faith in Action for HIV and AIDS Partners

Many had a great time at the variety of events that took place July 11-17th. This publication provides comments and photos from some of the summer 2010 participants.

2010 Annual Meeting Brief Update: The annual meeting of the New York City Faith in Action Coalition for HIV and AIDS was held on Monday, July 12th at Brooklyn Borough Hall.

The Meeting started with a warm welcome from Borough President Honorable Marty Markowitz and Dee Bailey Chairperson of the Brooklyn Host team. After a review of the upcoming week of events, it was announced that UCAN, Inc. has signed on to be the fiscal conduit for the coalition.

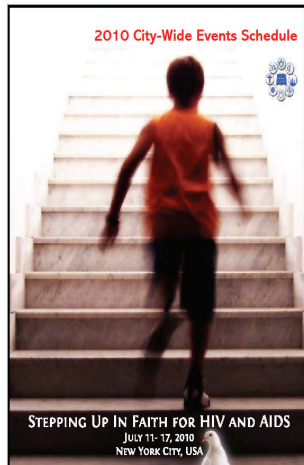


Annual Kick Off Boroughs

- 2009 Manhattan
- 2010 Brooklyn
- 2011 Staten Island

Staten Island has been selected as the 2011 Kick off borough for July events July 10—16, 2011.

We are beginning to process of



A Few 2010 Host Borough Photos



Marty Markowitz
Brooklyn Borough President



Dee Bailey Founder/CEO
Watchful Eye

NYS Assemblyman Darryl C.



Robert Zielony, Ph.D.
NYC Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene



U.S. Congressman
Edolphus "ED" Towns

NYS Assemblywoman
Annette M. Robinson

Brooklyn District Leader
Robert Carnegie

working with our Partners in the Borough of Staten Island to make the 2011 Kick-off a success.

Upcoming meeting updates can be found at www.nycfia.org

Statistical Outreach Update

There were over 1,000 participants during the week of events, July 11-17, 2010. Our testing partners have confirmed that 207 individuals now know their status by taking an HIV Test during the week of events.

The Christmas in July Gospel Concert that was streamed live from The Riverside Church along with our website has over 3,500 views.

Yours in the struggle



Oliver W. Martin III
Coalition Secretary

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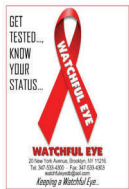
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Bringing local attention to the HIV and AIDS epidemic in New York City and the extraordinary role faith communities in partnership with secular communities can play in:

- HIV Prevention
- AIDS Education
- Care Services
- Advocacy



Dee Bailey, CEO
Watchful Eye
2010 Brooklyn Kick off
Chairperson



Watchful Eye

Testing Outreach and
Prevention Initiative
20 New York Avenue Suite 100
Brooklyn, New York 11216
347-533-4300

watchfuleyedb@aol.com
www.ourwatchfuleye.org

Blacks at Risk...

When we look at HIV/AIDS by race and ethnicity, Blacks have more illness (Blacks represent approximately 13% of the U.S. population and account for 45% of new HIV infections and 46% of people living with HIV disease); and more deaths (Blacks accounted for 57% of deaths due to HIV in 2006 and the survival time after an AIDS diagnosis is lower on the average than it is for most other racial/ethnic groups).

Watchful Eye Testing Outreach and Prevention Initiative hosted “**HIGH NOON: a Black/African American conversation on HIV, AIDS and Faith in New York City communities**” The purpose of this meeting was to have an intimate conversation about issues surrounding the HIV/AIDS epidemic in New York City. This meeting sparked a community dialogue between multiple sectors of the New York City communities and encouraged individuals, elected officials, civic groups and faith leaders to join forces with other leaders and institutions to develop a comprehensive strategic plan to increase prevention activities and intervention strategies to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic in NYC.

The mission of the Watchful Eye is to build a community level infrastructure through community mobilization and outreach that allow a cross section of community leaders and stakeholders to jointly develop programs and activities that strengthen collaborative projects to conduct and sustain HIV prevention initiatives that focus on getting people tested, educated and involved.

The “Watchful Eye” Testing, Outreach and Prevention initiative served as a catalyst to develop and execute these community actions and programmatic events providing testing, prevention and education services that reduced stigma and enhance risk reduction throughout the borough of Brooklyn and the City of New York.

