

LBGTQIAA

Innovators for Change



AMIDACARE's celebration of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual community and our allies



BE YOURSELF

The health plan **for individuals**

When you're part of the Amida Care community, you can be yourself. We see each member as a whole person, with physical, emotional, and social needs. We want to help you improve your health and live your most authentic, best life.



Amida Care's Medicaid health plan now accepts **all transgender individuals who qualify, regardless of HIV status.**

1-855 GO-AMIDA (1-855-462-6432) (TTY 711) www.AmidaCareNY.org



As **NEW YORK CITY** celebrates LGBTQ Pride this June, Amida Care offers this special publication to showcase stellar accomplishments by LGBTQ New Yorkers in a wide variety of areas – from elected officials and artists to activists, gourmet cooks, parents, and many others.

In 2018, as we march for LGBTQ Pride, it's hard to believe we're just one year away from the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots that sparked the modern LGBTQ rights movement. This year, we at Amida Care – and I suspect our entire community – see Pride not only as a celebration but as a call to action to speak out about our collective outrage at a resurgence of hatred, intolerance, violence, and discrimination.

Despite some recent watershed moments for LGBTQ rights – the legalization of same-sex marriage, the designation of the Stonewall Inn as a national monument, and the dedication of the NYC AIDS Memorial in Greenwich Village, to name a few - the national agenda these days seems to be going backward. Boastful, hateful rhetoric has made a vocal comeback, along with talk of a transgender ban in the military and of health care professionals denying care on the basis of their personal religious beliefs. Yet our resistance to stigma burns as bright as ever.

We encourage everyone to preserve our hard-won rights by registering to vote and casting your ballot in this year's elections – as Treatment Action Group Executive Director Mark Harrington, profiled in this magazine, urges us to do.

We celebrate the courageous LGBTQ leaders who are fighting for our rights, from NYC Council Speaker Corey Johnson to attorney Alphonso David, counsel to Gov. Andrew Cuomo. Our governor has chosen a design by Brooklyn artist Anthony Goicolea as a monument to gay and transgender people, to be built near the Chelsea waterfront. Achievements by these gifted New Yorkers, as well as those LGBTQ leaders and allies highlighted in this publication, spark feelings of pride, hope, and resistance in all of us.

Here at Amida Care, we feel proud to have turned a new page in 2018 by adding transgender care for all, regardless of HIV status, to our mission. And we take pride that New York State continues to play a leadership role, with the progress made in our first-in-the-nation drive to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2020, which has resulted in a 20.6% reduction in new cases of HIV.

This year marks the third time that our Amida Care float joins the LGBTQ Pride March in Manhattan. Please march with us on June 24! We wish you a joyful and meaningful LGBTQ Pride celebration.

Doug self-identifies as a gay cis-male and a social justice-minded feminist. Pronouns: he/him/his

CALL TO ACTION



Doug
WIRTH



Photo: Celeste Sloman for City & State New York



JARRETT has spent the past 16 years supporting movements that center on marginalized people. Since 2013, he has served as Executive Director of Stonewall Community Foundation, a prolific grant maker focused on New York City's diverse LGBTQ population. Jarrett also serves on the Board of the Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York. Previously, he worked as a consultant specializing in human rights advocacy and governance in the social justice sector. Jarrett's activism has caused him to be arrested 33 times for civil disobedience, honored in three Congressional tributes, and featured in two award-winning documentaries as well as *Newsweek*, *Mother Jones*, and *The New York Times*.

Jarrett LUCAS



PHILANTHROPY
BUILDS
COMMUNITY

BUILDING UP A DONOR BASE OF YOUNG SUPPORTERS

“In most young people, the instinct to find community runs deep, and in a fast-moving city like New York, I think that longing is even more powerful. Here at Stonewall Foundation, we see fundraising as an opportunity to help potential donors satisfy that longing. **Our approach is to lean into the idea that ‘development’ really is about organizing people around their shared experiences, interests, and passions.** The best example of this is our Quarter Share initiative. In just 10 years, it has welcomed thousands of young people in as members and donors, raising more than \$636,000 to date, mostly through monthly gifts of \$25 or more. In addition to making donating accessible, we support participants in setting the agenda. At the end of the day, their agenda – which includes regular social, cultural, volunteer, and educational events – is all about building community. That is the gift that keeps on giving.”

*JARRETT self-identifies as a Black, relentlessly queer, Latino feminist.
Pronouns: he/him/his*

CRISTINA came to New York from El Salvador in the 1980s and has been working in HIV prevention, advocacy, and community organizing for 16 years. In 2007, Cristina convened a group of friends to establish the Translatina Network. TN strives to empower the immigrant transgender community through education and leadership development. It also helps clients to access HIV- and transition-related health care. While serving as TN's CEO, Cristina also oversees a transgender workforce development program at The Center (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center) in NYC.

CHALLENGES FACING THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY

“ We transgender persons face many challenges in this new era. Immigrants in our community are dealing with fear of being targeted by law enforcement and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. **We are coping with the risk of having our rights and protections taken away – under the proposed military transgender ban**, for example. At Translatina Network, we face the challenge of finding enough resources to serve our large client base. More than 150 people attend our 11-week job training program, and we convene weekly Leadership Groups in Manhattan and Queens that are also held monthly in Brooklyn. ”

TRANS DAY OF ACTION

“ Pride Month is very special for me. On June 22, 2018, as my community takes part in our annual TRANS DAY OF ACTION to demand social and economic justice for trans and gender non-conforming people, **I feel proud that we are ‘resilient and resisting.’** ”

*CRISTINA self-identifies as Translatina and female.
Pronouns: she/her/hers*

FIERCE LEADERSHIP



Cristina
HERRERA





Therese

R. RODRIGUEZ



POET, FIGHTER, LEADER

THERESE is Chief Executive Officer of Apicha Community Health Center (formerly: Asian & Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS) and has led the organization since 1997. Under Therese's leadership, Apicha CHC has been transformed from an AIDS service organization into a federally qualified community health center. Apicha CHC is recognized for its culturally competent and linguistically appropriate primary care delivery model, focused on improving the health of its communities, especially Asians and Pacific Islanders, LGBTQ people, and those who are living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. Therese also serves on the Boards of the National Minority AIDS Council and iHealth, represents Apicha CHC in the National LGBT Primary Care Alliance, and serves on the New York State AIDS Advisory Council.

