



**AIDS
WALK
ARIZONA
TUCSON**

**SUNDAY
OCTOBER 11
2015**

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The SAAF CONNECTION

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN ARIZONA AIDS FOUNDATION

SPRING 2015

Volume 2, Issue 2



Accomplishments and Changes to Prevention Services

By Luis Ortega, Director of Programs

This year, SAAF is successfully completing three directly funded federal grants.

HEP TLC (Hepatitis C: Testing and Linkage to Care), funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), provided Hepatitis C education and rapid testing services to people who had current or former substance use, in particular people who inject drugs. For those who tested confirmatory positive, linkages to medical care

activities were provided to El Rio Community Health Center and other providers for disease management and treatment. HEP TLC worked close with behavioral health providers and the Pima County Health Department to reach their participants for program services.

SAAF's **Alternatives** program, also funded by the CDC, is in its fifth and final year of implementation. During the first four years, Alternatives provided HIV and Hepatitis C (HCV) rapid testing, outreach & education, and one-on-one risk reduction counseling and group-level interventions for people with current or former substance use and/or people with a history of incarceration. Under this initiative, SAAF was the only AIDS Service Organization in the country to be funded to implement the MIP

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OUR MISSION:

To cultivate
a healthy,
stigma-free society
through
transformative
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Layout and Design: WhiteSpace Design, LLC
Printing: Alphagraphics CPS

Printed on Recycled Paper

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New Logo, New Look, Same Fight.

By Wendell Hicks, Executive Director

In the last issue of the SAAF Connection, I shared news about SAAF's change to a new mission statement which more accurately reflects the work that we do throughout the community. This new statement, to cultivate a healthy & stigma-free society through transformative action, sets the tone and helps us remember why this work is so important.

Our new mission statement also just happens to coincide with the beginning of our 30th year of providing services in southern Arizona. As part of this anniversary, we are also unveiling an updated look for this newsletter and a new, 30th anniversary logo. Like the new mission statement, I think this new logo and look more accurately represents the work that SAAF does and reflects what makes us so unique from other non-profits in the community.

In 1985 when the Tucson AIDS Project and the Shanti Foundation (along with PACT for Life, founded in 1987) started offering services to people who were living with HIV & AIDS, they were on the frontlines in the fight against stigma. Throughout the early 80s, devastating footage of men (many of them gay) & women who had become infected with HIV and were dying of AIDS ran on the nightly newscasts almost non-stop. Out of the gate, AIDS was a heavily stigmatized disease because of the disproportionate number of American gay men who were becoming infected and because the most common ways of spreading HIV was (and still is) through sexual contact or the sharing of needles by intravenous drug users, already highly



Photo by Scott Griessel, Creative

stigmatized and difficult-to-talk-about subjects. To say that we in the fight to help people who were suffering and to stop the spread of HIV were waging an uphill battle was the understatement of the decade.

While we have been at this for more than 30 years, the stigma that was so much a part of this disease in the early days has not gone away. The saddest thing about stigma is that it closes down so many important conversations that can change and save lives. We see this, too, in the fight for LGBT rights. When SAAF took over programs from Wingspan in 2014, it only made sense to adopt a broader mission statement and when considering the fight against AIDS and the fight for LGBT equality, it became clear that the battle against stigma was the common thread that truly united both.

I hope you enjoy the new look of the newsletter and I hope you will come out sometime during the next 12 months to help us celebrate our 30th anniversary. It is only because of you that we have made it this far and it will be your passion and support that sustains us as we continue to work towards our vision of a healthy community, free from stigma.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wendell Hicks".

Wendell

Artful Living Gallery & Studio showcases a wide range of merchandise as well as the art of Jeff Ferst on canvas and paper.



Artful Living Gallery Event to Benefit SAAF

By Ethan Smith Cox, Director of Development

Tucson artist Jeff Ferst, owner of Artful Living Gallery & Studio in downtown Tucson, will be holding an Artful Evening for SAAF – in support of the Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation on August 8, 2015 from 5:30 – 8:30pm.

