



# RED RIBBON TIMES

2021 Volume 9

## What COVID-19 Taught Us About Patient Care

By Michael Anthony Alonso

**Overworked. Understaffed. High-risk populations. At-capacity.** These are some of the buzzwords that we have all been hearing (and continue to hear) for over 16 months. At first, they may have been scary, but in the end, they gave healthcare a swift kick in the butt to change the way they do patient care. Throughout time, humans have had to adapt and invent new ways of doing things. Building bridges to cross rivers; building roads and railroad tracks to travel safely; developing medications to treat illness; putting seatbelts in cars; though not a complete

list, these are some of the ways we have innovated.

COVID-19 was no exception. How do we see patients when we need to social distance? How do we protect the public and healthcare workers when we have limited safety equipment? These questions led to what we call “disruptive invention.” The way we provided healthcare to people was disrupted and we needed to invent new ways of doing things.

In speaking to staff at the Orange County Health Department, I learned

some of the ways that things are being done differently:

### Telehealth:

- For clients/patients with access to technology and data plans, they were offered the ability to utilize telehealth to avoid coming into the clinic! Telehealth allowed those patients to be seen by a provider, get their medications refilled, meet with their case managers, and so forth without having to commute into the clinic.
- For patients that did not have data

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# CENTRAL FLORIDA HIV PLANNING COUNCIL

## STANDING COMMITTEES

### The merged Membership and PR & Marketing Committee

- This meeting is the first Tuesday of the month at 2:00 PM

### The merged Service Systems & Quality and Needs Assessment & Planning Committee

- This meeting is on the first Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM.

### Executive Committee

- This meeting is the Thursday of the week before the Planning Council meeting at 2:00 PM

### Planning Council

- This meeting is the last Wednesday of the month
- Meet-N-Greet (5:30 PM) & Meeting (6:00 PM)

## PLANNING COUNCIL SUPPORT CONTACT INFORMATION

### Whitney Marshall Support Manager

407-429-2216

Whitney.Marshall@hfuw.org

### David Bent Support Coordinator

407-429-2119

David.Bent@hfuw.org

### Cameron Edgar Administrative Assistant

407-835-0906

Cameron.Edgar@hfuw.org

## RYAN WHITE PART A SERVICE PROVIDERS

**AIDS Healthcare Foundation**  
407-204-7000  
www.aidshealth.org

**ASPIRE Health Partners**  
407-245-0014  
www.aspirehealthpartners.com

**Center for Multicultural Wellness and Prevention**  
407-648-9440 • www.cmwp.org

**Dept. of Health in Lake County**  
352-771-5500  
http://lake.floridahealth.gov/

**Dept. of Health in Orange County**  
407-858-1437  
http://orange.floridahealth.gov/

**Dept. of Health in Osceola County**  
407-343-2030  
http://osceola.floridahealth.gov/

**Dept. of Health in Seminole County**  
407-665-3200  
http://seminole.floridahealth.gov/

**Heart of Florida United Way**  
407-835-0900 • www.hfuw.org

**Hope and Help Center**  
407-645-2577  
www.hopeandhelp.org

**Miracle of Love**  
407-843-1760  
www.miracleofloveinc.org

**Orange County Medical Clinic Pharmacy**  
407-836-7160

**Orange Blossom Family Health**  
407-428-5751 • www.hcch.org

**Part A Recipient's Office**  
2002-A E. Michigan Street  
Orlando, FL 32805  
407-836-7631



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CentralFloridaHIVPlanningCouncil

**Orangecountyfl.hiv**

**http://centralfloridahivpc.com**

plans and technology, the clinic was able to increase safety measures and keep in-person appointments and services. Electronic devices were also given to certain clients to be able to pilot a new program that can help patients access telehealth services.

- According to an employee of the DOH-Orlando, these measures helped patients keep their appointments remain on their medications and ultimately stay healthy.

