



THE UNIVERSITY
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at CHAPEL HILL



UNC
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Center for AIDS Research

UNC CENTER FOR AIDS RESEARCH

NEWS LETTER | August 2023

Third Edition



ADVOCACY AND CHANGE AT ITS FINEST

MESSAGE FROM OUR OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (OCE) MANAGER



Alicia Diggs, BSW, MPH
Manager, Office of Community
Engagement (UNC CFAR).

The CFAR Office of Community Engagement (OCE) supports and promotes community advocacy by working closely with national and local organizations. OCE aims to establish and grow strong relationships based on equity, trust, and accountability. In this edition of the CFAR newsletter we highlight two of our recent advocacy efforts- the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS and our Community Collaboration Board member North Carolina AIDS Action Network

"As we celebrate the achievements we have made, we thank our community partners for all their consolidated efforts, and we look forward to more opportunities to promote HIV/AIDS community-driven work"



Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS

Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS
Alicia Diggs, UNC CFAR Office of Community
Engagement Manager, PACHA member

As a member of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA), it's my pleasure to share



ADM Rachel L. Levine, M.D., Assistant Secretary for Health, HHS and Alicia Diggs, PACHA member and UNC OCE manager

Since January 2023, PACHA has held 2 meetings. The March 2023 meeting focused on Federal policies that affect all the social determinants of health, including housing and social justice. During the June 2023 meeting, PACHA passed a Resolution Concerning Urgent Action Recommended for the Syphilis Syndemic as well as PACHA Principles for Zero HIV Stigma in recognition of the annual Zero HIV Stigma Day. The resolution is a call for all stakeholders to work to end HIV-related stigma. You can find more information here: From Vision to Reality: A Call to End HIV Stigma.

We as a council honored and recognized our very own Dr. John Wiesman, PACHA Co-Chair, and Professor, Gillings School of Global Public Health, and Carl Schmid, Executive Director, HIV+Hepatitis Policy Institute for their services, as this was their final meeting as PACHA members.



Photo; B. Kaye Hayes, M.P.A., PACHA Executive Director; Director, OIDD; Deputy Assistant Secretary for Infectious Disease, OASH, HHS and Harold J. Phillips, MRP, Director, White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP), Alicia Diggs UNC OCE Manager

with you some of our recent work.

PACHA provides advice, information, and recommendations to the Secretary of Health & Human Services on programs, policies, and research to promote effective HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and cure. In addition, the council also provides information and recommendations to the Secretary regarding the implementation of the Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) initiative and the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (hiv.gov/pacha).



Photo; PACHA members



Photo; The PACHA Stigma and Disparities Committee with ADM Rachel L. Levine, M.D., Assistant Secretary for Health, HHS

Kaye Hayes, Executive Director of PACHA and Caroline Talev, Senior Management Analyst Office of Infectious Disease and HIV/AIDS Policy provided feedback regarding the importance and impact of the council meetings, site-visits, and PACHA-to-the-People community engagement sessions.

Check the link below to learn more about PACHA meetings

[Learn more](#)

Stay connected through [HIV.gov](https://hiv.gov) for updates from PACHA



North Carolina AIDS Action Network (NCAAN)

In another area of advocacy outreach, we showcase the North Carolina AIDS Action Network (NCAAN). The NCAAN has served on the Community Collaboration Board of the CFAR for the past 3 years. In this section, we share some of the work NCAAN does within the community as part of their work at CFAR.

By Maggie Blunke- Administrative Assistant

North Carolina AIDS Action Network (NCAAN) is a leading nonprofit dedicated to improving the lives of North Carolinians living with and



Photo: Veleria Levy, NCAAN Executive Director, Harold J. Phillips, MRP, Director, White House Office of National AIDS Policy (ONAP)

impacted by HIV. With a strong commitment to health equity and advocacy, NCAAN has been at the forefront of combating stigma, driving policy change, and fostering grassroots action since its establishment in 2010. NCAAN is continuing that legacy under the new leadership of Veleria M. Levy- Executive Director.



Photo: HIV Speaks on Jones Street Community Members

One program in particular that Veleria has spearheaded is Ella/Her. Ella/Her is a collaborative project with the Southern AIDS Coalition and Latinos in the South, focused on encouraging Black and Brown cisgender women to talk to their doctors about biomedical interventions such as PrEP and PEP. Cisgender women have long been underserved by AIDS service organizations, and in the Carolinas, Latina women are 3.9 times more likely to contract HIV, and Black women contract HIV at a staggering 13.9 times the rate of the general female population. The goal of Ella/Her is to empower women to take control of their health, by prioritizing pleasure and freedom, thereby giving them tools to advocate for their sexual wellness.

In May 2023, NCAAN hosted their largest advocacy day— HIV Speaks on Jones Street—which brought together about 100 advocates, including Harold Phillips, Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy. This event was hosted in Raleigh to discuss pressing issues facing the HIV, Hepatitis and Harm Reduction communities, like Medicaid and expanding the Good Samaritan Law.

By amplifying the voices of those affected by HIV in North Carolina, encouraging the support of allies, supporting comprehensive healthcare access, and championing the expansion of Medicaid, NCAAN is paving the way toward a brighter, healthier future for all North Carolinians.



Photo: NCAAN staff and board members at the Governor's Office

To learn more about NCAAN's mission and how you can support their vital work, please visit their website at www.ncaan.org.



Announcements and Awareness Days

AUG 20TH

Southern HIV/AIDS Awareness Day #SHAAD

Southern HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (SHAAD) is August 20. Founded by the Southern AIDS Coalition. SHAAD is a day that individuals, communities, and organizations can unite

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to call attention to the disproportionate number of people living with HIV in the South. SHAAD is an opportunity to provide people in the South with HIV testing and linkage to HIV medical care if necessary, education on HIV prevention, including ways to stop HIV stigma, and other HIV-related care resources.

[Click here to learn more](#)



FAITH HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

Aug 30th

National Faith HIV/AIDS Awareness Day #NFHAAD

August 29, 2022 is National Faith HIV & AIDS Awareness Day. (NFHAAD). NFHAAD is a day to engage faith communities to work together for HIV/AIDS education, prevention, treatment, care, and support, and to reduce and eliminate stigma and discrimination.

[Click here to learn more](#)



September 6-, 2023

United States Conference on HIV/AIDS (USCHA)

The 2023 **United States Conference on HIV/AIDS** will take place September 6 - 9 at the Marriott Marquis in Washington, DC. This year's theme is "A Love Letter to Black Women". Like our focus on Puerto Rico and Latinx populations last year, we will lean into this theme while we celebrate and honor Black women (cis and trans).

[Click here to learn more](#)

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