The evening will allow participants to view and purchase original artwork at the gallery with a portion of sales from the event going to support SAAF programs and services.

Artful Living Gallery & Studio showcases a wide range of merchandise as well as the art of Jeff Ferst on canvas and paper. His home décor and clothing line are created with images of his art. Jeff's work is intensely colorful and celebratory, grounded in reality and musical in feeling, tactile and visual.

Jeff's work is in corporate and residential collections throughout the US and Canada. He has had his work exhibited at Wilde Meyer Gallery, Tohono Chul Park, Rain Crow Gallery, and Art House Centro here in Tucson as well as other galleries in the US and Canada. His work is also included in exhibitions in two US Ambassadors' residences – one in Dushanbe, Tajikistan and the other in Windhoek, Namibia.

For more information on this event, visit www.saaf.org.



SAAF CARE SERVICES

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
Medical Benefits Cost Sharing Assistance for those enrolled in statewide ADAP Assist
Medications Assistance
Support Groups
Transportation
Wellness and Buyers' Club
Other Personal Support Services

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

Register for AIDSWALK 2015 – Be entered into our Drawing

This year, we are excited to offer a 2 Fitbit Activity Trackers or 2 tickets to Festival for Life, taking place on Saturday November 14, to 2 lucky AIDSWALK registrants.

Entering is quick and easy:

1. Go to www.aidswalk.com
2. Click on Register Now button
3. Pay for your registration online by August 15 using a major credit card

(Online registrations processed through a secure, encrypted site to insure the privacy of your financial information)

4. Set up your AIDSWALK fundraising page.

Every paid registrant through August 15 will be entered into a drawing for the Fitbit Activity Trackers or tickets to Festival for Life.

Register today for YOUR chance to win!!!



AIDSWALK Arizona/Tucson is coming Sunday October 11

By Monique Vallery, CTA, Associate Director of Development



Presents

AIDS WALK ARIZONA TUCSON

2015 will mark the 27th Annual AIDSWALK Arizona/Tucson!

We hope that you will join us a Walker or Runner at this year's event, taking place on Sunday October 11 in Downtown Tucson on Jácome Plaza in front of the Main Library. SAAF is again teaming up with one of Tucson's most beloved cultural events, Tucson Meet Yourself. What a great way to spend the day Downtown in the morning at AIDSWALK and finishing off the day enjoying all that Tucson Meet Yourself has to offer.

Visit www.aidswalktucson.com for complete information and to register yourself or a pet TODAY!



Jell-O hostess Lucinda Holliday and fellow Drag Queen Patti LePlae SAFE were the top fundraising team - raising over \$5,000!



Photos by Scott Gressel, Creatista



FUNDRAISING EVENTS

AIDSWALK TUCSON

Sunday October 11, 2015

Downtown Tucson

www.aidswalktucson.com

THE 27TH ANNUAL JERÔME BEILLARD FESTIVAL FOR LIFE

Saturday November 14, 2015

Tucson Chinese Cultural Center

www.festivalforlife.org

BOWLING FOR TOMMY

Saturday January 23, 2016

NEW LOCATION

Fiesta Bowl- 501 West River Road

MÖDA PROVÖCATEÛR

Sunday March 5, 2016

Tucson Convention Center Grand Ballroom

www.saafmoda.org

JELL-O WRESTLING

Date TBD

The Slaughterhouse

www.jello-wrestling.org

Jell-O Wrestling 2015 – What a Wild Ride It Was!

By Monique Vallery, CTA, Associate Director of Development

The 28th Annual Reno Gannon Memorial Jell-O Wrestling Extravaganza and Benefit Auction, presented by Title Sponsor Freedom Smoke USA International, was held on May 9, 2015. This year's event raised more than \$43,000 for the programs and services of SAAF and we could not have done it without your support!

