

"LOVE KNOWS NO LABELS: CELEBRATE PRIDE!"



June is PRIDE MONTH

As June comes to a close, we wanted to take a moment to reflect on the vibrant and empowering journey we embarked upon throughout Pride Month. This annual celebration has always been a powerful reminder of the ongoing fight for equality, acceptance, and love, and this year was no exception. Together, we honored the LGBTQ+ community, showcased our unwavering support, and celebrated the diverse voices that make our world a more inclusive place.

From spirited parades and thought-provoking discussions to uplifting events and heartfelt campaigns, we witnessed the true power of unity and compassion. It was an incredible month filled with stories of courage, resilience, and the collective drive to foster a society that embraces everyone, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusivity extends beyond Pride Month—it is a fundamental value that underpins everything we do. We believe in creating spaces where all individuals can thrive, express themselves authentically, and feel a genuine sense of belonging. Your support throughout this month has been instrumental in furthering



this mission, and we couldn't be more grateful.

We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to everyone who participated, attended, and advocated for LGBTQ+ rights during this significant month. Together, we raised awareness, encouraged dialogue, and sparked positive change. Every act of kindness, every flag raised, and every story shared has contributed to a more compassionate and accepting world.

While Pride Month may be ending, the spirit of pride and allyship lives on. We encourage you to carry the torch throughout the year, championing equality and uplifting the voices of marginalized communities. Let us continue to foster a culture of respect, understanding, and love, not just within our community but also in the wider world.

As we bid farewell to June, let us hold onto the lessons we've learned, the connections we've made, and the determination to build a better future for all. Together, we can create a world where diversity is celebrated, where everyone can be their authentic selves, and where love knows no boundaries.

Thank you for being part of this incredible journey and for standing beside us in celebrating Pride Month. We look forward to continued collaboration and making a positive impact together.

With pride and gratitude



Upcoming Events

Zero HIV Stigma Day Presentation
Open Door Elgin Office
Thursday, July 20th from 5-7PM

Elgin Police Department
Summer Fun @St. Francis Park
Thursday, July 27th from 5-7PM

Mental Health Resource Fair
Hosted by Karina Villa
@Zion Lutheran Church
July 29th from 12-2PM

Mission San Juan Diego Catholic Church "Festival-Kermes"
July 29th-30th from 10AM-7PM

National Night Out - Elgin
Division St, Elgin IL
August 1st from 6-8PM

National Night Out - Aurora
August 1st from

Mexican Independence Day
Elgin Festival Park
September 16th

Zumba Fundraiser in Observance of National Latino HIV Awareness Day
October 14th from 9-11AM
Simply Destinee

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN ABOUT OUR SERVICES: WWW.ODHCIL.ORG

FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM: @ODHCIL

"CELEBRATING FREEDOM, EMBRACING UNITY!"



From the Desk of
PERRY MAIER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Can you believe we're in July already? Just as we celebrate Independence Day this month, Open Door is celebrating its own milestone of independence. Last year, right around now, The Board of Directors approached me to determine my level of interest in returning as the Executive Director. Obviously, there was interest, and the rest is history.

Upon my return to Open Door, one of my first realizations was (is) Open Door is needed now more than ever for those persons living with and/or impacted by Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS. Our Mission is to provide "services including education, prevention, diagnosis and treatment services to those who have or are at risk for Sexually Transmitted Infections, including HIV/AIDS, in addition to the greater LGBTQ community." We are increasing our presence and visibility in multiple geographic areas, which is reflected in the many pictures and articles within this newsletter.

Speaking of the importance of education and prevention, if you are like many of us, you may feel comfortable researching things online. The Internet is such a powerful tool. It's important that when doing your research, you obtain your information from reputable sites. The [Illinois Department of Public Health](#) and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(cdc.gov\)](#) are two sites to check out. Information on both sites is current, fact based and reflects best medical practices.

Finally, I am extremely proud to announce that Open Door Health Center of IL has recently been approved for Outreach and Prevention Funding in Region 8. (Suburban Cook County). Please keep an eye out for announcements of future Suburban Cook County events. As always, thank you for your ongoing support of the work of Open Door. You can reach out to me or other members of my team at 847-695-1093 or on the web at www.odhcil.org.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

The name, Marcos Bostho, is synonymous with Open Door. Marcos has worked with Open Door Health Center of IL since February 2004. In his 19+ years with the organization, Marcos has provided outreach, testing and support to thousands of people in our area who may have been at risk for, or living with, HIV/AIDS. Recently, Marcos's role expanded to include fundraising and other development work.

