

The Mosaic Initiative is a grassroots HIV-prevention organization. Our mission is simple: to do what we can to stop the spread of HIV. We believe that a major part of the solution is also simple: KNOW YOUR STATUS



Summer
2010

Brad Ogilvie, Founder
Suzie Goering, Assoc.
Coordinator

The past nine months have been busy! Among the activities: Local actions in Illinois and Washington, DC; a new, vibrant and interactive website; pushing for policy changes. We invite you to read more and to continue to do what you can to support our work as well as our mission in your own community.

WEBSITE

Earlier this year, we developed a new website, enabling us to reach more people in a more timely fashion. News and comments are posted frequently. Videos are posted, and initiatives are updated regularly. We also reach the vast social-networking world with ease. Take some time to explore the website and to share it with others. Education is vital to stopping the spread of HIV. Repetition of information is the key. This website allows us to do this with ease and efficiency.

WHEATON/DUPAGE

Suzie Goering participated in a cable-access program in early June talking about the importance of and challenges to HIV-testing in low-incidence communities. She also represented The Mosaic Initiative on National HIV-Testing Day, collaborating with Serenity House and DuPage County Health Department on a day of education and testing. Suzie also met with Rep. Peter Roskam to advocate for greater visibility to the need for testing. Suzie also ran an information table at Chicago Public Radio's Worldview Global Action Expo in April where we were unique for our local and international view. Up next is gathering narratives of HIV-testing experiences.

WASHINGTON, DC

In March, Brad and Suzie participated in a weekend-long training held by HealthGap. It was good to learn about the bills and funding issues related to AIDS treatment in Africa, and it has been a good opportunity for us to bring voice to a more universal call for collaboration.

Brad has been regularly attending presentations and workshops in DC. Listening to people talk about HIV work with MSM (men who have sex with men) and sex-workers in India and Africa, and a growing HIV-problem on Indian Reservations has only reinforced our belief that there is much duplication and waste, while true collaboration is lacking. On the other hand, when we apply our shared learnings, we can accomplish much more. Some of the resources on our website reflect this.

On June 18, Brad was a panelist on a national webcast about HIV-testing. Brad joined Dr. Bernie Branson of the CDC and Dr. Gerald Schochetman from Abbott Labs in talking about the importance of HIV-testing, including discussions about the latest technologies and cultural challenges. There is a link to this webcast on our website. Brad also continues to serve on a CDC/NIH Community Advisory Panel.

KENYA

We continue to be inspired by our colleagues and friends in Kenya. Joel Musindalo has turned 2 donated sewing machines into a tailoring school for 30 orphans, and Ojenge Okwe continues to provide education and hope through his efforts and despite his own health challenges. In addition to financial support, we are exploring a prospective deepening partnership with a grassroots education/testing group in that region. Check our website for updates.



“Small Fish in a Big Pond”

This is often what it feels like for us. We routinely sit with people who have countless times more resources than us. Frequently, we find ourselves the “only” at the table—the only organization that is working in our own backyard; the only organization that has done overseas work; the only organization that is focused on all people knowing their status (not just certain groups). We bring fresh eyes that allow us to see things from multiple perspectives, to find common ground, and to stay focused on our mission, not institutional survival. This allows us to uncover the obvious but overlooked, to find collaborators and to get creative.

For example, as we have been promoting and advocating for greater access to HIV-testing, we frequently are confronted with the rebuttal that “people need counseling”. However, as many people who have been tested can attest, the current system—laden with intrusive and intimidating questionnaires and critiques of risk—is not an ideal “counseling” scenario. So our latest venture in expanding access to tests is to work with The American Psychological Association to develop a pilot program that would train psychologists and other helping professions to offer HIV-screening to clients. If counseling is really the issue, shouldn’t this profession be involved?

“Mission and Vision”

At times we feel like we are being redundant in our message. Even looking back to old newsletters, we see repetition. But when we read the news about growing waiting lists for treatment, and calls for all people to get tested, things we have been speaking to for years, we know we have to stay on course. We find that having a grassroots presence is important. We can challenge the status quo while keeping HIV-prevention work fresh, creative, engaging and energized. It is a work of passion.

Please consider ways that you can help to keep this work going. We operate on a shoestring budget with no overhead, devoting all our resources to the mission. A great way to get involved is to join Team Mosaic for **AIDS Run and Walk Chicago (October 2, 2010)**. 100% of funds raised by team members come directly to us.

Of course, direct donations are always welcome. These can be done through our website electronically as well as by check.

Most important to our mission, however, is to encourage your friends and family to Know Their Status. Above all else, this is what we are really all about.



127 W. Willow, 2nd Floor
Wheaton, IL 60187
www.mosaicinitiative.org



Suzie Goering at Chicago Public Radio's Worldview Global Action Expo in April

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