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Letter from our CEO

Dear Friend,

As we come to the end of 2019, I am happy to share that Radiant Health Centers has opened Orange County’s first health clinic specializing in the unique needs of LGBTQ+ patients, as well as qualifying patients of all backgrounds.

We are also thrilled to offer expanded services in our Irvine location, which includes addressing sexual healthcare needs including PrEP prescriptions to prevent HIV, access to PEP for people with concerns they may have been exposed to HIV and AIDS, STI and Hep C testing and treatment, as well as family planning services.

We continue to address healthcare inequality that affects marginalized groups of people, especially the LGBTQ+ community, by creating an environment free of stigma that embraces the unique healthcare realities of each patient it serves.

Due to discrimination and misunderstanding, members of our LGBTQ+ community are often unable to access or are uncomfortable accessing the healthcare they need. Our clinic is specially designed to make everyone in our community, including individuals who are gay, transgender and gender non-conforming, feel welcome and comfortable through culturally appropriate care that spans preventative practices to medical treatment.

The medical clinic is Radiant Health Centers’ first step to opening a universally welcoming health center in Orange County where all community members are welcome. I look forward to working with our donors and community partners to bring a much needed medical clinic to Orange County that will offer compassionate care for all.

Yours in service,

Philip Yaeger
Executive Director/CEO

OUR MISSION

Radiant Health Centers provides the LGBTQ+ community medical services that are compassionate and comprehensive while continuing to serve those living with and affected by HIV.
This year, Radiant Health Centers launched the Aging with PRIDE program, made possible in part through a grant from the Council on Aging, to meet the ever-changing needs of our clientele.

The Aging with PRIDE program includes specialized case management, mental health services and coordinated care to address depression and isolation and to keep mature clients active and empowered so they can manage all aspects of their health — physical, mental and spiritual.

Steven’s Story

Steven was diagnosed with HIV in the mid-1980s and was referred to AIDS Services Foundation Orange County, now Radiant Health Centers.

“I was able to get help with food available through the pantry,” said Steven. “And if I needed anything else, their wonderful staff would help me.”

After receiving support from ASF, Steven moved in with family who helped him get back on his feet. He was able to take a few years off from receiving assistance from the agency.

“Now that I’m back with Radiant Health Centers in the Aging with PRIDE group, I’m able to see things in a new perspective,” said Steven. “The art program is a great way to express myself in a different way than I have in the past. Before I joined the Aging with PRIDE group I felt suicidal and was ready to check out.”

Steven had recently lost his job and was on disability, and it was overwhelming.

“By being part of this group, I’m able to deal with my life better because I know everyone has problems they are dealing with,” said Steven. “This program brings you a whole new perspective on life in general. It’s one of the best mental health groups for helping people deal with their problems. In my experience, Radiant Health Centers is one of the best places on the planet for groups to come together to share without being judged.”

“We’re all humans and we all need compassion,” said Steven. “I get that at Radiant Health Centers.”

Joel’s Story

Joel came to the United States from Mexico in 1988 and was shortly thereafter diagnosed with HIV.

“I was a young man full of potential. I was happy but when I was diagnosed with HIV all my feelings turned dark because my life, as I knew it, was gone,” said Joel. “The first place I got help at was ASF. Unfortunately, I didn’t take advantage of all the services because I thought I could handle everything by myself.”

It’s been a long time since Joel was introduced to ASF and he’s finding new assistance with Radiant Health Centers.

“I was feeling angry and sad before joining this program, which made me come to therapy,” said Joel. “Now I’m hopeful and full of energy. I know the best part of my life is still to come.”

If you’d like to learn more about Radiant Health Centers’ Aging with PRIDE program, please contact Martha Gomez at 949-809-5716.
Radiant Health Centers Receives $1.97M Grant from Department of Public Health to Provide Innovative HIV Treatment

Radiant Health Centers has received a two-year, $1.97 million grant from the California Department of Public Health to provide rapid anti-retroviral treatment (ART) to individuals who test positive for HIV, at no cost to the client.

