

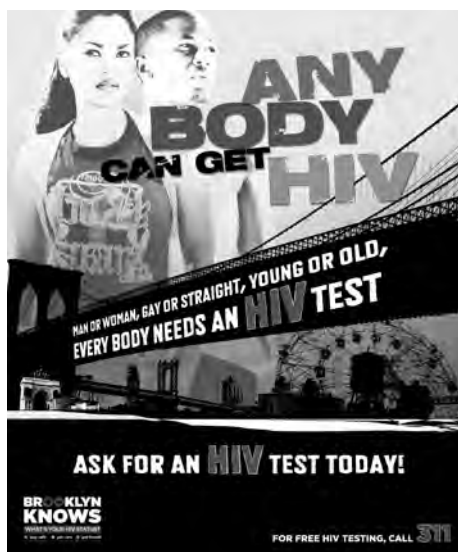
HIV Link

The Newsletter of the HIV Center for Women and Children

Bringing together care
and research in service
to families in need

'Brooklyn Knows' Voluntary HIV Testing Initiative

On World AIDS Day (December 1, 2010), Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg announced an ambitious new initiative in New York City's fight against HIV/AIDS. Brooklyn Knows, a community-based testing effort, aims to help a half-million Brooklyn residents learn their HIV status over the next four years. The new initiative will build on the achievements of The Bronx Knows, a City-led community partnership that has helped more than 400,000 Bronx residents get tested for HIV since its launch in 2008. The Mayor was joined at the Brooklyn Public Library by City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley, and awardees who accepted a proclamation and individual certificates for their extraordinary work in helping New York City combat the epidemic: Dr. Leonard Berkowitz, Medical Director of the Program for AIDS Treatment and Health (PATH) Center at Brooklyn Hospital Center; Elaine Greeley, Executive Director of Brooklyn AIDS Task Force; Dr. Luis Freddy Molano, Assistant Vice President for HIV Programs at the Community Healthcare Network; and Dr. David Holson, Director of Emergency Medicine at Queens Hospital Center. SUNY Downstate's Magna Robinson (STAR Program) and Dr. Jeff Birnbaum and Jennifer Irwin (HEAT Program) attended the event. Dr. Jack DeHovitz and Kathleen Russell from Downstate's HIV



Center/STAR Program and Dr. Birnbaum are members of the Brooklyn Knows Steering Committee.

Since 2002, the number of New Yorkers diagnosed with HIV each year has fallen by a quarter (to about 3,800), and the annual death toll from HIV/AIDS is down by more than a third - to 1,600 deaths in 2009. More New Yorkers are getting tested than ever before, and those testing positive are getting more consistent care and treatment. The City's care coordination program uses federal funds to help 28 independent centers provide comprehensive, coordinated care for people living with HIV/AIDS. These centers provide an expanded form of medical case management, striving to ensure that all patients know where, when and how to get all of the care and support services they need to stay well and protect their partners.

Despite all of this progress, more than 108,000 New Yorkers are living with HIV/AIDS, and the condition disproportionately affects Black and Hispanic New Yorkers, who account for more than eight out of 10 new HIV diagnoses in NYC each year. Routine testing helps prevent new infections - both by helping HIV+ people avoid risky sex and by enabling them to get timely treatment. Besides preserving an infected person's health, HIV medications reduce the amount of virus in body fluids, thus cutting the risk of transmission during sex. Unfortunately, thousands of HIV+ New Yorkers have yet to learn their status. Nearly a third of the City's adults have never been tested - and among those who are newly diagnosed with HIV each year, nearly a fourth have gone undiagnosed for periods of a decade or more despite the damage to their own health and the risk to others.

Brooklyn Knows is New York City's latest effort to address this challenge. The Brooklyn coalition's 52 early partners include 9 hospitals, 13 community health centers and 23 faith-based and community-based organizations, along with the Brooklyn Borough President's office and a half-dozen local businesses and educational institutions. All of the partners will join with the Health Department and various Brooklyn youth groups to promote universal voluntary testing. Many partner organizations will provide testing in their own facilities, offering tests at no charge for those who lack health coverage. As part of the initiative, the Health Department is

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sponsoring a borough-wide awareness campaign – “Any Body Can Get HIV” – which recently debuted in Brooklyn subway stations. The campaign also includes a New York Knows Facebook page where friends and fans can share support and resources.

