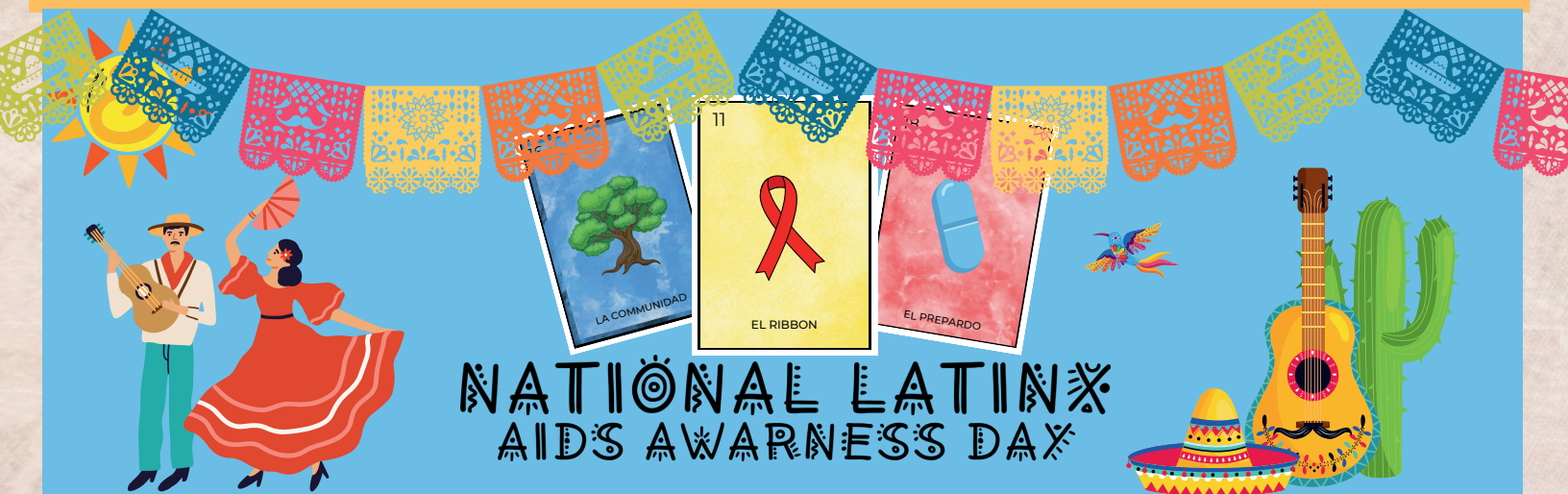


## BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING HOPE: LATINX AIDS AWARENESS



### Embrace the Culture. Celebrate the Heritage!

As the leaves begin to change and the air turns crisp, we welcome the vibrant month of October with open arms. This month is not only a time to embrace the beauty of autumn but also a time to celebrate two significant observances: Hispanic Heritage Month and National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day. In addition, we'd like to shed light on the importance of mental health during these challenging times.

#### Hispanic Heritage Month: A Celebration of Culture and Heritage

From September 15th to October 15th, we honor and celebrate the rich culture, history, and contributions of Hispanic and Latinx individuals to our society. This month offers an opportunity to recognize the diversity within the Latinx community and learn from the stories and traditions that have shaped it. Throughout October, we'll be hosting cultural events and showcasing the talents of our community members. Join us in celebrating the heritage that makes us stronger together.

#### National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day:

This day serves as a reminder of the importance of HIV/AIDS education, prevention, and support within the Latinx community. We encourage everyone to get tested, know your status, and access the

resources available to prevent the spread of HIV.

Let's unite to end the stigma and provide a supportive environment for those affected by this disease.

#### The Importance of Mental Health

Amidst the celebrations and awareness efforts, it's crucial to recognize the significance of mental health. The challenges of the past years have taken a toll on our emotional well-being. Remember that seeking help or reaching out to a friend or family member can make a world of difference. Your mental health matters, and it's okay to seek support when you need it. Let's prioritize self-care, practice mindfulness, and promote a stigma-free environment where everyone can openly discuss their mental health concerns.

