



# AMIDA CARE

MEMBER NEWSLETTER 2018 - VOL.1



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Dear Amida Care Members,

I am happy to tell you about an exciting new chapter in the life of Amida Care. We have always been known for providing excellent care to transgender New Yorkers with HIV. **On November 1, 2017, we started enrolling transgender persons who are HIV negative and welcoming them as new members of our Special Needs Plan.**

Getting approved by the New York State Department of Health to open our health plan to all transgender individuals, regardless of HIV status, is a bold opportunity. It gives Amida Care a chance to expand while also providing support to transgender New Yorkers who otherwise might not get the care they need.

Access to our organization's successful model of care can help prevent new HIV transmissions among transgender individuals – a community facing one of the highest risks of acquiring HIV. At the same time, Amida Care's eligibility expansion advances our support of New York State's End the Epidemic (EtE) initiative, as we help HIV+ members become "undetectable" and HIV- members "stay negative."

We have always taken pride in Amida Care's "above and beyond" approach to customer service. To adapt and enhance it for our new members of trans experience, all staff members have undergone Transgender Awareness training.

We hope to spend time with you at Live Your Life and Town Hall meetings in the coming year. We have much to celebrate!



Abrazos,

*Doug Wirth*

Doug Wirth, President and CEO



Follow us on social media!





# You're Hired!

Amida Care's latest special publication, **HIRE ME!** End AIDS with Jobs, came out just in time to mark World AIDS Day on Dec. 1, 2017. Filled with success stories about New Yorkers with HIV or at risk who have returned to work or trained for new careers, this 80-page magazine available in English and Spanish also lists New York City's many workforce development programs, with information on requirements and how to apply. Go to our website to read it online at [www.amidacareny.org](http://www.amidacareny.org)



## Our Latest Awards

In December, Amida Care was honored by the Translatina Network with a Community Recognition Spirit Award for outstanding contributions to the transgender community of New York. Our organization was also presented with a City & State and New York Nonprofit Media PRIDE Award in August 2017. Among 10 honorees to be recognized, Amida Care was praised for unwavering commitment to providing quality health care for the LGBTQ community.

# SAY **NO** TO THE WINTER BLUES

It's very common to experience stress or feel low during the winter months. It can affect your mood and hurt your health.

## **AMIDA CARE CAN HELP!**

Your behavioral health benefits include treatment for depression, stress, and alcohol and substance use issues.

Call our dedicated Amida Care Behavioral Health phone line to find out about services available to you.

**AMIDA CARE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**  
**(866) 664-7142**  
**TTY 711**



**Your vote is  
your voice.  
Don't be silent.**

**VOTE**



**It's not too early  
to register to vote.**

Call the  
NYC Board of Elections  
for more information:  
**866-VOTE-NYC**  
(TTY 212-487-5496)  
or visit **[www.vote.nyc.ny.us](http://www.vote.nyc.ny.us)**







# EUGENE EPPS

## POSITIVE CHANGE THROUGH PEER TRAINING

**Eugene Epps is a brave example of positive change.** Growing up, Eugene found new challenges around every corner. He watched his mother sell drugs from their home, lost family members to AIDS, and was sent to foster care after a drug raid.

“I became bitter,” Eugene says. He acted out, committing crimes that landed him in prison. After his release, Eugene became very ill, and a test showed that he had HIV.

“DON’T ALLOW YOUR PAST,  
WHATEVER IT MAY BE, TO  
KEEP YOU DOWN. LET YOUR  
LIGHT SHINE. BE BETTER THAN  
YESTERDAY.” – EUGENE

Eugene felt as if the odds were stacked against him, but he courageously chose to take that first step to live better. He went to the Alliance for Positive Change (then called AIDS Service Center NYC) to get the help he needed. Eugene started as a client, but soon became an example to others. He enrolled in Alliance’s Peer Recovery Education Program and completed eight weeks of training.

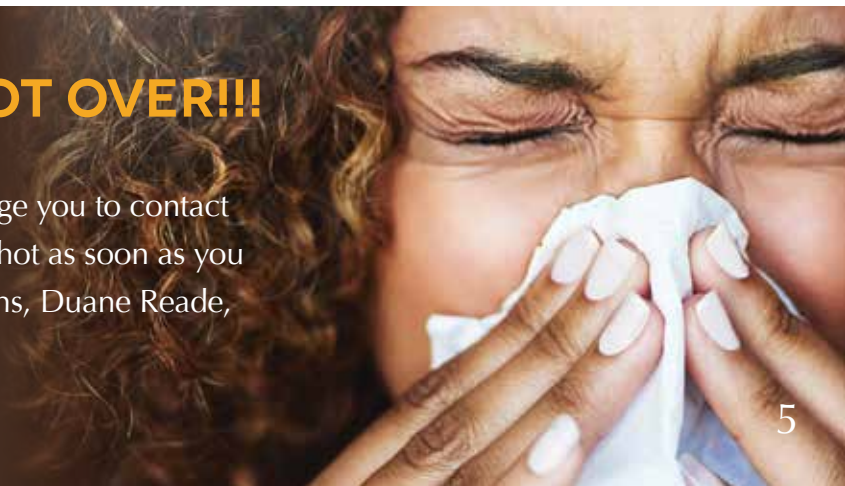
“The Peer program changed my life,” says Eugene. “I was able to put the streets away. I learned how to use coping mechanisms, and I became more confident and less judgmental.”

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For more of Eugene’s story and other workforce success stories, visit our website: [www.amidacareny.org](http://www.amidacareny.org)

## THE FLU SEASON IS NOT OVER!!!

It’s not too late to get a flu shot. We encourage you to contact your health care provider to schedule a flu shot as soon as you can. Also, many drugstores such as Walgreens, Duane Reade, and CVS offer flu shots on site.



# FRAUD, WASTE, OR ABUSE HARMS ALL OF US!

Call Our Compliance Hotline  
at **888-394-2285**

If you suspect any cases of fraud, waste, or abuse that involve your medical care – including vision, dental, behavioral health, or prescription drugs – please call the Amida Care Compliance Hotline at **888-394-2285**.

We're here to help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The call is free. When you call the hotline, you can leave your name and number. OR you can remain anonymous.

Other options for reporting anonymously include:

Compliance email address: **[compliance@amidacareny.org](mailto:compliance@amidacareny.org)**

Compliance mailing address:

**Amida Care, Attn: Compliance  
14 Penn Plaza, 2nd floor, NY, NY 10122**



Please be aware that your **Amida Care Healthy Rewards VISA Card** expires every two years. For some of you, the expiration date is coming in early 2018. You don't have to do anything, just look for your new card in the mail and activate it as soon as you receive it. Any rewards balance will be automatically transferred to your new card. If you have any questions, please call **Member Services** at **1.800.556.0689, TTY 711**.