



CHAMP Launches Pilot Program for Community Organizing & Mobilization Building a Grassroots HIV Prevention Movement: The Prevention Justice Partnership

The history of AIDS activism is paved with braved individuals who organized to fight for survival. Important victories were won on domestic and global access to treatment and care in the first quarter century of this pandemic. Much remains to be done, not the least of which the search for a vaccine and a cure. But one urgent question can and must be answered: What can we do to stop the persistent rates of new infections worldwide.

While the current U.S. domestic and global HIV prevention policies seem stuck in the nineteen-fifties, driven by radical right-wing ideology instead of sound scientific research, the impact of these policies will have negative and costly consequences lasting decades after this President leaves office. Since community-based AIDS organizations are already struggling to provide vital services after years of under funding, a new generation of activists is sorely needed in order to turn the path of the epidemic back on the right track.

Recognizing that a successful movement depends on a strong, well informed, and organized constituency, the CHAMP Academy, our technical assistance and capacity building program, is launching a unique pilot program — The **Prevention Justice Partnership (PJP)**. The PJP is a twelve-month program designed to provide a new generation of leaders with tools and resources to advocate for HIV prevention policies based on science. Central to the program are the two-day intensive on-site training and strategy sessions every quarter, coupled with on-going mentorship and support.

For our pilot year, we have invited a diverse group of grassroots organizations from around the country to partner with CHAMP. Following are brief descriptions of our six partners:

ACT UP Austin – Formed as a response to the call to action made by the Campaign to End AIDS in 2005, a group of diverse individuals decided to take the next step and reactivate the Austin chapter of ACT UP. This young and enthusiastic group recognized the negative impact current HIV prevention policies is having on their communities, and they are organized and ready to change them for the better. CHAMP will utilize the rich resources and build upon the skills of group members to develop and launch a strategic HIV prevention advocacy campaign.

ACT UP Philadelphia – A veteran of the AIDS activist movement, this powerful group has grown along with the ever-changing AIDS crisis for eighteen years. Addressing both the domestic and global AIDS crisis, ACT UP Philly has been extremely effective in using direct action and the media to change the public dialog and policy. Recognizing sustainability as one of the many challenges facing a diverse, community based, and all volunteer organization, ACT UP Philly is partnering with CHAMP to focus on fundraising, leadership development, and infrastructure building for the long haul.

Allies Linked for the Prevention of HIV and AIDS/ALPHA –

Founded by a young HIV positive gay man in 2003, this all-volunteer organization provides HIV prevention counseling and testing services in a community setting in Boise, Idaho. While these services are vital, ALPHA also realizes that more must be done to stem the growing HIV epidemic. From local opposition to harm reduction/needle exchange, to proliferation of abstinence-only-until-marriage programs, there is no shortage of issues to address. CHAMP will work with this partner to incorporate a policy advocacy campaign to compliment on-going service delivery.

Proyecto Lucha & BAY Positive – Based in San Francisco, Proyecto Lucha was formed out of the ashes of recent federal and local prevention program cuts, especially in the gay, lesbian, and transgender immigrant Latina/o community. BAY Positive is a drop-in center and support group for young HIV positive people in the Bay area. CHAMP will work to recruit participants from both of these overlapping communities to identify and train a new generation of AIDS activists, building a new voice to revitalize the AIDS movement in San Francisco.

North Carolina Harm Reduction Coalition – A diverse statewide coalition of PLWHAs, IDUs, sex workers, service-organizations, religious leaders, researchers, students, and community allies, the NCHRC was created in response to the HIV epidemic among people of color and injecting drug users in the state. NCHRC works to "encourage and motivate the acceptance of harm reduction strategies in North Carolina through education, advocacy, and resource development." CHAMP will work with the NCHRC to strengthen their coalition structure, translate platform items into concrete and winnable campaigns, and provide training for their members who are new to advocacy.

C2EA Rhode Island – Taking advantage of our new office in Providence, CHAMP is working with a group of Rhode Island HIV/AIDS activists to start up a state chapter of the Campaign to End AIDS (C2EA). We are partnering with C2EA RI through a two-month training program, the Prevention Justice Seminar. This seminar is an in-depth immersion course on the history of AIDS activism and current policies impacting the epidemic. With a shared base of knowledge, we expect to advance towards campaign building and execution full steam ahead.

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