

Meet a LAAN Board Member Allen King, Secretary



Alleen King is the Founder & CEO of Living in 3-D and a recognized community leader in providing HIV education and anti-stigma information throughout the State of Louisiana. She began her HIV career at the Philadelphia Center in Shreveport, LA. Living in 3-D is an organization dedicated to HIV education and anti-stigma work in communities. Alleen is an experienced motivational speaker and coordinates other educators for Living in 3-D

speaking engagements at churches, high schools, colleges and correctional facilities.

As a woman living with HIV, diagnosed in 2008 and living with an undetectable viral load since 2009, she believes that the power of people telling their stories to educate others is an important strategy toward ending the HIV epidemic. Living in 3D sponsors the annual Love Day in the Park, raising HIV awareness and working with the community to ensure that accurate and needed information is readily available. Facing Our Issues is a specific Living in 3-D project created to educate pastors and clergy on HIV and the destructive impact of stigma.

Alleen is also a state certified HIV Counseling Testing Specialist and a member of the Louisiana HIV Criminalization Strategic Planning Committee. Beyond her work addressing HIV, Alleen is also an active leader in her church, helping start a soup kitchen and food pantry and the Site Supervisor of Summer Feed Program. She also directs her church choir. She currently works as Program Coordinator of Oasis Outreach Group Shreveport and a CNA for The ARC Caddo Bossier. Alleen's commitment to social justice and giving back to her community is a driving force in all her work.

"The Louisiana AIDS Advocacy Network, Inc. (LAAN) amplifies the voices of people living with HIV (PLWHIV) and their allies in Louisiana through advocacy. LAAN Advocates on behalf of all persons infected and affected by HIV in Louisiana. LAAN Strives to provide strategic leadership in HIV advocacy that is powerful, effective, committed and inclusive, done with integrity using factual information in order to galvanize the advocacy efforts of PLWHIV and to influence those who make policy decisions.

- LAAN Mission

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This \$100M Initiative Will Battle HIV in the South



The Gilead COMPASS program will support underfunded organizations in the region for the next decade

Pharma giant Gilead Sciences launched a \$100 million initiative to fight the HIV epidemic in the South during the next 10 years.

According to a [Gilead press release](#), the program is titled Gilead COMPASS (Commitment to Partnership in Addressing HIV/AIDS in Southern States).

Through a corporate giving program of the initiative, Gilead will work with three organizations to disperse funds to local groups that address HIV/AIDS issues. The three coordinating centers are Emory University Rollins School of Public Health, The University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work and the Southern AIDS Coalition.

HIV funding is especially needed in the South because, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 45 percent of people diagnosed with HIV in the United States live in the South, though the region is home to only one third of the country's population. What's more, nearly half of people who die as a result of the virus are in Southern states.

"HIV/AIDS remains an urgent public health crisis in the United States and this is particularly apparent in the Southern states, where rates of new infection rival those seen in the 1980s. In some communities, those rates are actually rising—a chilling reminder that the epidemic is far from a thing of the past," said Gregg Alton, executive vice president of corporate and medical affairs at Gilead Sciences, in the press release. "We recognize a collaborative effort is needed, and we are very pleased to partner with local organizations that are uniquely positioned to address the epidemic on the ground."

"Limited access to health care and information about lifesaving advances in HIV treatment and prevention in the most vulnerable communities creates an environment where we, as a society, have the tools in hand to improve lives, but these resources are not being fully utilized to address the epidemic," added Charlene Flash, MD, MPH, assistant professor of medicine and infectious disease specialist at Baylor College of Medicine. "We must take action and apply these resources to overcome this challenge as too many vulnerable people in the South cannot access, or worse still, are unaware of the existing lifesaving tools to prevent and treat HIV."

Our Concerns About the Presidential HIV/AIDS Council Getting the Boot

AIDS United questions the timing and approach of the PACHA dismissals



AIDS United expressed concern over reports that the Trump Administration had sent letters dismissing all remaining members of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA) — six members had previously resigned already, citing a lack of action by the administration to combat the global HIV/AIDS epidemic. For more than two decades, this body has provided advice, information, and

recommendations to the President and the Secretary of Health and Human Services regarding programs, policies, and research to promote effective treatment, prevention and research to end the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

While AIDS United recognizes that it is within the Trump administration's purview to appoint PACHA members, and previous new Administrations also asked for the resignations of entire council memberships, we are very concerned about the timing and lack of transparency surrounding today's dismissals. Most new administrations appoint their own Councils early in their terms, not after almost a year in office. Additionally, it is quite unusual to take such action between Christmas and New Year's, when much of Washington is closed and their PACHA members are home celebrating the holidays with loved ones. AIDS United is especially bewildered by the administration's dismissal of members whose terms had expired this year, and whose appointments the administration itself had extended.



