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# VOICES

The Voice of Delaware's HIV Community

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## Join Us As We "Paint the Town Red" At WOW

Welcome in spring, shake off the winter doldrums and join us at WOW! The Fifth Annual WOW Awards Celebration is Saturday, April 18, at The Clarion Hotel - The Belle, in New Castle. When you join us you'll be swept up in a night of decadent food, lively entertainment and many more surprises! We try hard every year to out-do ourselves and make WOW the best ever, so that we dazzle our guests — all in honor of the people and companies that contribute so much to HIV/AIDS services, philanthropy, volunteerism and community leadership throughout Delaware. We hope you will join us this year as we "Paint the Town Red," as we've gone to great lengths to make this a night you won't soon forget.

Comfort is key so dress is business casual. Come prepared to kick up your heels. We can't give away all the surprises now but we know you will say "WOW" from the moment you arrive at the door because everyone's a star at WOW. Your walk down the red carpet wouldn't be complete without the paparazzi on the sidelines and the flashing of the cameras. Once inside you can sip on a specialty cocktail as you browse the incredible silent auction. After you've showed off your dancing skills, you'll need to relax, and the VIP lounge will be the perfect place to catch your breath. From beginning to end, this year's WOW will keep you enchanted, and you'll be wishing that it never ends.

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## "Black Life Is Worth Saving" 2009 National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Observed



Executive Board Members of the Faith Community Partnership listen to Norman Griffiths read the proclamation issued by the Wilmington City Council.

The 8th Annual National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day Conference, presented by the Faith Community Partnership Against HIV/AIDS, was held on February 7, 2009 at the Double Tree Hotel in Wilmington. The Delaware HIV Consortium was a proud sponsor of the event and five staff members attended the conference that featured informative guest speakers, music and more. The theme for 2009 was "Black Life is Worth Saving!"

The program's featured guest speaker was Laurie Reid, MS, RN of the CDC who addressed reasons why the black community is disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. Inadequate education, poverty, lack of health insurance and transportation, and missing or limited data about the population all combine to negatively impact the health of the black population, according to Ms. Reid.

John Kennedy, HIV/STD/HCV Program Director, Division of Public Health, gave an informative speech detailing successes in the HIV/AIDS field and noting where improvements can be made. According [Continued on page 3](#)

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# Letter From the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

For months now it has been challenging to pick up a newspaper or to listen to the evening news without being overwhelmed by the economic struggles facing families throughout our country and the whole world. And for many nonprofits the news isn't much better. According to the latest statistics from DANA, the Delaware Association of Nonprofit Agencies, Dr. Paul Light of NYU predicts that 100,000 nonprofits will go out of business due to the slowing economy in the next 12 months. In addition, the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University indicates a 27% drop in donations over the past year. These are dismal statistics no matter how you spin the headline.

The downward spiral of the economy has had an immense impact on the dramatic rise in the need for many social services as well. Homelessness has skyrocketed, food pantries cannot keep their shelves stocked and the lines awaiting a meal are blocks long and include individuals and families that a year ago would have never imagined the struggles they now face. The basic fabric of our family structure is being challenged and for most of our clients their situations are more dire than in the past. In addition to life's daily struggles of survival and medical adherence, many battle depression, substance abuse and the added stress of making do on much less.

Social services, in general, are being stretched to the limit. Now more than ever, the Consortium needs your support in order for us to handle the increase in demand for services and to continue sponsoring the programs and events of our sister agencies.

On April 18, 2009 we will honor twelve individuals and corporations for their leadership in volunteerism, philanthropy and excellence in service to the HIV/AIDS community at the WOW Celebration. These are people and companies who have walked the walk and have led by their example, even in difficult economic times. Some people are able to support us with the gift of dollars and others with the gift of volunteering their time and compassion. Both are necessary and their impact is invaluable, but without our volunteers we could never deliver the continuum of care we are so fortunate to offer the HIV/AIDS community.

Please help us continue to meet the demands we face as an agency by supporting our efforts to raise funds. We hope that many of you will attend this year's WOW Celebration and bring your friends. You may also help us by securing a special donation for the silent auction or volunteering for the event. Opportunities to help out are abundant if you will lead by example and invest however you are able to contribute. The most important thing is that together we find solutions to our challenges and that can only be accomplished by working together. No matter the means...we're depending on your commitment and support to help us through these difficult times.

Thank you.

*Peter Houle*

The Delaware HIV Consortium is a statewide, non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating the spread of HIV/AIDS and to creating a seamless continuum of care for all people infected and affected in Delaware.



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# Getting Involved And Showing You Care...

## By Joe Scarborough, 2008 Volunteer of the Year

Prioritizing housing issues during these uncertain financial times is on everyone's mind these days. While federal dollars are being put aside for housing, it is far short of replacing lost funding over recent years, and increased current demand. With so few dollars and such great a need, now more than ever we need to let our legislators know how we would like those dollars spent. Housing is finally being recognized as an important component in HIV treatment and prevention.

