



The Newsletter of the HIV Center for Women and Children

Bringing together care and research in service to families in need

FIFTH SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE OF THE NEW YORK HIV RESEARCH CENTERS CONSORTIUM

The New York HIV Research Centers Consortium held its fifth scientific conference on December 3, 2008 in New York City. The Consortium is a collaborative project of HIV research centers in the greater New York area. Its mission is to enhance scientific knowledge of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and related issues by facilitating inter-institutional, multi-disciplinary collaborations by scientists affiliated with HIV research centers in the New York region. The conference, entitled "Setting an HIV/AIDS Research Agenda for New York State," was attended by HIV/AIDS basic science

research and encourage the development of programs and policies that address HIV/AIDS issues in NYS.

NYS has the second highest AIDS case rate in the US with 28.5/100,000 (compared to 12.9 nationwide) in 2006; overall, NYS residents account for 16% of all HIV/AIDS cases nationwide. NYS is also home to a diverse and unique population that is not found in other states. Communities of color, including those within SUNY Downstate's service area, continue to be disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS. The number of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) over age 50 is increasing. About one-

sored initiative. California's legislature established an HIV/AIDS research initiative in 1983. To date, the California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) has since invested over \$200 million to sponsor nearly 2,000 research projects on HIV/AIDS in California.

Four work groups were formed at the conference and each were asked to develop seven research priorities for NYS. The work groups were: 1) basic research; 2) social, behavioral and prevention research; 3) clinical research; and 4) health policy research. A full report and executive summary of the work groups' recommendations are in

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and behavioral researchers, clinicians, epidemiologists, and community representatives from over 30 institutions across NYS. The conference agenda will be used to supplement a NYS AIDS Advisory Council report which urges the creation of a NYC HIV/AIDS Research Initiative modeled on a successful California program. This initiative would fund NYS-based HIV/AIDS

third of PLWHA are concurrently diagnosed with HIV and AIDS or diagnosed late. A large proportion has inconsistent or delayed access to care after initial HIV/AIDS diagnosis. Research is needed to address these and other issues of concern in NYS.

Since NIH funding for NYS institutions has been declining over the past 25 years, NYS needs its own state-spon-

development and will be available on the website of the Center for Drug Use and HIV Research at the National Development and Research Institutes, Inc. (www.cduhr.ndri.org).

Dr. Jack DeHovitz serves as a member of the steering committee of the HIV Research Centers Consortium and this conference was funded by a grant from NYS to SUNY Downstate.

SAVE THE DATE

Brooklyn AIDS Teen Educators (BATES) Youth Conference & Theatre Festival

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2009 ★ 11AM-5PM ★ SUNY Downstate Medical Center

For further information: call Marian Searchwell at (718) 270-3992 or Joni Watson at (718) 270-3898

GRANT AWARDS

The HEAT Program received a \$35,000 grant from the Paul Rapoport Foundation to provide services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities.

PROGRAM UPDATES

ICLC Annual Holiday Party

The Infant and Child Learning Center (ICLC) held its annual holiday party in SUNY Downstate's Student Center gym on December 19, 2008. Approximately 400 children and their families from the early intervention, preschool and day-care programs braved the snowy weather to enjoy breakfast with Santa. Each child received a gift and had a picture taken with Santa. Each picture was framed and personalized and sent home with the family. There was an elf who painted faces and a clown who made balloon animals. As always, it was a memorable event, with children playing together, parents renewing friendships, and staff marveling at the growth and progress of the children. Many parents expressed gratitude for the services that have improved the lives of their children and the support that ICLC provides. Thank you to the ICLC staff members and volunteers from the Queens College women's softball team who helped with picture taking, registration and serving. Everyone had a wonderful time!

Third Annual NYS-ITRP SUNY Downstate Seminar a Success

From January 14-16, 2009, SUNY Downstate hosted a group of Georgian, Armenian, Polish, Estonian and Russian public health professionals as part of the New York State AIDS International Training and Research Program (NYS-ITRP). The seminar included presentations by both Downstate and Albert Einstein School of Medicine faculty and staff on issues relevant to HIV research and treatment, including Mental Health Issues and HIV; HIV Policy; HIV Prevention and Care for Adolescents; an HCV overview; an HPV overview; and HIV Pathogenesis. Seminar attendees also participated in observation sessions at the HIV ambulatory clinic at the STAR Health Center and the Sexually Transmitted



Dr. Jack DeHovitz (center, with tie) with current and prospective Fogarty fellows at SUNY Downstate in January 2009.

