

AIDS ACTION BALTIMORE, INC.

14 EAST EAGER STREET, BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202, (410) 837-2437, FAX (410) 837-2438
BaltoAIDS@aol.com <http://aidsactionbaltimore.org>

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Dear Friends:

AIDS Action Baltimore (AAB) has been providing essential services to people with HIV/AIDS since 1987. Thanks to your generosity, we're still standing. We know only too well that times are still tough, but as we commemorate our 34th year of service, we hope we can count on your continued support which will help us maintain our many HIV/AIDS programs. We still desperately need your help to keep our doors open and continue to provide our many essential services to the Baltimore HIV/AIDS community. We hope you will remember us and continue your loyal support. Please help us in any way you can. Your donations will enable us to continue our marvelous record of benevolence and compassion with only a rate of 7% overhead in 2020. The amount of work we accomplish and the effect we have had on the war against HIV with only four employees is truly amazing!

Although HIV disease is becoming a chronic manageable disease, here is why we still need your help now more than ever:

AAB still provides financial assistance to many needy people with HIV/AIDS. AAB has provided this support to over 8,650 people since 1987 and \$3,110,000 in assistance for items such as rent and utilities, and direct programs in our community to people with HIV/AIDS and their families. We firmly believe we must continue our invaluable financial assistance program which provides a safety net to people with HIV/AIDS experiencing an emergency financial crisis.

In the latest Centers for Disease Control (CDC) data reported in 2019, Maryland was ranked 6th among U.S. states and territories in adult/adolescent HIV diagnosis rates (per 100,000) in 2018, tied with Mississippi. At the end of 2018, 1,173,900 people in the United States aged 13 and older were living with diagnosed or undiagnosed HIV. At the end of 2019, there were 31,630 people aged 13 and older living with diagnosed HIV in Maryland. An estimated 3,830 people with HIV (PWHIV) in Maryland in 2019 remain undiagnosed.

AAB has been instrumental again this year in reducing HIV infection in Baltimore. The CDC tells us that Black Gay men have a 1 in 2 chance of becoming HIV infected in their lifetimes. We are currently administering an HIV prevention program, know as PrEP UP. PrEP is a one pill once a day prevention regimen that has proven to be 99% effective in reducing HIV transmission risk. Our HIV prevention program provides outreach, education, testing assistance, healthcare linkages, navigation support and support groups that promote medication adherence for African-American Transgender women and Gay men.

Our New Horizons program promotes HIV prevention and treatment retention in care and adherence to life-saving medications in Gay men and Transgender women as well as the services provided above. Our prevention and treatment efforts have been extremely successful. We seek to educate Black Gay men and Trans women about their exorbitant risk of HIV transmission, and help them build networks of support to combat the many social obstacles they encounter daily which contribute to their risk of becoming HIV infected, and falling in and out of care and treatment. We have also been educating people about Treatment as Prevention (TASP), also known as U=U (Undetectable HIV = Untransmittable HIV), as well as the latest in HIV research and treatment information.

AAB will continue to link people at risk of HIV and with HIV to care providers and help them to stay on their PrEP and HIV medications. We are very proud of our very successful support and education programs which have helped to decrease the number of people who become HIV infected and PWHIV who are unable to sexually transmit HIV because their virus is undetectable; thus, untransmittable (U=U), as well as the number of PWHIV we have helped to remain on life-saving HIV medications.

Our national work affects all who are touched by HIV/AIDS. We are working with industry to continually change the standard of care by ensuring that their new drug pipelines remain robust, and by replacing older more toxic drugs with more effective, better tolerated drugs, as well as exciting new long-acting drugs for HIV prevention and treatment that may require only daily, weekly or monthly dosing. This is the wave of the future. For more information on our events and the latest in HIV treatment and research as well as PrEP for HIV prevention and HIV treatment support or financial assistance and prescription drug access program information, please see our web site at www.aidsactionbaltimore.org and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/prep.up.7> and <https://www.facebook.com/newhorizonsbmore/>

AAB has been instrumental in the formation of the Drug Development Committee of the AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition, a national organization that interacts with the pharmaceutical industry, pressuring companies to study drugs expeditiously and ethically and to include the HIV affected community in all aspects of research and development. AAB is also a leading member of the national Fair Pricing Coalition (FPC), pressuring “big pharma” to price HIV drugs reasonably, limit price increases, cap ongoing drug prices for government programs like AIDS Drug Assistance Programs, and to initiate co-pay programs for patients with private insurance. We have convinced every HIV and Hepatitis C drug company to create programs that will cover all the outrageously expensive co-pays and other out of pocket (OOP) costs for people with private insurance. Our work directly affects Marylanders with ever increasing OOP prescription costs. We are also working very hard to ensure that people in Maryland and across the country who cannot afford their medications get their drugs for free from “big pharma” through Patient Assistance Programs (PAPs). Our work is way ahead of the curve. This type of advocacy does not happen in any other disease community. These OOP co-pay programs are now in danger of being discontinued by insurance providers. AAB has been trying to work in collaboration with numerous national organizations to preserve co-pay programs.