## New and Improved Services:

- During the pandemic, there was an increased need for mental health and food bank services, and we saw those being used more. Where patients could not access these services, it raised a red flag to leaders to pay attention to making sure clients have access to these services.
- Throughout the COVID-19 shutdowns, the ADAP office suspended and ultimately deleted the need for confirmatory and viral load labs for ADAP certification/re-certification.
- DOH has noticed the need for having a central laboratory on-site so keep an eye out for that.

## Stocking-up:

- Many healthcare centers have begun making sure they have a stash of gloves, masks, shields, and other forms of protective and safety equipment in the event that something to this magnitude happens again. This includes healthcare supplies that don't expire, and some that might, such as medications for HIV-treatment and PrEP.

## Here to stay:

What I find exciting about this response to COVID-19 is that these changes are not expected to go anywhere. The healthcare community has learned that these changes were necessary long before the pandemic, but didn't always get the buy-in. As the age-old saying goes: necessity is the [parent] of invention.

**"Drop Us  
a Line..."**

**Planning Council Support  
HFUW  
1940 Cannery Way  
Orlando, FL 32804  
407-835-0900**

**CFHPC@hfuw.org**





# I help Orlando feel seen through art.

By Kim Murphy



**After graduating from art school in the mid 90's, I thought that being an artist meant creating paintings by myself in a studio, struggling to find a gallery**

**to display the work, and (fingers crossed) selling it to collectors one day.** I was able to skip that whole soul-crushing 'starving artist' system by moving to Orlando upon graduation and starting my career as a scenic artist, working full time; first at Sea World, then Universal Studios.

I spent the next twelve years painting murals, faux finishes, props and show sets, as part of teams that erased damage left by the thousands of vacationing 'guests' who attended our parks each day. I loved this job dearly. Where else could an artist work on refurbishing a 120-foot-tall mural of the New York Public Library one day and restore hieroglyphics for an ancient Egyptian tomb the next?

Towards the end of my time at Universal, I found that the work was leaving me feeling empty and began to look for ways to give

back. With the support of Universal's employee volunteer program, I developed an after-school art club for children in the extended day program at Eccleston Elementary School, with my co-workers. It was there that we discovered that if we created a good mural design and a system that made it easy to execute, people of all ages could come together and paint something beautiful. We found that the children and faculty took great pride in the work they had done and were uplifted by the images and quotes. Around this same time, I began grad school to earn my master's degree in Mental Health Counseling at Nova Southeastern University.

