

THE COMMUNITY

NEWS FROM COLORADO HEALTH NETWORK, INC | MARCH 2015 | ISSUE III

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- 20 NATIONAL NATIVE HIV & AIDS AWARENESS DAY
- 21 CHN: A RED TIE AFFAIR
- 10 NATIONAL YOUTH HIV & AIDS AWARENESS DAY
- 23 DCAP: COMPASSIONATE CONNECTIONS CAMPAIGN TOUR
- 30 NCAP/WCAP: DINING OUT FOR LIFE

CHN ON PATH TO LAUNCH CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



Dear Cornerstone members and supporters of the Colorado Health Network:

As CEO, I'm pleased to share with you that our board of directors

unanimously agreed to launch a capital campaign project to create a new home for our Denver client service delivery and oral health care service delivery, along with our statewide administrative offices.

This new home will provide a center where clients can receive compassionate care under one roof in a more efficient manner, and as a site for innovative and socially focused programs and services.

The Campaign is titled the Compassionate Connections Campaign and will focus on three areas of support: Mind & Body, Services & Shelter, and Cupboard & Community.

In the fall of 2013, we commissioned the services of City Projects of Denver to provide a comprehensive Real Estate Plan that set the stage for a successful project. A capital campaign feasibility study was also conducted by RDM Communications which focused the campaign vision as well as the viability of a successful campaign. We're pleased to share that the time is right for such a project.

The goal of the campaign is to acquire and renovate a 20,000-square-foot center that will expand and improve upon our current capacity to provide advanced HIV/AIDS specialty oral health care services and other life essential supportive programs to individuals residing in the Denver Metropolitan area, as well as throughout the state of Colorado.

Currently, an aggressive search is underway for a site which meets the future needs of the HIV population. The total campaign goal is \$3,838,516.

I invite you to learn more about the campaign at our April 23rd reception and tour taking place at the DCAP office beginning at 5:30 p.m. You can call 303-962-5305 to RSVP.

I am personally grateful to our board of directors, community leaders, staff, and volunteers who are contributing their time and efforts to bring this milestone to fruition. I'm especially grateful to you, our supporters, as we couldn't do this without you!

Sincerely,

Darrell J Vigil, MBA
Chief Executive Officer

SCAP PAYS TRIBUTE TO NATIONAL WOMEN & GIRLS HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

With March upon us, we focus our efforts to commemorating National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day on March 10th. National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day brings to light the growing issue of women and girls becoming a larger proportion of those infected with HIV/AIDS across America and the world.

According to the CDC, women account for one in four people living with HIV in the United States. Additionally, women of color are at greater risk of contracting HIV, at almost four times the rate of caucasian women.

On March 10th, Southern Colorado AIDS Project (SCAP) held its fifth annual benefit luncheon to support efforts in bringing awareness to the Colorado Springs community. Some 200 guests were in attendance including KKTU news anchor Dianne Derby, Gloria Latimer, one of the founding board members of SCAP, and Rosemary Harris Lyle, President CO/WY/MT State Conference NAACP.

During the event, SCAP client Robin Rene' Perkins spoke on her 22-year journey with HIV and questions were answered by Infectious Disease Specialists Dr. Betsy Kleiner about

trends, medications, and prevention. The messages of knowledge is powerful, knowing your status, and starting conversations with friends and family around HIV rang through.

Stigma is a huge barrier in women accessing HIV care and testing. Recommit today to normalizing HIV in your community.



WCAP CREATES A SAFE SPACE FOR CLIENTS

When John* came into Western Colorado AIDS Project (WCAP) to access the syringe exchange program, staff noticed John appeared to show physical signs of domestic violence.

John ended up confiding in staff that his partner assaulted him and that he was fearful it would happen again. Staff was able to call and refer John to Latimer House and link him to resources and care within an hour of stepping into WCAP's doors.

Latimer House is a organization in Grand Junction which counsels, advocates, and shelters adults and children who are survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Studies have found that domestic violence occurs among same-sex couples at comparable rates to heterosexual couples — one in every four relationships experience domestic violence.

*Client's name changed for anonymity

HOWARD DENTAL CENTER BUILDS CLIENT CONFIDENCE



Howard Dental Center client Christopher Sloan pictured with Dr. Salazar post implant surgery.

Christopher was diagnosed with HIV in 1982 and, "fully anticipated not being alive in 5 years". It wasn't until he began work with the Shanti Project, a support group in San Francisco, that hope was restored.

After a health crisis befell Christopher resulting in a period of time in a coma, medicine prescribed during this time destroyed Christopher's gum structure. Recovery was slow. Christopher was unable to find any dental assistance for people living with HIV until returning home to Denver. Denver Health referred him to Howard Dental Center (HDC).

With many people awaiting assistance from HDC including Christopher, it took upwards of a year before he got the call to come in, all the while living in pain from further bone and mouth deterioration.

After HDC dentists examined Christopher, he found out due to extensive bone damage, dentures weren't an option. HDC staff worked with Christopher for 20 months on applications and meetings to solidify funds for implant surgery while Christopher continued to live with, "not a tooth in my head".

Mainly self-confidence waned on Christopher. He says, "when you look in the mirror and don't know who's looking back, it wears on you" but "Howard Dental Center understood me and was in tune with what was necessary for a successful outcome".

Christopher wants youth to know that, "HIV is no longer a death sentence and that there are agencies out there, like HDC, that care and really want to work to help them through this".

PREP: A NEW TOOL IN HIV PREVENTION

Our Denver staff recently had the opportunity to receive training from a representative of Gilead Science on a relatively new tool in the HIV prevention tool belt — PrEP.

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is a FDA-approved and CDC-recommended HIV prevention method in which people who do not have HIV take a daily pill to lower their risk of contracting HIV. The only current medication is called Truvada. Studies have found that if taken properly, individuals reduced their HIV risk levels by as much as 90%. PrEP has no life-long

commitment and can be taken during times of one's life where risk of HIV exposure is high.

Currently most health insurance plans cover a Truvada prescription.

PrEP is not meant to replace conventional HIV prevention strategies. It is however an option for those who wish to protect themselves in a way that doesn't require the cooperation of a sex partner.

For more information, contact your local CAP regional office or visit prepacts.org.



Dine Out, Fight AIDS

Thursday, April 30

Ft Collins & Grand Junction

Participating restaurants donate a portion of their profit for the day to support NCAP & WCAP.

DiningOutForLife.com



2015 registration opens May 1st!

Who will you walk for?

AIDSWalkColorado.org



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