As we embrace the colors of fall, let's also embrace the diversity of our community, promote health and well-being, and celebrate the beautiful tapestry of Hispanic and Latinx cultures. Together, we can create a brighter and more inclusive future.

Stay tuned for our upcoming events and activities throughout October, and join us in these meaningful celebrations.

Wishing you a vibrant and joyful October!

### Upcoming Events

**Free Rapid HIV Testing**  
 Oct. 1st from 10:00AM-3:30PM  
 Walgreens 1221 N Lake St, Aurora, IL 60506

**Free Rapid HIV Testing**  
 Oct. 11 from 11:00AM-2:00PM  
 Elgin Community College Building F Room F121

**National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day**  
 Oct. 11 from 6:00-8:00PM  
 Gail Borden Library, Elgin, IL

**Zumbathon in Observance of National Latino HIV Awareness Day**  
 Oct. 14th from 9:00AM-11:00AM  
 Simply Destinee Youth Center

**"Keep Being You Program"**  
 \*Lunch and Learn\* Oct 19th from 10:30AM-12:00PM  
 Gail Borden Library

**Free Rapid HIV Testing Event**  
 Oct 19th from 2PM-5PM  
 Simply Destinee Youth Center

**Free Rapid HIV Testing**  
 Oct. 26 from 11:00AM-2:00PM  
 Elgin Community College Building F Room F121

For the events in bold, there is no fee for these events. However, registration is recommended. To register, please click [HERE](#).



## BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING HOPE: LATINX AIDS AWARENESS



A year has passed since I walked back through the doors of this great organization. So much has already happened and there is so much more to do. Where do I begin?

This past weekend I walked with ardent advocates and allies at the AIDS Run and Walk sponsored by the AIDS Foundation of Chicago. Just feeling the positive energy of all of us being there, walking together for a common cause, energized me. I am thankful for the staff, volunteers, and board members who walked for Open Door. We all raised funds to support our work to end HIV/AIDS by 2030!

October 15 is National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day, a day to help stop HIV stigma and address the disproportionate impact of HIV on Hispanic/Latino communities. I hope you enjoy this newsletter to learn more information about the National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day. Open Door will be hosting a number of events that are outlined in this newsletter. Please join us at Gail Borden library on October 11 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

Included in this newsletter is information from our Client Advisory Board (CAB).

It is great to hear from them, and for them to share information with our reading audience. They, too, have events planned in October through December. Everyone is welcome at the bowling events. I encourage you, no, challenge you, to come out and bowl your best game and have a great afternoon.

As I look toward the end of the year, my mind goes to December 1, 2023, World AIDS Day. The theme for 2023 is "Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility." I almost forgot. We are rolling out a new website on December 1. The website will be introduced in conjunction with our World AIDS Day event on December 2, 2023 at Gail Borden Library. Please watch your inbox for information we are planning for the website launch. As always, please check out our website for the most up-to-date information/registration on where you can find us. You can find us at [www.odhcil.org](http://www.odhcil.org). Oh, and while you're there, just hit the green Give button, if you're so inclined.



From the Desk of  
**PERRY MAIER**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**JOANNA RUIZ**  
SOCIAL SERVICES  
DIRECTOR

Open Door Health Center is pleased to introduce Joanna Ruiz to the community at large. Joanna is the Director of Social Services. Joanna supervises our Case Management team, including medical and non-medical case managers. She provides leadership in the HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS) Retention, Peer Advocate, and DRS (Division of Rehabilitation Services) programs. Joanna describes her role as "being there not only for the clients, but also for the staff, to ensure we are providing the best care for the patient. It means having compassion and love for helping others."

It was her love for helping others that brought Joanna to Open Door in 2007. She had been volunteering with an organization who referred her to Open Door to provide information on HIV/AIDS. She describes her job search as one in which she was looking to "make a difference in the lives of other people". After meeting with Open Door staff and seeing their passion and love for their work in helping others led Joanna to take the job of Case Manager.

