

NEWS & VIEWS

Its time to Say Good Bye and Good Luck

By
Dean Bockman

This is one of the hardest things I have done in my life and the reason is that what I am about to write is very emotional and close to my heart. I have to say good bye to a very special lady who touched my heart and soul deeply. I want to be selfish and say "NO DON'T GO" but I need to let her go so she can start on a new adventure in her life. I will cherish the memories and remember how she has impacted my life in so many different ways. I know I am a better person from the first time I met her at Open Door Clinic.

When I first came to Open Door Clinic about 15 years ago, I met and got to know many of the staff and clients over the years. I have, I believe, become very close to some of them. I can call these people friends and some of them part of my extended family.

Phyllis Stephens is one of a kind; her heart is as big as they come. Phyllis started with Open Door Clinic just about 30 years ago; she is what I would call one of the ORIGINALS. I can tell you that she has



made a difference in my life and I am sure she had made a difference in everyone's life that she has had contact with. She goes out of her way to help a client or who ever asks her for her help.

I can recall many times that I had a situation and went to her and she was able to help me figure out what to do and how to resolve the situation. I also remember sitting down with her many times and talking and when I left, I felt like the

world was lifted off my shoulders. She has a way of talking with me and other clients that is unbelievable and that words can't explain. All I can say is that she did not miss her calling when she came to Open Door Clinic. Her passion, desire and drive makes everyone who she comes in contact with feel truly cared for and like she really wants to help. I know that her smile, positivity and willingness to help will be missed.

I know when I say "we will miss you Phyllis" it is not just me saying those words. It is from all of us whose hearts you have touched by just knowing you. We all want to wish you the very best with your new life adventure and you will always be a part of us, because you have touched our hearts in many different ways. Thank you for doing what you did for us and just to let you know, YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE in our lives.

Take Action Now Protect HIV/AIDS Funding!

Bryan Gooding
Member of Illinois Alliance for Sound AIDS Policy

Important action alert that concerns our clients, our communities and the State of Illinois. Funding for HIV/AIDS services are under

attack! With out the continuation of the 2011 state tax increase or some other long term viable revenue solution the Governors Doomsday Budget goes into effect. This will be a disaster for all essential services in Illinois, police ,fire, education, public health.

For HIV/AIDS services it could mean an almost 4 million dollar cut to our 25 million budget, this is in addition to the 9 million or about 30% in cuts since 2011. Most of the money in

Continue On Page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2

TAKE ACTION NOW
PROTECT HIV/AIDS
FUNDING!

2

ONE DOOR CLOSES
AND ANOTHER ONE
OPENS

3

SENATOR LINDA
HOLMES (D) OF
AURORA LEADS THE
FIGHT TO CAP CO-
PAYS

3

AIDSWATCH IN
WASHINGTON DC

4

TIPS FOR
CONTACTING YOUR
LEGISLATOR

4

THE SUGGESTION
BOXES ARE FOR
YOU

5

OPEN DOOR OWNS
PROPERTY IN ELGIN

5

MAKE THE ASK

5

STI TESTING

5

SUGGESTIONS ARE
BEING HEARD

6

THE CLIENT
ADVISORY
COMMITTEE (CAC)
WANTS YOU

6

SAVE THE DATE
SUMMER PICNIC

6

JUNE
EVENTS

Take Action Now Protect HIV/AIDS Funding!

Continued From Page 1

that budget goes to the Illinois AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP). This program provides life saving medications for our clients who are uninsured and helps with premiums and co-pays for those that are. Co-pays for these *specialty* drugs can be in the 100s or 1000s of dollars.

We know that keeping people on medication is not only important for them to stay healthy but also reduces the number of new infections simply because those on meds are less likely to pass the virus on to some one else. HIV is a communicable disease. We can virtually eliminate HIV transmission with HIV medications and medical care. New evidence from the National Institute of Health shows that connecting people to HIV treatment is critical to preventing new HIV/

AIDS infections. HIV-positive persons receiving treatment can reduce

transmission to others by 96%. This is huge! Every new case of HIV prevented saves the state \$380,000 or more per person in lifetime medical care. Investment in these programs now will save lives and millions of dollars in future healthcare costs.

