

The AIDS Epidemic - 30 Years Later

By Wendell Hicks



Photo by David Banger, Cox Media

"In the period October 1980 - May 1981, 5 young men, all active homosexuals, were treated for biopsy-confirmed pneumocystis carinii pneumonia at 3 different hospitals in Los Angeles, California. Two of the patients died. All 5 patients had laboratory-confirmed previous or current cytomegalovirus (CMV) infection and candidal mucosal infection."

Centers for Disease Control Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), June 5, 1981

This was the first report from the Centers for Disease Control of cases of men being infected with a mysterious virus. As we now know, these were some of the earliest reports of AIDS in the United States.

In 1981 I was 19 years old and living in East Texas. I was also just beginning to come to terms with being gay and starting the "coming out" process. As I watched the reports on the news that year, I remember feeling confused, scared, and uncertain how this would affect me. All of the cases identified had been connected to gay men (or active homosexuals, as the report states). This was long before the days of 24-hour news coverage and the internet and I had very few places to turn for answers.

Eventually, this newly-discovered virus (initially described as the "Gay Cancer") would become known as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Unfairly and incorrectly stigmatized as a "Gay Disease," the United States government turned its back on the crisis. It would take almost six years for then-President Ronald Reagan to say the word AIDS in public. By that time, many lives had been lost unnecessarily. By April, 1987, more than 41,000 had died from AIDS in the

United States and an additional 71,000 had been diagnosed with the disease.

During the 1980s, I saw many healthy young men and women succumb to AIDS. I lost so many close and cherished friends to this disease, that I was certain my demise was just a matter of time.

Desperate to take more control of my life, I left a career in graphic design and started working for my first AIDS Service Organization in 1991. Since then, I have devoted myself to educating people about HIV and AIDS and to helping those living with it. This is what makes my heart sing. I often say that since I started working in this field, there has not been a single day that I have not wanted to go to work, not a single moment when I have not been excited by the potential of the possible and the power that each of us has to make a difference.

As we look back over the 30 years since the first AIDS diagnosis, we must:

- 1) recognize the great progress we have made,
- 2) remember those we have lost,
- 3) continue to support people living with HIV and AIDS, and
- 4) remind others that AIDS has not gone away.

Today AIDS is frequently referred to as the "forgotten epidemic."

As often as not, this seems true.

Although largely marginalized in the mainstream media, more than 1.1 million people are living with HIV in the United States, and HIV and AIDS are still vital topics of conversation if we are ever to realize a world with no new infections. While incredible strides forward have been made, we still have so far to go.

Thank you so much for helping make a difference. Because of your support, SAAF is educating and empowering those living with HIV and AIDS to take control of their lives. With your assistance, we are creating a healthier community through a compassionate and comprehensive response to HIV and AIDS.

With great appreciation,

Wendell Hicks,
SAAF Executive Director

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SAAF

SOUTHERN ARIZONA
AIDS FOUNDATION

375 S. Euclid Ave.
Tucson, Arizona
85719

CONNECTION

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Your gift today to
SAAF's
Food Program
will help someone tomorrow!

2011/12 Fundraising Events

AIDSWALK Tucson
Sunday, October 16, 2011
University of Arizona® Campus

Festival for Life
Saturday, November 19, 2011
Tucson Chinese Cultural Center

Bowling for Tommy
Saturday, January 14, 2012
Bedroxx, 4385 West Ina Road

Möda Prövocateür
Sunday, March 4, 2012
University of Arizona®
Student Union Grand Ballroom

Jell-O Wrestling
Saturday, May 12, 2012
Kennedy Fiesta Park

Make a Difference: Volunteer at SAAF

By Anna Griessel, Support Services Manager

SAAF is always looking for enthusiastic volunteers. The Buyers' Club and Food for Life are just two SAAF programs in which you can make a difference. Have a positive impact in the community while having fun; donate your time to SAAF.

Buyers' Club Volunteers

If you like helping others in a retail environment, being a volunteer at the Travis Wright Memorial Buyers' Club might be the perfect volunteer opportunity for you. At the Buyers' Club, SAAF clients and the community can purchase pharmaceutical-grade supplements at great prices. The Buyers' Club is located in The Medicine Shoppe, next to SAAF. Volunteer opportunities are available on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from noon to 5:00 pm.

