



# AMIDA CARE

MEMBER NEWSLETTER 2019 - VOL.1

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Check out our new blog, **Amida Care Now**, at [www.amidacareny.org/blog](http://www.amidacareny.org/blog), for health information and other news you can use.



Amida Care's Stephane Howze, VP, Member Experience and Ombudsperson, at a World AIDS Day 2018 event.

[www.AMIDACARENY.org](http://www.AMIDACARENY.org)

Follow us on social media!



Dear Amida Care Members,

With 2019 under way, it's worth reminding ourselves of all that we have accomplished together lately and all we are striving for in the months ahead. Thanks to millions of votes that we New Yorkers cast in last November's crucial midterm election, our state and national agendas can now move forward with a strengthened commitment to quality health care for all.

The outcome of that election reshaped the U.S. Congress (our most diverse in history), which can now act as a significant check on efforts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medicaid, and other health care programs for all Americans.

In New York State, our new Senate sets the stage to expand health care access, protect LGBTQ New Yorkers from discrimination, and enhance our state's trailblazing initiative to End the HIV/AIDS Epidemic (EtE) by 2020 – now just one year away!

With EtE in mind, at Amida Care we are proud to announce a new *Live Your Life Undetectable* program for our members living with HIV. Members who achieve an undetectable viral load can earn rewards valued up to \$100 for every three-month period that they remain "undetectable." Being undetectable means that people with HIV can live healthier, longer lives and cannot transmit HIV to others. Turn to Page 2 of this newsletter for more details on this and other programs for which you are eligible as an Amida Care member.

As this year unfolds, please know that keeping each of you as healthy as possible and living your best life is our mission — one that we remain dedicated to going above and beyond to fulfill. We look forward to enjoying good times with you at our *Winter Life Celebration 2019*, our monthly *Live Your Life* events, and many other special events all year long!



Abrazos,

*Doug Wirth*

Doug Wirth, President and CEO



## Become “Undetectable” and Earn Rewards up to \$400 in value

Amida Care encourages our members living with HIV to become virally suppressed – or “undetectable” – so we’re launching a new incentive program called **Live Your Life Undetectable**. To motivate our members to take antiretroviral (ARV) medications as prescribed, we are offering rewards worth \$100 in value for each quarter (three-month period) that you stay undetectable.

For most people, taking ARV medications exactly as prescribed by your Primary Care Provider (PCP) brings the amount of HIV in the blood down to a very low level. This is sometimes called “viral load suppression” or being undetectable. People living with HIV who reach and maintain an undetectable viral load can lead longer, healthier lives and are unable to transmit HIV to others.

Amida Care encourages you to enroll in our new **Live Your Life Undetectable** program. If you already are or become undetectable (viral load of less than 200 copies/ml), you will receive rewards worth \$100 in value for each quarter (three-month period) you stay virally suppressed. To help you achieve this goal, we will connect you to supportive services and tools decided on by you and your PCP.

To learn more about this program, talk to your PCP or call Amida Care at **1-800-556-0689**.

## You Can Get Medication-Assisted Treatment for Addictions

As an Amida Care member, you are eligible for **Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT)**. This means that if you want treatment for substance use issues, you are entitled to receive medications in combination with behavioral therapy. These medications are FDA-approved and may be prescribed to treat smoking, opioid, or alcohol use disorders. Medications for opioid use include buprenorphine, methadone, and naltrexone. Naltrexone can also be used to treat alcohol use disorder, and so can Disulfiram or Acamprosate. You may obtain these medications as part of a program or from your provider.

If you want to get referrals or learn more about **MAT** as a covered benefit, please call **888-664-7142**. For more information about **MAT**, go online to: <https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment>.







Luis Carle © 2018

## HIV/AIDS and the Healing Power of the Arts

Amida Care published a new community magazine, *Art & Creativity*, to mark World AIDS Day and celebrate the power of the arts to heal, inspire, and mobilize. This bilingual publication features artists and organizations across a wide range of mediums – from sculpture and painting to music and filmmaking – who have found ways to sustain themselves and others as part of ongoing efforts to end the global HIV/AIDS epidemic. Go to our website at [www.amidacareny.org](http://www.amidacareny.org) to read this magazine online or pick up a print copy in our office or at your next provider visit.



