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OUR MISSION
The mission of AIDS Services Foundation is to prevent the spread of HIV and improve the lives of men, women and children affected by HIV/AIDS in Orange County.

OUR STORY
A small group of volunteers founded AIDS Services Foundation Orange County (ASF) in the late summer of 1985 because people were dying, had nowhere to turn and desperately needed help. ASF is now the largest and most comprehensive nonprofit HIV/AIDS service provider in Orange County, with a staff of committed and caring individuals, a 23-member Board of Directors, and hundreds of dedicated volunteers.

Each year, ASF helps more than 1,600 men, women and children, along with their families, that are either living with HIV or are impacted by HIV disease. Services include food, transportation, housing, case management, emergency financial assistance, children and family programs, Latino outreach programs, mental health counseling, support groups, HIV testing, and an extensive array of HIV prevention and education programs. We hope for a time when these services are no longer needed. Until then, we work hard each day to prevent the spread of HIV and to ensure that everyone living with HIV and AIDS in Orange County has access to life-enhancing care and services.

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Dear Friends,

This year marks the 28th anniversary of AIDS Walk Orange County. And as we return to the Orange County Great Park for this year's event, we also return the walk to the greater community event it was when we first walked together in 1986.

That year, just a few hundred people took part in the first AIDS Walk. I am certain that the founders and early organizers of the event didn’t think there would be a need for the Walk over a quarter of a century later. However, the need does continue and we hope to see over 2,500 people join us for the walk on Saturday, May 17th.

In its 27 year history, AIDS Walk has raised over $14 million for the people living in Orange County affected and infected with HIV. As it has from the beginning, AIDS Walk will distribute funds raised through the walk among recipient agencies that use the funds for their HIV and AIDS programs.

Thousands of men, women, and children affected by HIV/AIDS have been helped as a direct result of these donations. And likely tens of thousands more have heard prevention and education messages thanks to AIDS Walk. On behalf of all of us at ASF and our recipient agencies, I invite you to join us and be a part of that history!

I also invite you to read an introduction from our new board president, Duane Vajgrt. Duane has been supporting the agency since ASF’s inception and now, he continues that support in a new way. He is a generous and energetic supporter of everything we do at ASF and I think you’ll enjoy getting to know him on page 8.

As always, I am thankful for your support and look forward to seeing some or all of you at AIDS Walk this year!

Sincerely,

Philip Yaeger
Executive Director/CEO
ABOUT THE WALK
The 28th annual AIDS Walk Orange County is scheduled for Saturday, May 17. It features a 5k walk and Red Ribbon 5k Fun Run through the Orange County Great Park’s newly-developed green spaces.

The program and festival attractions include live bands and youth DJ, food vendors, carnival booths, art exhibits, merchandise sales, community dance and choral performances, and the Best of OC Business Showcase Silent Auction.

This year’s walk includes many firsts! To raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in our community, the event will include a Human Red Ribbon Project (bringing together hundreds of Orange County students aged 12 – 18 years to form the largest human red ribbon Orange County has ever seen), a Survivor Club, and a presentation of HIV-related art works.

You can register for the Walk, Red Ribbon 5k Fun Run, and the Human Red Ribbon Project at aidswalkorangecounty.org. One registration fee is applicable to all activities! Registration is $25 per person and can be paid upfront or raised by the participant.

We need YOU to make this event successful and raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in our community. Bring your whole family and friends for a fun day out at The Great Park and support a worthy cause in the place where you live! All proceeds from the walk are distributed among recipient agencies whose programs serve people affected by HIV in Orange County.

RED RIBBON 5K FUN RUN
This year for the first time AIDS Walk Orange County will feature the Red Ribbon 5k Fun Run to bring runners to our historic community charity event.

The Red Ribbon 5k Fun Run is a fun, community, all-inclusive running event for runners of all fitness levels. The run will be gun-timed and we will use the Pull-Tab System to record times and award top runners in various categories. The main requirement for this 5k is that you have heart and want to unite with other runners in the fight to end AIDS in Orange County!

The Red Ribbon 5k Fun Run is less about your speed and performance and more about health, compassion and community! The 5k route winds through the newly developed green spaces at the Orange County Great Park and will feature water stations, entertainment, cheering and cookies and chocolate milk at the finish line! There will be prizes for the best, most outrageous costumes! The mile route markers will be made by children who are directly, personally impacted by HIV/AIDS and who attend AIDS Services Foundation’s Kid’s Club. These markers will serve as a reminder about why this 5k is so important.