We are so at a tipping point here with new medication and prevention methods we actually have the tools necessary to end this epidemic. But there is lots of work to do. We've got to educate or kids, most of the new

diagnosis at our clinic this year have been in their early 20s. Do you

think these kids benefited from abstinence only education? We've got to break down the barriers to getting people tested and in treatment, hit people in communities where they are and in a language they understand. Fight stigma, misinformation and lack of access to healthcare...I know it sounds like a lot, but it is achievable! The time is not to pull back, it's time to keep pushing forward till the end, using every tool in our toolbox! Money is a part of that tool box.



That's why I am asking you to join with me, dozens of staff and clients that have already sent letters to, or met with their legislators. Be part of a larger voice of thousands of people around the state that have a stake in this issue. **Take Action Now!** You can help by making phone calls and sending letters to your legislators asking them to **protect critical funding for HIV/AIDS services in the State of Illinois.** Please ask family and friends to do so also. More information on this and other advocacy issues can be found at <http://www.aidschicago.org/advocacy/>.

You can look up your legislator at <http://capwiz.com/nea/il/directory/statedir.tt?state=IL&vl=state> or <http://hq-wfc2.wiredforchange.com/o/8810/getLocal.jsp>

One Door Closes and Another One Opens



Published April 15, 2014 By the Huffington Post.

I have found myself thinking to myself, "Am I where I am supposed to be?"

Once I get out of my head and let a little time pass, I realize, "Yes! I am exactly where I am supposed to be."

Earlier this year I went to Washington, D.C., to meet with LGBT activists from Russia. We had a press conference, and I was able to share my jour-

ney and offer my support for what these brave individuals are doing in a country that seems to hate LGBT people. This was prior to the Olympic Games in Sochi.

I knew I was on the short list to be named to the official U.S. delegation to represent our country at

the Olympics, which is a very prestigious honor. Use this link to view the whole article at the Huffington Post.com

www.huffingtonpost.com/greg-louganis/one-door-closes-and-another-one-opens_b_5152391.html?utm_hp_ref=email_share

Senator Linda Holmes (D) of Aurora Leads the Fight to Cap Co-Pays!

Bryan Gooding

SB 3395, sponsored by State Sen. Linda Holmes (D-Aurora) along with Sen. Michael Noland (D-Elgin) and Sen. David Koehler (D-Peoria), would amend the Illinois Insurance Code to limit out-of-pocket costs for specialty drugs to \$100 per prescription, or \$200 per month for all medications.

In an update from Sen. Holmes district office, they say the bill didn't gather enough momentum

in the current session. The Senator plans on having a series of meeting over the summer to gather more support and reintroduce the bill next session in January 2015.

Skyrocketing out-of-pocket costs are putting lifesaving medications out of reach for people living with chronic diseases like HIV/AIDS. Insurance companies have increased co-payments for many medicines by adding a 'specialty tier', a fourth category of medicines. Medications on this

specialty tier are needed for life threatening or debilitating diseases and can cost a patient between 25-50% of the drug's total cost each month, causing people living with chronic illnesses like cancer, arthritis, blood diseases, epilepsy, HIV and others to pay hundreds, even thousands, of dollars a month.

The high cost of these critical medications put them out of reach of people living with HIV. This results in people stopping treatment and compromising their

health lives and the lives of others by increasing infection rates. Each new infection costs \$380,000 or more over a lifetime of care. Increased emergency room visits and hospital stay would mean an even greater cost to insurance carriers and the state. Access to medication lowers healthcare costs.

