



IN THE SPOTLIGHT



APLA Health & Wellness Unveils New PrEP Program at the Gleicher / Chen Health Center

APLA Health & Wellness opened the Gleicher / Chen Health Center (GCHC) in Baldwin Hills October 1. In November, GCHC expands its offerings by launching the Pendleton / Goldman PrEP program, which provides PrEP management and counseling to HIV-negative individuals. The new program is just one of the many medical, dental, and behavioral health services GCHC provides.

The Pendleton / Goldman PrEP program, named for GCHC donors Brian Pendleton and Chad Goldman, encompasses doctor evaluations, case management, regular HIV testing, along with Truvada prescriptions for eligible HIV-negative patients. The program is overseen by Dr. Christian Takayama, an HIV specialist, and Dr. Gifty-Maria Ntim, medical director at GCHC, with Dr. Raphael Landovitz of UCLA acting as medical advisor.

APLA Health & Wellness believes that PrEP is an important tool to use in conjunction with other prevention methods to fight the rise in HIV infections that's been documented in younger gay and bisexual men over the last several years. "PrEP is extremely effective if taken correctly, and we're proud to say we have a complete program that works with individuals to educate them about Truvada and help them decide the best way to maintain their sexual health," says Vallerie D. Wagner, chief operating officer of APLA Health & Wellness.

The Gleicher / Chen Health Center, which is named for a significant gift from APLA Board Member Howard Gleicher and his partner, Damon Chen, is open six days a week and features five exam rooms, four dental operatories, and three counseling rooms, as well as a lab, vitals room, and prevention services in an adjacent office suite. This marks the first time that APLA Health & Wellness is providing primary medical care to patients, greatly expanding its services to the Baldwin Hills and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Gleicher / Chen Health Center is located at 3743 S. La Brea Ave. in the Baldwin Hills Shopping Center and is open Monday-Saturday. For additional information, please call 323.329.9900 or visit aplahw.org.

NEWS & NOTEWORTHY



Photo credit: Michael Becker

Looking Back at 2014: A Year of Accomplishment

It's been a while since we've been able to tell you about everything that we're doing at APLA and APLA Health & Wellness, so I wanted to take a moment to talk about the past year and let you know what you helped make possible.

As we come to the close of the year, it's easy to get caught up in the holidays, making plans with friends and/or family, and hoping we have the energy to do everything. But it's also a perfect time to pause and reflect on what has happened over the last 11 months.

We haven't been able to update you as much as we would have liked this past year, but it's not because there was a lack of news! If anything, 2014 has been one of the most momentous years we've had at APLA and APLA Health & Wellness.

After receiving a federal grant from the Health and Human Services Health Resources Services Administration in late 2013 to become a federally qualified health center, we embarked on a major renovation of the former APLA Health & Wellness Center and turned it into APLA Health & Wellness' first full-service health center. Named the Gleicher / Chen Health Center thanks to generous support from APLA Board Member Howard Gleicher and his partner, Damon Chen, the new space offers primary medical, dental, behavioral health care, as well as comprehensive STD screening and treatment, HIV testing, HIV specialty care, and [PrEP counseling and management](#).

While the opening of APLA Health & Wellness' health center was the culmination of years of hard work, APLA also continues to offer its life-sustaining services to thousands of clients in Los Angeles County. We provide support in the areas of transportation, housing assistance, benefits counseling, linkage to medical care, behavioral health counseling, and more. These services help those living with HIV/AIDS live the longest most productive lives possible. To put all of this in perspective, from January 1-November 1 of this year, we were able to:

Provide 539 hours of psychotherapy

Conduct nearly 2,500 HIV tests from three sites in Los Angeles County, as well as over 1,200 STD screenings

Counsel 720 clients about public benefits

Continue advocating on behalf of those living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS in L.A. County

Provide 454 clients housing assistance

Distribute 140,000 bags of groceries to clients through 8 locations of our Vance North Necessities of Life Program

Perform over 15,000 dental procedures

Offer the largest HIV prevention program in Los Angeles County


Advocate for the health and human rights of gay and bisexual men in 160 countries around the world through the [Global Forum on MSM and HIV \(MSMGF\)](#)

We will now serve over 14,000 clients in the County annually between APLA and APLA Health & Wellness, and continue providing administrative and fiscal support to MSMGF for its groundbreaking global work.