HUMAN RED RIBBON PROJECT
Orange County High Schools and youth organizations will form teams to participate in the Human Red Ribbon Project (HRRP) immediately following the walk. The formation of the Human Red Ribbon is scheduled for 11:30am.

The students will come together and form a huge red ribbon at the AIDS Walk festival site and photographers and media representatives will be present to capture the ribbon formation. We will be setting the first Human Red Ribbon record for Orange County and the project will be coordinated as a part of AIDS Walk Orange County each year.
SURVIVOR CLUB
This year, AIDS Walk Orange County is offering participants who are living with HIV/AIDS the opportunity to be recognized, celebrated, and honored for their courage in dealing with and survival of the daily challenges presented by HIV/AIDS.

We believe that the time has come for us to offer people living with HIV/AIDS the opportunity to stand up and share their status at our AIDS Walk event without fear of stigma or discrimination. Openly honoring our survivors at AIDS Walk is in line with our commitment to help end the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS. We understand that sharing status is not easy for everyone and no one’s status will be recognized unless they want it to be. We encourage participation in the Survivor Club only if you feel completely comfortable doing so.

If participants wish to be in the Survivor Club at AIDS Walk this year, they must select that option during the on-line registration process. The button is located under the profile page during registration.

ART AT THE WALK
This year, for the very first time, art will be exhibited inside historic Hangar 244 as a feature of the AIDS Walk Festival. Local, but nationally recognized, artists Kurt Weston and Leslie D. Davis will display works they have created that deal specifically with HIV/AIDS.

Artist Camberley Morawa will be doing a live painting demonstration on a surf board which will be auctioned off at a later date.

And members of ASF’s Kid’s Club, working with Italian Street Painter Lysa Ashley, will present a mural that will be the culmination of a six week residency by the artist provided by the Segerstrom Center for the Arts.

AIDS Walk Orange County has been an important part of our community for 28 years and it is hoped that through this conscious effort to bring back the community feeling of the original walks, HIV/AIDS will have less and less places to hide in Orange County as more and more people understand that the virus and disease are still important issues here.

Please join us on May 17th. We hope to see you there!
FAMILY PROGRAMS AND KID’S CLUB
ASF continues to plant and foster new relationships with partner agencies to ensure our clients receive all the help they need to lead healthy, self-sufficient lives. And the month of March brought a couple of great programs, grown out of those relationships, to our clients who access our Family Programs and Kid’s Club.

WIA Youth Employment Program
On the evening of March 25th, 12 youths and young adults (aged 16-21) and their parents participated in the Youth Employment Program offered by the Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA) and the Orange County and Santa Ana Workforce Investment Boards. The program, which “assists youths through skill-building in support of their individual education and employment goals,” is funded through the Workforce Investment Act.

The one-hour workshop consisted of a detailed introduction to the program and its benefits. The one-on-one case management model offers resume building and interviewing assistance, skill-building workshops, career exploration and academic advising, job search assistance, paid on-the-job-training opportunities, and paid work experience placement. Some clients are even provided with professional clothing to wear to interviews.

Many of our clients and their children have trouble finding work and keeping jobs because of the stress being infected, or having a family member who is infected, places on them. Oftentimes, their school work and social life are affected, as well. The WIA Youth Employment Program offers a way to break down at least one of those barriers to success.

Segerstrom Center for the Art’s ArtsTeach Workshops
Now in its third year, the partnership between the Segerstrom Center for the Arts and ASF has been one of our most successful and fun programs for our Kid’s Club clients. Year one saw the creation of several different types of puppets as well as puppetry performance workshops. Last year, the Center offered our kids Hip Hop Dance. And this year, the kids will have hands-on visual arts lessons.

Italian Street Painter Lysa Ashley began working with Kid’s Club on March 27th and her residency continues for 5 more consecutive weeks, culminating on May 8th.

Italian street painters, or I Madonnari (so called because they usually painted recreations of the Madonna), can be traced back to the sixteenth century. Most were itinerant visual artists who travelled to work on cathedrals. When that work was done, to earn more money in a city, they would recreate the paintings from the cathedral on the city streets.

Lysa will work with our kids on the creation of a mural, which the kids will design themselves, that they feel voices their feelings about HIV/AIDS. That mural, created on canvas instead of the street, will be a lasting image, their own thread in the ever-changing tapestry of HIV/AIDS in our community.