Joanna has seen many changes at Open Door Health Center. She says that when she started there was a staff of 13. At one point there were over 60 employees. Joanna has seen Open Door become part of the community and has seen how clients see the agency as part of their family. In Joanna's culture if someone considers you part of their family, you have made a difference and impact in their lives.

Joanna describes her greatest accomplishment as having a great case management team again. Open Door's Case Management team has been recognized several times by AIDS Foundation of Chicago. As she says, "I think it's because we all trust each other and work together as one. Being able to bring those clients that we had lost back to the clinic and having them trust us."

The words that sum up Joanna are love, compassion, trust and making a difference. Joanna demonstrates all these traits and more. If you see Joanna, in Aurora or Elgin, in office or out in the community, please thank her for all that she has done, is doing and will do to help others. Open Door Health Center of Illinois could not do our work without her.

## INTRODUCING MARY LOVE: A DEDICATED ADVOCATE FOR OPEN DOOR

# BOARD TALK

### Dear Open Door Community,

We are thrilled to shine the spotlight on one of the driving forces behind Open Door's success, Mary Love, our esteemed Secretary of the Board. With a heart full of passion and a commitment to our mission, Mary Love has been an invaluable asset to our organization since joining our Board of Directors in 2020. Ms Love is affiliated with the American College of Health Care Executives. Today, we want to introduce you to Mary and share her inspiring journey and dedication to the cause.

### A Heartfelt Commitment to the Mission

Mary's journey with Open Door began out of a desire to impact the lives of individuals living with HIV profoundly. She recognized the importance of providing comprehensive support, healthcare access, and stable housing for those in need. This commitment to our mission led her to join our Board.

Through her dedication, Mary has played a pivotal role in advancing Open Door's mission to provide essential services to our community. She has steadfastly advocated for increasing awareness and funding, actively engaging in fundraising, and participating in community outreach initiatives.

### Inspired by Impact

Mary's dedication to Open Door is fueled by witnessing our organization's incredible impact on the lives of those we serve. She has seen firsthand the positive changes and outcomes that result from our support and healthcare services. These success stories inspire her to work tirelessly for our cause.

Open Door's dedication to providing comprehensive healthcare and support aligns perfectly with Mary's beliefs, and she

wholeheartedly supports our mission. She envisions a future where Open Door becomes a leading organization in HIV care and support, reaching even more needy communities. With the unwavering dedication of our staff, board members, and volunteers, Mary is confident that we will continue to grow and make a significant difference.

### Securing a Brighter Future

One of Mary's most significant accomplishments as a member of the Board of Directors was identifying the need for more oversight and accountability of Open Doors operational activities. This achievement has led to increased access to testing and early intervention, ultimately saving lives in our community.

Mary Love's commitment to Open Door runs deep, and she wants the public to know that she is dedicated to making a positive impact and advocating for the rights and well-being of individuals living with HIV. Her dedication is a testament to the passion and drive that defines Open Door's board members.

In closing, we are immensely grateful to have Mary Love as our Secretary of the Board. Her unwavering dedication, advocacy, and commitment to our mission continue to drive Open Door forward. We look forward to the future as we work together to create a world where everyone has access to quality healthcare and support.

**Thank you, Mary, for your outstanding contributions to Open Door.**



## MARY LOVE



### Free HIV and STI Testing for those who are uninsured!

**Mondays in Aurora**

**Ph: (630) 264 1819**

**Tuesdays in Elgin**

**Ph: (847) 695 1093**

### Call us to schedule your appointment!



## AIDS RUN AND WALK CHICAGO



Open Door Health Center staff, volunteers, and board members at the AIDS Run and Walk Chicago on Saturday, September 30th, 2023. Individuals listed from left to right: (bottom row) Marcos Bostho, Michelle Espino, Luis Lopez; (top row) Danise Habun, Perry Maier, and Terry Ross



### Run for hope, walk for change

We're thrilled to share the exciting news about Open Doors' enthusiastic participation at the Annual AIDS Run and Walk Chicago this past weekend! On a beautiful Saturday morning, Team Open Door joined hundreds of others in this inspiring event. Under the slogan "Show up, show out," we came together to make a meaningful difference.