What's more, this timing negatively and directly affects current PACHA members' ability to reapply for the position by January 2nd (the deadline provided by a recent Federal Register notice) as some have been encouraged to do. This timing also suggests an intent to avoid public scrutiny about the decision. More importantly, there is a strong value in having an independent and evidence-based council that can provide the Administration with the best advice on ending the HIV epidemic, something that is only now realistic thanks to the dedication of, among many others, previous and current PACHA members. PACHA should represent the community and have members who fully reflect the breadth of individuals living with and affected by HIV. As such, it should contain a diversity of opinions as well as racial, gender and LGBTQ representation. AIDS United will be watching the appointments and will work to hold the new PACHA and this Administration to account to ensure that it does not become a rubberstamp for policies or partisan strategies that will harm previously bipartisan efforts to end the epidemic.

Internal Condoms to be Down-Classified to Same Level as Standard Condoms



FDA representatives have said they will issue a federal order in early 2018 to [down-classify female \(also known as internal\) condoms](#). When the proposed order is issued, there will be an opportunity for public comments that support this reclassification. Since the mid-1990s, the FDA has grouped female condoms along with breast implants and pacemakers as Class III devices while standard (male) condoms have always had Class II status. Class III devices face stricter regulations which prevented innovation and created barriers to research as well as manufacture of internal condoms. Changing the classification to Class II status will make it easier for manufacturers to produce a wide variety of internal condoms for consumers to choose from.



National Institute
of Allergy and
Infectious Diseases

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

Moves to Cut Microbicides Research

[Microbicide development](#) may soon no longer be a priority in government-funded HIV prevention research. For years, women have called for an HIV prevention tool that is woman-initiated, easy to use, and undetectable during sex and, ideally, came in both contraceptive and non-contraceptive forms. The answer was microbicides, products that could be applied vaginally or rectally to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted illnesses. The first microbicide clinically proven to prevent HIV transmission could be on the market by 2020. However, it would be the first and last since the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has said it aims to move away from microbicide research and toward implants, injectables, and vaccines instead.



HIV, Stigma, and Health Study

Help us understand how stigma affects people living with HIV

Go to tinyurl.com/hivstigmastudy

SAC Takes Grassroots Organizing to Next Level with LEAD Academy

The Southern AIDS Coalition (SAC), is committed to building an organized, influential, and sustainable voice among those of us who are disproportionately impacted by HIV in the South. Earlier this year, we launched our LEAD (Leadership Education and Advocacy Development) Academy, a program that includes more than 20 hours of intensive training designed to prepare gay and bisexual men of color and women of color for leadership roles within their communities.



For more information contact SAC at:

Southern AIDS Coalition

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Need a new license plate?

LOUISIANA office of
MOTOR VEHICLES
PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES

LAAN is excited to announce that LAAN now has its own LA License Plates and they plates are finally available for you to purchase.

The Louisiana AIDS Advocacy Network, Inc. (LAAN) applied for a Special Prestige License Plates in 2014 under TITLE 47 Revenue and Taxation, RS 47:463.182 - Special prestige license plates; Louisiana AIDS Advocacy Network (LAAN), Universal Citation: LA Rev Stat § 47:463.182 and was granted permission under §463.182 to secure a special prestige license plates; Louisiana AIDS Advocacy Network.

It has been a long process to collect funds to cover the initial fees, designing of the plates, and getting them into production over the last three years; but, they are now available for you to purchase.

To sign up for the LAAN AIDS Awareness License Plate

Go to <http://expresslane.org>

In the dark blue, click on "vehicle services"

Then click on "special plates"

(Note: if you just want to see the plate, click on "special plate viewer" then under Organization plates, look for Louisiana AIDS Advocacy Network)



Know Your Legislator?

Visit: www.whoismyrepresentative.com to find out!

SAVE THE DATE:

LAAN Legislative Awareness Day

Thursday, April 5th, 2018, 9am-4pm

The location is First United Methodist Church, 930 North Blvd,
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Hold Your Spot at SPEAK UP! 2018

**THE ONLY
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
BY AND FOR
WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV.**

PWN-USA.ORG/SPEAKUP2018



Join us April 12-15, 2018, in beautiful Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, as we build on past years of success and respond to the current political moment.