On February 12, 2009 I had the opportunity to take that message to Legislative Hall in Dover to testify at the Joint Finance Committee budget hearings for the second time. Our legislators need to hear not only from service providers, but from clients and consumers who are directly affected by their decisions. Being a part of the decision making process helps me better understand the policies and funding that persons like myself rely on. We should all be a part of the decision making that we are facing in our country and in our state. Hopefully more clients and consumers of housing programs will speak up and show that the programs do work and take an active role in the advocacy for these programs.

The Delaware HIV Consortium has numerous opportunities to raise money to help fund programs, and to recognize the people who have been instrumental in the mission of the Consortium. The Annual WOW Gala is a night where all segments of our vast community have a chance to relax and celebrate together over fantastic food and delicious drinks. The money it raises gives us all a chance to do our part in maintaining programs our clients rely on. Each year the Consortium also honors several men, women, companies and organizations who have all contributed to our community. The Red Ribbon Awards are a heartfelt gesture of gratitude that I am honored to have been a past recipient of.

Whether it is writing a letter to your congressman, or bidding on an auction item at a fundraiser, we can all do our part to help ensure funding for programs that are integral to a population that is growing every day.

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[Continued from page 1](#)

to Mr. Kennedy, data shows that in the state of Delaware the number of deaths caused by AIDS is at an all time low, no infants have been infected with HIV through their mothers in the past three years, and over 439 people have enrolled in the needle exchange pilot program in Wilmington.

However, approximately 28 percent of Delaware's known HIV-positive population, 964 individuals, has been "lost to care." Lost to care means that the DPH cannot verify that any of those 964 individuals have seen a doctor or nurse or had lab work done in the past 12 months. Of the 964 individuals, 588 clients (61 percent) are black.



John Kennedy, Wade Jones and Ray Collins in attendance at the conference on Feb. 7, 2009.

"I would like to close with a direct appeal for your help with a very serious matter," said Kennedy, "and it ties directly to this year's theme, 'Black Life is Worth Saving'." After giving his sobering statistics, Kennedy added, "Perhaps you know someone, perhaps it is you, or a family member, or a partner, or someone in your church or neighborhood - whoever it is not currently in care, please, help get them back into treatment. We have very effective treatment available and we have a world-class treatment system in place, led by Christiana Care. There are a lot of financial programs to support care — so access to treatment should not be a barrier. Treatment is available and the door is open. We want our clients to come home now."

This event was co-sponsored by the Beautiful Gate Outreach Center, Delaware Division of Public Health, the Delaware HIV Consortium, Faith Community Partnership AIDS Walk Partners and additional private donors.

# Making the Resource Guide Better for All

## 2009-2011 Resource Guide Coming In May

The Planning Council is in the process of updating its popular Resource Guide, with a planned May distribution. The Resource Guide contains information on HIV/AIDS service providers, organizations, and businesses that offer a wide range of services statewide. Rita Devlin Salvo, Manager of Community Planning, said, "The Resource Guide is a valuable tool for clients, caregivers, and providers. When we last updated it in 2006, the Consortium printed 7,000 copies. We just distributed the last copy."

The Planning Council has produced the Resource Guide for a number of years, "tweaking" it with each update. "This year," said Salvo, "the book will have expanded Spanish translation. Since its primary purpose is to help clients find and access needed services, this enhancement will directly benefit our Hispanic residents. Also, the Planning Council's Data Work Group did a great job updating information on the 160-plus public and private organizations listed in the guide." These agencies offer services ranging from medical, case management, counseling, outreach, financial assistance, crisis intervention, and prevention education, to transportation, food, housing, complementary therapies (massage, chiropractic), and more. Additionally, the guide contains information on laboratory tests, hotline numbers, a listing of items clients should take to intake or financial screening appointments, a listing of free internet access locations, and a glossary of terms and acronyms. The Resource Guide is also available on the Consortium's website at [www.delawarehiv.org](http://www.delawarehiv.org) under the "HIV Services" dropdown tab at the top.

Funding for 2009-2011 Resource Guide comes from three sources: the Consortium, a local foundation that wishes to remain anonymous, and the Department of Public Health. Salvo said, "The Resource Guide is a needed client tool. With the support of our partners, we were able to enhance it this year and print the large number of copies we'll need for the next two years. We are very grateful for their help."

Those organizations on the Consortium's prior distribution list will be notified of the 2009-2011 Resource Guide's availability in the spring. Other interested recipients can call Rita Devlin Salvo (302) 654-5471, Ext. 107) to be put on the distribution list.

## AIDS Delaware Hosts First Red Ribbon Auction



AIDS Delaware hosted its 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Red Ribbon Auction at Barclay's in Wilmington on Feb. 28, 2009. Numerous staff members from the Consortium attended including Associate Executive Director, Glen Pruitt, pictured above with AIDS Delaware's Joan Cherrin.