Food for Life Drivers

Monday through Thursday, 52 weeks a year, SAAF sends three drivers into the community to deliver fresh, healthy meals to its homebound clients. The Food for Life program thrives thanks to the many volunteers who prepare and deliver the meals. If you have your own vehicle and can spare two hours in the morning, one day a week, this might be the opportunity for you.

For more information about these and other volunteer opportunities, please contact Courtney Kelly, Volunteer Coordinator, at 520-628-7223 or ckelly@saaf.org.

SAAF

SOUTHERN ARIZONA
AIDS FOUNDATION

July, August, September
Summer 2011
Tucson, Arizona

CONNECTION

The Newsletter of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation

AIDSWALK 2011 - Sunday, October 16, 2011

By Ethan Smith Cox, Development Director

The 24th Annual AIDSWALK, SAAF's largest annual fundraising event, will take place on Sunday, October 16, 2011 on the campus of the University of Arizona.

Each year, 1000s come together to:

Remember those we have lost to AIDS;

Support those who are living with or affected by HIV or AIDS and;

Educate the community on ways to protect themselves so that we can stop the spread of HIV.

The goal for this year's AIDSWALK is to raise \$181,500 to support the programs and services of SAAF. Since 2000, AIDSWALK has raised more than \$2 million for SAAF and we can only continue to be successful with your help. Register to walk; Start a team of walkers or runners or; Join the Red Ribbon Club. No matter how you choose to support, you'll be helping SAAF to continue to fulfill its mission in the community and serve 1000s with our care service and prevention programs.



Supporters walk during last year's event - AIDSWalk 2010

NEW THIS YEAR - Make a \$10 contribution to AIDSWALK using your cell phone. Simply text the word "SAAF" to 20222 and your contribution will be included on your next phone bill. Now, supporting AIDSWALK and SAAF is easier than ever!

For more information on how to get involved with this year's event and to keep up on the latest news, visit aidswalktucson.com.

In This Issue:

AIDSWalk 2011 -	Page 1
The AIDS Epidemic - 30 Years Later	Page 2
Staff Spotlight - Pat Desson	Page 3
2011 Jell-O Wrestling - The Most Successful Ever!	Page 3
2011 Volunteer Appreciation Event	Page 4
In Memoriam - Dave Locke	Page 4
Supporting SAAF Through Workplace Giving	Page 5
2011/2012 Fundraising Events	Page 5
Make a Difference: SAAF Volunteers	Page 6

SAAF

Our Mission

The mission of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation is to create and sustain a healthier community through a compassionate, comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS.

Travis Wright Memorial Buyers' Club

Purchase vitamins and supplements for HIV/AIDS care and general health at the lowest possible cost. Located at The Medicine Shoppe 305 S. Euclid Ave, next to SAAF

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
9:00 am to 6:00 pm
Wednesday
9:00 am to 8:00 pm

Support Groups

Mondays

P.A.T.H. – Positive Attitudes Towards Health and HIV:
Open to anyone living with or concerned about HIV/AIDS
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm @ SAAF

Wednesdays

SAAF Haven Support Group
(lunch included)
11:00 am - 12:30 pm @ SAAF

Thursdays

Heterosexual Support Group
(lunch included)
11:00 am - 12:30 pm @ SAAF
(except for third Thursday of the month)

Support Group schedules may vary. Please call SAAF for more information.



Staff Spotlight

By Pat Desson, Senior Case Manager

I have worked in SAAF's Care Services Department for over 11 years. For several of these, I was a program assistant, and gave administrative support to the department and coordinated our dental program. In 2006 I became a case manager, and was recently promoted to senior case manager.

I carry a case load of approximately 50 clients. A case manager connects our program participants to the services SAAF offers. These include food and housing; and access to dental treatment, transportation, and financial assistance for rent and/or utilities. In addition, SAAF offers emotional support. We listen to our clients, hear what they say, understand what they are going through, and then, to the best of our abilities, help them face the many challenges of living with HIV/AIDS. One of the greatest challenges of my job is dealing with the limited resources and funding within the community.

