



From: AIDS Funding Collaborative and The Center for Community Solutions

Date: August 10, 2015

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As New HIV/AIDS Infections Persist in Greater Cleveland, the AIDS Funding Collaborative Expands Investment in AmeriCorps Program

(Cleveland, OH) One in eight people with HIV do not know they are infected, according to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); among youth, this number increases to one in six. Ninety percent of new HIV infections could be prevented by testing and diagnosing people with HIV and ensuring they have prompt and ongoing medical care and treatment. The most recent Ohio HIV data (2013) indicate that 200 individuals were newly diagnosed with HIV, and over 4,800 people are living with HIV/AIDS in Cuyahoga County.

To strengthen the community's response to ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Cuyahoga County, since 2012, the AIDS Funding Collaborative (AFC), has operated an HIV-specific AmeriCorps program. This national AmeriCorps program is facilitated in partnership with AIDS United, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit grantmaking and advocacy organization. The program focuses on building local capacity to curtail the epidemic by embedding AmeriCorps members in community-based organizations to provide a year-long investment of meaningful, direct service in HIV/AIDS prevention and care. In lieu of a salary, they receive a stipend, approximately \$1,000/month to support living expenses in Cleveland. AmeriCorps service members assist local agencies in enhancing their existing HIV programming and/or building new programs to meet community need. They accomplish this in a variety of ways, including mobile HIV testing to underserved and/or homeless youth and adults, benefits enrollment for people living with HIV/AIDS, and establishing routine HIV testing programs in clinical settings.

For the 2015–2016 service year, the AFC has expanded the number of agencies served through this program from six to eight. "The AFC's investment leverages local investment from agency match funds, and national resources of AIDS United and the Corporation for National Community Service, so we turn our \$1 into almost \$2 in community programming," states Melissa Federman, AFC director.

The following agencies and individuals have been selected for the new service year:

- Care Alliance Health Center – Mary Bline, Mechanicsburg, OH
- Cleveland Department of Public Health – Joshua Kratz, Marcellus, NY
- The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland – John Licatatiso, Northfield, OH
- LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland – Nicole Fetcho, Columbia, IL
- MetroHealth – Reana Thomas, Dublin, OH
- Nueva Luz Urban Resource Center – Chelsea Wood, Tacoma, WA
- Recovery Resources – Shali Caver, Kent, OH
- Ursuline Piazza – Roxanne Krausert, Minneapolis, MN

“The AmeriCorps program provides a complimentary resource to the AFC’s grantmaking to area agencies to accomplish important, front-line services to strengthen Greater Cleveland’s safety net. We are thrilled to expand the program to benefit additional community partners,” noted Jill Paulsen, AFC Advisory Committee Chair.

Cleveland-based service members will receive national training with 46 peers from five other operating sites: Albuquerque, Chicago, Indianapolis, New Orleans, LA and Washington, DC.

The team begins its service on August 24, 2015.

For information about the AFC, visit www.AIDSFundingCollaborative.org or contact Melissa Federman at mfederman@CommunitySolutions.com.

The mission of the AIDS Funding Collaborative (AFC) is to strengthen the community’s response to HIV/AIDS as a public/private partnership providing coordination, leadership, and funding in Greater Cleveland. The AFC is located within the offices of The Center for Community Solutions, which provides fiscal and administrative oversight.