Brooklyn has been heavily affected by HIV/AIDS over the past three decades and has some of the city’s highest prevalence rates. An estimated 27,000 Brooklyn residents were living with HIV/AIDS in 2009,

and 986 were newly diagnosed. Currently, a quarter of the borough’s new diagnoses occur years after infection, when HIV is already causing illness. And surveys suggest that 40% of Brooklyn adults have yet to receive an HIV test.

Any NYC resident can get a free HIV test at one of the City’s sexually transmitted disease or tuberculosis clinics. New York State law now also requires most medical facilities to offer a voluntary HIV test to anyone ages 13-64 receiving emergency,

inpatient or outpatient primary care health services, with limited exceptions. If you are not offered an HIV test the next time you visit a primary health care provider, ask for the test. New Yorkers interested in finding a testing location should call 311 or visit nyc.gov. Free and confidential HIV testing is also available at the STAR Health Center (in University Hospital’s Suite J). Free and confidential testing for youth ages 13-24 is available at HEAT at 760 Parkside Avenue, Room 308 or call (718) 467-4446.

PROGRAM UPDATES

NYS-ITRP Assessment Trip to Kazakhstan

In October 2010, Jack DeHovitz, MD, MPH traveled to Kazakhstan, one of our new target countries for NYS-ITRP, to assess their HIV research training needs. He conducted this trip in collaboration with Nabila El-Bassel, DSW, Professor of Social Work and Director of both the Social Intervention Group at Columbia University School of Social Work, as well as the Executive Director of the Global Health Research Center in Central Asia (GHRCCA), our key collaborative institution in Kazakhstan. GHRCCA’s main office is at Columbia University in New York City, with a regional hub in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and additional offices in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Local direction for GHRCCA is provided by Assel Terlikbayeva, MD, MSW, a former trainee of Dr. El-Bassel.

During his visit, Dr. DeHovitz conducted a number of trainee interviews in Astana, capital city of Kazakhstan, as well as in Almaty, where he also visited representatives from the Ministry of Health Republican AIDS Center and faculty from the School of Public Health. He also visited the vast and lively Barakholka Market, the setting for GHRCCA’s Silk Road Health Project, which will examine the influence of multilevel factors, such as ethnicity, migration patterns, gender roles and expectations, on sexual HIV risk behaviors and incidences of HIV, chlamydia, syphilis, and gonorrhea among migrant male market vendors.

Initial linkages between GHRCCA and NYS-ITRP were formed in 2007, when Dr. DeHovitz was asked to serve on the newly formed GHRCCA Scientific Advisory Committee. Subsequently, Louise-Ann McNutt, PhD, key NYS-ITRP faculty member, provided training in a one week HIV research course in Almaty in June 2009, where she also conducted initial interviews with potential trainees. GHRCCA programs are also linked to Chris Beyrer, MD, MPH,

whose AITRP program provides support in research and training activities. Additional partners with GHRCCA include the Kazakhstan Ministry of Health’s (MOH) Republican AIDS Center and the MOH’s School of Public Health.

The Republic of Kazakhstan has one of the fastest growing HIV epidemics in the world, with an annual doubling of infection rates since 2000. Drug users account for more than 73% of HIV cases, but the HIV epidemic also impacts sex workers and prisoners. As with other countries, young sexually active people in Central Asia form a bridge population through which the epidemic spreads from IDUs to the general population, with 80% of people living with HIV/AIDS in Central Asia under the age of 30. We look forward to our continued collaborations with Dr. El-Bassel and her knowledgeable and helpful GHRCCA staff who facilitated a productive trip for our team.

National Fogarty Administrators Meeting Convened in New York City

In November 2010, the NYS International Training and Research Program (ITRP) (Jack DeHovitz, PI) hosted the annual national Fogarty Administrators Meeting in New York City. Conference attendees are comprised mostly of administrators from institutions receiving funding from various Fogarty research training grants, including AIDS International Training and Research Programs, Framework Programs for Global Health, Global Infectious Disease Research Training Program, and others. The conference provides a platform for administrators to learn about the fundamentals of managing an international training program by facilitating discussions about issues such as visa regulations, student healthcare, tracking student progress, and the fiscal and program monitoring of research training grants. NYS-ITRP staff were responsible for conference logistics, program planning, and meeting evaluation. Dr. DeHovitz and Vinayaka Prasad, PhD, PI for the Albert Einstein AITRP program, opened the two-day session with an overview of the organizational struc-

ture and trainee highlights of their respective training programs.