FIGHTING FOR EQUALITY

“ Throughout most of my adult life, I have participated in movements that increase equality for the underprivileged. I am proud of my involvement in the pro-democracy movement against the Marcos dictatorship in the Philippines. I am proud of my work in the struggle for Filipino-American equality. **I am proud of my 27-year fight for human rights and equality for people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS, the LGBTQ community, and Asian & Pacific Islanders.** On a more personal front, I am proud that through the course of my work, I have discovered my capacity to write poetry in the language of this land, which solidifies the United States as my home. ”

*THERESE self-identifies as a lesbian, Filipina-American female.
Pronouns: she/her/hers*

AN HIV SURVIVOR of over 30 years, Mark is Executive Director and a co-founder of the National Working Positive Coalition. From 1995 to 2007, Mark helped develop an HIV employment program for San Francisco's Positive Resource Center. He has since focused on providing training, technical assistance, and advocacy at community, state, and federal levels to increase and improve employment opportunities and services for people living with or at risk for HIV. A steering committee member of The United States People Living with HIV Caucus, Mark consults on the Considering Work initiative for NYC's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and for Project E3TC in New Orleans. He co-chaired NYS's Ending the Epidemic steering committee to expand employment opportunities for People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).

CREATING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLWHA

“ In my years of work in the employment arena, it's been a source of profound pride and joy to be part of communities pulling doors open – even when gale force winds push them shut. I'm proud of the communities I feel deeply connected to that dig deep to unearth the strategies, energy, resources, and creativity to spread employment and economic opportunities widely – as well as to advance human rights and social and economic justice. Ours is healing work in communities, a country, and a world tilted toward benefiting some and away from equal access to opportunity for so many. **I love this work because we can shift power to people who haven't inherited it and are often blocked from access.** When it's possible to level the playing fields, we should all race to maximize how much that can happen. ”

MARK self-identifies as a gay male. Pronouns: he/him/his

JOBS FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV



Mark
MISROK





Lee

AULDER



A NEW YORK “SEER”

LEE is a photographer with Guyanese roots who resides in Brooklyn. He is a photojournalism major at St. John's University. Lee is short in stature, but his favorite quote is: “What I lack in height, I make up for in personality.” With a calm, charming disposition, he allows his friends, family, and clients to feel welcomed and safe around him.

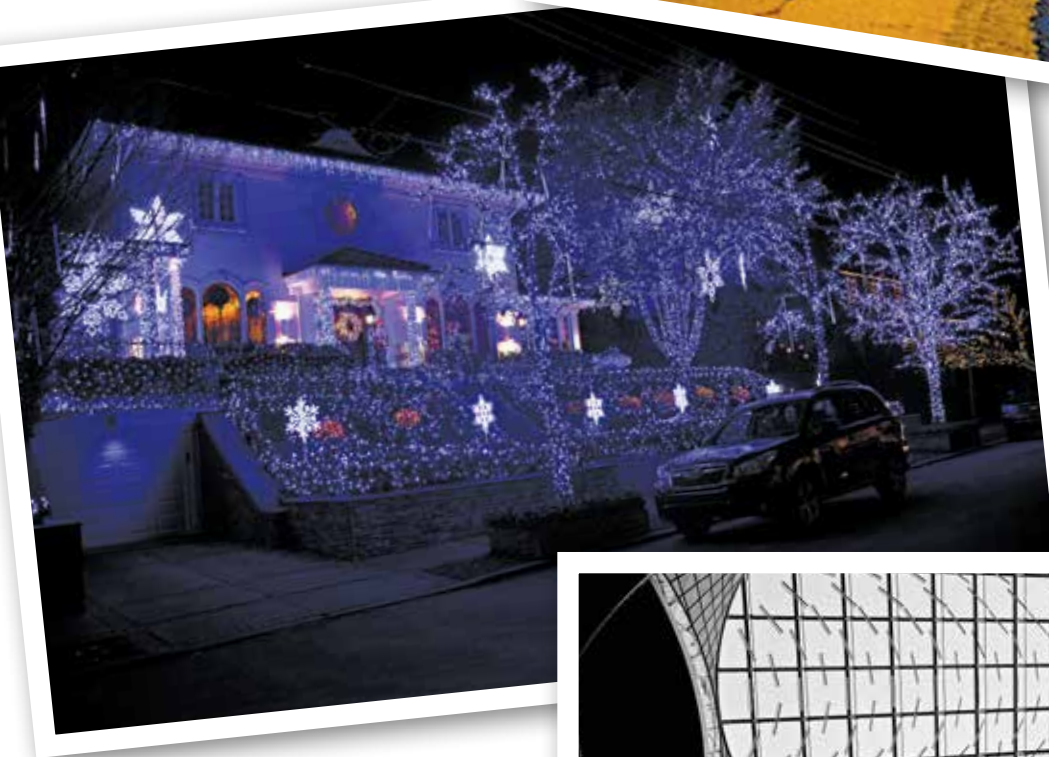
A GIFT AND A PASSION

“ Photography is my way of expression. I find beauty in art and color. **I love to focus on the things around us that people normally pass without giving a second glance.** I love to capture the special moments of others on their journeys through life, sealing those moments in time with natural emotions. When it comes to color, vibrancy is a must. I love to see the colors dance before my eyes as I edit my photos. Photography is not only my skill. It's my gift and my passion. ”

LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING

“ **My biggest accomplishments have been honoring who I truly am and taking the necessary steps to transition;** beginning my journey with genuine love for myself and true understanding of who I am, deep within; and taking the time to understand that we are spiritual beings who are simply having human experiences and embracing them. ”

LEE self-identifies as a transgender male. Pronouns: he/him/his



Contact Lee at:
leemajorphotos@gmail.com



Angel

RIVERA

(aka Diablo ONYX)



SAFE, SANE,
AND
CONSENSUAL

ANGEL is President of the New York/Northeast chapter of ONYX, a national Leather/BDSM (Bondage and Sado-Masochism) organization formed and operated by men of color. Angel, 47, was born in Puerto Rico but has lived in New York for 44 years. The first in his family to attend and graduate from college, Angel has worked full time in law firms for most of his adulthood. For more than 18 years, he has been doing community service.