## "Voices" To Your Inbox

In order to cut costs in printing and mailing, as well as to save trees, the Consortium is considering sending a digital edition of Voices. You might already receive newsletters from other organizations via e-mail and we're wondering if you would be willing to receive Voices the same way. In the coming months we may send you an e-mail to which you can reply how you would like to receive our newsletter. We want to make this convenient for you, while at the same time saving money that could be used to support our direct client services. Give it some thought and let us know what you think. E-mail John at [jhinkson@delawarehiv.org](mailto:jhinkson@delawarehiv.org)



# Thank you For Helping!

The Delaware HIV Consortium is grateful for all of the support we receive to help us carry out our mission. We would like to say a big “thank you” to everyone who helped support us, in one way or another, in 2008.

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Remember to mark your calendar for the Consortium’s **Annual Meeting on Wednesday, May 20, 2009**. The meeting will be held at the Dover Sheraton from 10:30 am - 2 pm. Lunch will be served. Please RSVP by calling (302) 654-5471.

# News & Events

## HIV Among 50+ Population On The Rise

According to a recent bulletin from the World Health Organization (WHO), the increasing number of new HIV infections occurring among individuals over the age of 50 means that doctors need to take more action in discussing risk factors and promoting HIV testing among the aging population. Data from Brazil shows from 1996 to 2006, the number of HIV-positive individuals doubled over that ten-year period, and more data needs to be gathered about modes of transmission. People over 50 are less likely to have protected sex and often perceive themselves as low-risk for STDs.

Some experts think there may be a correlation between the emergence of drugs that treat erectile dysfunction, which came onto the market approximately ten years ago, and rising rates of STDs and HIV among the older population. Older people are less likely to have discussions with their doctors about their sexual practices and the precautions they should be taking, and many doctors do not perceive their older patients to be at risk for STDs. Despite the fact that the CDC recommends annual testing for HIV for everyone ages 13 to 64, experts say most of the emphasis is on getting youth tested.

Scientists and leaders in the HIV/AIDS field note a lack of data collected about people over the age of 50. Doctors say more data about the elderly needs to be collected, studying everything from nutrition to sexual practices to modes of HIV transmission. “While sexual activity is the most likely mode of transmission, research is required to establish the relative contribution of different risk factors and modes of transmission,” reads the report.

Because older individuals are less likely to be tested for HIV, they have a shorter time from diagnosis to onset of AIDS, compounded by their waning immunity. The report states, “There is little appreciation that the older the individual, the faster the progression from HIV infection to AIDS. For example, there is a life expectancy of more than 13 years in people infected at age 5 to 14. This declines to 4 years in those infected at age 65 or older.”

Source: <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/87/3/en/>

## AIDS Delaware’s “Do The Right Thing 4Life” Celebrates 8th Year

Right L-R: Director of Education & Outreach Frank Hawkins, Beatrice Holloway, Velda Jones-Potter and Joyce Proctor.




Below, L-R: Greg O’Neill, Shannon O’Neill and Executive Director of AIDS Delaware John Klein



Left L-R: Stephanie Dove, Tracy Green and the Consortium’s Policy & Education Coordinator Alyson Lang




The Delaware HIV Consortium  
presents  
**Paint the Town  
RED**




at  
**WOW**

Saturday, April 18, 2009

Join us from 6 - 11 pm as we celebrate the 5th Annual WOW Awards Celebration at The Clarion Hotel - The Belle in New Castle, Delaware.

 Tickets may be purchased at [www.delawarehiv.org](http://www.delawarehiv.org) or by calling (302) 654- 5471  
Single tickets are \$125, or "Parties of 10" for \$1000  
\*For your comfort, attire is business casual\*

All proceeds benefit the Delaware HIV Consortium



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We're proud to have Bank of America, PhRMA and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware support us at a time when donations to non-profits, from both individuals and corporations, have severely declined. The Clarion Hotel – The Belle and the Augusta Grille have graciously donated their space and services for the night's festivities, and the newly renovated Grand Ballroom couldn't be a more beautiful and sensational location. You might want to consider booking a room for Saturday night at The Clarion Hotel, which is offering a special rate for WOW guests, because "WOW is more fun when you sleep over!" To make reservations call The Clarion Hotel directly at (302) 428-1000 and ask for the WOW guest package, which includes breakfast for two on Sunday morning.

So gather your friends and buy your tickets today, which can be easily purchased online at [www.delawarehiv.org](http://www.delawarehiv.org) or by calling our office at (302) 654-5471. Single tickets are \$125 and "Party Packs of 10" are \$1,000. Payment by cash, check and all major credit cards are accepted. If you would like to help out in any other way, such as donating an item to the silent auction, please contact our office and we'll be glad to help you. The doors open at 6 pm and the party goes until 11 pm, so get there early to enjoy all of the evening's happenings.

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