NONE of this would be possible without you. We remain committed to our clients and patients, and passionate about improving the lives of those with HIV/AIDS as well as the LGBT community. And while we accomplished much this past year, there is more work to be done—from lowering HIV infection rates to ensuring that everyone eligible for health care has access to it. We're confident that with your support we can rise to these challenges.

Here's to moving forward and affecting positive change in 2015. We'll stay in better touch, we promise.

With gratitude,



Vallerie D. Wagner
Chief Operating Officer
APLA Health & Wellness



Introducing Fuerza Positiva— A New Positive Force at APLA

Groundbreaking program reaches out to HIV-positive Latino men in Los Angeles

AIDS Project Los Angeles recently launched Fuerza Positiva, a newly designed program that promotes positive health outcomes among Latino men who have sex with men (MSM) living with HIV in Los Angeles County by connecting them to medical care and treatment. "Through formative research, we have found that Latino men receive little social support from friends and family," says Elvis Rosales, Fuerza Positiva project coordinator. "Our program is designed to

supplement the lack of social support and to address the stigma associated with being gay or MSM, being a Latino, and HIV-positive"

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Special Programs of National Significance (SPNS), the Fuerza Positiva program focuses on Latino men who are HIV-positive by addressing the cultural barriers they face with obtaining HIV care and maintaining adherence to prescribed HIV medications. In addition to the linkage to care services, the program also offers individual counseling and group-level skills building and social support sessions.

Support also comes in the form of a bilingual, text messaging-based outreach program, through which Latino men in Los Angeles County who have recently tested HIV-positive can call or send questions via text message to 323.540.2844. The text messaging and caller help line will answer questions anonymously, as well as connect Latino MSM to APLA services and community partners.

For more information visit the Fuerza Positiva [Facebook page](#) or contact: Elvis Rosales at 213.201.1331 or erosales@apla.org; Carlos Reynoso at creynoso@apla.org or 213.201.1334, or Jeff Bailey at jbailey@apla.org and 213.201.1483.



Marking 30 Years of AIDS Walk Los Angeles

This year's historic event raises over \$2.3 million

In the summer of 1985, 4,500 people took to the streets of Los Angeles in the first ever AIDS fundraising walk—what came to be known as AIDS Walk Los Angeles. Those 4,500 people raised an astonishing \$630,000 for the only-2-years-old AIDS Project Los Angeles and a handful of other HIV/AIDS service organizations. On October 12, 2014, we marked the 30th AIDS Walk Los Angeles, at which an estimated 25,000 people walked the six-mile route and raised nearly \$2.3 million.

For AIDS Walk's Founder and Senior Organizer, Craig R. Miller, watching the 30th event that he helped launch was still inspiring. "As we mark the Walk's 30-year milestone today," he told participants at the opening ceremony at West Hollywood Park, "it is clear that our walkers still have the commitment, compassion, and power to see this epidemic to its end."

Since its inception, AIDS Walk L.A. has raised more than \$79 million for APLA and over 20 other HIV/AIDS service organizations in Los Angeles County. With the funds raised through the event, APLA has been able to continue its vital, life-saving client services, as well as pioneer new ways of helping the community. Most recently, APLA Health & Wellness opened the new Gleicher / Chen Health Center, which provides primary medical care, dental care, behavioral health care, and PrEP counseling and management through the Pendleton / Goldman PrEP program, and offer more services.

While speaking to the crowd gathered for the opening ceremonies on October 12, APLA Chief Executive Officer Craig E. Thompson noted that every person's perseverance and commitment to the event makes a tangible difference. "[W]e are proud of the thousands of supporters of APLA who have, year after year, raised life-changing funds for people living with HIV/AIDS in our hardest hit communities," he said. "On behalf the 6,000 clients who rely on APLA's services and the thousands more who benefit from our prevention and testing efforts, I want to thank everyone involved in [AIDS Walk L.A.'s] success."



Volunteer Spotlight

M·A·C Cosmetics Employees Continue Tradition of Giving Back to the Community

In mid-October, 30 M·A·C Cosmetics volunteers came to APLA's Vance North Necessities of Life Program (NOLP) warehouse in North Hollywood, where they sorted donations and bagged groceries to be delivered to our eight food pantries throughout Los Angeles County.