CELEBRATING SEXUALITY

“ In ONYX, our mission is to educate about the Leather/BDSM/Kink community, provide a safe place for exploration, and empower all to live their Leather journeys more freely, safely, and happily. Our three principles are Safe, Sane, and Consensual. ONYX is sex-positive and body-positive. We don’t discriminate, and our members vary in weight, height, and age. We’re all involved in giving back to our Leather, LGBTQ, and People of Color communities, especially through HIV prevention and providing help and care to young people. **The Leather community is not just about wearing Leather gear and exploring one’s fetishes or kinks. We are a group of like-minded individuals who share commonalities, build friendships, and form extended families.** ”

COUNTING BLESSINGS

“ I’m most proud of where I am today. I may not have the life I dreamed of or have accomplished all the goals I set for myself. I have lived through several adversities – from growing up in a neighborhood where I had to be indoors before sundown because of shoot-outs and drive-bys to dealing with health issues and almost dying due to misdiagnoses and being prescribed the wrong medications. Today I count my blessings and appreciate how far I’ve come. **I’m not perfect, and I know I’m a work-in-progress, but I have learned to enjoy and appreciate the life I have.** ”

ANGEL self-identifies as a gay, Hispanic male. Pronouns: he/him/his

FIGHTING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



Lynn
ECKERT

LYNN grew up in Abington, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Philadelphia, and now lives in Kingston, New York, with her spouse, Amy, and their three children. Lynn serves as an Ulster County legislator, where she has advocated for economic fairness, transparency, and social and environmental justice. A tenured professor at Marist College, for 16 years Lynn has been teaching courses that include Constitutional Law, Race and Political Thought, and Feminist Theory. A graduate of Gettysburg College, Lynn went on to earn a doctorate from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.

BEING GAY IS A GIFT

“As an elected official and a professor, I take most pride in being an out, proud, and visible member of the LGBTQ community. When I was growing up, I saw no positive role models from my community. Gays and lesbians were depicted as leading deviant and unhappy lives. In that cultural context, it took a long struggle for me to come to terms with my sexuality and understand that being gay was a gift – not an impediment. To see the world differently and grapple with oppression can lead one to develop a greater compassion for the plights of others and a fuller sense of justice. **I am so enormously thankful for the bravery of those who came before me who fought for the recognition of our community’s humanity. I bring that history and their courage with me as I try to fight for greater social justice and economic fairness.**”

LYNN self-identifies as a lesbian/gay feminist. Pronouns: she/her/hers





Charles KING



**UNDETECTABLE
EQUALS
UNTRANSMITTABLE**

CHARLES, President and CEO of Housing Works (HW), helped found the organization in 1990 to support homeless people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and other chronic conditions. HW has helped over 30,000 clients with housing, health and behavioral health care, substance use issues, legal and advocacy support, job training, and employment. Charles co-chairs the Ending the Epidemic Subcommittee of the AIDS Advisory Council. He holds law and divinity degrees from Yale University and is an ordained Baptist minister.

ENDING AIDS

“ Personally, I am most proud of the roles Housing Works has played in advancing the agendas to End AIDS as an Epidemic in New York State, eliminate hepatitis C, and open Supervised Consumption Sites for people who inject drugs. We are helping New York lead in addressing some major health disparities in our nation. ”

ISSUES AFFECTING PLWHA AND COMMUNITIES AT RISK

“ We need to address two big issues to End AIDS as an Epidemic. First, we need to achieve universal viral suppression of people living with HIV. The second issue is the stigma that keeps HIV-positive people out of care and prevents those most at risk from taking PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis).

Here’s a three-part solution to both issues: 1) We all need to own viral suppression. If you interact with someone who is HIV-positive, you have a role to play. 2) If you interface with people at risk, serve as a PrEP ambassador. PrEP must be normalized and de-stigmatized. 3) We all need to celebrate U=U (Undetectable Equals Untransmittable) and **let the world know that those of us living with HIV are not vectors of disease. When we are durably virally suppressed, it’s impossible for us to transmit HIV through sexual intercourse.** ”

CHARLES self-identifies as a gay man. Pronouns: he/him/his

OCTAVIA is an activist, advocate, mother, and scholar who serves as an Amida Care Community Ambassador. She understands the intersectionalities and nuances of her complex identities and how they correlate with the world around her. While employed at the Hetrick-Martin Institute, Octavia led transgender-related programming and services. She worked with transgender youth, training them to navigate the systems in place to help them and helping them find their own voices and advocate for themselves. Octavia is now pursuing a doctorate in public policy. She remains rooted in transgender community issues by mentoring transgender youth to take her place in the fight for equality.

WORKING WITH YOUTH

“ I take pride in and find strength and resilience in watching the Kiki ‘ballroom’ community overcome obstacles. Many of these young people aged 15 to 30 have faced discrimination and adversities that might have been the demise of other youths, despite getting familial support. I have seen young people in the Kiki community navigate a system that wasn’t designed or implemented with them in mind – and yet go on to become successful, thriving adults, fashion designers, film assistants, etc. Their community is a force to be reckoned with. This excites me, as I witness sheer talent and greatness that rarely get the opportunity to manifest. I salute them. I also know they have defied the odds! **The pride I feel will always be dedicated to these young people and those coming after them. Without them, the world would be dismal.** ”

OCTAVIA self-identifies as an African-American woman of transgender experience who is living with HIV. Pronouns: she/her/hers

“KIKI” ADVOCATE



Octavia
Y. LEWIS





A LONG-TIME RESIDENT of the East Village, George grew up in Port Jervis, New York. Growing up, he loved drawing and enjoyed copying images that he found in *MAD* magazine. George moved to New York and studied at Manhattan's School of Visual Arts, earning undergraduate and advanced degrees. His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at a number of galleries and in group shows at the National Arts Club, the Forbes Gallery, and the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Gay and Lesbian Art in Soho – the world's only museum dedicated to works by LGBTQ artists.