Please urge your legislators join the effort to **Cap the Co-pays!!** You can get more information and fact sheets to share at www.capthecopay.org

AIDSWatch in Washington D.C

Bryan Gooding

AIDS United, Treatment Access Expansion Project and United States People Living with HIV Caucus organized AIDSWatch 2014 in our nation's capitol. April 28-29 over 300 people living with HIV, and their allies from around the country traveled to Washington to meet with members of congress and educate them on how federal law and policies effect people living with HIV and the goals of the National Strategy on HIV/AIDS.

A delegation of 9 advocates from Illinois Alliance for Sound AIDS Policy (IL-ASAP) joined the fight. The advocates were chosen from across the state, including Bryan Gooding from Open Door Clinic in Aurora.

Developments over the past several years have made it possible to finally end AIDS in America! The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has stated an AIDS-free generation is within our grasp. People who are HIV can "suppress" the virus with medications and reduce transmission up to 96%. However this will take a commitment to effective prevention strategies, expansion of healthcare and access to medications. Laws and policies need to reflect the current relationship between medication, care and prevention and be designed to reduce barriers and stigma.

Participants attended training on Monday the 28 to be briefed on the specific policy issues in order to talk to their representatives and senators. Douglas Brooks, Director, Office of National AIDS Policy gave speech and brought a message of support from President Obama. Afterward they were off to the hill for scheduled appointments at congressional offices. Most contact was made with aides or legislative assistants. In some ways this can be

more effective than actually meeting with your Congressman. They often have more time and you are able to present your concerns with more detail. In turn they can explain more fully to the Congressman. Getting the support of an aide for your issue can be half the battle. Developing relationships with these people can give you an ally in your Congressman's office and serve as point person for follow ups.

One of the biggest things we were trying to educate congress on is the **Ryan White Program**

and how it will work with the **Affordable Care Act (ACA)** to help cover gaps in services. The ACA has provided an unprecedented opportunity for people living with HIV to receive care through either the expansion of Medicaid or insurance through the Market Place, but there are still many states that did not expand Medicaid. Ryan White will be crucial in these states to provide care to low income or undocumented persons living with HIV/AIDS. For people with insurance Ryan White Programs help with premiums and high co pays on life saving drugs. Ryan White will also remain important in providing funding for outreach and prevention as well as supportive services such as case management, transportation and other services not covered by insurance. We are asking that congress hold off on making any changes to the Ryan White Program until we find out exactly how it will intertwine with the ACA. Of

course full funding and implementation of the ACA including the expansion of Medicaid in those state that haven't is important not just to people living with HIV/AIDS and chronic conditions but to all people that have traditionally not had access to healthcare.

Stable housing plays a critical role in helping people with HIV stay in care and adherent to medications, which reduces infection rates.

Housing is healthcare.

The Housing Opportunities for people living with AIDS (HOPWA) was created by congress in 1992 to provide housing assistance and related supportive services for low income people and families living with



HIV/AIDS. We are asking for an increase in the HOPWA budget of \$20 million dollars more than last year, increasing budget to \$350 million. This would sustain existing program and permit small program expansions. Current funding helps approximately 60,000 households. People who are homeless are more likely not to be on meds or in care, this increases infection rates. Ask Congress to protect and increase HOPWA funding.

Comprehensive sex education is a critical tool in preventing HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancy in people of all ages, but especially our youth. Medically correct, age appropriate, comprehensive sex education will arm young people with information to make responsible choices when it comes to sex and sexual health. Ask Congress to end federal abstinence-only until marriage programs. With teen pregnancy, rising rates of HIV and STD in youth we know this

policy hasn't worked. **Repeal the ineffective Abstinence-Only Program Funding Act (Repeal Bill HR3774)** and co-sponsor the **Real Education for Health Youth Act (Bill HR725 / S372)**

Lifting the ban on federal funding for needle exchanges will help reduce new HIV infections and other blood born infections, in drug users, and reduce the risk of accidental prick to sanitation workers, police and public. Needle exchanges are one of the most cost effective prevention strategies we have. Cities like Chicago who have implemented strong needle exchange programs have seen reductions up to 90% in new infections due to IV drug use. Ask congress to lift the ban and let us use our prevention dollars in way that are most effective.