Highlights of this year's event included wrestling matches featuring the Super Mario Brothers, Disney Princesses, Yogi and Boo-boo, and members of the Tucson Roller Derby. Longtime Jell-O hostess Lucinda Holliday took to the ring to wow the fans against fellow Drag Queen Patti LePlae SAFE. This dynamic duo was also the top fundraising team, raising well over \$5,000 through their efforts.

Congratulations to John Jackson, this year's raffle grand prize winner of 2 nights in Vegas and 2 tickets to see

Title Sponsor



Mariah Carey live. We hope he has an amazing time this summer at the show. Any many thanks, again, to Dr. Kayla Boyer and Speedway Veterinary Hospital for being the Raffle Sponsor.

We'll look forward to seeing you next year for another great year of Jell-O!



Continued from page 1

Accomplishments and Changes to Prevention Services

By Luis Ortega, Director of Programs

TO YOUR HEALTH

Travis Wright Memorial Buyers' Club

Purchase vitamins and supplements for HIV/AIDS care and general health at the lowest possible cost.

The Medicine Shoppe
305 S. Euclid Ave, next to SAAF
Monday-Friday: 9:00am to 6:00pm



evidence-based intervention. In year 5, SAAF has implemented two additional interventions particularly targeting people living with HIV/AIDS who are current or former substance users, and very high-risk negative individuals. We also continued HIV and HCV testing services, linkages to care, and developed a navigation and support services system of care in conjunction with SAAF's existing Peer Counseling program. Project partners have included COPE Behavioral Services and Pima Prevention Partnership.

The **Reaching Adolescents Prevention Program (RAPP)** has been funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) since September 2010 to provide substance abuse and HIV prevention services. Also in its fifth and final year, the program has been working primarily with youth and young adults of color, ages 13 – 24. Participants have received HIV rapid testing services, outreach and education, family support services, and resource and referral services. They have also participated in a group-level intervention called **Say it Straight**, a research based intervention that results in empowering communication skills and behaviors as well as increased self-efficacy and personal and social responsibility. By learning about these communication behaviors, participants have learned how to say yes when they want to say yes, no when they want to say no, and how to say no to risky behaviors. RAPP also uses adapted sessions from the Street Smart Curriculum, focusing on HIV and STI risk-reduction and substance abuse prevention. The use of social media as a way to engage youth and young adults

was taken to another level through RAPP's Life Plus Project (LPP) initiative, an environmental strategy used to promote HIV testing and substance abuse prevention. LPP, through additional 'New Media' funding, also targeted LGBT youth and Latino gay/bisexual men. Project partners have included Child & Family Resources and Pima Prevention Partnership.

SAAF is very proud to have had the opportunity to implement these programs and provide the services that have reached thousands of people in our community. As we prepare to wrap-up these programs and celebrate our accomplishments, we equally celebrate the addition of three new programs this year: **One Life**, an integrated substance abuse and HIV treatment and prevention program with CODAC Behavioral Services; **Youth Life**, a sexual assault prevention program targeting youth and young adults; and **ANCHOR**, a collaboration with SIROW that provides education and employment readiness services to LGBT young adults 18 and over.

We optimistically wait for word on other grant opportunities in the fall that will allow us to continue providing some of the aforementioned services. These opportunities will create new ventures into exciting areas such as NIH-funded research with the University of Arizona's Liver Research Institute, college-based prevention services with Pima Community College, and Latino focused capacity building initiatives with Amistades, Inc.

**SAAF's Prevention Services:
Creating Healthier Communities!**

In the Foundation Spotlight

By Evelyn Rens, Grants Coordinator



In March 2015, SAAF's board of directors adopted a new, broader mission statement that better reflects our organization's expanding focus: to cultivate a healthy and stigma-free society through transformative action.

To achieve this mission and maintain services essential to the people we serve, SAAF is proud and grateful to have continued support from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Straight Alliance Fund.

In 1999, the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona was awarded a two-year, \$100,000 challenge grant from the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership. Through the vision of an advisory committee representing a broad cross-section of the community and the continuing commitment of a group of LGBT leaders, straight allies, community volunteers and donors, the Alliance Fund has thrived, making 144 grants totaling more than \$600,000 to 56 organizations, including SAAF.