The final mural will be displayed at “Art at the Walk,” alongside the works of professional artists, at this year’s AIDS Walk Orange County.

CORRECTION: In the last issue of The Voice, the volunteer who assisted in transcribing William’s story was incorrectly identified as Darya. Her name is Dania. We apologize for the mistake and thank Dania once again for her assistance in telling William’s story.
MORE IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER

We all know that sometimes quality is better than quantity. In identifying a subclass of antibodies associated with an effective immune response to HIV vaccine trials, a multi-national research team led by Duke Medicine scientists is proving that adage true. The study, which was reported in *Science Translational Medicine*, provides key insights that could aid in the development of a vaccine.

"More is not always better with an antibody response," said senior author Georgia D. Tomaras, Ph.D., director of the Laboratory of Immune Responses and Virology at Duke Human Vaccine Institute. "Instead, it’s the underlying quality of the immune response. Going forward with other vaccine trials, it will be important to know the subclass, specificity and antiviral functions of antibodies that are induced."

Tomaras and her colleagues looked at two HIV vaccine trials previously conducted in Thailand. The first trial they revisited, called VAX003, was completed in 2003 and studied an investigational vaccine among intravenous drug users. The vaccine was found to be ineffective.

The second trial, known as RV144, concluded in 2009 and involved more than 16,000 adults. It used two vaccines in combination - one as the prime vaccine and the second as a boost. The boost was the same investigational vaccine used in the earlier VAX003 trial.

In both trials, the vaccines induced the production of antibodies that targeted the same region of the HIV virus. In fact, the vaccine used in the 2003 trial actually elicited higher levels of most of the antibodies than the prime/boost combination of the more successful 2009 trial.

But there was one exception. The researchers found that participants in the 2009 vaccine trial were more likely to have HIV-specific IgG3 antibodies, compared to individuals in the 2003 trial. The HIV-specific IgG3 response correlated with decreased infection risk, but the effect waned over time, similar to the declining efficacy observed in the RV144 trial.

"HIV-1 specific IgG3 is one biomarker that can be evaluated in further vaccine candidates. It provides a specific way to benchmark HIV-1 vaccine candidates against the one partially efficacious vaccine to date," Tomaras said.


“MIRACLE BABIES” HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF CARE

During the 2013 Conference of Retroviruses & Opportunistic Infections (CROI), news of a Mississippi “Miracle Baby” that had been “effectively cured of HIV” broke at the conference. A year later, that child remains HIV-free as she approaches her second birthday. And this year’s CROI brings news of an additional baby in Long Beach, California, who may also have been cured following aggressive antiretroviral therapy (ART) within the first 4 hours of birth (although the child remains on anti-HIV drugs at this time).

In an opinion column by Suraj Madoori, he notes, “Since 1994, we’ve known that treatment with anti-HIV drugs – even one as relatively weak as AZT – can drastically decrease rates of newborn HIV infection. And in the mid-’90s, we saw quick action around the country to connect the dots to integrate testing and treatment as a part of perinatal care and implementation of policies to make treatment accessible to women who present in labor without previous treatment.”

Yet nationally, around 200 babies are born positive each year. So, what’s the best way forward? The measures we need to put in place to protect babies from infection are the same ones that will also help the women who carry them in their bodies, and the communities in which they live.

Early detection and access to care and medication are both significant reasons why these babies currently show no signs of the HIV virus in their systems. No adult has ever been treated with immediate aggressive ART within four hours of infection. That is because, through even the most sensitive testing, the virus cannot be detected until about two months after infection.

But the same principles of early detection and access to care and medication will do nearly as much good for adults as it has done for these “Miracle Babies.” It will keep the infected adult healthier, will make him/her less likely to transmit the virus, and that, in turn, will keep the entire community healthier.
When October 2014 comes around, I will have been on the Board of Directors for 10 years. During that time, I have served on several of the committees at ASF. I chaired, until just recently, the Programs Committee and served on the prior Board Development committee. And I continue to serve on the Fund Development committee. Prior to being elected as board president, I also served as the board secretary. Additionally, I have been involved with and rode in the Orange County Ride for AIDS (OCRA) since its inception five years ago. I currently serve on its steering committee and have participated frequently in the AIDS Walk over the years.