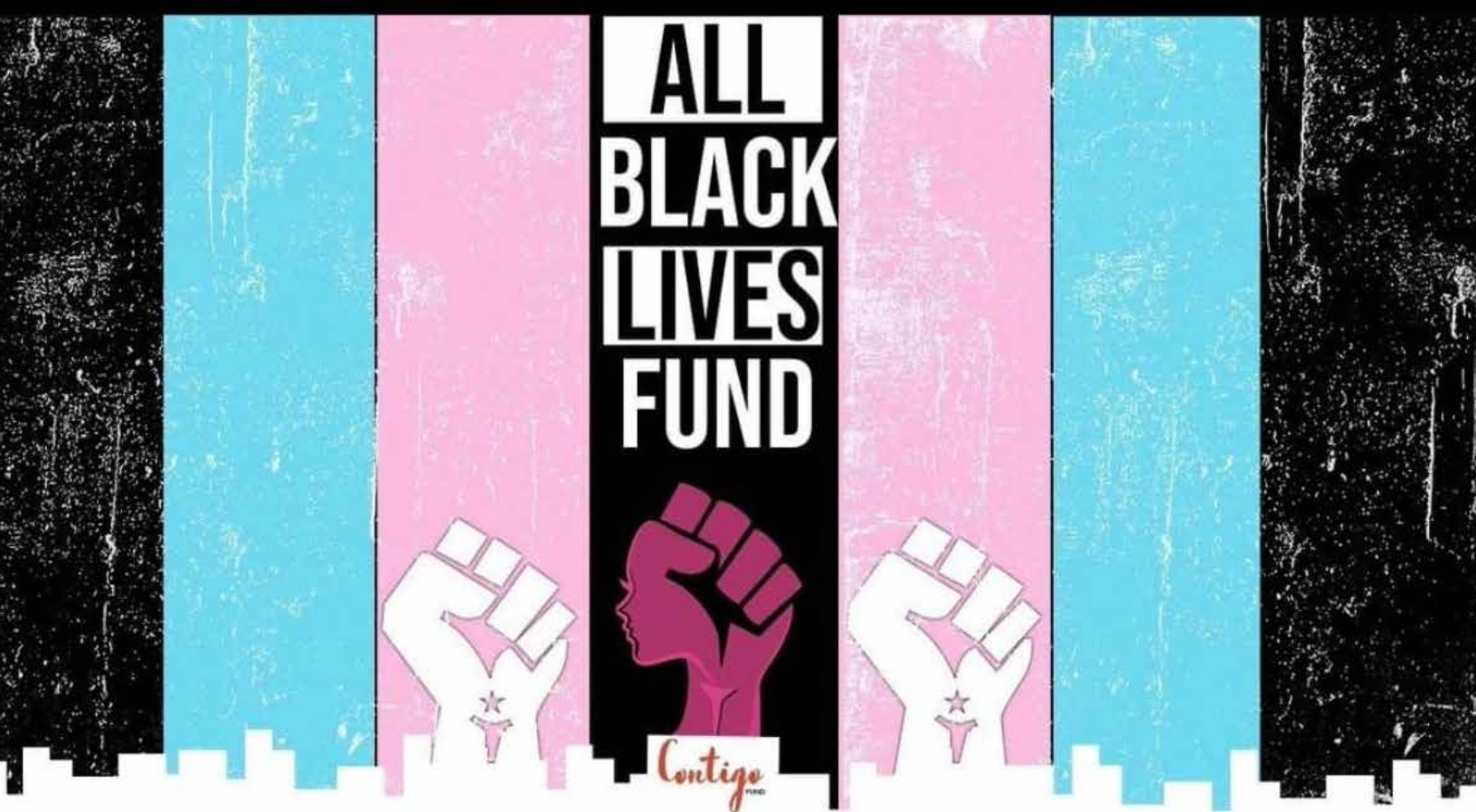
**IN 2007 I LEFT UNIVERSAL TO PURSUE MY CAREER AS A THERAPIST, WORKING WITH THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY, SPECIALIZING IN SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS TRANSITIONING IN GENDER AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV.**

I found my purpose along the way. Providing counseling at a clinic that focuses on the treatment and prevention of HIV

for the past four years, I have had the opportunity to grow my awareness and make lasting connections with folks and organizations throughout the community. I have gone from ally to activist.

After a long 2020 of providing therapy sessions via telehealth due to COVID restrictions, I decided to take a break from being a therapist and return to my first love, art. As a member of the Maven Leadership Collective, I was encouraged to apply to their Creators Studio to develop a participatory mural painting project, with a focus on social justice. I was fortunate enough to be selected for the cohort, where I created a mural painting initiative centering queer and trans people of color called Painting Change.

I now partner with companies, non-profits and local government to facilitate murals, painted by volunteers, with the goal of increasing QTPOC representation throughout Central Florida. The murals are designed to inspire hope as well as action, raise awareness, encourage conversation, importance to the artwork that is being created. Helping to empower the community, by creating public works of art that are for them, by them and about them is a dream come true. As the saying goes, "There is power in representation."



# There's no Pride for some of us without liberation for all of us.

By Gabriella Rodriguez

**A notable quote from one of the mother's of the trans and queer liberation movement-Marsha "Pay It no Mind" Johnson.** May we not forget that if it wasn't for our Black and Trans sisters to say "No more" in 1969 at Stonewall, led by Black and brown transgender women, that the fight for LGBTQ+ liberation may not have ignited.