SPEAK UP! 2018: A National Leadership Summit for Women will be designed to provide

political education, leadership skills, policy advocacy, and voter engagement training to up to 350 women, including women of trans experience, living with HIV.

SPEAK UP! 2018 is open to all women living with HIV, including women of trans experience, over 18 years of age.

If you [register](#) and pay in full before January 31, 2018, you will get the early-bird rate of \$200. After January 31, the rate will increase to \$250.

www.pwn-usa.org/speakup2018/register/

You can [hold your spot](#) at **SPEAK UP! 2018** with a \$100 down payment. This payment is non-refundable, and you must complete payment by February 28, 2018, in order for us to continue to hold your spot. Finish paying by January 31 to get the early-bird rate.

The cost of registration for SPEAK UP! 2018 is \$250 (or \$200 before January 31). This includes 3 nights of shared accommodations at the [DoubleTree Myrtle Beach Oceanfront Resort](#), all meals during the Summit and all training materials. This amount does not reflect the true cost of participation in the Summit: Instead of awarding scholarships to a few people, we do extensive fundraising to make participation affordable to as many women as possible.

Individual fundraising tools, including a template letter you can use to request funds or sponsorship, are [available on our website here](#).

<https://www.pwn-usa.org/speakup2018/fundraising-tips/>

To Encourage Empowerment Against HIV and AIDS in the South, The Red Door Foundation Announces 2018 Symposium to be held in Birmingham



Birmingham, Alabama - The Red Door Foundation (TRDF) - whose vision is to change the stigma around HIV/AIDS, increase the awareness in the African American community, and be a catalyst for change - announces its 2018 Saving Ourselves Symposium (SOS) to be held in Birmingham, Alabama. SOS will be held June 6-10, 2018 at the Sheraton Birmingham. Registration opens December 1, 2017 on www.trdfoundation.com. The theme will be "The Time Is Always Now."

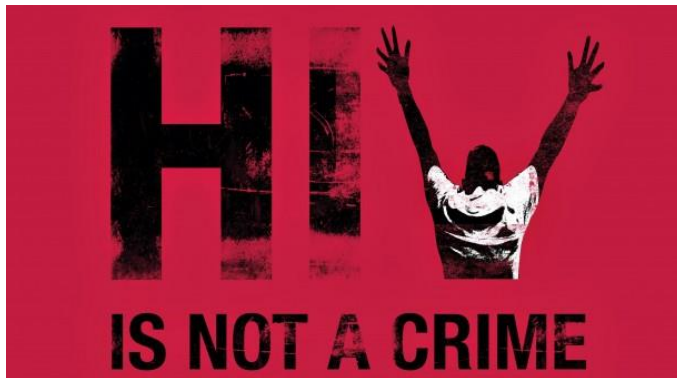
The Saving Ourselves Symposium (SOS), hosted by The Red Door Foundation, addresses the health and wellness of the Black LGBTQ community in the South, focusing on HIV and other health disparities.

(SOS), is an annual conference designed to provide cutting edge research, promising practices, and HIV/AIDS behavior change techniques in efforts to educate, encourage, and empower the Black LGBTQ community. Started in 2013, SOS is a one-of-a-kind conference that has provided first-hand information to service providers and service users working within and throughout the Black LGBTQ community.

Scholarship Information

This year, The Red Door Foundation Inc. will be providing financial scholarships to help offset the cost of conference attendance to individuals who want to participate, however, may be financially unable to do so. The purpose of The Red Door Foundation, Inc. scholarship is to encourage, and assist, individuals who seek to further their knowledge, education, and improved service delivery techniques. Scholarship applications are available until 8:00 PM EST/5:00PM PST February 28 at www.trdfoundation.com

HIV IS NOT A CRIME III



National Training Academy, June 3-6, 2018, in Indianapolis, will unite and train advocates living with HIV and allies from across the country on laws criminalizing people living with HIV and on strategies and best practices for repealing such laws. Skills-building training, with an emphasis on grassroots organizing, advocacy, coalition-building and campaign planning, will leave participants with concrete tools

and resources to work on state-level strategies when they return home.

[Scholarships are available!](#) But you don't have much time left to apply! The deadline to apply for a scholarship to HIV Is Not a Crime III is January 12 at 5pm EST.