

Central Florida HIV Planning Council

World AIDS Day (WAD) Workgroup Meeting Minutes

October 10, 2025

Call to Order: The World AIDS Day Workgroup was called to order by the Workgroup Chair, Rene Cotto-Lewis at 2:05 PM via Webex.

Participants Present (all via Teleconference): Rene Cotto-Lewis, Sueanne Vazquez, Ira Westbrook, AJ Johnson, Beatrice Boursiqot, Gabriella Rodriguez, Richelle Joe, Kara Williams, Charlie Wright

PCS Staff Present: David Bent, Whitney Marshall, Laura Perez

Approval of the Agenda:	The workgroup reviewed the meeting agenda and approved it as presented.
Approval of the August 22 Minutes:	The workgroup reviewed the August 22 minutes and approved them as presented.
Open the floor for Public Comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no public comments. • PCS did not receive any comment cards.
New Business:	<p>Volunteers The workgroup discussed what volunteer positions are needed for this years event, how many volunteers are needed per position, and what their responsibilities would be. They discussed the following positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue Setup • Venue Breakdown • Quilt Displays • Quilt Ceremony • Networking hour • Registration table <p>Gabriella Rodriguez of QLatinx, who will be leading the quilt ceremony, shared how many volunteers she expects to need and that they need training beforehand. PCS shared that approval for links for the various volunteer positions should hopefully go up next week. No volunteers are needed for the food, as the caterer is providing staff. The workgroup Chair suggested making a call for volunteers for the event at the next Planning Council Business meeting.</p> <p>PCS provided confirmation that volunteers have been secured to give their testimonials during the event.</p> <p>The workgroup also received the following updates regarding sponsors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$3,000 from Rosemont Specialty Pharmacy • \$1,000 from AuthenticRAW

The committee agreed to have gift cards as raffle prizes for the event. PCS shared that the gift card amounts at last year's event were \$200, \$150, and \$50.

Awards

The workgroup began reviewing the nominations submitted for the three awards. Each award category is defined as follows:

The Service Award: The annual Service Award is reserved for those in the HIV workforce who are unwavering in their dedication to improving the healthcare outcomes of the clients that they serve. They are committed to quality, equity and demonstrate integrity in the face of hardship. Those who qualify for the Service Award include, but are not limited to, Case Managers, Peers, Early Intervention Specialists, senior leadership, Referral Specialists, mental health or substance use providers, and any other individual in the HIV field who stands out for their dedication and passion. The Service Award recipient must not have received the Service Award in the past.

The Unsung Hero Award: Unsung Heroes are those who exhibit extraordinary courage, commitment, and selflessness for the cause without seeking credit or praise for the incredible work that they do. They lift others up without expecting anything in return because of their fierce compassion and care for those living with or affected by HIV. A person who demonstrates resilience and perseverance in the face of stigma and hardship and acts as a beacon to the community. Please note: the Unsung Hero Award recipient must not be employed by a Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program provider or HIV service provider and cannot have received the Unsung Hero Award in the past. If your nominee works for an HIV provider, then your submission will automatically be moved to the Service Award category.

The Lifetime Achievement Award: The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to those who have devoted their careers to ending the HIV epidemic through exemplary service, perseverance, and leadership. Eligible nominees have made a significant impact in the lives of both clients and colleagues by being exemplary role models via contributions that improve the system of care for all, increase access and health equity, and reduce stigma. Individuals eligible for this category must have at least fifteen (15) years of experience in HIV-related work and cannot have received the Lifetime Achievement Award in the past.

The workgroup discussed the idea of honoring all nominees on social media and the Red Ribbon Times. After reviewing the nominees for one of the award categories, the committee entered a lengthy discussion on whether to open the awards back to one for the EMA and one for Brevard county for each award (six awards total). After holding an informal vote, the majority of members who voted indicated that they would prefer the