Marcos is "mission driven" and works to "accomplish the mission of the organization which is to reach out the community and populations at risk to inform, educate, test, and link into medical care as well as to increase the visibility of the clinic to incorporate more funding opportunities and fundraising events to increase the revenue to continue providing unique services in the suburbs of Chicago. "Marcos can be found at all locations of Open Door (Elgin, Aurora and DeKalb).

Before becoming employed at Open Door, Marcos was involved with our LGBTQA+ community and served as a volunteer with the organization. He describes his feelings at the time: "I really enjoyed working with the staff and I loved the wonderful environment of inclusiveness from everyone. I felt safe in an atmosphere in which I was not judged for who I was, as a Proud Gay Latino." Marcos carries that sense of safety and inclusiveness with him as he goes about doing his daily work.

Marcos sees his greatest accomplishment as knowing "that I have been able to make a difference in someone's life and to help others to keep their health in good condition. I have met wonderful people who are no longer with us, but they left a significant mark of love in my heart."

Open Door Health Center of IL commends Marcos for his commitment to the organization and to his personal integrity in doing the work. Next time you see Marcos, please thank him for his service.



MARCOS BOSTHO
DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH &
DEVELOPMENT

BOARD TALK

Open Door is happy to introduce a new feature, Board Talk, to our newsletter. Beginning with this edition, we will introduce and feature a member of our wonderful Board of Directors. It is important that the public know all of the people who support the mission and work of the Open Door Health Center of Illinois. In this edition, allow us to introduce you to our Board President, Reynaldo Rodriguez.

Since 2017, Rey Rodriguez has served on the Board of Directors for Open Door Health Center of IL. At the time, Perry Maier did a presentation to LULAC (The League of Latin American Citizens) about Open Door Health Center and Art Velasquez of LULAC encouraged Rey to offer his leadership skills and compassion to the organization. He did so and the rest is history.

Rey's life has been one of service. He joined the Board because his life's purpose is "to save lives and improve the quality of life" for others. He grew up on a farm in Oswego, joined LULAC at the age of 12, joined the Marines and served our country. Rey has worked as an officer with the Aurora Police Department and has participated in missionary work with the San Pablo Lutheran Church in Honduras. He has provided prevention programming on domestic violence to area schools. Rey is devoted to his community and envisions a time when all people will feel safe and secure in their homes and in their neighborhoods.

Rey became President of the Board of Directors for Open Door in 2020 and has identified 2 major accomplishments during his tenure: 1) Keeping the doors of Open Door open during a time of "turmoil" and chaos and 2) "pushing for Perry to come back" as the Executive Director. Rey's 5 year vision for Open Door includes expanding and offering more services in additional geographic areas and securing a mobile medical clinic whereby Open Door staff can go out to see more clients rather than having clients only come to a brick and mortar building.

Rey describes himself as self-educated and is an ardent advocate for those in need. He is currently employed with AID (The Association for Individual Development) and Broadstep. Rey is part of owner in a security company, Illinois State Security.

Open Door Health Center of IL thanks Rey for his service to the organization and to the community at large.



BECOME A VOLUNTEER
 WE'RE LOOKING FOR THE BEST KIND PEOPLE



REGISTRATION TO HELP OUR OUTREACH EFFORTS
JOIN WITH US!
 CONTACT: KARINAM@OPENDOORCLINIC.ORG

Are you passionate about making a positive impact in your community? Join the Open Door Health Center of Illinois as a volunteer and be a catalyst for change! We are seeking dedicated individuals to lend a helping hand during events and assist with various small projects. By volunteering with us, you can contribute to the well-being of others and support our mission to provide comprehensive healthcare services. If you're interested, reach out to Karina Maksimova, our Human Resources Manager, who will guide you through the process of becoming a valued member of our team. Together, we can make a difference and create a healthier future for all.

OPEN DOOR HEALTH CENTER
presents

BACK to the 80's Event Benefiting Open Door



What is Injectable PrEP?

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved one injectable pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medication: cabotegravir (CAB) 600 mg (brand name Apretude®). CAB is a single antiretroviral drug given as an intramuscular injection every 2 months to prevent HIV.

Who is Injectable PrEP for?

PrEP is for people who don't have HIV and are at risk of getting HIV from sex or injection drug use. Injectable PrEP with CAB is highly effective at protecting patients from HIV and is for adults and adolescents who weigh at least 35 kg (77 lb) and are at risk of getting HIV through sex.