As we continue the fight today .... We look within our local communities as we support, build and invest in local leaders by creating pipelines to leadership to ensure we are at the table in which decisions are being made.

The Organizing For All Black Lives Fund is doing just that, an initiative in part by the Contigo Fund, dedicated to funding Black LGBTQ+ groups and efforts in Central Florida. The Fund has raised over \$100,000

since it launched earlier in the year.

Co-designed by Contigo's leadership alongside Black LGBTQ+ Leaders, Contigo launched the All Black Lives Fund in response to historic racial justice uprisings and motivated by the escalating and often invisible cases of murder and violence against our Black Transgender family at the

hands of police brutality, white supremacy, and transphobia.

Trans activist and chair of Central Florida HIV Planning Council Angela Hunt stated "solidarity goes beyond words alone, it requires us to take action and everyone is called to do their part."

On the first day of Black History Month, The city commissioner and previous Chair of the Central Florida HIV Planning Council Bakari Burns, alongside state Rep. Anna V. Eskamani proclaimed "ALL Black Live Fund Day," a continued solidarity for our Recognition of the contributions of Black-led LGBTQ organizations in Central Florida and celebrating the fundraising efforts of the All Black Lives Fund and awarded its first round of grants to support the general operations of three groups led



## HIGHLIGHT STATS

Sadly, according to the Human Rights Campaign, 2021 has already seen an increase from 2020 in the number of Transgender and non-conforming people who were shot or killed in a violent way. The number so far has reached 32, with the majority being Black and Latinx transgender women, and in the south.

by and for Central Florida's Black LGBTQ+ communities.

- Divas in Dialogue is a support group for trans women of color where they empower, build and strengthen each other while ensuring everyone has a seat at the table.
- Gender Advancement (GAP), is a trans-led grassroots movement dedicated to the progression and inclusion of transgender and gender nonbinary individuals in all facets of society.
- Bros in Convo is a Black, queer-led community organization promoting and providing health equity to Black gay, bisexual, queer and same gender-loving men in Central Florida.

Congratulations once again to Divas in Dialogue, Bros in Convo, and Gender Advancement Project.

May Marsha Johnson's words serve as a reminder as we strive for a more equitable future. There's no Pride for some of us without liberation for all of us.

To Donate to the All Black Lives Fund and to learn more about the work of Contigo visit <https://contigofund.org/donate/>



## City of Orlando HIV Community Assessment Survey

**The City of Orlando is working with health organizations to understand our community's beliefs about HIV.**

This is a partnered collaborative collecting community data to identify interventions combatting HIV stigma. The responses will help us create programs and educational

materials that will reflect the needs of our community. The community's feedback is valuable, and the City of Orlando is aiming to receive at least 1,000 responses. **The survey is available in English, Spanish and Creole. For more information, visit [www.orlando.gov/hiv](http://www.orlando.gov/hiv).**

# Breaking The Silo: Linkages/Enlaces

By Andres Acosta



**Failure to embrace more robust intersectionality in social justice spaces contributes to perpetuating the HIV epidemic in Florida.** Miami ranks first in the country for new transmissions and has 54 cases per 100,000. Orlando ranks 3rd and has 27 cases per 100,000. There remains an urgency in addressing this issue that is not often reflected outside of HIV advocacy and service organizations.

Currently, there generally exists limited capacity—but infinite potential—for social justice movement leaders and organizers to be sufficiently equipped

with the language and skills to more fully integrate HIV education and MIPA into their strategies. The net result is often policy formulation, service delivery, and program development in key issue areas that are incomplete. Queer and trans people of color bear the disproportionate brunt of these challenges.

## **SO WHAT DO WE DO ABOUT THIS?**

Well, we have to break the silo that often alienates HIV organizations into a comfort zone where all the amazing

work being conducted to educate, empower, and ultimately end the HIV epidemic has limited reach and is often circulated around the same groups. There is no doubt that the Florida Department of Health, Ryan White Part A, and Ryan White Part B have worked hard to build new relationships with our community in the past years. However, there is only so much that can be done by organizations whose main purpose is service delivery.