As a senior case manager, I also assist Laura Feld, our associate director, with some of our department's administrative duties. This gives me an opportunity to employ some of my administrative skills.

I love working at SAAF and consider it my home away from home. The people I work with are people I trust and care for deeply – it matters what happens to them, it matters if they are happy or hurting. Everyone and everything at SAAF matters.

On a more personal note, I am Grandma to three awesome grandchildren: Jayden (5), Wyatt (3) and Victoria (18 months). They live in Utah, so I don't get to see them very often but when I do it's all about spending time with them. And, yes, they wear me out completely and I love every minute of it!

My home is my haven, my castle, my wonderful place to be. There are always projects to do, so if I get bored, it's really my own fault. When I'm home, I am relaxed because that's where my music is, my stuff, my comfy spaces, and my nine-year-old Beagle, Maya. I consider myself very lucky to have the opportunity to work at SAAF and to "give back." I hope to make a difference in at least one life each day, and, at SAAF, I am able to do this and so much more.

2011 Jell-O Wrestling - The most successful ever!

By Ethan Smith Cox, Development Director

The 24th Annual Reno Gannon Memorial Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza Benefit Auction and Concert took place on Saturday, May 14, 2011, at Kennedy Fiesta Park, and did we have a ball!

This year's event raised more than \$56,000 for SAAF's programs and services and marked the single most successful day of fundraising in its 24 years.

Special thanks must be extended to everyone who came together to make this year's event such a hit:

- Our lovely drag hostesses – Lucinda Holliday, Aja Simone, Tempest DuJour, Barbara Seville, and Lady Ashley
- The incredible, dedicated 2011 Jell-O Wrestling committee – Jerry Anderson, Rich Brennan, Chris Davis, Dave Fredricks, Roy Hernandez, David Lefton, Harry Lewis, Dave Locke, Joe Roos, Danny Scott, and Helga Wöcherl
- Our sponsors - including IBT's, which stepped up to be this year's title sponsor.
- Our amazing and hilarious wrestlers – Team Checkup was this year's top wrestling fundraiser, bringing in more than \$13,000. A special thanks to team members Cliff Martin, Ben McDonald, Wendell Hicks, and Kevin Casey.

Stay tuned: We are already planning some big surprises for next year's 25th anniversary wrestling event.

2011 Volunteer Appreciation Event

By Ethan Smith Cox, Development Director

After an April rainout, SAAF moved the Volunteer Appreciation event to Thursday, June 9, in the courtyard of the Historic Y. This year's event was a collaboration with Wingspan and the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network (TIHAN). More than 100 volunteers from all three organizations celebrated their successes.

This year SAAF gave awards to volunteers in 20 categories. Without our diligent and passionate volunteers, SAAF would not be able to do any of its work. We hope you had a chance to celebrate with us and honor some of the wonderful people who make our community so great.

Special thanks to Raytheon GLBTA and the Louise Young Fund for their support of this year's event.



2011 Volunteer Appreciation Awards

Award	Awardee
Administration	Conrad Moseley
Business Leadership	Long Realty
Care Services	Jim Wymore
Development	C.J. Minott
Education	Andy Little
Jean Cicci Peer Counseling	Phil Bossenbroek
Jerome Beillard Self-Empowerment	Juan Chavira
Longtime Volunteer	Claire Orloff
Media Leadership	AdVision
New Volunteer	Wes Tolliver
Youth Prevention Services	Michael Felton
Original Contribution	Deb Van Sant & Greg Rogan - The Medicine Shoppe and Lucinda Holliday
Outstanding Prevention Contribution	Sky Lopez
Volunteer Resources	Curt Beall
Group Volunteer Effort	MSHAPE volunteers
Reception	Juan Chavira
Food Programs	Marsha & Kal Fisher
Events	Cindy Joy
Outstanding Prevention Collaborator	Old Pueblo Community Services
Staff Volunteer of the Year	Erin Butler
Volunteer of the Year	Juan Chavira

In Memoriam

by Ethan Smith Cox, Development Director

On June 2, 2011, SAAF lost an avid supporter when Jell-O committee member and SAAF donor Dave Locke passed away. For the past 24 years, Dave has been a driving force behind the Jell-O wrestling benefit, working up until the last minute to ensure the success of each year's event.

