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The Amida Care Fund at Stonewall Community Foundation Announces 2019 Grant Awards for HIV/AIDS Initiatives at NYC Community Organizations

New York, NY (December 10, 2019) - The Amida Care Fund at Stonewall Community Foundation announced today that it has awarded a total of \$30,000 in grant funding for innovative HIV prevention and services to several community-based organizations to help them continue their important work in the communities they serve. The 2019 grantees are Colectivo Intercultural TRANSgrediendo (CIT), Out My Closet (OMC), Pride Center of Staten Island, Sylvia Rivera Law Project, Translatinx Network, and Trinity Place Shelter. Grant recipients will receive \$5,000 each and are selected based on their outstanding work to address HIV/AIDS in LGBTQ communities throughout New York City.

Amida Care, the largest Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan in New York, serves 8,000 members living with or at elevated risk for HIV. The Amida Care Fund at Stonewall Community Foundation was established as part of Amida Care's privately funded Live Your Life wellness program and is focused on supporting work that advances Governor Andrew Cuomo's Blueprint to End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in New York State by 2020.

The Fund supports HIV education, prevention, intervention, and treatment programs that engage New Yorkers who are disproportionately impacted by HIV—such as young gay and bisexual men of color and people of transgender experience—and those who are HIV-positive but not virally suppressed or receiving necessary access to care.

“Amida Care is proud to work in partnership with the Stonewall Community Foundation to recognize and support organizations that are helping break down barriers to care. These organizations do invaluable on-the-ground work to address challenges that affect community health, such as poverty, unemployment, unstable housing, and food insecurity, while providing access to HIV prevention methods like PrEP, HIV testing, and treatment. We can't end the HIV epidemic in New York without the essential community-based health services that these organizations provide,” said Doug Wirth, president and CEO of Amida Care. “Though we have made great strides in the fight to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic, there is much more to be done. We must expand our reach in communities most heavily impacted by HIV, particularly in black, Latinx, and LGBTQ communities.”

“Because they are embedded in communities acutely impacted by the HIV epidemic, our grantee partners are incredibly resourceful and strategic in the fight to end AIDS,” said Jarrett Lucas, Executive Director of Stonewall Community Foundation. “Their efforts to build equity in health is all the more valuable, given that the people they serve face deep social, political, and economic inequality. We are proud to continue working with Amida Care to support such inspiring and effective groups.”

Grant awards support a range of HIV-related programs and services:

Colectivo Intercultural TRANSgrediendo (CIT) works for the trans Latinx community to have full access to culturally relevant health and human services through support groups, referrals, and advocacy. CIT will use Amida Care funding to raise awareness among trans Latina sex workers about HIV transmission and the importance of knowing their HIV status, connect their members to testing resources, and empower them to access PrEP and PEP without fear.

Out My Closet (OMC) supports and educates poor and distressed LGBTQ youth by donating clothes, providing counseling services, and conducting workshops. OMC diminishes the stigma of seeking help by drawing in young people with free “shopping” experiences at a mobile pop-up clothing shop that goes where displaced LGBTQ youth are likely to be. Volunteers at the mobile facilities offer free HIV testing and other resources. Out My Closet will use funding from Amida Care support these operations.

Pride Center of Staten Island empowers LGBTQ individuals and families living on Staten Island to achieve their fullest potential. The Center creates a visible, safe, and welcoming space, offers comprehensive resources, provides LGBTQ empowering programs and events, and celebrates diversity. The Fund’s grant award will support the Center’s HIV Prevention Program, which provides comprehensive HIV, STI, and Hepatitis C prevention services.

The Sylvia Rivera Law Project works to guarantee that all people are free to self-determine gender identity and expression, regardless of income or race, and without facing harassment, discrimination, or violence. The Fund’s grant will help to support the goals of the initiative, which include increasing access to gender-affirming identity documents and safe, affordable health care; providing legal services and referrals, including assistance with matters related to accessing care; and training service providers in creating trans-inclusive and affirming services.

Translatinx Network is a network of transgender individuals whose aim is to promote the healthy development of trans people through outreach, education, and capacity building, allowing the creation of a safe, productive, and equitable environment. The grant award will support the program’s HIV education, employment, and community outreach activities targeting transgender women of color, who are disproportionately impacted by the HIV epidemic.

Trinity Place Shelter supports homeless LGBTQ youth and young adults in New York City to safely transition out of the shelter system and grow into independent, positive, and productive adults. The Fund’s grant award will help to support the 10-bed shelter that provides LGBTQ homeless youth with a safe place to sleep and eat, and connects them to transportation, counseling, HIV prevention, and health services.

The Fund’s grant selection committee is composed of Amida Care executives, senior staff, and members of the health plan. Committee members have many years of experience working directly with HIV-affected populations in New York and an in-depth understanding of the communities served by the grant recipients. Amida Care’s goal is to continue to raise more money to increase the Fund and expand financial support for this critical work. To donate, please visit <http://www.amidacareny.org/about-us/support-our-work/>.

Amida Care Inc. is a not-for-profit health plan that specializes in providing comprehensive health coverage and coordinated care to New Yorkers with complex conditions, including HIV and behavioral health disorders, and people who are of transgender experience or who are homeless (regardless of HIV status). Amida Care has a wide network of health care providers throughout New York City and is the largest Medicaid Special Needs Health Plan (SNP) in New York State. For more information, visit www.amidacareny.org.

Stonewall Community Foundation is the only public foundation focused on the needs of New York City’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) community. Since 1990, the Foundation has invested more than \$16 million in over 500 organizations via our donor advised funds, annual grant making, and leadership building programs. The Foundation inspires meaningful change through strategic initiatives designed to engage the community, empower our leaders, and invest in grassroots LGBTQ organizations across the five boroughs. For more information, visit www.stonewallfoundation.org.

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