George

TOWNE

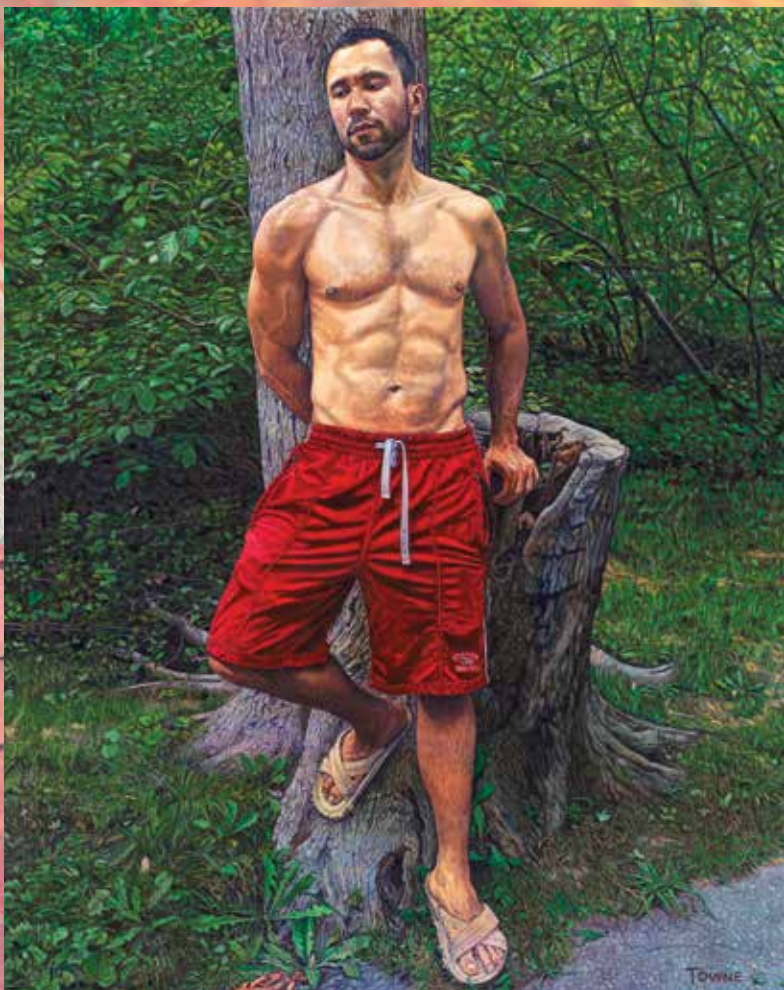


OF MEN
AND ART





www.georgetownheart.com



A FIGURATIVE ARTIST AND IMAGE-MAKER

“ I’m proud that I made the decision to come out of the closet at a relatively young age. Since then, I’ve never found it something to feel ashamed of or try to hide. As a figurative artist and an image-maker, I feel it’s important to show the world some things I’ve seen and liked along the way. Among these are a variety of gay men whom I’ve found sexy or important to record because my depictions of them showed male intimacy or bore some social or political impact. ”

*GEORGE self-identifies as a Caucasian gay male.
Pronouns: he/him/his*



Kimberleigh JOY SMITH



PARENT AND ADVOCATE

SENIOR DIRECTOR for Community Health Planning and Policy at Callen-Lorde Community Health Center, Kimberleigh has dedicated the last 25 years to improving community health and promoting health equity and social justice for black, brown, LGBTQ, and low-income communities. In the early 1990s, Kimberleigh came out and also started her work in HIV advocacy. As a Black lesbian, Kimberleigh takes pride in the role LGBTQ communities of color have played in ending the HIV/AIDS epidemics in New York State, but she readily acknowledges all that is left to do. She has received various accolades for her work and dedication to end AIDS in NYS.

TREATMENT AND PREVENTIVE TOOLS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

“ One recommendation of New York State’s End the Epidemic (EtE) Plan is especially near and dear to me as a parent of a 15-year-old boy: a regulation that will enable minors’ access to HIV prevention and treatment. **It’s really special for me to have worked to make HIV treatment and preventive tools like pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) available to young people in NYS who do not have parental support.** In my view, this is one of the biggest accomplishments of the EtE thus far, largely unsung by the general public. I want my kid – and every kid – to have access to all the tools they need to be healthy. There is so much more to do to disrupt the systems and ‘isms’ that make people sick. I want to celebrate the victories and stay focused on the work ahead. ”

*KIMBERLEIGH self-identifies as an African-American lesbian.
Pronouns: she/her/hers*

RICHARD serves as a staff attorney and strategist on criminal justice and police misconduct at Lambda Legal, the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization for lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people, and people living with HIV. Richard coordinates Lambda Legal's litigation and policy work on behalf of justice-involved people. He has trained hundreds of advocates on providing services to marginalized communities and on the intersections of poverty, racism, and LGBTQ rights. Richard has received the Hispanic National Bar Association's Top Lawyers Under 40 Award and the National LGBT Bar Association's Best LGBT Lawyers Under 40 Award. He earned his law degree from Fordham School of Law and his BA at Georgetown University.

LEGAL CHALLENGES CONFRONTING OUR COMMUNITY

“Poverty and violence lie at the roots of the biggest challenges facing our community. **These challenges include the criminalization of LGBTQ people, lack of access to health care, and the barrage of violence that we face as we try to live our lives.** In the United States, 2017 was the deadliest in recent history for LGBTQ people and, in particular, for transgender women of color.”