And finally the **criminalization of people living with HIV/AIDS** perpetuates stigma and creates barriers to getting people tested and into care. Currently 33 state have HIV specific laws that criminalize exposure to HIV regardless of intent or actual transmission, and include behaviors we know don't transmit the virus, such as spitting or biting. These laws ignore science and discourage people from getting tested and knowing their status. They single people out based on HIV status and perpetuate stigma. We are asking that the federal government set guidelines and recommendations to the states to bring these laws up to date, or eliminate them all together. We already have battery and assault laws that can be used in cases where there is intent

You can find more information on these and other issues at www.aidsunited.org www.aidschicago.org

Tips for Contacting Your Legislators

Bryan Gooding

There are 3 basic ways to make contact with your legislator. Email/ letter writing, phone calls, or meet in person.

The easiest is to make a phone call or write a letter. When writing a letter to your senator or representative there are a few things to remember. Identify yourself as a constituent, include your full name address and contact information. Your legislators like to hear opinions from home and want to be kept informed what is going on in their district. Base your letter on your own experiences and observations. Personal stories on how a particular issue or piece of legislation will affect you or your community have a greater impact. If writing about a specific bill, describe it by number or name. Even more important is a concrete statement of the reasons for your position--particularly if you are writing about a field or subject in which you have specialized knowledge. Legislators have to vote on lot of things with which they have had little or no first-hand experience. Some of the most valuable information they receive comes from facts presented in letters from people who have knowledge in the field. Short well thought out letters that present a definite position are almost always the best. Do not engage in letter writing overkill. Quality, not quantity, is what counts. Ask for a reply.

It takes minutes to place a call to your legislator, and it can make a world of difference. Before placing the call become

familiar with the issue you wish to comment on. Ask to speak to your legislator directly. Telephone calls are often taken by a staff member, not the legislative member. If your legislator is not available it's a good idea to write down the name and title of the person you speak with. Keep in mind that it is important to develop and maintain a good relationship with your legislator's staff members. Often you may get more time and be able to explain issues in depth to a staff member. Ask to speak with the assistant who is working on your issues (i.e., healthcare, budget, education) When speaking with your legislator or staff, identify yourself by name and the organization that you represent if any or the town from which you are calling. Legislators are most responsive to their constituents, the people who keep them in office. If you voted for them, let them know. Engage them in conversation, for instance, you can ask your legislator if they are familiar with the issue. Your legislator may not have prior knowledge, so be prepared to educate them. Use personal and local examples to make your point. Ask them for their support and thank them for their time and consideration. If you reach a voice mail, leave a short message identifying yourself and contact information, ask for a return call.

Finally you can meet with your legislator in person. Talking to an elected official may seem intimidating at first, but it is important to remember that it is a

normal part of their job. Especially if you live in their district, they want to know what you think and how they can help. Do your homework. Try to know the basics about the piece of legislation you are going to address. If there isn't any specific legislation, be able to explain what you are concerned about and why. Call the office and ask to speak the person who schedules the legislator's time. Ask them to schedule an appointment for you with the legislator. You can go alone or in a group with other like minded advocates. If the legislator is unavailable, ask to schedule an appointment with the staff member who handles your issue. Don't feel bad if you don't get to speak to the legislator every time. Legislative staff members work very closely with the legislator and they are good allies to have.

When addressing your legislator address them by their title, Senator, Representative and their last name. Be personal tell them a little about yourself--where you live, what you do for a living, if you are representing yourself or an organization. Be sure to tell them that you live in their district (if you do). Connect your talking points to your story (how it has impacted you or your community). If possible provide at least one piece of data that will support your point of view. Select one key piece of data that helps sell your point of view. If available you can always provide them a short brief or fact sheet on your topic. Be focused remember they may have only a few minutes to share with you so stay on topic.