A regular feature of these conferences is a “culture shock” panel, during which trainees recount their challenges in habituating themselves into US and academic culture. This year, several of our SUNY-Albany School of Public Health students participated in this panel: Telvi Tonsiver (Estonia), Lia Gvinjilia (Georgia), Anna Vingradova (Russia), and Baurzhan Zhussupov (Kazakhstan), providing conference participants with insights on trainee needs and common cultural barriers. The Fogarty International Center was represented by Program Officer Jeanne McDermott, PhD, CNM, MPH, and others who provided the administrators with guidance on program monitoring and insight regarding future directions for Fogarty-funded programs.

HEAT Co-Sponsors National HIV Ballroom Event in Brooklyn

The HEAT Program co-sponsored a large ballroom event in conjunction with Gay Men of African Decent (GMAD) on December 4, 2010 at Sanders Studios in Fort Greene. This ball was part of a National HIV Ballroom Initiative that conducted balls in Los Angeles and Pittsburgh during the same week in observance of World AIDS Day. Both HEAT and GMAD provided HIV rapid testing at the event and community partner agencies provided STD screening. There were over 20 community-based organizations serving LGBT youth who participated in a health fair that operated during the ball and was a requirement for youth before they could enter the ball.

Safer Sex Party

The HEAT Program, in conjunction with the Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition (YWCHAC), sponsored a safer sex party in Crown Heights at Caribbean City on December 10, 2010. HEAT provided tabling and HIV rapid testing at the event. Several partner agencies provided tabling and over 150 youth attended and accessed information and resources.

FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATES

Jack DeHovitz, MD, MPH presented the World AIDS Day lecture at the SUNY Albany School of Public Health on December 1, 2010. His presentation was entitled "HIV in New York and the World: Back to the Future." Dr. DeHovitz conducted a review of the Fogarty International Center's AIDS International Training and Research Program (AITRP) on December 3, 2010.

Jack DeHovitz, MD, MPH was an organizing committee member and speaker at a conference in Washington, DC on Georgian health care on February 1-2, 2011. The conference, "Georgian Health Care 2020: MEDEA 2011," brought together Government of Georgia officials, representatives of US and international organizations, non-governmental and private sector

stakeholders in Georgia's health sector, and Georgian medical and public health professionals who live and work in the US, and focused on ways to improve healthcare delivery in the former Soviet republic. First Lady Sandra Elisabeth Roelofs organized the conference. Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services, delivered opening remarks.

Michael Duncan joined the STAR Program as a Senior Research Assistant and Research Intern for the SWAN Project. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley. He graduated from the Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Physician Assistant (PA) Program, completed an orthopedic surgery fellowship at Lincoln Hospital, and continues to work as a PA for several syringe exchange programs in

Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the Bronx. He is presently pursuing a Master of Public Health in epidemiology at SUNY-DMC's School of Public Health.

Mickey Ramos joined the HEAT Program as a HIV Test Counselor. He will be outstationed at The Hetrick Martin Institute (HMI) as part of a CDC-funded HIV prevention project. He will provide HIV testing to LGBT youth at HMI and link youth who test positive to services at HEAT. Prior to joining HEAT, Mr. Ramos worked in youth programming at Grand Street Settlement, Union Street Settlement House and The Door.

Kristle Samuel joined the HEAT Program as a Peer Youth Outreach worker. She will provide outreach and sexual health workshops to high-risk young women of color and escort them to HEAT for services.

GrANT AWARDS

The Special Treatment and Research (STAR) Program received a 2010 Quality of Care Award from the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute for its quality improvement project aimed at measuring and improving the quality of diabetes care in a clinical HIV primary care setting. The STAR Program's model received high honors for being "one of the very best Quality Improvement Projects of 2010...that may well serve as a road map for other clinics looking to improve diabetes care in HIV primary care clinics."