FIGHT AGAINST LGBTQ DISCRIMINATION

“I take the greatest pride in working on behalf of the most marginalized in our community, including poor people and people in state custody. Every day I have the privilege of working with my colleagues to fight against LGBTQ discrimination and HIV stigma and to help make the legal system more just and fair. **Our community is strong, resilient, and beautiful, and I am proud to be a lawyer for our people.**”

*RICHARD self-identifies as gay, Latino, and queer.
Pronouns: he/him/his*

LAWYER FOR OUR PEOPLE



Richard
SAENZ, ESQ.





PASTOR
Vanessa
 M. BROWN



PREACHING
 IN THE
 TRENCHES

MINISTRY is at the forefront of Vanessa's life. Her heart and passion lie in spreading the radically inclusive message of God's love for all. Having earned a divinity degree at New York Theological Seminary, Vanessa now serves as Senior Pastor for Rivers of Living Water UCC (United Church of Christ), a radically inclusive ministry in Harlem and Newark. For 11 years, this congregation has been serving those in need, especially the LGBTQ-identified. Since 2013, Vanessa has also been acting as an Episcopal Liaison to faith- and community-based organizations throughout the northeast, from Pennsylvania to Maine, on behalf of The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries (TFAM).

A PASTOR TO THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

“ For 11 years, our ministry at Rivers of Living Water UCC has been living out its mission and vision of being tangible Love in action as a visible voice in our community. We serve those in need, regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender, ethnicity, age, and ability – particularly the LGBTQ-identified. **We are in the trenches, going where needs must be met, impacting lives through education, information, spiritual restoration, and emotional and economic empowerment.** We offer referrals for housing, food, clothing distribution, and health care, including HIV/AIDS, Hep C, and STI testing. With our inclusive love, we can and will experience God's extravagant welcome to all of us. ”

HELPING PEOPLE REGAIN WHOLENESS

“ I am very excited and proud of our program called **Shades of Blue**. It is designed for those dealing with depression, grieving, and loss – and focused on helping people regain wholeness and find joy. I celebrate this because I understand how dark the nights and how long the days have been to come into the light of liberation and truth. Some among us still struggle on a daily basis. Our group therapy sessions help. Shades of Blue is just a part of our ministry called Pathways to Healing and Wholeness, through which we provide both individual and group mental health counseling with licensed clinicians. ”

VANESSA self-identifies as a lesbian. Pronouns: she/her/hers

AN ACTIVIST with the New York City chapter of Gays Against Guns (GAG), Paul lives with his husband in Brooklyn, where he makes documentaries and art movies. He has worked with GAG since it formed in response to the 2016 Pulse nightclub shootings in Orlando, the deadliest incident of violence against LGBTQ people in U.S. history. Paul is currently at work on a documentary about GAG, and his latest film, *“The Red Tree,”* tells the little-known history of Italian dictator Benito Mussolini’s prison island for gay men. Born in Dublin, Ireland, Paul came to the United States in 1994 and has lived in NYC since 2000.

PEOPLE COMING TOGETHER TO MAKE A CHANGE

“ The Pulse massacre changed PRIDE for me forever. I’ll never forget the power and grief of walking down 5th Avenue with Gays Against Guns in 2016. I was walking with my camera, tears streaming down my face, filming our ‘Human Beings’ protest that included veiled figures dressed in white to represent lives lost to gun violence. The crowd fell silent as we walked past, and people honored those we lost. I’m immensely proud of that – a powerful effort by a group of creative people to come together and try to make a change on a very volatile American issue. I’m proud of the commitment that keeps us together. This year we’ll march for the third time. **For our community, gun violence is a life-and-death issue, whether through hate crimes or suicide. I’m incredibly proud that we’ve been able to bring a new voice to change the conversation and get folks thinking in new ways about gun laws.** ”

PAUL self-identifies as a gay male. Pronouns: he/him/his

GAYS AGAINST GUNS



Paul
ROWLEY





ORIGINALLY FROM MALAYSIA, Mohan has spent more than two decades in the culinary world, working in fine dining establishments in Italy, Malaysia, and the United States. Mohan was trained at ALMA - La Scuola Internazionale di Cucina Italiana in Parma, Italy, and the International Culinary Center in New York City. His cooking is inspired by NYC's multifaceted diversity and remains deeply grounded in southeast Asian and modern American cuisines. Mohan was granted political asylum in NYC in 1998, based on sexual orientation.

Mohan

KULASINGAM



SENSUAL COOKING



www.chefmohan.com



CONNECTING PEOPLE THROUGH COOKING

“ I strive to create provocative, thoughtful, engaging dishes that go beyond race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, sexual identity, and social norms. I love to support local farmers and indigenous cooking styles. I constantly reinvent my cooking to suit the ever-changing dynamics of our fast-moving world. **My cuisine represents a hybrid of the cultures that form the core components of this great city. Cooking connects people. It’s about memories, tradition, culture, friends, enemies – and, at times, about sex.** ”

The gayest event I’ve ever catered was a party for twink boys twerking, chest-thumping hyper-macho gay men, drag queens in heels higher than a box of Cheerios, and lip-synching lesbians. The hors d’oeuvres menu consisted of Honey Nut Cheerios-encrusted salmon, pork and veal meatballs, raw tuna carpaccio, French fries, Asian spring rolls, fresh fruit, and Greek yogurt. ”



MOHAN self-identifies as gender queer, brown skinned, and Malaysian born, and as a U.S. citizen since 2011. Pronouns: he/him/his



KAREEM'S side hustle as a stand-up comic actually sprang out of the work he's been doing as an HIV prevention youth educator since 2008. New York City high school kids cracked up at his presentations on sexual health. Their reaction led Kareem to successful comedy gigs at Brooklyn's Treehouse Bar and Grill and citywide shows, as well as open-mic sets in Detroit and Las Vegas. Kareem weaves facts about STI and HIV prevention into his jokes and he remains committed to his day job. Kareem just joined CAMBA as Prevention Supervisor of their Young Men's Health Project, while continuing to serve with Love Heals Youth Initiative and their Youngblood Project – a sexual health course for young men that they named in his honor.