Rapid ART, which provides treatment to HIV-positive individuals within three days, prevents HIV transmissions by helping HIV-positive individuals attain an undetectable viral load. A person with an undetectable viral load has effectively no risk of transmitting HIV to other people.

Rapid ART is more impactful than traditional treatment because it reduces the HIV viral load much quicker, and as the viral load decreases so does the risk of transmitting HIV. Rapid ART also helps patients achieve an undetectable viral load in a much shorter timeframe due to the much quicker treatment window.

“Research shows that approximately six new people test positive for HIV every week in Orange County, and the sooner we get them into treatment the sooner they become undetectable and can no longer transmit HIV to others,” said Phil Yaeger, CEO & executive director, Radiant Health Centers. “By removing barriers to care, we will get people into treatment much quicker, which is a key factor in reducing the spread of HIV.”

Through the grant, Radiant Health Centers will develop a complete care navigation plan that will offer clients everything from screening to treatment and medications. Clients will be able to attend appointments in person and via telehealth appointments through any internet-connected computer or smart device. The telehealth appointments will remove barriers to access care, such as lack of transportation, and allow patients to contact providers from the convenience of their own homes.

“We have served the community for the past 34 years, and as the AIDS and HIV epidemic has evolved, so have we,” said Yaeger.

Radiant Health Centers will also conduct a variety of outreach and education activities to increase the community’s knowledge that rapid ART can result in an undetectable HIV viral load, which means that HIV cannot be transmitted.

For testing and treatment appointments call 949-809-8764.
“End the Epidemics”

Town Hall Addresses STI, Hepatitis C and HIV Epidemics in California

STIs in California are at an all-time high. For the fifth consecutive year, combined cases of gonorrhea, chlamydia and syphilis have risen in the United States. To address the epidemic and outline steps for a solution, Radiant Health Centers and a coalition of health organizations recently held an “End the Epidemics Town Hall,” a community panel discussion at the Orange County Health Care Agency Public Health Learning Center in Santa Ana.

The event drew more than 100 participants and panelists including Craig Pulsipher, state affairs specialist, APLA Health; Phil Yaeger, executive director and CEO, Radiant Health Centers; David Souleles, deputy agency director, Public Health Services, Orange County Health Care Agency; Dr. Christopher Ried, medical director of STD/HIV, Orange County Health Care Agency; Dr. Catherine Diamond, infectious disease specialist, UC Irvine Medical Center; and Sandra Boodman, senior director of programs, Radiant Health Centers.

“HIV, Hepatitis C and STIs are major public health threats in California,” said Yaeger, “We now have the tools and ability to end the epidemic, but to do so, we have to work together.”

Achieving this goal will require increased political will and new resource commitments to reach the most at-risk individuals.

The California HIV/AIDS Policy Research Center’s End the Epidemics Statewide Working Group, along with over 150 organizations, have launched a community-driven effort to create a statewide strategy to end the HIV, Hepatitis C and STI epidemics in California.

“HIV, Hepatitis C and STIs disproportionately impact many of the same communities,” said Yaeger. “Having an STI also increases the likelihood of acquiring HIV.”

Comprehensive prevention services can drastically reduce new transmissions and efficient screening, rapid treatment, and partner services can reduce further spread.

“14 children were born with syphilis in 2018,” said Souleles. “We have the tools now to put an end to this, but we need to figure out how to harness those.”

The organizations are calling on Governor Newsom and the California Legislature to take immediate action to address the state’s alarming increase of HIV, Hepatitis C and STIs, urging California’s top elected officials to convene a statewide task force charged with developing and implementing a strategy to that end.

“To end the STI epidemic in California, our healthcare organizations must come together and create a united and coordinated response,” said Pearl Jemison-Smith, STI Coalition, Orange County.
Personal exemption was eliminated by the tax law in 2017; however, the standard deduction was nearly doubled in 2018. In 2019 it rose to $12,200 for a single person and $24,400 for married couples filing jointly. For more details see [www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-contributions](http://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-contributions)

If you’re a retiree over the age of 70½, you must start taking required minimum distributions (RMDs) from your retirement account every year— except Roth IRAs whose contributions are already taxed. You can donate all or a portion of your RMDs, up to $100,000 a year, directly to charity from qualified charitable distribution (QCD). This is advantageous to the individual: even though you don’t get a write-off for your donated gift, you also don’t owe taxes on that retirement-account distribution. As an example, for a taxpayer in the 22 percent bracket, directing a $5,000 RMD to charity saves approximately $1,100 in federal income taxes, similar to if you’d been able to deduct it.