### Start Line

The day began with group stretches, fostering a sense of unity and preparation for the event ahead. As we gathered at the starting line, the anticipation was palpable, and the atmosphere was charged with enthusiasm.



### Finish Line

Crossing the finish line held special significance, reminding us of the progress made in the fight against HIV and AIDS. It was an incredible event, and we're grateful to have been part of such a meaningful day. Thank you to all who joined us in supporting this vital cause!



**OPEN DOOR HEALTH CENTER**  
presents

**SCAN TO REGISTER**




### El PrEP es para nosotras!

PrEP (profilaxis preexposición) es un medicamento que es muy efectivo en prevenir el VIH a través del sexo e inyección de drogas. ¡PrEP es para cualquier persona en riesgo de contraer el VIH! PrEP puede impedir que el VIH se establezca y se propague por todo su cuerpo. Es altamente eficaz si se toma según las indicaciones, pero es mucho menos eficaz si no se toma consistentemente. Y recuerde, PrEP le protege contra el VIH, pero no contra otras enfermedades de transmisión sexual (ETS). Hay más opciones para prevenir el VIH que nunca. Hable con sus parejas, amigos y proveedor de salud sobre PrEP.

#### ¿Qué tan eficaz es la PrEP?

- Reduce el riesgo de contraer el VIH a través de las relaciones sexuales en aproximadamente el 99 % cuando se toma según las indicaciones.
- Aunque hay menos información sobre qué tan eficaz es la PrEP en pastillas entre las personas que se inyectan drogas, sabemos que reduce el riesgo de contraer el VIH en al menos un 74 % cuando se toma según las indicaciones. La PrEP en inyecciones no se recomienda actualmente para las personas que se inyectan drogas.
- La PrEP es mucho menos eficaz cuando no se toma según las indicaciones.

#### ¿Cómo puedo comenzar la PrEP?

Hable con su proveedor de atención médica si cree que la PrEP podría ser adecuada para usted. La PrEP puede ser recetada por cualquier proveedor de atención médica

con licencia para emitir recetas.

Antes de comenzar la PrEP debe hacerse una prueba del VIH para asegurarse de que no lo tiene.

- Mientras reciba la PrEP, deberá ir a su proveedor de atención médica de manera rutinaria, como se recomienda para lo siguiente:
  - visitas de seguimiento,
  - pruebas del VIH, y
  - surtidos de medicamentos o inyecciones de la PrEP.
- Pregúntele a su proveedor de atención médica sobre las pruebas del VIH que se envían por correo y servicios de telesalud para las visitas de seguimiento.

Si no tiene un proveedor de atención médica, puede usar el localizador de servicios de prevención del VIH para buscar un proveedor de PrEP cercano a usted.

#### ¿Puedo tomar PrEP mientras tomo anticonceptivos?

No se conocen interacciones entre la PrEP y los métodos anticonceptivos basados en hormonas, por ejemplo, la píldora, el parche, el anillo, la inyección, el implante o el DIU. Es seguro usar ambos al mismo tiempo.

La PrEP para mujeres promueve opciones de prevención del VIH para las mujeres. PrEP (profilaxis preexposición) son medicamentos que toman las personas para prevenir contraer el VIH a través de las relaciones sexuales o el consumo de drogas inyectables. ¡La PrEP es para todas las personas en riesgo de contraer el VIH! La PrEP puede evitar que el VIH se arraigue y se propague por todo el cuerpo. Hable con sus socios, amigos y proveedor de atención médica sobre la PrEP.