We are very excited that scientists have begun to work on HIV “cure- related” research. AAB is working with government, industry and the national HIV community to make a “cure” for HIV or what we are now calling “durable HIV suppression” a reality. Even though this will take years to come to fruition, we have to start somewhere. AAB is a member of the Martin Delaney Cure Research Collaboratories (DARE) CAB, AAB is also working with DARE researchers to bring additional resources to Baltimore for local cure research projects. We held three HIV Cure Forums in 2019 and 2020, and will hold more in 2021.

HIV policy gets more complicated every year. COVID-19 is eating a large percentage of US Health and Human Services (HHS) funding. We are in danger of losing all our hard won treatment and prevention gains. Because of COVID-19, it is much harder to obtain the money we need to fight HIV. We are working very closely with the Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) in their End the HIV Epidemic Initiative. The BCHD has also provided funding for our prevention and treatment programs. We had five Town Halls in conjunction with the BCHD in 2020 and 2021, discussing new HIV and COVID-19 news. Innovative events like this would not happen without AIDS Action Baltimore.

The Trump Administration left our country with the largest public health crisis in 100 years which also resulted in a shattered, but recovering economy. Even though President Biden is conducting a miraculously successful vaccine effort, we need your help more than ever so that we can continue the fight to save our community from the devastation of HIV disease and the ravages of COVID-19. AAB successfully advocated for increased NIH HIV research funding this year, and will continue to advocate for other HHS budget increases, like continued funding for the Ryan White Care Act for the support of people with HIV.

AAB has also been working diligently on COVID-19 advocacy and support. We are using our many years of government research and policy expertise and connections in the fight against COVID-19. AAB is advocating directly for PWHIV with COVID-19. Last year AAB was able to convince the HIV Medical Association (HIVMA) which is part of the Infectious Disease Society of America to create a document that addresses critical care interventions and other important medical considerations for PWHIV and COVID-19.

AAB was instrumental in ensuring that PWHIV were not excluded from COVID-19 vaccine protocols, and worked tirelessly to ensure that PWHIV were finally prioritized for COVID-19 vaccinations both nationally and in Maryland. We spearheaded many months of high level advocacy, collaborating with national activists to ensure that PWHIV were included in COVID-19 vaccine trials and prioritized for vaccines.

AAB filed written public comments for every FDA COVID-19 vaccine authorization hearing and was chosen to make oral comments at all but one FDA hearing. We also filed public comments for all the CDC COVID-19 vaccines hearings. We will continue to advocate with the NIH to assure that clinical trials for people with COVID-19 are conducted ethically and expeditiously, and to ensure that PWHIV are included in important clinical trials. Advocating for these life-saving strategies has been our life's work. Our expertise and long-standing contacts in these arenas are invaluable.

We know that many of you have suffered too during this last horrible year. AAB has been helping to fund local COVID-19 food insecurity efforts for people with HIV, and has expanded our financial assistance programs for PWHIV who have COVID-19. We sent needy clients COVID-19 care packages that included masks, hand sanitizer and important COVID-19 information. Please be sure to contact us if you think our programs might be of assistance to you or your friends and family.

Our city and country need the expertise of AIDS activists now more than ever. As always, we will continue to work locally and nationally for PWHIV and now for PWHIV and COVID-19. With your help, we can continue to keep our doors open to face yet another pandemic that affects us all. But we can not do it without your help. Please give as much as you can to help us keep our doors open at this critical time in our history.

We are still doing our best to help ourselves. Unfortunately, we were unable to have our September 2020 Tea Dance at the Clifton Mansion, the restored Italian style mansion which was the residence of Johns Hopkins. But we did receive very generous contributions from our loyal supporters last year, and were able to apply for a number of COVID-19 emergency grants in 2020 that ensured that we could keep our doors open. We also hope to be able to have our exciting new benefit at the Clifton Mansion on September 19, 2021. But the capacity requirements and related additional expenses may prohibit us from having the event this year although we will try our very best to make it feasible. Unfortunately, there has been no 2021 emergency grant funding available. Thus, we will no doubt need your help this year as much as ever.

Please help us to continue our emergency financial assistance programs and our vital local and national research and treatment advocacy. We greatly appreciate your continued support in these tough economic times. Thank you in advance for your contribution and for your past generosity. We know you are called on to make many contributions. We very much appreciate your continued confidence in our work. Your donation will help us to save lives. We are forever grateful for your trust and loyal support. Remember, now more than ever, without people like you, there would be no AIDS Action Baltimore! We hope you and yours remain safe and well.

Sincerely,



Lynda Dee & the AAB Board
Merle McCann, M.D., Chair

Michael Aquino
Jake Boone, III
Kenny Eggerl

Thomas Holden
Mark McMullen
Cameron Wolf, Ph.D., M.P.H.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

CONTRIBUTION ENCLOSED: \$50 \$75 \$100 \$500 OTHER

Current financial statement is available upon request. Contacting AIDS Action Baltimore at 14 East Eager Street, Baltimore, MD 21202 or (410)837-2437. Documents and information submitted to the State of Maryland under the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401 for the cost of copying and postage.