Grassroots, Social Justice, and Community Based Organizations have built trust in our community and don't

face the same stigma associated with HIV-specific organizations. That is why providing them the tools to meaningfully include people living with HIV in every part of their processes can lead to an impact on the way our communities most affected by HIV are educated and ultimately connected to care.

That's where Maven Leadership Collectives' newest program Linkages/Enlaces looks to bridge the gap between our HIV organizations and the rest of our community. The program launched late last year and was created and led by HIV advocates from Central and South Florida. The first cohort was comprised of 10 organizations, 5 in Central Florida and 5 in South Florida that impact the lives of more than 800,000 people across the state in the areas of civic engagement, immigration rights, labor justice, mental health, economic independence, community building, and entertainment.

## SO WHAT HAS COME FROM THIS?

In Central Florida, the graduating organizations have already begun to implement the lessons learned from the program. Poder Latinx is an organization that focuses on building the civic engagement of the Latinx community. They recently launched a campaign for paid family leave for all, where they intentionally sought out and included the voices of people living with HIV. Central Florida Jobs With Justice, which focuses on worker rights and labor justice, added an HIV education component to their health rights for workers campaign. They will be featuring voices of community members living with HIV in their upcoming discussion series. Finally, Peer Support Space, which is the largest organization providing peer services in Central Florida, is training

all of its facilitators on HIV literacy and will be launching a community workshop "what the HIV community which you knew" to educate the community at large and advocate for the HIV positive community in Central Florida.

Similar progress is being made in South Florida that is not only a tool to educate the community on HIV but also a driving force for equity and inclusion. Miami Beach Pride has created a trans advocacy committee that will include

and care to new clients identified and referred by these non-HIV-focused. For people living with HIV, these new partnerships introduce them to resources available in the community and provide opportunities for new advocates to be identified and elevated in a way that increases the pool of HIV-positive leaders in our communities.

## WHAT IS NEXT?

"Breaking the silo means that we create an ecosystem of support for all individuals in our community that recognizes HIV as a chronic condition that affects every aspect of our lives. Breaking the silo is the only way we will ever end the HIV epidemic." Says Andres Acosta, Program Manager for Maven Leadership Collective. "It means we stop settling for good enough, stop trying to serve our



outreach and education about HIV also ensures that the entire celebration is inclusive and welcoming to the trans community of Miami Beach. 2-1-1 South Florida has created a master list of all available HIV resources for Broward and Miami-Dade counties. The office of New Americans included an immigrant individual living with HIV in their educational video series for the community.

The work these organizations have done illustrates the possibilities of what can happen when we educate non-HIV organizations on how to include people living with HIV in their service delivery, program creation, and policy formulation. The benefits are that HIV starts to be commonly spoken about in a way that decreases stigma and carries the message outside the HIV organizations' spheres of influence. For HIV organizations this means that their work is amplified and future collaborations are created in a way that empowers them to provide service

communities from a distance, and make sure that our work is connected to every aspect of the community and reaches everybody in our community." As the program gets ready to launch its second cohort of organizations the focus has turned to recruiting big organizations that are faith-based, or traditionally conservative in an effort to truly diversify the portfolio of partners in the community that are ready to do the work necessary to end the epidemic, starting with distributing the City of Orlando's HIV Stigma study so that our city can understand the best way to create new educational materials.

To learn how your organization can receive free training from the linkages/enlaces program contact Andres Acosta at [acosta@mavenleadership.org](mailto:acosta@mavenleadership.org)

To take the city of Orlando's HIV Stigma Survey visit: [www.orlando.gov/HIV](http://www.orlando.gov/HIV)

# Ending the HIV Epidemic Townhall Update

ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 21ST, HEART OF FLORIDA UNITED WAY HOSTED A VIRTUAL EVENT TO PROVIDE A COMMUNITY UPDATE ON THE EFFORTS TO END THE HIV EPIDEMIC IN ORANGE COUNTY. The event was shared live on Facebook and provided those tuning in with an opportunity to hear about activities happening in the first year and to receive special highlights from contracted providers.