Above: "Retro in a Colorful Mind," by Ricardo C.  
Top Right: "Beauty of New York. That's Me," by Michele M.  
Middle Right: "Buildings," by Ellen S.  
Bottom Right: "A Seed Must Be Planted," by Donna G.

## Your 2019 Amida Care Art Calendar

Fourteen winning art works and seven honorable mentions were chosen among more than 100 contestants in our latest annual art contest. The winning entries are featured in Amida Care's 2019 calendar, mailed to every member of our organization. Enjoy your calendar and use it to keep track of your appointments, special occasions, and other plans all year long.





AMIDA CARE & OUR  
PARTNERS MARK THE 30<sup>th</sup>

# WORLD AIDS DAY



World AIDS Day 2018 was observed by Amida Care, civic leaders, and many of our partner organizations with special events in Manhattan and Brooklyn.

We joined the NYC and NYS Health Departments, Broadway Cares/Equity Fight AIDS and End AIDS NY 2020 Coalition – a partnership of more than 60 organizations – to mark the 30th annual **World AIDS Day** at an event called **Breaking Through Stigma**, held at Baruch College in Manhattan.

Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams, the National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS (NBLCA), and other advocates joined Amida Care on November 28 at Brooklyn

Central Library to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS.

Our organization debuted its newest special magazine, **Arts & Creativity**, published to coincide with **World AIDS Day 2018**. Free HIV screenings were offered by Bridging Access to Care.

The first World AIDS Day was inaugurated on **December 1** three decades ago to raise awareness of efforts to combat the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, support those living with HIV and commemorate those who have lost their lives to AIDS. The theme this year was **Know Your Status**, a reference to more than 9 million people worldwide who are unaware of being HIV-positive.





# LET'S CELEBRATE **YOU** IN 2019!

## Wellness RULES at This Year's Earliest *Live Your Life* Events

Meditation, fitness, and fun are the agenda for Amida Care's ***Live Your Life*** events in January 2019. To ring in the new year with mindfulness and kick-start some healthy new wellness practices, our members are meeting in Manhattan, Bronx, and Brooklyn. Be sure to join us – and bring a guest – for these monthly special events. Visit [www.amidacareny.org](http://www.amidacareny.org) for the latest schedule of upcoming events.



## Get Set for Our 2019 ***Winter Life Celebration!***

Watch your mailbox, cellphone texts, and Amida Care's website ([www.amidacareny.org](http://www.amidacareny.org)) for the 4-1-1 on our 2019 ***Winter Life Celebration***. This special occasion happens in February, so please keep an eye out for the exciting details. Don't miss this chance to get together and have fun with your fellow Amida Care members!



# AMIDA CARE RECEIVES NBLCA'S **CHOOSE LIFE AWARD**

The **National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS (NBLCA)** recently honored Amida Care with a Choose Life Award. The award was presented at the NBLCA's 2018 Gospel Extravaganza on October 25 in Harlem, at an event celebrating the organization's 30 years of educating, mobilizing, and empowering Black leaders to address and proactively fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic and other health disparities facing African Americans.

Amida Care was recognized as a leader in providing quality health care to communities of color living with and impacted by HIV/AIDS and other health disparities. The award was presented to Amida Care President and CEO Doug Wirth by NBLCA's President and CEO C. Virginia Fields.

"This award is aptly named, because the work that all of us do together is all about choosing life. At Amida Care, the focus of our work has been to promote access to high-quality, comprehensive, culturally competent health care that will give people the chance to live their best lives and contribute to their communities," Doug said.

**Access Our Latest  
Amida Care  
Provider Directory**

To access our current, up-to-date Amida Care Provider Directory, please visit [www.amidacareny.org](http://www.amidacareny.org) and select: For Members, Find a Provider. For a printed version of the current Provider Directory, please call Member Services at 1-800-556-0689, TTY: 711, and ask to have a copy mailed to you.

[www.AMIDACARENY.org](http://www.AMIDACARENY.org)