Dave was born in Waltham, Massachusetts on April 10, 1950 to Albert & Carol Locke and relocated to Tucson many years ago. Dave loved all living things including plants and animals, especially his cat Tigger. Dave is survived by his parents as well as a brother, Kevin, and 3 loving sisters, Cheri, Alice, and Jean.

Dave's passion and compassion defined all of his volunteer work and he sought to do everything in his power to make Tucson a better community.

Those of us who knew Dave will always remember his wonderful smile, his gentle spirit, and incredible generosity. He will be greatly missed.



Supporting SAAF Through Workplace Giving

By Evelyn Rens, SAAF Grants Coordinator



Funds raised through these campaigns are substantial. In 2009 Arizona federal employees raised more than \$2.35 million dollars for more than 1,500 international, national, and local charities. Federal retirees are able to make gifts through the campaign as well.

To learn more about how employees of government agencies can donate, visit the agencies' websites. (Campaigns for government agencies assign numbers to each charity. SAAF numbers follow each agency acronym.)

Arizona Combined Federal Campaign
(CFC-71034) at www.cfc.org

Arizona State Employees Charitable Campaign
(SECC-3148) at www.azsecc.org/

Pima County Employees Combined Appeal Program (ECAP-9898)
at www.pima.gov/ecap

City of Tucson Employees Combined Appeal Program (ECAP-9898)
at www.unitedwaytucson.org/cotecap

In addition to government agencies, many local businesses participate in workplace campaigns. United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona, Community Shares of Southern Arizona, Raytheon Rays of Hope, and IBM ECCC all utilize payroll deductions for their employees' donations.

Did you know that each year SAAF receives about \$25,000 through workplace gifts? On behalf of the people we serve, we thank all those donors who designate SAAF in their workplace charitable campaigns.

When it comes to charitable giving – you have a choice, especially if your employer allows you to contribute through payroll deduction. Workplace giving makes it easy to contribute to SAAF.

Each spring, SAAF completes an application, similar to a grant proposal, to participate in the Arizona Combined Federal Campaign and the Arizona State Employees Charitable Campaign. By submitting this application, SAAF confirms its status as a tax exempt nonprofit and demonstrates how its work directly benefits people in Southern Arizona.

Each fall, employers who participate in workplace giving conduct annual campaigns to promote charitable giving and to explain how employees can make contributions through payroll deductions. Many employers have agency fairs in which representatives of participating charities share information about their organizations. At this time, employees may complete pledge forms on which they may designate the amount to deduct from each paycheck, the recipient of the charitable gift, and the total annual contribution. For example, if an employee were to deduct \$10 per paycheck for 26 pay periods, the total annual gift would be \$260.



Services Available for People Living with HIV/AIDS Include:

CLINICAL SERVICES

Case Management
Peer Counseling

SUPPORT SERVICES

Complementary Therapies
Dental Care
Food Programs
Holiday Project
Medications Assistance
Support Groups
Telephone Assistance
Transportation

HOUSING SERVICES

Housing Units Owned by SAAF
Community-Based Subsidized Housing
Emergency Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Assistance
Move-in Deposits

PREVENTION SERVICES

Risk-Reduction Counseling

YOUR GIFT IN ACTION

Below are just a few of the ways in which SAAF utilizes funds to support people in Southern Arizona.

\$5

Can help to cover 1 Food for Life meal delivered to a homebound client. Last year, SAAF delivered more than 15,000 meals in Southern Arizona.

\$10

Can help to cover the cost of 1 HIV test kit with supplies. If the test has a positive result, this cost goes up to \$200. This does not cover the administrative costs to conduct the test.

\$15

Can help to support a family that receives a monthly supplemental food bag which includes 2 lbs. of meat, 1/4 lb. butter, 1 lb. cheese, and 1 loaf of bread. Last year more than 1,500 supplemental food bags were given out.