Also, don't let the legislator change the subject either. Be polite, but be firm. Stay positive. Don't be argumentative. You may not agree with the stand your legislator is taking on a particular issue but remember your goal is to have a long-term relationship; you are looking for common ground on the issues in which you are interested. Don't be defensive. They may ask tough questions. They are probably asking the questions that will be asked of them. Give them information that will help them justify why they should support your issue. The legislative process involves compromises, but you always have the right to participate in the process. Just be positive while you firmly state your positions. Don't leave without asking them to support your issue. If there is a bill associated with the issue, be specific and ask them to support the bill. You can ask them, "Will you support this legislation?" Ask them if they have any questions or need any additional information. Thank them for their time and attention. Follow up with a thank you note and anything else you promised.

We can all be advocates for issues that concern us. The way to do so is through effective communication with the people who are making decisions and policies that affect you and making your voice heard. You can increase your impact doing grassroots education of family, friends and community members to help gather support for your issue, and encourage them to contact their legislators. Together we are stronger. Make your voice heard!

The Suggestion Boxes Are For You



There are suggestions boxes in each clinic for the clients use.

How you ask?

If you have an idea for an improvement in the clinic.

If you have praise for a staff member.

If you have a concern of any kind.

If you just want to say something.



We want your experience at the clinics to be a GREAT one but if we don't know what your ideas or concerns are and we can't keep doing the great things going. So the CAC and the clinic staff can't this if it wasn't for YOU.



All you have to do is write it on a piece of paper, you can put your name if you'd like, and place it in the box. The CAC will review it and make any recommendations to the staff.

Open Door Now Owns Property in Elgin

Today, May 1, 2014 at 1:00 pm CST we closed on the property at 1665 Larkin Ave., Elgin, IL. See Pic below.

It is a monumental day for Open Door Clinic of Greater Elgin!

37 years ago the founding directors of Open Door Clinic of Greater Elgin, aka: Open Door, envisioned a place that provided confidential public health to a disenfranchised sexually active population in the greater Elgin area.

Staying true to their ideals Open

Door has consistently grown to now serve a variety of people in need of our services and an ever increasing need for the services we provide.

Spearheading this acquisition has been Open Door's Vice President of the board, Mr. James Burns Jr.. As chairman of the Facilities Committee, Burns lead a

group of Open Door board members, staff, and volunteers through the 17 month processes of re-

searching, selecting, purchasing and financing to arrive at this moment.

Construction is estimated to take an additional six months before

moving in and numerous details still need to be decided upon as the committee is not yet done with its' work.

Still, there is a time for celebration, for praise and for thanksgiving!

Thank you, Jim, and to all your facility committee members, the staff and board of Open Door and all those that helped us to arrive at this moment.

Open Door Clinic of Greater Elgin is now a land owner! It's real! Celebrate!



Make The Ask

By Bryan Gooding

This month's newsletter has focused on Advocacy issues that are important to clients of Open Door and people living with HIV/AIDS across the state and our country. If anything in particular moves you to take action, I encourage you to do so. The only way to ensure that our state and country has sound policy to deal with HIV/AIDs is if those affected by HIV/AIDS have a voice in those policies. Arm yourself with the knowledge



your advocacy voice.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed

it takes to advocate for yourself and others. More information on these and a host of other topics can be found at the links provided. You can also contact me, Bryan Gooding, at either the Elgin or Aurora clinic. bryan@opendoorclinic.org I would be happy to help you identify the issues that affect you most directly, and find

citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. — Margaret Mead, Anthropologist

Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek. — Barack Obama

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Illinois-Alliance-for-Sound-AIDS-Policy-IL-ASAP/186442938078988>

<http://www.aidschicago.org/component/tag/Illinois-Alliance-for-Sound-AIDS-Policy>

www.aidschicago.org

www.aidsunited.org

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv>

www.hivcaucus.org

<http://www.taepusa.org>



Free STI Testing



Just want to let everyone know that the suggestion boxes are working and you are being heard.