It is the goal of Watchful Eye that HIV/AIDS remain in the forefront and in focus until there is a cure. It is our aim to make it a part of every community agenda. We believe that if individuals are aware of their HIV status, they can and will begin to affect the changes in behavior that will stem the tide of this epidemic in our communities.

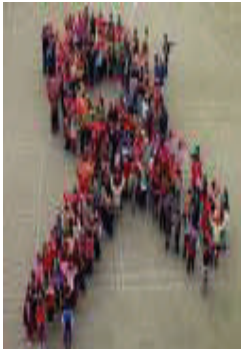
Our Quality of Care — People Living with HIV and AIDS

Town Hall Luncheon on Wednesday, July 14, 2010

We have a very powerful conversation covering Primary and Secondary Prevention as well as current Ryan White Care Services. It was wonderful to be in a room full of People Living with HIV and AIDS and their families to discuss how we are feeling about the services that are available to us, along with how to work with our doctors and service providers.

I sometimes feel like I live in a forgotten area of New York City. Thank you so much for bringing this forum to the Staten Island area.

Marsha T.



Executive Director, UCAN Inc
Fiscal Conduit for
NYC Faith in Action for HIV/AIDS
Prevention, Care and Education Coalition

UCAN, Inc is please to accept the invitation to serve as the fiscal conduit for the Stepping-up in Faith Program Initiation of the NYC Faith in Action for HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care and Education Coalition (NYCFIA). Stepping-up in Faith continues to demonstrate the important ways the faith community can effectively engage in HIV prevention, providing education, care and support throughout New York City. Your collaborations are bridging gaps in services, thus increasing access and capacity for people to know their status and stop the spread of HIV.

Having registered in the State of New York, UCAN Inc. is happy to further our partnership with NYCFIA through our capacity to offer nonprofit fiscal services and serve as your fiscal conduit. As a national organization affiliated with the United Church of Christ, UCAN is able to ensure the highest standards in fiscal control and accounting. It is just one of the many ways we hope to work with NYCFIA in our shared mission to provide HIV prevention education, care and support.



FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT WELFARE AGENCIES

Summary of Group Discussion Youth, HIV, Workforce Development and Faith-Based Service Providers

Goals for Our Meeting

- Increase understanding of the needs & challenges facing homeless young people
- Brainstorm workforce inclusion strategies in programs serving youth and persons living with HIV
- Identify key points of collaboration & gaps between runaway and homeless youth, employment & HIV service areas
- Identify policy opportunities, key questions & resonant components of this issue

Snapshot - Presentation Summary

Greg Rideout, Deputy Program Officer for Youth Services and Workforce Development, Henry Street Settlement

The homeless youth population faces many challenges in obtaining services as many of them do not have proper identification documents, which often delay, or prevent them from applying for housing, public assistance and other support services. City agencies that provide services to this population do not have a protocol for information sharing. Community-based organizations often carry the burden of communicating crucial client updates to relevant agencies in order to expedite applications for benefits or services. Because of the transient nature of the homeless youth population, it is particularly challenging to apply outcome-based evaluation methods to track success among services provided to homeless young people.

Lucky S. Michaels, Director of Homeless Youth Services, Metropolitan Community Church of New York

Homeless youth face challenges moving between programs and could feel lost, or re-experience trauma, during the processes of getting services from different organizations. Despite increased attention to youth homelessness issues, funding and resources have not followed the demand and needs of this population.

Identify core service components that currently bridge employment, HIV & RHY services, and those that would strengthen the connection

- Case management
- Coordination of services – as youth often have many appointments with different service providers or city agencies
- Trust from the community

Explore opportunities you would like to see strengthened for homeless young people

- Focus on the needs of youth; meet them where they are at!
- Modify programs to adapt to needs of youth
- Youth support what they help to create
- Get youth to inform other youth
- Organize a city-wide job fair for runaway and homeless youth
- Utilize financial aid from community college
- Provision of emotional support for youth = positive youth development/ asset based
- Dormitories or shelters for homeless youth can consider providing education and training in areas such as youth organizing

Suggest 3 policy recommendations

- Develop alternative/age appropriate mental health modalities
- Include homophobic child abuse in pending "Dignity For All" bill (A.3661/S.1987)
- Develop recommendations to modify existing HIV testing legislation to address youth needs
- Funds for HIV prevention and outreach targeting the homeless youth population