Disease (STD) Clinic at Kings County Hospital Center. Four of the seminar's participants, Drs. Michal Czerwinski (Poland), Alexey Kruk (Russia), Yeghishe Nazinyan (Armenia), and Liit Hovakimyan (Armenia), presented information about HIV and other sexually transmitted infections in Eastern Europe and the results of their independent research projects at the weekly Downstate HIV/ID Seminar Series.

HEAT House Ball

The Health and Education Alternatives for Teens (HEAT) Program held its first House Ball in conjunction with the Federation of Houses on January 31, 2009 at The Lab nightclub in Brooklyn. The House Ball community is a well-established group of individuals attending and participating in dance and fashion competitions known as "balls." The community is composed of social networks of "houses," which are often named after famous clothing designers that compete with each other for trophies and prize money at balls. The community provides a social framework for young, predominantly Black and Latino/a, gay and transgender persons. A large percentage of the members of the House Ball community do not conform to traditional gender roles; they may dress as the opposite gender. This community gives members the freedom to

explore non-traditional gender roles in a supportive environment that avoids the social exclusion experienced in their own communities. The Federation of Houses is a group comprising the current "Mothers" and "Fathers" of the Houses in NYC. This coalition was created to better serve the House Ball community by disseminating information, and creating innovative programs to assist House Ball community youth to achieve stability in career, education, health and wellness. Over 200 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth attended the event and youth competed in a variety of categories for trophies and monetary prizes. Additional NYC youth agencies that target LGBT youth tabled and provided safer sex resources. HEAT tested 68 youth at the event. These events help to reach a very high-risk and vulnerable youth population who are in need of medical, mental health and case management services.

Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition (YWCHAC) Quarterly Meeting

YWCHAC held its quarterly service provider meeting on February 6, 2009 from 10am-2pm at Planned Parenthood Federation of America in Manhattan. The meeting, titled, "Young Women of Color: Violence, Abuse, Trauma & the Link to HIV," included a panel discussion with experts in the field. Panelists included: Lynn Roberts, PhD, Hunter College of CUNY Urban Public Health Program; Mehret Mandefro, MD, TruthAIDS; Kirsten deFur, MPH, NYC Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence; Meghan O'Connor, MPH, LMSW, NYC Alliance against Sexual Assault; and Darlene S. Torres, NYC Anti-Violence Project.

Valentine's Day Safer Sex Party

The HEAT Program, in conjunction with the Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition (YWCHAC) hosted a Valentine's Day Safer Sex Party on February 20th at The Lab nightclub in Brooklyn. This free event targeted youth ages 13-24. Youth agencies tabled and provided safer sex materials and brochures and HEAT conducted HIV testing. There was also free food, a disc jockey, and giveaways for youth.

HIV/ID RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES

DATE	TOPIC	SPEAKER
March 12	Report on CROI: 16th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections	Judith A. Aberg, MD Associate Professor of Medicine, Div. of Infectious Diseases NYU School of Medicine; Director, NYU AIDS Clinical Trials Unit
March 19	Gram Negative Resistance (ID Seminar) Update	Simona Bratu, MD Dept. of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, SUNY Downstate Medical Center
March 26	Antimicrobial Stewardship in (ID Seminar) the Institutional Setting	David P. Nicolau, PharmD Center for Anti-Infective Research and Development, Hartford Hospital, Hartford, CT

ALL LECTURES TAKE PLACE FROM 12-1 PM, THURSDAYS, SUNY DOWNSTATE MEDICAL CENTER LECTURE HALL 1B, 395 LENOX ROAD, BROOKLYN, NY

SAVE THE DATE

Own Your Power! Saving Our Selves – SOS

An event for young girls & young women of color ages 13-24

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2009
11AM – 5PM

St. Francis College
180 Remsen Street
(between Court & Clinton Streets)
Brooklyn, NY

Workshops
Guest Speakers
HIV/STD Screening
Health Resources
Giveaways
Raffles

For further information:
call Jennifer Irwin (718) 282-1176

Pre-register @
<http://ywchacsummit2009.eventbrite.com>

Sponsors:
Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition,
in collaboration with the FACES Network & the
HEAT Program of SUNY Downstate Medical Center

FACULTY AND STAFF UPDATES

Dr. Jack A. DeHovitz attended the opening of the Institute for Infectious Diseases and Reproductive Health (IMIS), a new \$4.8 million world class laboratory and treatment institute in the Tabarre neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on February 9-12th. The IMIS is operated by GHESKIO Centers, the first medical clinic in the world exclusively dedicated to the fight against HIV/AIDS. GHESKIO, a French acronym for the Haitian Group for the Study of Kaposi's Sarcoma and Infectious Disease, was founded in 1982 by a consortium of Haitian health professionals dedicated to the improvement of Haitian health care through clinical care, research, and training. Its new IMIS facility will build on its integrated model for HIV/AIDS prevention and care while more than doubling its capacity to provide patient services and a wide range of training. Dr. DeHovitz worked with GHESKIO during his infectious diseases fellowship and was coauthor of a series of publications describing early features of the HIV epidemic in Haiti.