Kareem

YOUNGBLOOD



COMEDIAN WITH A PURPOSE

EDUCATING YOUNG PEOPLE OF COLOR AT RISK FOR HIV

“ When I started this work, I remember feeling like I was ‘only’ a health educator. It was my job to present to the students right after my co-facilitator disclosed that he has HIV. The kids looked scared, like they never wanted to have sex ever or again. I thought: ‘How do I make them remember what I have to say?’ I wanted them to know that life, love, and sex are still possible. I made them laugh so hard, they asked if I do stand-up comedy. Teachers started calling back to say the students wouldn’t stop talking about me. They remembered my presentation like I was Kevin Hart. I try to make it funny but full of information that they will hold onto – like my bit about how I thought I noticed symptoms of syphilis on my body right before Thanksgiving dinner... **I want to connect and get through to them, and THAT’S WHAT I TAKE MOST PRIDE IN!** ”

KAREEM self-identifies as a gay, Black male. Pronouns: he/him/his

MEDIA VERSATILITY



Javier
E.GOMEZ

BORN IN PUERTO RICO, Javier is a noted actor, producer, award-winning journalist, and communications specialist based in New York, with 20+ years of experience in print, radio, television, film, theater, government, media relations, not-for-profit organizations, and advocacy. He has served as press officer for New York State politicians ranging from the Governor to Bronx borough presidents – and as communications director for the National Puerto Rican Day Parade and other high-profile community endeavors. Javier's High Pitch media relations firm supports such clients as Lin-Manuel Miranda of "Hamilton" fame. He hosts a weekly Spanish-language public affairs program on BronxNet TV and works as an off-Broadway producer and actor. He co-produced and co-starred in "Don't Look," a horror-comedy feature film that premiered in Los Angeles in March 2018.

WORKING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

“ Helping to empower and build strong communities and raising awareness about important issues that impact society are accomplishments that I take most pride in. These have occurred throughout my life in every project I've participated in. Be it writing articles about HIV/AIDS prevention and medical breakthroughs during the 1990s; promoting equality and social and economic justice through government initiatives; strengthening the work of not-for-profit organizations; and most recently, producing works for film, the stage, and television that defy stereotypes, everything I do is driven by a commitment to empowering others and inspiring them to be their best, take pride in who they are, and make the world a better place. **Those people whom you touch through your work today will in turn touch and inspire others in the future. I am so proud to be part of that cycle.** ”

JAVIER self-identifies as a Latino male. Pronouns: he/him/his





TRACIE has worked for nearly 30 years as a policy advocate, trainer, and lobbyist in the public health, public policy, and not-for-profit worlds. From 2015 to 2017, she served as Assistant Secretary of Health for New York State, overseeing mental hygiene agencies. Currently, she is Associate Director of the Legal Action Center. Throughout her career, Tracie has led advocacy campaigns to increase funding for substance use disorders and HIV/AIDS and to promote passage of criminal justice reforms and landmark HIV confidentiality and testing legislation. Tracie received a BA degree from Mount Holyoke College.

CHALLENGING BARRIERS TO HEALTH CARE

“As an advocate for people facing major discriminatory barriers to health care and opportunity, I have always supported LGBTQI New Yorkers in fighting for civil, health care, and human rights.

I feel proud that I've been able to leverage my experiences in HIV/AIDS policy advocacy into expertise on health care access issues, especially on behalf of individuals, families, and communities impacted by mass incarceration.

Many in these communities suffer at comparatively higher rates from serious chronic illnesses – including HIV, substance use, and mental health disorders. I've focused on funding and good public policies to support people whom society tends to overlook. Let's get people the care they need to keep them out of the system and ensure that those coming out of jails and prisons get linked to community health care, so they can stay well while re-entering society.”

*TRACIE self-identifies as female and African-American.
Pronouns: she/her/hers*

Tracie

M. GARDNER



GETTING
PEOPLE THE
CARE THEY
NEED

KELSEY is Chief Executive Officer of GMHC, the world's first and nation's leading provider of HIV/AIDS care, prevention services, and advocacy. GMHC annually serves 13,000 people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS in New York City, the epidemic's largest national epicenter. In 2014, Kelsey was appointed to Gov. Andrew Cuomo's Task Force to End the AIDS Epidemic in New York State by 2020. Previously, he served as Chief Operating Officer and in other roles at Harlem United Community AIDS Center, Inc. Kelsey received an MSW degree from New York University and an MBA from Columbia University. He teaches at the NYU Silver School of Social Work.

CHALLENGES FACING HIV/AIDS ORGANIZATIONS

“ We at GMHC strive to create a safe, healthy environment for everyone we serve. But we can't control what happens outside our doors, especially when it comes to messages our clients might read or hear. In this political climate, hurtful, hateful rhetoric seems to be inescapable. Many clients tell us they feel under siege. **When clients are scared, they're less likely to get the care they need.** That threatens not only their individual progress, but the progress we've made against HIV/AIDS as a community. ”

LGBTQ YOUTH CHANGE THE WORLD

“ **I am so proud of the LGBTQ community. Our tenacity, resilience, smarts, and compassion always impress me, but this year I'm especially moved by young community members helping to change the world.** Emma González, the openly bisexual Parkland High School student who articulately defends the rights of ALL of us to be safe from gun violence, is a personal hero. LGBTQ youth joined GMHC and other organizations in successfully lobbying NYC on the issue of city-funded housing programs for homeless youth. And hundreds of young LGBTQ activists joined resistance marches nationwide. This generation is building on what we've already accomplished — and, I hope, will end the AIDS epidemic once and for all. ”

KELSEY self-identifies as an Asian gay male. Pronouns: he/him/his

CREATING SAFE SPACES



Kelsey
LOUIE





Julian CABEZAS



REDEFINING MASCULINITY

JULIAN was born and raised in East Los Angeles, where he organized for the rights of communities of color, workers, LGBTQ folks, and youth. He was taught to honor culture, respect, and family, above all else. He attributes his success in life to community organizing, since his college tuition was mostly covered by diversity scholarships and the 1199 National Health Care Workers' Union. His social work is fueled by compassion, continual reflection, and learning whatever he can get his hands on. Currently, Julian is the Manager of Outreach Programs at Amida Care.