CAB injections may be a good option for PrEP for people who:

- Have problems taking oral PrEP as prescribed
- Prefer getting a shot every 2 months instead of taking oral PrEP
- Have serious kidney disease that prevents use of oral PrEP medications.

CAB injections should not be prescribed to people who have HIV or to those with a history of hypersensitivity reaction to CAB.

How Is Injectable PrEP Used?

CAB is FDA approved as an intramuscular injection in the buttocks initiated as a first injection followed by a second injection 1 month after the first and then continued with an injection every 2 months thereafter. A 4-week lead-in period of 30 mg daily oral CAB prior to the first injection is optional for patients who are worried about side effects.

Read more about Injectable PrEP:
<https://www.cdc.gov/stophivtogether/library/topics/prevention/brochures/cdc-lsht-prevention-brochure-clinicians-quick-guide-what-is-injectable-hiv-prep.pdf>

Drug-Resistant Gonorrhea: A Public Health Threat

What is Gonorrhea?

People who are sexually active can get gonorrhea, a common sexually transmitted infection (STI) that can affect the genitals, rectum, and throat. It can be treated and cured, but it is highly skilled at outsmarting the antibiotics used to treat it.



Gonorrhea is the **second** most commonly reported bacterial infection in the United States.

What is drug-resistant gonorrhea?

Drug resistance, also referred to as antimicrobial resistance, happens when germs like bacteria and fungi develop the ability to resist, and even defeat, the drugs designed to kill them. That means the germs are not killed and continue to grow. The bacteria that cause gonorrhea has grown resistant to nearly every drug ever used to treat it, and it's only a matter of time until it becomes resistant to the last available cure.

1.6 million

CDC estimates that 1.6 million new gonorrhea infections occur each year, and that half of those infections are resistant to at least one antibiotic.



Today, the United States has just **one** recommended gonorrhea treatment option remaining.

For more information visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/std/gonorrhea/drug-resistant/public-health-threat/public-health-threat-text-only.htm>



Call us to schedule an appointment: (630)264-1819 (Aurora Office)
(847)695-1093 (Elgin Office)

OUTREACH



CHECK OUT WHERE WE'VE BEEN



"Empowering Elgin, Together in Action!"

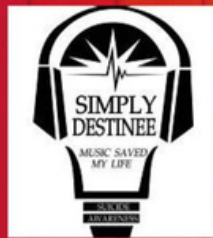
The Elgin in Action event was a phenomenal showcase of the incredible resources available to our community, inspiring us to take charge, collaborate, and create positive change for a brighter future.♥

Dancing with Pride!

This year's Pride Pop-Up Shop event at downtown Aurora on June 10th was a fabulous celebration of love, inclusivity, and self-expression! Hosted by Simply Destinee Dance Studio, the event was a vibrant mix of vibrant colors, empowering music, and amazing vendors showcasing their LGBTQ+ merchandise. Thank you to everyone who joined us in spreading love and supporting the LGBTQ+ community. Let's continue to dance, shine, and create a world where everyone is celebrated for who they are!

PRIDE POP UP SHOP

HOSTED BY



Love is Love



JUNETEENTH CULTURAL FESTIVAL

"Embracing Freedom, Honoring Heritage."

Open Door had the great honor of participating in the Juneteenth Cultural Festival that took place at Festival Park in Elgin, IL. The Festival was a vibrant celebration of unity, history, and the resilience of our community. From captivating performances to delicious food and engaging conversations, it was a day filled with love, knowledge, and empowerment. Let's continue to honor the past, celebrate the present, and build a brighter future together.♥

"Exploring the Richness of Asia!"

We had an incredible time at 'A Day in Asia' event hosted at the Gail Borden Library in Elgin, honoring AAPIA Month and Asian HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. From captivating cultural performances to thought-provoking discussions, we immersed ourselves in the beauty, diversity, and resilience of Asian heritage. Together, we raise awareness, celebrate achievements, and foster understanding. Let's continue to embrace unity, fight stereotypes, and promote inclusivity every day.

A DAY IN ASIA

ELGIN LIBRARY



IN OBSERVANCE OF AAPIA HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY








Join us for a special

ZUMBA CLASS

In Observance of National
Latino HIV Awareness Day!

Instructed by
Juanito Perez

 Saturday Oct 14
 09:00Am - 11:00Am
 122 W W Downer Pl #124,
Aurora, IL 60506

Registration

Ticket information will be shared soon!
Ticket prices: \$20