With that background and experience, I am honored to join a relatively short list of distinguished, prior Presidents of the Board of Directors of ASF including our Founding President, Al Roberts, as well as Dr. Jorge Rodriguez, Maria Marquez, Shelly Virkstis, and most recently, Randy Harmat. I have served under each of these stellar individuals and have learned valuable lessons from their leadership.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge one of our prior board presidents, Dr. Jorge Rodriguez, who recently resigned from our board, having served ASF for 23 years. Thank you, Jorge, for so many years of such dedicated service.

I would also like to acknowledge Randy Harmat, who stepped up as Board President following the untimely loss of our dear friend and colleague, Shelly Virkstis. While Shelly’s passing was a huge loss to all of us at ASF, Randy made the transition very smooth and continued to move the board forward with skillful leadership, aided by our very competent Executive Director, Philip Yaeger.

I am fortunate to have Randy’s experience as a continued resource given that he will still be one of the board officers, serving as secretary for this current term. Joining Randy are two other officers, Mark Guillod as Treasurer and Jeff Elder as Vice President. Mark is an experienced and long-time ASF board member, as well as long-time prior ASF treasurer. With many years of experience on the board of Make-A-Wish Foundation, Jeff and his wife Karla have been long-time and exceedingly generous supporters of ASF.

In addition to these very experienced and knowledgeable officers on my board, I am fortunate that they are joined by an equally dedicated group of other board members, several of whom chair other very important committees. Unfortunately, space does not allow me to acknowledge each of them individually, though they each deserve much acknowledgment for the many hours of selfless service they provide to our board and to our clients.

Each of our board members has a story or reason about how they got involved with ASF. I have been involved with ASF since its inception 29 years ago. My partner, Jeff Benedick, was actually one of the original cast members of the real first Splash when it started at Ken and Al’s backyard pool. The donations raised during that fundraiser became the seed money for the establishment of ASF as an organization. I have been involved with ASF ever since as an annual donor, attending annual Splash events, and participating in the early years of AIDS Walk when it was at the University of California Irvine.

Despite my knowledge of all the good work that ASF did for its clients, what truly endeared me to ASF was when we actually used its services. In 1993, after visiting a former roommate in San Francisco and discovering that he was extremely ill with AIDS and barely able to make it on his own, Jeff and I took him in. To our astonishment, his parents, who lived in Newport
Beach and who we knew, would not take him in or help with his care. He was so ill that, with each of us working more than full time, there was no way we could have adequately cared for our friend at our home, and kept him out of a skilled nursing facility for as long as we did, without the help and support that ASF rendered. Unfortunately, after nine months of assistance from ASF, his health care needs exceeded what we could provide at home and he did have to be transferred to a skilled nursing facility in his final days.

Given that experience, I could not turn down Al Robert’s offer when he invited me to join the board of ASF nearly 10 years ago. Having witnessed all the care and compassion given to our dear friend by the nurses and caregivers at ASF, I felt it was my opportunity and obligation to pay it back and to pay it forward. That experience is what keeps me passionate about my role at ASF. I now want to continue and add to the legacy that is ASF.

To ensure the future success of ASF, we, as a board, have developed a three-year strategic plan under the savvy mentorship of our board coach, Marlene Wood. During annual weekend retreats, artfully organized by Marlene, the board has truly recognized the need to become much more strategic in our operations and approach to leadership. As a result, I strongly feel that the board has become much more cohesive and focused. As evidence of that cohesiveness, we had 100% attendance of all board members at our last annual gala and nearly 100% attendance at our most recent annual retreat. It is our intention to have that same sort of concerted participation at many more of our functions. Your board is truly engaged!

It is my intention to continue to foster that enthusiasm. And, as our chief executive, Phil Yaeger, has done over these last two years of Marlene’s assistance to the board, I will endeavor to continue to learn from Marlene’s experience.

Strategic goals the board has adopted include increasing the representation of women and minorities to more closely match the distribution of the clients we serve, bringing more youthful board members on board, and increasing our connection and support at the corporate level. In accordance with that, I am pleased to announce the latest two members to join our board. Joining just in time to attend our most recent board retreat, and hitting the ground running, is the youthful Wesley Sasser of PIMCO. Wesley will also be joining our Fund Development committee and currently serves on the AIDS Walk steering committee. And most recently added to our board is Ms. Baraa Sarakby from Wells Fargo. Baraa will be attending her first board meeting in April. I offer a hearty welcome to them both! I’m also pleased to say that we are currently considering two additional, dynamic female board candidate prospects.