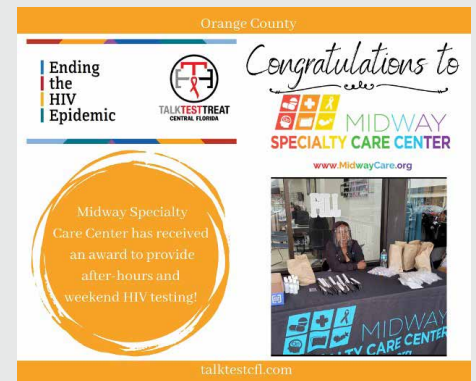
## Divas in Dialogue -

**HIV Education & Testing for Transgender Women of Color**



## Hope & Help Center -

**Syringe Service Program**



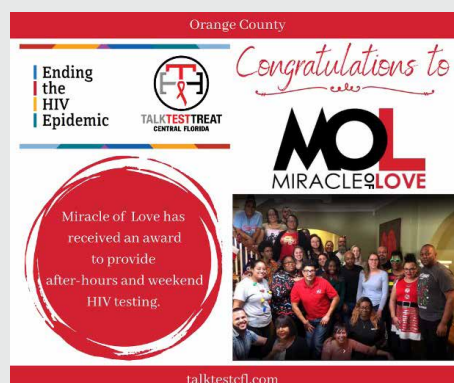
## Midway Specialty Care Center -

**After-hours & Weekend Testing**



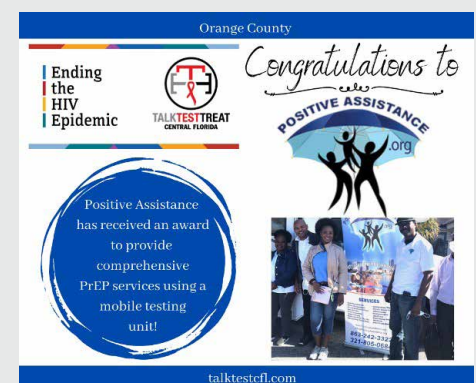
## Miracle of Love -

**Priority Testing for Black and Latinx SGL men (age 13-24)**



## Miracle of Love -

**After-hours & Weekend Testing**



## Positive Assistance -

**Mobile PrEP**

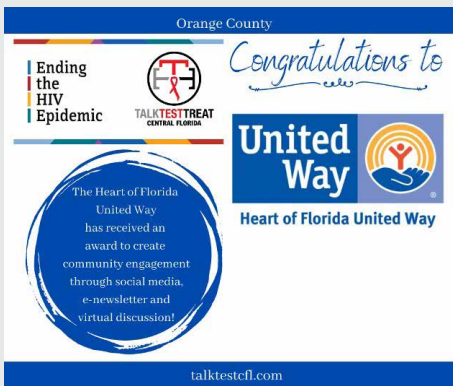




## Sistas Organizing to Survive (SOS)

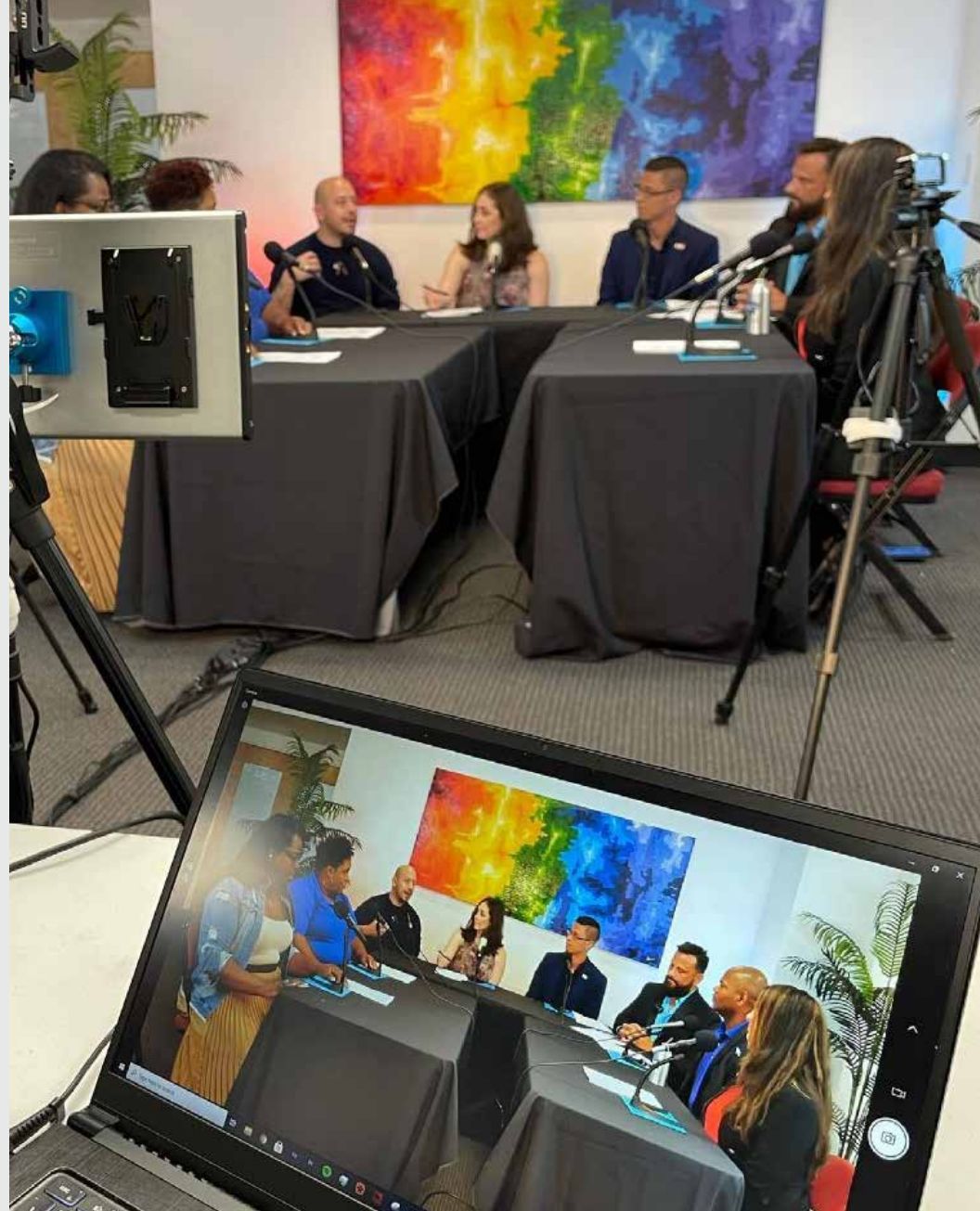
Orlando Chapter -

**HIV Education & Testing for Black Heterosexual Women**



## Heart of Florida United Way -

**Community Engagement**



# Ending the HIV Epidemic Panel Discussion

During the Townhall event, Yasmin Andre of Heart of Florida United Way moderated a panel discussion to focus on strategies for the next year of Ending the HIV Epidemic work. The panelists included key funders, providers and community advocates for Orange County's EHE initiative: Claudia Yabrudy (Orange County RWHAP Part A), Kara Williams (Florida Department of Health), Andres Acosta (Maven Leadership Collective),

Felipe Sousa-Lazaballet (City of Orlando), Shea Cutliff (Miracle of Love), Andre Antenor (Positive Assistance), and Sam Graper (CFHPC). The panel was hosted at The LGBT+ Center Orlando and produced by Jose De La Cuesta (Your IT Guy Productions). You can still watch the event on Facebook at @CentralFloridaHIVPlanningCouncil or you can check out each segment of the panel discussion on the Central Florida HIV Planning Council channel on Youtube to share with others.