The Health and Education Alternatives for Teens (HEAT) Program received a \$75,000 grant from the Elton John AIDS Foundation to hire a part-time Nurse Practitioner to expand HEAT's clinical services for young men who have sex with men (YMSM) and transgender youth.

The HEAT Program received a second year of funding from New York Community Trust (New York City AIDS Fund) for \$65,000 to continue its 3MV+ Plus intervention for HIV+ YMSM of color. The 3MV Plus Project addresses the health, mental/emotional health, and ongoing risk behavior and transmission of HIV among young Black and Latino (of African descent) HIV+ MSM 16 to 24 years.

SAVE THE DATES

YWCHAC 2nd Annual Film Festival-Films by Young People, For Young People

Saturday, March 19, 2011 ★ 12-4pm
Tribeca Cinemas, 54 Varick Street, NYC
Safer Sex Education Party immediately after

YWCHAC 5th Anniversary Gala

Thursday, May 12, 2011
Prince George Ballroom, 15 E. 27th St., NYC
(more information to follow)

"HIV Prevention and Care for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, transgender (LGBT) Youth"

Friday, May 13, 2011 ★ 9:00am - 3pm

Courthouse Meeting Room, Brooklyn Borough Hall, Brooklyn, NY

This meeting is targeted to clinical care providers (physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and allied health professionals) who provide care for adolescents, LGBT youth, and HIV+ adolescents and young adults. The meeting will provide an overview of skills and resources to assess sexual health and risk, provide HIV prevention counseling and provide HIV clinical care to LGBT youth. Contact David Odegaard at (718) 270-4752 or david.odegaard@downstate.edu for more information; online registration should be available soon.

JOB OPENING

Clinical Research Associate I

Salary Range: \$35,000- 50,000

Required: Bachelor's degree in health education, social work or related field. Minimum of three years' experience in health care, health education, mental health, substance abuse treatment, social services, research or related field required. Bilingual in English/Spanish/French/Haitian Creole preferred. **Responsibilities:** Provide prevention education regarding HIV & substance abuse. Provide rapid HIV counseling and testing. Administer substance use screens and provide brief interventions. Conduct structured interviews for evaluation as required for the intervention as required by SAMHSA. Refer clients for drug treatment, primary care and other needed services. Follow-up to ensure patients receive needed services. Make home visits to client to ensure follow-up as needed. Ensure completeness and accuracy of programmatic and GPPA data and perform ongoing quality assurance checks. Conduct focus groups to obtain input on intervention. Monitor program data on an ongoing basis to ensure that the intervention is meeting objectives. Ensure timely delivery of data to the STAR Health Center. **Send cover letter and resume to:** Yolene Gousse, SUNY Downstate Medical Center, 450 Clarkson Avenue, Box 1240, Brooklyn, NY 11203

PHONE LINK

All of the programs listed below are part of SUNY Downstate's HIV Center for Women and Children. For more information about the services each program provides, please call the numbers listed or the HIV Center for Women and Children at:

(718) 270-2301 or 4736
OR visit our website at:
www.hivcenter.org

PATIENT CARE AND SERVICES FOR ADULTS

Out-Patient Care
STAR Health Center (SHC):
(718) 270-3745

Mental Health Services:
(718) 270-3745

Family-Centered Care Program
(FCCP) (718) 270-2357 or 3745

FOR ADOLESCENTS

Family, Adolescent &
Children's Experience at SUNY
(FACES):
(718) 270-3826

Health & Education
Alternatives For Teens (HEAT)
Program:
(718) 467-4446

FOR CHILDREN

Infant and Child Learning
Center (ICLC):
(718) 270-2598

Family Care Center (at KCHC):
(718) 245-2562

COMMUNITY AND MEDICAL EDUCATION

Prevention Services for
Adolescent and Young Adults -
SUNY Adolescent Education
Program (AEP):
(718) 270-3203

Educating People at Risk
(EPAR):
(718) 270-3897

HIV Clinical Education
Initiative:
(718) 270-4752

RESEARCH

Adult Clinical Trials:
(718) 270-4487

PUBLICATIONS

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HIV link

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