**Donating securities** to a charity such as Radiant Health Centers can let you bypass a capital gains tax and increase your tax deduction; it also allows you to give more to a charity of your choice. For example, if you are planning to give $50,000 in cash, and you have stock worth $50,000 that you paid $10,000 for, and if you then donate the securities, you don’t have to pay capital gains tax on the $40,000 gain ($50,000-10,000) and also will receive a charitable deduction for the $50,000 donation.

Take advantage of **charitable bequests** and beneficiary designations. You may include charitable gifts in your estate planning. For example, you may designate an extra share for the charity of your choice or designate a specific dollar amount, a piece of property or a percentage of the estate to go to the charity of your choice. You may also designate a charity of your choice to be a partial or full beneficiary of an investment account, insurance policy, bank account or any account that transfers through beneficiary designation. Please consider selecting AIDS Services Foundation Orange County dba Radiant Health Centers as the charity of your choice to make a difference in your community.

One other way to give to a charity is to consider setting up a **donor-advised fund** at a community foundation or the charitable arm of a brokerage. For example, if you give $10,000 a year to charity. You donate $30,000 of stock (or cash), get an immediate tax deduction for the large gift, and then later designate the money in the fund to the charities of your choice such as Radiant Health Centers.

AIDS Services Foundation Orange County dba Radiant Health Centers is a California Corporation 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization. Your charitable donations are deductible. Tax Id# 33-0126481

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Remember those childhood days of excitement when the circus came to town? The games, the spectacle, the food! It was just magical. Radiant Health Centers’ 2020 Gala, Cirque Rouge, is recreating that experience, bringing back those memories and re-inventing the circus in a one-night-only event on Sat., Feb. 15, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. at the historic Yost Theater in Santa Ana.

This year’s Gala will be a glamorous experience where you will be transported back to the heyday of the circus at the beginning of the 1900s, while raising funds that will allow Radiant Health Centers to provide healthcare equity for all in our community.

A champagne reception, a photo, and mingling with friends old and new starts your evening. You will be transported back to the days of no-tech games where skill doesn’t matter. Just good old-fashioned fun, laughter and luck! You can demonstrate your “strength,” whack-a-mole (no animals will be harmed!) and play Skee-Ball all while enjoying the amazing hors d’oeuvres custom created for this event by 24 Carrots.

You’ll be treated to song and dance, music and magic, spectacle and delight! And it doesn’t end there.

We will present amazing opportunities for each and every one of you to become part of the life-affirming, life-changing, life-celebrating mission of Radiant Health Centers. You’ll learn about new services offered to clients including PrEP and Pep prescriptions to prevent HIV, STI screenings and treatments and about Radiant Health Centers’ new clinic in Santa Ana that serves people who otherwise may not have access to healthcare. The mission is so compelling that it raises the bar for “fund-raising.”

You’ll want to be part of the live auction action, “Fund-A-Need” and our silent auction where you will have an opportunity to bid on fantastic items. It may be just an evening for you, but it is a year of support for Radiant Health Centers’ clients.

You’ll not want this magical night to end but, alas, our circus must end its run by the stroke of midnight. You’ll have had one of the most special nights of your life, made even more special knowing you have made a difference. What could possibly be more magical than that?

For information please contact Ana Martinez at Amartinez@RadiantHealthCenters.org

Feb. 15, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. | The Yost Theater in Santa Ana
To purchase a seat or table at the event visit CirqueRouge2020.givesmart.com
SAVE THE DATE

Feb 15, 2020
Cirque Rouge Gala
Yost Theater
Santa Ana

May 30, 2020
AIDS WALK 2020
Huntington Beach Pier

For more details visit www.RadiantHealthCenters.org