For full report please contact Ms. Esther W. Y. Lok
Assistant Director of Policy, Advocacy and Research & Senior Policy Analyst for HIV and AIDS
Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies
281 Park Avenue South, NY, NY 10010
Ph: (212) 801-1312 Fax: (212) 414-1328
Website: www.fpwa.org

"Homeless youth face challenges moving between programs and could feel lost, or re-experience trauma, during the processes of getting services from different organizations"



Community welcome by Pam Albert, Elder

Sacred Conversations – A Minority Round Table

A New York City Conversation on:

- HIV
- AIDS
- Faith
- Spirituality
- Minority Health



Welcome Address by
Dr. Monica Sweeney - Assistant Commissioner -
Bureau of HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control, NYC
DOHMH



Panelists:

- Nurah Amat'ullah
- Venerable Benkong
- Claude Colimon
- Bishop Zacchary Jones
- Debra Levine
- Daniel Leyva
- Moses Mansu
- Suki Ports

In their Own Words—While we can never fully capture the richness of the full conversation, below are comments that were thought provoking for many in the audience.

Dr. Sweeney suggested that there are benefits to having a Health Ministry as opposed to an AIDS Ministry in that there is likely to be more buy-in, and less push-back. It was also noted that if there is a very popular member of the community who is willing to stand up and be counted as a person living with HIV/AIDS, this can be beneficial to the entire congregation.

It was noted by Dr. Sweeney that with the changing demographics of today, the notion of “minority” populations is changing, and with that change there will be challenges and opportunities. She noted for example, that last year was the first year in NYC that more non-white babies were born than white babies. While there is much to be done to stop the HIV/AIDS epidemic, unless we address the issues more broadly, instead of disease by disease, institution by institution the disparities will continue to exist.

Nurah Amat'ullah – Executive Director - Muslim Women's Institute for Research and Development (MWIRD)

Ms. Amat'ullah described the Muslim population in NYC, which she said is the most diverse Muslim population in the world, thus creating a unique challenge regarding how to service it. Nurah noted that these are really “communities rather than one community.” Nurah said that there are over 800,000 Muslims in NYC. She suggested that the language in our conversations be changed from speaking of “Churches,” to “Houses of Worship,” to be more inclusive.

Venerable Benkong – Resident Buddhist Monk -Grace Gratitude Buddhist Temple

For young men, they may well be motivated to find a woman with whom to have a child since 21 years later that offspring will be able to bring-in her/his parents legally into the US. This leads to a situation in which, if the relationship is with the purpose of having a child, the likelihood of taking medical tests or using a condom is rather small.



Claude Colimon -Regional Minority Health Consultant – Region II US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Ms. Colimon spoke about her work in HHS Region II. She noted that she assists organizations with capacity building. Ms. Colimon noted that today she is working with an organization/congregation doing an Health Ministry regarding HIV/AIDS.

Bishop Zacchary Jones – Pastor – Unity Fellowship of Christ Church NYC, Inc.

Bishop Jones noted that ministers tend to be “splintered” with respect to HIV and AIDS. He noted that one can follow their heart and spiritual side versus the Executive Director (ED) side. He suggested that the Coalition could work on what does not always work regarding the split between the personal versus the ED role. Bishop Jones said he finds he must speak for three populations, namely, “people on the down-low, lesbians in sex work, and transgenders.” He alluded to the percentage of LGBTs he works with and the stigma and poverty issues.

Bishop Jones noted the issues that remain around the role of people in ministries. He cited an example of a 16-yr-old who confronted him asking, “how could you as a Minister, be speaking about HIV and AIDS?” Bishop Jones noted that he responds with a message of hope and caring.

Debra Levine – Vice President Community Development -National Black Leadership Coalition on AIDS (NBLCA)

Ms. Levine mentioned the activities of counseling, testing and referral, and the part that Houses of Worship need to do including preaching the gospel, supporting communities and educating them. Ms. Levine spoke of the need for measurable cultural competence, faith sensitive, linguistically sensitive work/materials, which match people’s theologies, and the importance of supporting people.

Ms. Levine spoke of helping people of color to stay HIV-negative if they are so, or if they are HIV-positive to get into care. She alluded to the notion of 30 years of talking in silence. She expressed interest in helping be sure that people in NYC know their HIV status

Daniel Leyva - Director Latino Religious Leadership Project - Latino Commission on AIDS (LCOA)

Mr. Leyva spoke of his last 15 years working with LCOA, noting that the Latino community is “a very very diverse community.”