SAAF received its first grant from the Alliance Fund in 2009 through the Queer Youth Initiative which helped fund critically-needed sexual health education for LGBTQ youth. In 2011, the Alliance Fund also started making grants for Project ALLY (Arizona's Life Links for Youth), a suicide prevention program targeting LGBTQ youth. Grants made by the Alliance Fund since then were instrumental in enabling SAAF to leverage funding from the County to save ALLY when the program's funding was abruptly eliminated due to the federal sequester in May 2013.

There are many ties and connections between SAAF, the LGBT community, and the Alliance Fund. SAAF's staff members believe in the Alliance Fund's mission and

are donors, including Executive Director Wendell Hicks. SAAF's Director of Finance, Tabitha Fox, volunteers on their Board (and she refrains from voting or feedback on applications for SAAF's programs).

We appreciate their support of key programs acquired from Wingspan including:

The Anti-Violence Project which maintains the 24-hour hotline and face-to-face crisis intervention, support and advocacy for LGBTQ survivors of domestic and interpersonal violence; sexual assault and sexual violence; dating violence and stalking; and hate violence and;

The Eon Youth Program which maintains a much-needed dedicated safe space, support groups, one-on-one guidance, and basic needs for LGBTQ youth ages 13 – 23.

And their continuing support of SAAF's programs including:

MSHAPE, which provides a safe and substance-free community-oriented drop-in space for LGBTQ and straight allied adults 18 and older. Participants can receive HIV and Hepatitis C prevention and testing, health education, and access basic needs including food and showers and;

ALLY which has conducted suicide awareness education, suicide prevention training, and LGBTQ cultural competency training with 1400+ youth and 350+ adults in order to create a community safety net to prevent attempted and completed suicides among LGBTQ youth.

Everyone at SAAF wants to thank and recognize the Alliance Fund's donors, board, community volunteers, and staff for their vision, commitment, and generosity.

To learn more, visit the [LGBT&S Alliance Fund at www.alliancefund.org/wp/about-us](http://www.alliancefund.org/wp/about-us)



VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Get involved with SAAF!

Join us for an upcoming volunteer orientation, the first step for anyone wanting to volunteer at SAAF.* Orientations take place at the SAAF office building located at 375 South Euclid Avenue.

Tuesday July 21, 2015
5:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Tuesday August 18, 2015
5:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Saturday September 19, 2015
10:00 am – 2:00 pm

*(*No orientation is necessary for those volunteering for fundraising events and Walk-in Wednesdays.)*

To sign up for Volunteer Orientation, contact Michael Webb, SAAF's Volunteer Coordinator, at (520) 547-6101 or mwebb@saaf.org or visit saaf.org/volunteer/overview

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Author David Fredrickson holds benefit for SAAF

By Ethan Smith Cox, Director of Development

SAAF is excited to welcome Author David Fredrickson to Tucson on Friday September 18 to read selections from his novel, *Life on All Fours*, at Antigone's, located at 411 North 4th Avenue.

Life on All Fours is a love story framed by loss and narrated by one whose four paws are firmly on the ground. Ben Walker lives in San Francisco. It's 1997, and after nearly two decades of AIDS devastation, finally, there may be reasons to hope. Ben, his ex-wife, Judy, and their mutual best friend, Anthony, struggle in a complicated triangle of love and personal history to create family. Into the mix tumbles Beau, an eight-week-old Field Spaniel who bears witness to the human drama that swirls around him. *Life on All Fours* is two stories but one shared journey—a dog and a man, and the hearts they touch along the way.

Writer, advocate, and psychotherapist, Fredrickson has dedicated his professional life to the psychosocial needs of underserved communities including at-risk children, adolescents, and families and those affected by HIV/AIDS.



The reading will begin at 6:00pm.

In addition to the reading, the author will also be available to sign copies of *Life on All Fours* and a percentage of all sales of the book that evening will be donated back to SAAF.