HOLDING ON TO LOVE

“ I take pride in being alive and loving myself. Silence = Death. I have survived by literally taking pride in my lived experience and those of my LGBTQ ancestors. We are a community that has fought and continues to fight against hurtful mindsets and systematic abuse. I have always believed that I should be able to love/make love (consensually) and express my gender in the way that feels right to me. **I will keep loving and saying: ‘This is who I am. This is who we are. Let go of your hate because I am not letting go of my love.’ ”**

A TRANSGENDER MAN IN NEW YORK CITY

“ I have a unique experience in NYC because I organize around trans health and rights. My life here has allowed me to meet over 300 trans and gender non-conforming (TGNC) individuals. Having met so many TGNC folks, I have noticed the variations within our experiences. A TGNC masculine support group in Chelsea, Manhattan, will talk about significantly different issues than a TGNC support group in Jamaica, Queens. **As a trans man, I try to bring up issues of race, class, and misogyny within trans masculine spaces because I want to actively resist toxic masculinity. ”**

JULIAN self-identifies as a queer, trans, Chicano/Latino, mestizo, disabled man. Pronouns: he/him/his/they/them and she/her with Julian's queer family

QUEER SANCTUARY



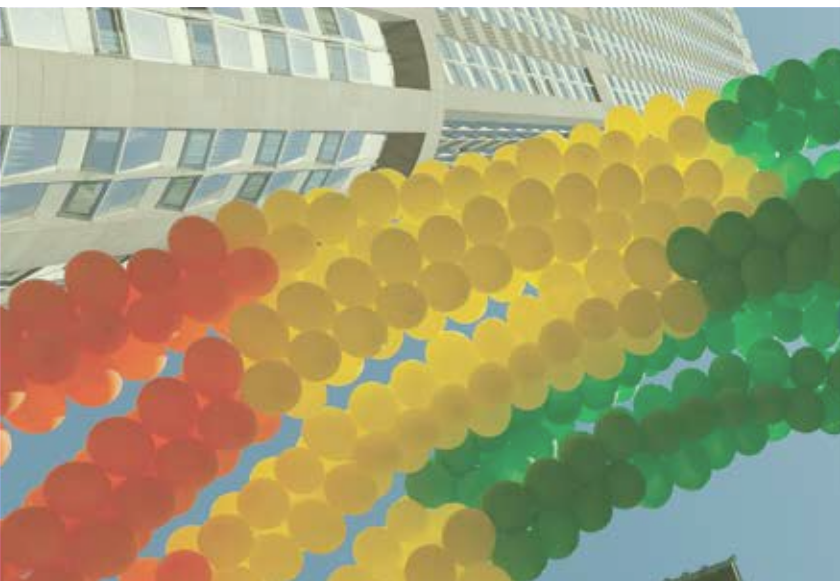
Glennnda
TESTONE

GLENNDA serves as Executive Director of New York City's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center. Since joining The Center, she has strengthened its programs for adults, youth, and families, ensuring all LGBTQ New Yorkers have an opportunity to live happy, healthy lives. Glennnda also helped launch a new Center brand and website, celebrated The Center's 30th anniversary, and completed a \$9 million renovation project to transform its building on West 13th Street. Glennnda previously served as Vice President at The Women's Media Center and Senior Director of Media Programs for the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD).

EQUALITY FOR ALL LGBTQ PEOPLE

“ Each year as June arrives, I feel particularly proud to have the privilege of helping those in our community who face the most challenges to find their voice, reach their goals, and change the world. When the world doesn't treat you well, it's hard to trust those around you to have the best intentions when they reach out their hand to help. **I'm proud that people at The Center trust me to partner in raising up the voices of those who often go unheard in our shared demand for equality for all LGBTQ people.** Our community is amazing in its capacity to welcome people when they need it. I feel grateful and humbled every day when I step through our doors on West 13th Street and am greeted with open arms, hearts, and minds. ”

GLENNDA self-identifies as a lesbian. Pronouns: she/her/hers





Wendy
STARK



LGBTQ
HEALTH CARE
LEADER

WENDY joined Callen-Lorde Community Health Center in 1994 and rose to become Executive Director in 2007. Six years ago, Wendy became Senior Vice President for Special Populations and Administration at New York University Lutheran Family Health Centers, where she focused on improving health care access for several medically underserved communities. In 2015, Wendy was recruited to return to Callen-Lorde as Executive Director of what has become a far larger organization. It now serves more than 18,000 people across the New York City metro area. A Pomona College graduate with a MBA in health care administration from Baruch College, Wendy has also served on the boards of the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice and the Community Health Center Association of New York State.

HOLDING HOPE

“ I’m proud when our LGBTQ communities work toward naming and integrating our intersectional realities into our liberation efforts and harnessing our collective strengths to create a world in which we want to live. **I’m proud when we can hold hope even in the face of forces that actively work against our survival. I’m proud when we raise each other up and achieve the impossible.** ”

*WENDY self-identifies as a queer, lesbian, white cis woman.
Pronouns: she/her/hers*

FREDDY started out as a family physician in Central America. In 1989 he moved to New York City and started working at Community Healthcare Network (formerly: Community Family Planning) as their Director of Women's Health. Today, as CHN's Vice President, Infectious Diseases & LGBTQ Programs and Services, Freddy also leads the Transgender Family Program. For decades, he has tirelessly advocated for advancing transgender health care.

JUSTICE FOR TRANSGENDER PEOPLE

“ There is not much justice or sympathy for transgender individuals, and no cohesive efforts by police and the legal system to grant this community equal rights. **If not for a small number of legal eagles doing pro-bono work in city courts, people of trans experience would be lost.** ”

HEALTH CARE FOR THE TRANSGENDER COMMUNITY.