## CLIENT ADVISORY BOARD

## CLIENT ADVISORY BOARD

The Client Advisory Board cordially invites clients & staff, friends & family to:

### Support Groups:

1st and 3rd Monday of Each month  
Open Door Elgin Office from 5-7PM

2nd and 4th Friday of each month  
Open Door Aurora Office from 4-6PM

### Social Events:

#### "Bowling Party"

Sunday, Oct. 22nd, 1:00-3:00pm  
St. Charles Bowl, 2520 W. Main St.,  
St. Charles IL  
Free Bowling, shoes and food  
provided by Open Door

#### "Holiday Party"

Saturday, Dec. 9th, 3:30-8:00PM  
Location to be announced

### Advocacy Events:

#### "AIDS Watch"

Washington D.C. March 17-19th, 2024  
Theme: "We're in this Together"  
Additional information to be  
announced

#### "Springfield Advocacy Day"

@2nd Week April 2024  
Speak with IL elected Representatives  
& Senators  
Advocacy Empowerment Training  
prior to event. Free Training,  
Transportation & Breakfast Provided  
by AIDS Foundation of Chicago



## Remembering Those Who Helped 97% of Open Door's Clients get to "Undetectable!"

(New York Times, "Anthony Fauci Quietly Shocked Us All," by Peter Staley, Dec. 31, 2022)

The first time I met Dr. Anthony Fauci was at the International AIDS Conference in Montreal during the summer of 1989. ACT UP, the AIDS activist group I was a part of, had scared the bejesus out of conference organizers by seizing the stage during the opening session, then made things worse by disrupting various scientific presentations. Many, if not most, AIDS researchers wanted us hauled away and never heard from again. Little did they know that Dr. Fauci, who was leading the response at the National Institutes of Health, had been meeting with members of ACT UP since shortly after our founding two years earlier.

I couldn't shake the feeling that as the head of our government's AIDS research efforts, Dr. Fauci had my life in his hands. Only four years earlier, at the age of 24, I was diagnosed with AIDS-related complex, considered a certain death sentence at the time. Days after the conference, I found myself in Dr. Fauci's office, along with the ACT UP members Mark Harrington and Jim Eigo, hammering out the final details of our parallel track program, which would allow thousands of people to obtain experimental drugs outside of traditional clinical trials. Within days, a New York Times [front page headline](#) about Dr. Fauci read, "AIDS Researcher Seeks Wide Access to Drugs in Tests." The F.D.A. quickly fell in line. ACT UP had scored its first major victory, with Dr. Fauci's help.

Shortly thereafter, Dr. Fauci gave in to one of our primary demands: adding people with H.I.V. to all the committees overseeing his AIDS research programs. Those patient advocates slowly but surely got results, vastly improving a [research network](#) that was more recently used to enroll thousands of people in the initial Covid-19 vaccine trials. It was the birth of a patient advocacy model that all disease groups use today, fully embraced by the research establishment. And it's a tradition that I hope will continue after Dr. Fauci's retirement December 31, 2022.

Full Article: [https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/31/opinion/anthony-fauci-hiv-aids-act-up.html?campaign\\_id=9&emc=edit\\_nn\\_20230102&instance\\_id=81638&nl=the-morning&regi\\_id=96322369&segment\\_id=121364&te=1&user\\_id=e965dc902b76e559967bffee2ad5e31a](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/31/opinion/anthony-fauci-hiv-aids-act-up.html?campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20230102&instance_id=81638&nl=the-morning&regi_id=96322369&segment_id=121364&te=1&user_id=e965dc902b76e559967bffee2ad5e31a)





# WORLD AIDS

DEC 2

# DAY

2023

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

NEW FACES OF HIV/AIDS PRESENTATION & EXHIBIT

GAIL BORDEN LIBRARY FROM 12PM-2PM  
COMMUNITY ROOMS ABC  
270 N GROVE AVE, ELGIN, IL 60120

[WWW.ODHCIL.ORG](http://WWW.ODHCIL.ORG)