Another major focus of our board is HIV prevention. That focus becomes all the more paramount when considering the statistics that 7,000 people in Orange County are living with HIV/AIDS. More unsettling is the fact that on average five people per week are becoming infected with HIV in Orange County. Embracing that goal of prevention is another exciting addition in the form of the newest ASF fundraising guild, Getting to Zero, which was featured in the last addition of The Voice. Their goal, shared by our board, is Zero new infections, Zero related deaths, and Zero discrimination.

We can only get there by administering HIV tests, identifying HIV positive individuals and connecting them to care. And ASF does just that … quite effectively, I might add. Annually, we administer approximately 2,500 HIV tests and by getting those clients into care, we are suppressing the HIV viral load in the community. In fact, ASF does this at a rate three times higher than the national level.

However, we cannot rest on our laurels. There is still much work to be done. And we can’t do that work without all the support we get from our private and corporate donors, our community, and, most of all, from our innumerable volunteers. I truly believe that we can never say thank you to our supporters enough. So, as I start my new term, I want to take this opportunity to simply say thank you to you, for all that you have done and will continue to do for ASF. Also know that I am fully committed to our mission. So, let’s get to Zero!

Duane Vajgrt, M.D., ASF Board President
This year, the OC Ride for AIDS (OCRA), presented by Casa Laguna Inn & Spa, will commemorate its fifth ride on Saturday, October 25. Bicyclists of all ages and experience levels are invited to join in and ride for a reason!

OCRA will once again offer three different routes of varying difficulty to our riders. The 100-mile Century Route is designed with the most experience riders in mind. Our 100 km, or 62-mile, Metric Century Route, may not be fit for beginners or those who haven’t ridden much recently, but it is a great option for those who enjoy biking and have the time to train before now and October. And, of course, the family- and beginner-friendly Taste of OCRA Route offers our least experienced riders a 30-mile course that will give them both a sense of accomplishment and a somewhat easier day on the bike!

Although the routes follow essentially the same course, there are changes from last year. The biggest change is that our start and finish location has moved from the coast in Laguna Beach to Irvine. The William R. Mason Regional Park will host OCRA this year and will allow us to “stretch out” a bit more than we could at the Festival of Arts.

The new start location will also offer our Taste of OCRA riders a safer and less car-traffic-challenged route. Our Century and Metric Century riders will still travel along Pacific Coast Highway, but now younger members of our ride will not have to deal with the narrower bike lanes and close-passing autos inherent along that route.

OCRA has also altered the amount necessary to participate in the ride. By lowering the minimum fundraising amount to $125 from the original $250, we’re hoping to attract more participants to our ride.

Registrations are already being accepted at ocrideforaids.com. If you have even the smallest interest in biking and want to help ASF clients by raising funds for the organization, please visit the website and register today!
Patron’s Council is ASF’s major donor recognition society. Patron’s Council members are vital to the success of ASF and demonstrate their unwavering commitment to the agency by contributing $1,200 or more annually in non-event related contributions. As major donors, Patron’s Council members enjoy several recognition events each year.

**MEMORIALS**

IN MEMORY OF EDDIE “TONY” ESTRADA AND SHAWN COAKLEY
Richard Estrada

IN MEMORY OF HY BENDER
Larry Fong

IN MEMORY OF RUBY AND DINO GOMEZ
Arthur Gomez

IN MEMORY OF MONTY LUDEN
Shirley Luden

IN MEMORY OF EMILY KELLY
Lilly Hill

**TRIBUTES**

IN HONOR OF CHRISTOPHER NICHOLS AND CJ STOYKA, TWO TALENTED FRIENDS
Christine Patterson

IN HONOR OF CHRISTOPHER NICHOLS’ WEDDING
Sylvr Sharp

IN HONOR OF CHARLES STOYKA’S WEDDING
Robert Flyte

IN HONOR OF JOAN CRAWFORD HAPPY BIRTHDAY MOM
Monica McDade

IN HONOR OF LARRY OVIATT HAPPY 75TH BIRTHDAY
Barbara Becker

**GRANTS**

Thank you to the following for their generous support of ASF’s programs and services:

**Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS ..... $7,500**
Nutrition Services Program

**ROCKHARBOR ........................ $10,000**
Nutrition Services Program

**Macy’s Passport ........................ $12,500**
S.H.A.P.E.
AIDS Walk Orange County
Sat., May 17, 2014
Orange County
Great Park, Irvine

Ride for AIDS
Sat., October 25, 2014
William R. Mason
Regional Park, Irvine

ASF’s Annual Gala
Sat., January 24, 2015
Marconi Museum
Tustin