“ I feel proud of the strides we have made at CHN in caring for LGBTQ people, particularly the transgender community. Many trans patients lack access to competent health care, and they fear being mistreated or ignored when providers don't grasp their unique needs. The trans community is NOT an emerging population, although the medical establishment has ignored them for generations. Transgender care is part of primary care. At CHN, **I'm especially proud of our Transgender Family Program, integrating comprehensive trans health care in a family care setting, and also:**

- Our advocacy for patients in Queens and Brooklyn criminal courts;
- Our work with transgender and transactional sex communities in Jackson Heights, Queens, promoting PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) for empowerment and protection; and
- Our partnerships to produce the CHN Conference on Transgender Health, furthering conversations on trans rights and health care. ”

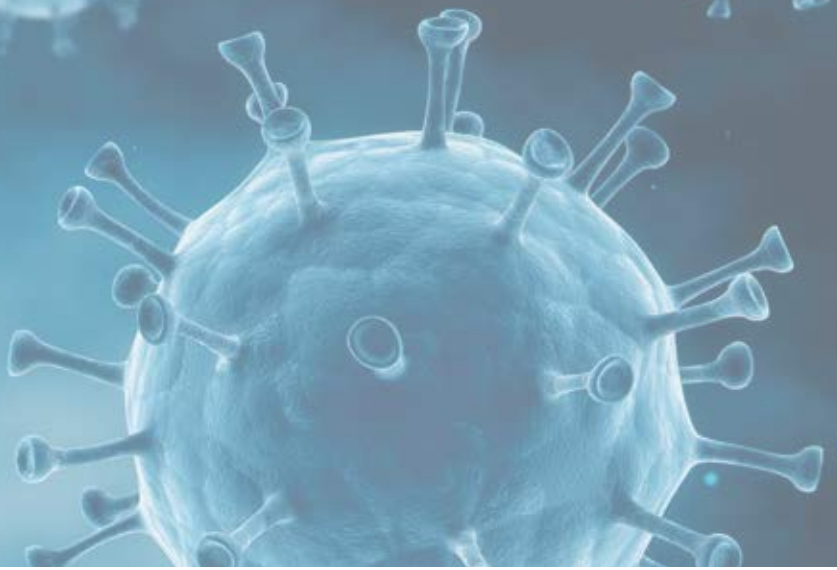
FREDDY self-identifies as a Latino gay man from South America who adopted the USA and NYC as his home. Pronouns: he/him/his

ADVANCING TRANS HEALTH CARE



Freddy
MOLANO





Mark

HARRINGTON



TREATMENT
ACTIVIST

SINCE 2002, Mark has served as Executive Director of the Treatment Action Group (TAG). A San Francisco native and a Harvard graduate, Mark moved to New York after college and joined ACT UP in 1988. Four years later, he and other members left to found TAG, a nonprofit whose policy reports and science-based advocacy work have helped expedite HIV/AIDS treatment research.

Mark has taken part in many demonstrations and written numerous reports for ACT UP and TAG. Under his leadership, TAG has evolved into an independent, activist, and community-based research and policy think tank that fights for better treatment and prevention, vaccines, and cures for HIV, tuberculosis, and hepatitis C virus. Mark also belongs to the AIDS Clinical Trials Group and the New York State AIDS Advisory Council subcommittee of the End the Epidemic initiative.

Diagnosed with HIV in 1992, Mark started antiretroviral therapy (ART) four years later and has had an undetectable viral load ever since.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING

“The most important developments in **HIV treatment, prevention, care, cure, and access depend on people voting in November 2018 to replace the current majorities in the U.S. Congress.** This will accelerate progress toward better treatment and prevention, a vaccine, a cure for HIV, and the end of the epidemic.”

*MARK self-identifies as an HIV+, gay male, Undetectable since 1996.
Pronouns: he/him/his*



YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE

Register and VOTE in 2018!

Your vote matters! Elections are happening this year at both the national and New York State levels. In 2018, we'll elect a U.S. Senator, our Governor, the NYS Attorney General, and State Assembly representatives. These three rounds of elections are coming up on Tuesdays:

- **November 6 general election;**
- June 26 U.S. (federal) primary; and
- September 11 NY State primary

Throughout the past year, you have fought hard to make sure that government listens to your voice and stops dismantling Medicaid, while maintaining access to health care, housing, and employment. Going forward, you have the opportunity to exercise your ultimate right as a U.S. citizen: the right to vote. Regardless of your political beliefs, voting is the ultimate way to exercise your right as a U.S. citizen by choosing to elect candidates who represent your interests.

If you've never voted before or recently made a change – like moving, changing your name, or getting released from incarceration – it's easy to register or re-register ASAP (before mid-October at the latest):

- Get a voter registration form at a post office, or
- Call 311 in New York City, or
- Go online to www.elections.ny.gov, or
- Call or visit the NYC Board of Elections at **866-VOTE-NYC**.

Find out where your polling place is by watching for a flier in the mail, calling 311, or visiting the website listed above. Where you live determines where you vote, and your signature verifies who you are at polling places. So you'll need to give your current address, and you'll want to ensure that your name is listed correctly.

If you were convicted of a felony in NY State, your right to vote is automatically restored as soon as your sentence is completed, or parole has ended. If you're on probation, all you have to do is re-register with your county Board of Elections. For details, visit the NY State Attorney General's website: www.ag.ny.gov/civil-rights/voting-rights.

Be sure to vote! Your vote is your voice.



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CAMBA
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Chef Mohan Kulasingam
www.chefmohan.com

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Gays Against Guns
www.gaysagainstguns.net

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 225 Varick St., 4th Floor
 New York, NY 10014

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center
www.gaycenter.org
 Phone: 212-620-7310
 208 W 13th St.
 New York, NY 10011

National Working Positive Coalition
www.workingpositive.net
 Phone: 646-403-9821

ONYX- New York/Northeast Chapter
www.onyxnynortheast.org

Rivers of Living Water United Church of Christ
www.rivers-at-rehoboth.org
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 263 West 86th Street
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Stonewall Community Foundation
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Treatment Action Group
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