Daniel stated that, “HIV/AIDS is not only a problem of stigma – it’s always been a problem of racism.” Mr. Leyva noted that people in faith communities live and work with us all. He added, “so why spend so much time pointing fingers at each other?” He added that we need to deal with stigma which is a big problem.

Moses Mansu – Deputy Director - Office of Minority Health NYCDOHMH

Moses shed light on the Office of Minority Health’s work with various Consortia. These included the Brooklyn, Bronx and Manhattan Ecu- menical Advisory Groups. Moses provided some examples of past activities and functions. One such activity has been helping faith communi- ties provide testing services (e.g., HIV testing). He also noted that through the Task Force they got some faith organizations to open their doors to condoms, testing (and discussion of stigma).

Suki Ports – Executive Director – The Family Health Project

Ms. Ports helped provide a context regarding Asian Pacific Islanders. She included in her remarks a focus on those in the over 50-years popu- lations. Ms. Ports noted that this is a very diverse and the fastest growing population in the USA. Suki noted that while this represents 12% of the population it receives less than 1% of funds. Suki remarked on the use of “other” to describe demographic data gathering and health statistics. She referred to high levels of hepatitis in the community. Ms. Ports was clear that one possible activity would be to insist that the NYC Department of Education teach the (mandated) HIV/AIDS curriculum.



A few Open Thoughts / Comments:

There is a continued need for more ministers to actually take an HIV and AIDS Test from the pulpit, this models so much for the congregations and helps for many to want to know their status.

Someone commented that the word “stigma” doesn’t connect well in the faith community, and that the notion of “judgment” not judging is relevant here.

Language is so crucial in this work. It was noted how important language is around what tends to be a discussion of “Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM),” should also be a discussion of all “people who have anal sex.” This also would include consideration of women at risk, in the discussion.

One participant stated that “this (event) is a spiritual experience.” The person also described it as “a healing event.”



In my own words: LaSonya T. Thompson, Esq., M.Ed.

NYCFIA week was just another example that God is moving in a Mighty Way.

I appreciated the fact that all of the panels and workshops I attended were either opened and/or closed with prayer for the future of HIV/AIDS Prevention, Education and Treatment. Prayer changes things.

In addition, Faith without works is dead. Panelists and seminar leaders strongly emphasized collaboration and innovation with less resources (human, financial, etc.), in this economy.

I applaud all of the event organizers and hope any video recordings of NYCFIA week will be available on You Tube as legacy. Keep pressing dearly beloved.



On behalf of the management team and production team of the Lion King staff, we thank the members of the New York City Faith in Action group for Stepping Up In Faith and your youth educators providing our crew with HIV Prevention Education. We are delighted that so many young people got the opportunity to see the show and we look forward to supporting your efforts into the future.

Minkskoff Theatre Mgmt Team.



Thank you for letting me provide the Sunday Best Hat table at the Christmas In July Gospel Event 2010.

The Sunday Best Hat Contest was just wonderful what a blessing and I look forward to next year.

Blessings Ms. Ruby

Gay Men of African Descent (GMAD)

Gay Men of African Descent (GMAD) was privileged to be part of 'Stepping into Faith for HIV/AIDS' during the weeks of July 11th-17th. It was a timely event for our agency and for the WipeOut Stigma Program which is a component of GMAD's efforts to reduce incidents and increase the understanding the relationship between HIV stigma and the barriers to care.

This year the **WipeOut Stigma** program unlike the previous year where we focused on MSM (Men who have sex with Men) and HIV stigma, this year has been awarded a grant to focus on HIV stigma and faith-based institutions.

GMAD's participation in the 'Stepping into Faith for HIV/AIDS' which was held on Monday July 12th was considered a success. It was also the debut of our new PowerPoint Presentation titled, '**Ours is a Gospel of Inclusion; Navigating Diversity in Our Communities**'. In attendance were many participants totaling 25 people representing different community based agencies, faith-based institutions and those representing self.

The '**Ours is a Gospel of Inclusion; Navigating Diversity in Our Communities**' presentation was a excellent way for people to talk about stigma in faith-based institutions and from others learn not only of their experiences but also outcomes that people can utilize to make changes in their place of worship. Facilitated by GMAD staff Aundaray Guess and Nick Williams it was a lively discussion as we identified stigma and the discrimination that often follows it.