Aurora and Elgin
For Dates please call:
Aurora:
630-264-1819
Elgin:
847-695-1093



A suggestion was put into the Aurora box for a computer that clients can use to sign up for programs. For many years the staff of Open Door has discussed having a computer for clients to use. It is something that we see as a win-win solution. Not only to sign up for programs but also to get educational information. The problem for both sites has been finding the right location to put a computer. The good news is with the planned move for our Elgin location, a space for clients to access the computer.

Space is being looked into in Aurora.



ADVOCACY IS THE KEY

PAGE 6

LET'S GET
SOCIAL!

The Client Advisory Committee (CAC) Wants YOU

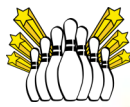


The CAC is still looking for a few clients that really want to make a difference.

We meet every other month, plan and host events during the year for clients and their families.



We prefer that you have transportation but it is not a requirement. Your dedication to help other clients and most importantly to have fun.



If interested Contact Dean B at deanbnewsletter@yahoo.com OR your case manager OR talk to a CAC member.

JUNE EVENTS

- 02 - Substance Use Group (A) 11a - 12p
- 03 - Positive MH (A) 4p - 5:30p
- 04 - Positive MH Group (E) 12p - 1:30p
- 04 - Making Stress Work for You (W) 12:30p - 1:30p
- 06 - HIV/AIDS Activity Education Group (A) 4p - 6p
- 07 - Happy Birthday Sharron M (E)
- 08 - Happy Birthday Shirley R (CAC) (A)
- 09 - Substance Use Group (A) 11a - 12p
- 10 - Positive MH (A) 4p - 5:30p
- 11 - Happy Birthday Carol W (E)
- 11 - Positive MH Group (E) 12p - 1:30p
- 11 - Game Night (W) 4p - 6p
- 11 - Happy Birthday David R (E)
- 11 - Happy Birthday Pat L (E)
- 13 - HIV/AIDS Activity Education Group (A) 4p - 6p
- 13 - Newsletter Articles Due
- 16 - Substance Use Group (A) 11a - 12p
- 17 - Positive MH Group (A) 12p - 1p
- 18 - Positive MH Group (E) 12p - 1:30p
- 20 - HIV/AIDS Activity Education Group (A) 4p - 6p
- 20 - Bingo Night (E) 4p - 6pm
- 23 - Newsletter to Clinics
- 23 - Substance Use Group (A) 11a - 12p
- 24 - Positive MH Group (A) 12p - 1p
- 25 - Positive MH Group (E) 12p - 1:30p
- 25 - Game Night 4p - 5p (W)
- 26 - Pain Management Group (A) 1p - 2p
- 27 - HIV/AIDS Activity Education Group (A) 4p - 6p

SAVE THE DATE CORRECTION

AUGUST 16TH 2014

OPEN DOOR & CAC
ANNUAL PICNIC
HOSTED BY
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
OF GENEVA

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN GETTING THE OPEN DOOR CLINIC'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER VIA E-MAIL OR HAVE ANY TOPICS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEWSLETTER.

PLEASE EMAIL ME AT deanbnewsletter@yahoo.com

ELGIN

164 DIVISION STREET
SUITE # 607
ELGIN, IL 60120

PHONE (847) 695-1093 FAX (847) 695-0501

AURORA

157 S. LINCOLN AVE.
ROOM K
AURORA, IL 60505

PHONE (630) 264-1819 FAX (630) 229-0182

www.opendoorclinic.org



- (A) Aurora Clinic
157 S. Lincoln Ave Rm K
Aurora, IL 60505
- (E) Elgin Clinic
164 Division St, Suite 607
Elgin, IL 60120
- (G) First Congregational Church
321 Hamilton
Geneva IL 60134
- (W) Canticle Place
26W105 Roosevelt Rd
Wheaton, IL 60187