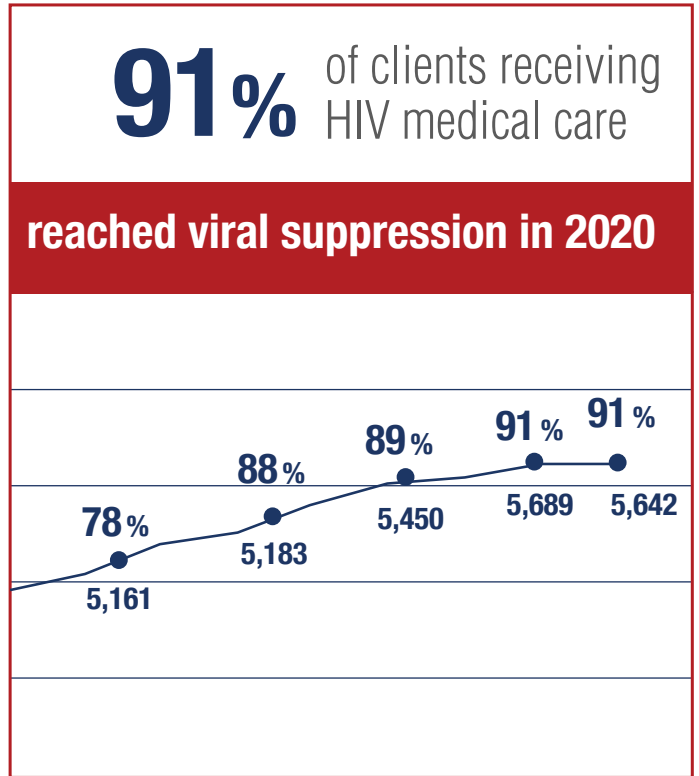
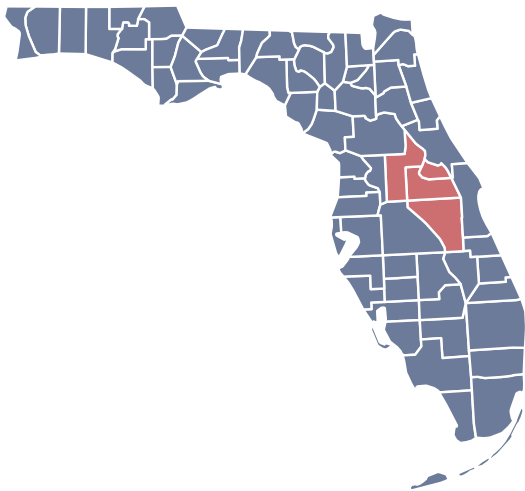
# Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Part A

By the Numbers: 2020

**SERVED**

**5,642** clients in **2020**

**43%** of people with diagnosed HIV in Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Lake County



**54%** of clients were aged 45 years and older

**48%** of clients were racial/ethnic minorities

- 46%** of clients identified as Black/African American
- 32%** of clients identified as Hispanic/Latino

**56%** of clients were living at or below **100%** of the Federal Poverty Level



CENTRAL FLORIDA HIV PLANNING COUNCIL

# WORLD AIDS DAY

Together



Again

The Amphitheater at Lake Eola  
November 30, 2021  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM



Visit us on Facebook or Instagram for  
event details and a  
list of satellite locations.



**#WAD2021**



[www.ocfl.net/ryanwhite](http://www.ocfl.net/ryanwhite)



Can't wait for the next Red Ribbon Times? Us either! Stay connected for all the latest info on Facebook @ CentralFloridaHIVPlanningCouncil