We realize that this is a difficult conversation to have but as we pointed out to attendees, we must start talking about 'the elephant in the room' as people are becoming infecting and dying and many churches in the epicenter of this pandemic are not addressing it or accepting their role in stigmatizing those who live a gay lifestyle.

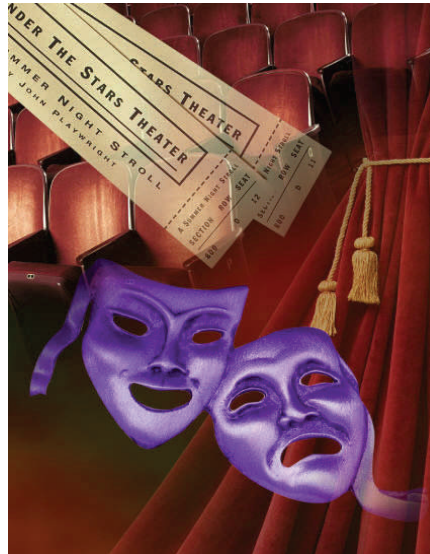
We feel that the 'Stepping into Faith for HIV/AIDS' gave us an opportunity to have that important talk and to make aware that for no charge we are available for any institution that would like to address this issue. Our thanks and appreciation goes out to the organizers of this event and we look forward to being a part of it next year.



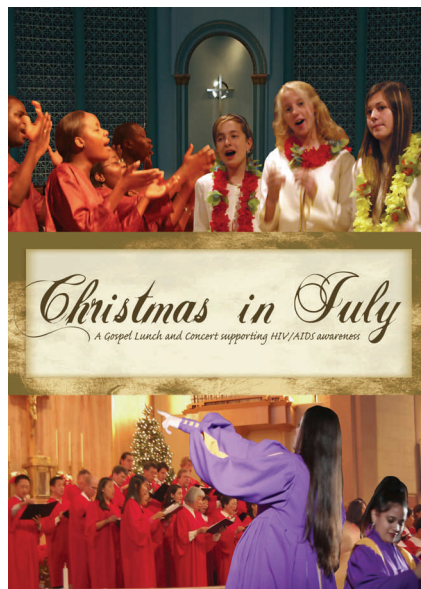


View all event photos at www.nycfia.org

**Acting Up for HIV & AIDS through Faith & the Arts
ARTS SHOWCASE 2010**



**Christmas In July 2010
A Gospel Concert for HIV and AIDS Awareness**





**NYC Faith in Action for HIV/AIDS
Prevention, Care and Education Coalition**

NYCFIA
New York Times Square Station
P.O.Box 857
New York, NY 10108
Phone: (212) 561-1787
Fax (212) 918-9164

www.nycfia.org



According to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, New York City remains the epicenter of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the U.S., with more AIDS cases than Los Angeles, San Francisco, Miami and Washington DC combined.

The collective mission of the NYC Faith in Action for HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care and Education Coalition is to educate the communities we serve on issues of HIV/AIDS prevention and care services.

The Coalition is a citywide partnership of faith-based, health and secular organizations that have a common goal, to reduce and ultimately eliminate HIV and AIDS in New York City.

In 2009, we officially launched the “a citywide, Stepping Up In Faith For HIV and AIDS on the steps of City Hall.



**A special thank you to Balm in Gilead, Inc. for helping to crystallize the Purpose, Goal and Objectives of
“Stepping Up In Faith for HIV and AIDS”**

Purpose

The purpose of **“Stepping Up in Faith for HIV and AIDS”** is to bring local attention to the HIV and AIDS epidemic in New York City and the extraordinary role faith communities in partnership with secular communities can play in prevention, education, service and advocacy.

Program Goal & Objectives

The goal of the campaign is to strengthen the capacity of our New York City’s faith communities and secular communities to influence social norms and thereby contribute to the prevention of HIV disease and provide compassionate support to those who are affected. Program objectives are:

1. To promote a week of HIV and AIDS awareness activities via faith and secular partnerships to educate the people of New York City about HIV/AIDS;
2. To raise awareness of faith communities to support HIV testing, health education, prevention interventions and give unconditional love and support to all those who are affected by HIV/AIDS.
3. To bring local attention to the critical role faith communities *are playing* in the HIV and AIDS epidemic in New York City.

We look forward to you and your organization joining and helping to plan the 2011
“Stepping Up in Faith for HIV and AIDS” week of community events in New York City.