Marie Ferol joined the STAR Health Center as the new HIV Counselor/Tester for the SUNY Downstate Emergency Department (ED) rapid HIV testing project. Before joining STAR, Ms. Ferol worked as an agency nurse technician in the SUNY Downstate ED. Her familiarity and camaraderie with the staff in the ED will make her better able to adjust to her new role of providing rapid HIV testing to emergency room patients and linking those in need of care to STAR.

Gilberto "Marcel" Gumbs joined the HEAT Program as the Peer Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Outreach Specialist, a newly-created position. This is currently a part-time position. Prior to joining HEAT, Mr. Gumbs co-facilitated youth focus groups and conducted outreach for

FACES NY, an LGBT agency in the Bronx. He also coordinated youth conferences and created a youth Internet blog for People of Color in Crisis (POCC), Inc., and was the Youth Event Coordinator at the Hetrick-Martin Institute in NYC.

Tiffanie Patterson, Outreach Coordinator for the HEAT Program, was appointed to the NYC HIV/AIDS Prevention Planning Group.

Jackie Phillips, BS, CASAC-T, joined the STAR Program as a Behavioral Health Case Manager and works with STAR Health Center patients to encourage engagement and retention into mental health and substance use treatment. Ms. Phillips was born and raised in Panama and is fluent in Spanish. She previously worked as the Intake Coordinator at Mount Sinai Hospital, followed by positions with a number of research projects, and as a case manager at Arms Acres, a residential alcoholism and substance abuse treatment facility. Ms. Phillips has worked across the treatment spectrum with adolescent, adult and geriatric populations. She is a graduate of Boricua College, holds CASAC-T certification, and is currently pursuing a Master of Social Work degree at Adelphi University.

M. Terrie Stewart, LMSW, CASAC, joined the STAR Program as a Substance Abuse Counselor. She counsels STAR Health Center patients and conducts substance abuse assessments for HIV+ in-patients. Ms. Stewart earned a BBA in Industrial Organization Psychology from Bernard M. Baruch College, an MSW in Clinical and Social Work Administration from Fordham University, and received CASAC certification in 2003. She is fluent in Spanish. Throughout her career, she has addressed the substance abuse and behavioral health needs of children, adolescent and adult populations in varied settings.

Richard Weinstein, MSW, Transition Coordinator and Adherence Counselor for the HEAT and FACES Programs, earned his Master of Social Work degree from New York University in September 2008.

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

Morgan DJ, Weisenberg SA, **Augenbraun MH**, Calfee DP, Currie BP, Furuya EY, Holzman R, Montecalvo MC, Phillips M, Polsky B, Sepkowitz KA. Multidrug-resistant *Acinetobacter baumannii* in New York City - 10 years into the epidemic. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol*. 2009 Feb;30(2):196-7. No abstract available.

Crystal HA, Davies P. Toward a plasma marker for Alzheimer disease: some progress, but still a long way to go. *Neurology*. 2008 Feb 19;70(8):586-7. No abstract available.

Weiss JJ, Bhatti L, Dieterich DT, **Edlin BR**, Fishbein DA, Goetz MB, Yu K, Wagner GJ. Hepatitis C patients' self-reported adherence to treatment with pegylated interferon and

ribavirin. *Aliment Pharmacol Ther*. 2008 Aug 1;28(3):289-93.

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Massad LS, Seaberg EC, Watts DH, **Minkoff H**, Levine AM, Henry D, Colie C, Darragh TM, Hessol NA. Long-term incidence of cervical cancer in women with human immunodeficiency virus. *Cancer*. 2009 Feb 1;115(3):524-30.

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Merhi ZO, Durkin HG, Feldman J, Macura J, Rodriguez C, **Minkoff H**. Effect of bariatric surgery on peripheral blood lymphocyte subsets in women. *Surg Obes Relat Dis*. 2008 Sep 10.

For the HIV/ID Seminar Series and the latest employment opportunities visit our website at www.hivcenter.org

The HIV Center is now distributing the HIV Link electronically. If you are interested in remaining on our mailing list, please send your email address, along with your name and mailing address, to hivcenter@downstate.edu

HIVlink

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