

# VOICES

THE VOICE OF DELAWARE'S HIV COMMUNITY

DELAWARE HIV CONSORTIUM

Fall 2019



From the Executive Director

## Happy Holidays!

Tis' the Season when we often reflect on our blessings, whether it be our health, our family & loved ones, our jobs, our friends, our faith or the anticipation and joy of the upcoming Holidays. Although it is so easy to get wrapped up in the frenzy of shopping, gift giving and the stress that accompanies the Holiday Season, I hope you will all take a moment to count your blessings. Despite life's setbacks and challenges, it's important to make time to remind ourselves of the true meaning of this wonderful and joyous time of the year by giving thanks. Even if the Holiday Season isn't your favorite time of year...we can all be thankful for the positive things in our lives.

I know I have much to be thankful for this year. I have been truly blessed. After having surgery for bladder cancer and chemo therapy this summer, it was a life changing experience. I'm cancer free for now but will have to be checked every six months for the rest of my life. Yet, as challenging as it was, I used this experience to help me focus on my priorities and determine what is really important to me; my husband and puppies, my family & friends, my work and all of our supporters and clients. But most of all, it made me question...will I leave this world a better place because of how I've lived my life and what I've accomplished, what I've done to help others or by things I didn't do to make a difference?

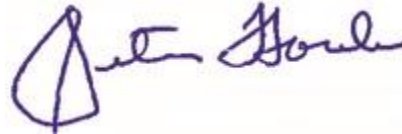
This Holiday Season, I hope you will join me by giving more of ourselves, sharing our prosperity, performing random acts of kindness, being more patient and demonstrating that action speaks louder than words. May all the beautiful Holiday decorations, the bright lights on the trees and the spirit of giving help us walk into the New Year as happier people because of what we did this Season and not what we wished we had done. There is no better gift to give ourselves than the satisfaction of helping someone in need, because it will make you feel

happier and more fulfilled! As Martha Stewart always said, "It's a Good Thing."

The Board, staff and clients thank you for your many acts of support throughout the year that have helped us improve the lives of people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Please help us again this Holiday Season continue our many programs and services by making a year-end donation, a commitment to volunteer, sponsoring an event or by a random act of kindness that will help us further our mission.

May the Spirit of the Season inspire you to smile, sing, laugh, walk in the snow and enjoy what is truly important to each of you. And don't forget to be good to yourselves too, it's a Holiday gift to yourself.

Happiest of Holidays,



Peter F. Houle, MBA, Executive Director



## EASY as PIE in final days!

Place your order now for a delicious dessert from Dessert by Jekeitta, Achenbach Pastries, or Pellman Bakeries! Deadline for **all bakeries, Friday 11/22 at 12 Noon**. Order now at [www.delawarehiv.org](http://www.delawarehiv.org).



*Case managers Junie Jean-Baptiste (left) and Jalissia Johnson-Tiggs (right) also work one day a week at the Christiana Care Georgetown HIV Community Wellness program and the Smyrna HIV Community Wellness program.*

## DHC Kent & Sussex Office Opens

The Consortium opened its combined Kent and Sussex County Office at 23A Northwest Front Street, in Milford in September. The new office combines the Consortium's offices in Milton and Smyrna, which are both now closed, into one office serving southern Delaware.

## DHC Launches Donor's Choice Program on Giving Tuesday

The Consortium will be launching Donor Choice, a new program empowering our supporters to choose specifically which one of our programs to support. To be launched on December 3 – Giving Tuesday – the Donor Choice Program allows the donor to choose between supporting 1) The Robert Ellis Holiday Fund to help our clients enjoy the holidays, 2) the Michael Brossette Memorial Fund, to help clients in southern Delaware with unexpected expenses, 3) our HIV and Hep C testing program, 4) our personal care items closet (soap, lotion, toothpaste, etc.), or you can just donate to the general fund to support all our services.

In this giving time of year, we truly appreciate your generous support, especially those that will make the Holidays easier for our neediest clients. Although people with HIV are living longer, more productive lives, many are still on Social Security Disability, which makes necessities like laundry detergent, shampoo and skin lotion seem like luxuries. Your donations will allow us to help our clients and their families enjoy the holiday, and will help them through the long, cold winter. For more info, go to [www.delawarehiv.org](http://www.delawarehiv.org).

## In-house Counseling

In-house behavioral health counseling, which has been available since Spring, is now available to Consortium clients receiving **case management services** as well as those receiving **housing assistance**. Thanks to this initiative, clients can arrange appointments with a therapist to discuss challenges they may be facing with family issues, stigma, drug and alcohol use, depression, anxiety, self-esteem, grief, and more.

These services are being supported by increased access dollars from the Consortium's 340B pharmacy program, which is intended to help Ryan White clients gain access to more services. This program is also supported by a generous grant from the Welfare Foundation.

## A Triple Treat from Iron Hill!

A tasty way to treat yourself and support the Delaware HIV Consortium! When you buy a Triple Chocolate Hill Brownie at Iron Hill Brewery & Restaurant at Riverfront Wilmington, a portion of your purchase is donated to the Consortium! A portion of the donation also supports the battle against childhood cancer. Talk about a TRIPLE WIN!

#IHBRiverfront



## HIV Testing & Linkage to Care

The Consortium's Testing & Linkage to Care program, in collaboration with Walgreens and Orasure Technologies, is now entering its seventh year. In an effort to be more accessible, we are now concentrating our testing efforts in two Walgreens locations on three days:

- Monday, 12:30 – 4 pm, 9th & Market
- Tuesdays, 12:30 – 4 pm, Elsmere
- Fridays, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm, 9th & Market

With the support of private foundation grants and your donations, we have been able to offer free HIV testing as well as the addition of Hepatitis C testing last year. In the past year, we tested more than 200 people and linked two positive individuals to HIV treatment. We also tested for Hepatitis C exposure and referred two positive individuals to their primary care physicians for follow-up.





## AIDS Walk Delaware

Thanks to everyone who walked, volunteered, or supported the 2019 AIDS Delaware, which was held on September 21. Thanks to your generous support, more than \$83,000 was raised in support of services to people living with HIV. The Walk is a collaboration between AIDS Delaware, the Delaware HIV Consortium, and all Delaware HIV/AIDS service organizations that participate.

Next year's AIDS Walk will be held on September 19, 2020, at Tubman Garrett Park, Riverfront Wilmington, and at Grove Park in Rehoboth Beach.



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Scott MacKenzie  
Shanice Rodgers  
Brad Shannon  
Sean Wise



## Two New Case Managers

We welcome two new HIV case managers – Shanice Rodgers, MSW(I), and Shari Harper(r) have joined the staff of case managers at the Consortium's New Castle County office! Between our Wilmington and Milton offices, we now serve nearly 300 clients! We are excited to welcome Shari and Shanice to our staff! If you would like to receive case management services from us, please call 302-654-5471 and ask for case management supervisor Kristine Major.

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