We recently spoke with Amanda Lawson, a M·A·C artist trainer who has been volunteering at APLA for several years, about the experience:

How often are M·A·C employees encouraged to volunteer in their communities?

Our region gets together to volunteer once a quarter, but VIVA GLAM ambassadors, who are based out of each store, volunteer separately and much more often. Our local retail manager, Robbie, and local M·A·C artist, Guity, are both very passionate about VIVA GLAM and are really proactive in our region; they're always out there volunteering.

Tell us about M·A·C AIDS Fund and VIVA GLAM.

The M·A·C AIDS Fund is an incredible program. All the monies raised from our VIVA GLAM makeup line go back to a giant fund; those funds are then allocated to different organizations for food, clothing, shelter, transportation, anything that helps to make someone [living with HIV/AIDS] more comfortable. It really is the heart and soul of the [M·A·C] brand.

Do you or any of the other volunteers have close ties with the M·A·C AIDS Fund and with people living with HIV/AIDS?

A lot of our artists—all of us, really—have connections to people with HIV/AIDS, or friends of friends who know someone who has been affected by the disease—someone who is living with it. It's really close to all of our hearts.

Will you return to NOLP in North Hollywood?

Oh yeah, absolutely. It's so very close to us. I live in the area so it makes it so easy for us to come to the [site]. We're trying to give our artists as many opportunities as possible to volunteer.

In 1994 M·A·C Cosmetics began the M·A·C AIDS Fund as a way to confront the AIDS epidemic and raise awareness about the disease. Twenty years later, the M·A·C AIDS Fund is still in full force, giving 100% of the proceeds from M·A·C's VIVA GLAM makeup line to men, women, and children who are directly affected by HIV/AIDS.

With the help of volunteers like M·A·C Cosmetics' employees, APLA's eight Vance North Necessities of Life Program centers are able to serve over 11,000 people and distribute 140,000 bags of groceries each year.

If you or a group you participate in would like to volunteer with NOLP please visit apla.org/get-involved/volunteer/food-pantry.html for more information.

PARTNER PROFILE



Bravo, Delta!

AIDS Walk L.A. Grand Sponsor Raises Over \$20,000 for the Fight Against HIV

With fundraising for AIDS Walk Los Angeles 2014 officially wrapped as of early November, we want to shine the spotlight on one of AIDS Walk Los Angeles' generous sponsors—Delta Air Lines, Inc., a strong pillar of support and leadership since 2012. In preparation for the 30th AIDS Walk Los Angeles, Delta Co-Team Leaders Tricia Rumola and Ranjan Goswami led 67 members to raise over \$20,000 in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

The Team Delta originally set a fundraising goal of \$15,000. To promote participation, Delta offered internal incentives for employees who raised over \$25 and were present on the day of the walk. Of the \$20,000-plus raised, Ranjan Goswami was responsible for more than 25% of it. His \$6,100 in funds made him the leading Team Delta walker and an AWLA Star Walker. "We're really proud of what we accomplished this year" Goswami says of the individual and team efforts. "We are doing the easy work. The hard—and vital—work is being done by APLA with their food banks, health care, counseling, and other critical services for Angelenos living with HIV/AIDS."

Since its inception, Team Delta Air Lines has raised nearly \$52,000 for AIDS Walk Los Angeles. As one of the main beneficiaries of the Walk, APLA is grateful to Delta's team and all it has done over the years to help support people living with HIV/AIDS. We can't wait to see what 2015 brings.

SAVE THE DATES



Jolly St. Knickers Fun Run Dec. 14

Don your gay apparel to support the Pendleton / Goldman PrEP Program

apla.org/knickers



World AIDS Day Food Drive Now-Dec. 25

Help those living with HIV/AIDS by participating in this 3rd annual event

apla.org/fooddrive



The Envelope Please: An Oscar® Viewing Party Feb. 22, 2015

Check back soon for more info about our annual Oscar viewing party



'Tis the Season to Give Now-Dec. 31

Donate to APLA and make a difference in the life of someone living with HIV/AIDS. Visit apla.org/holiday today!

We need you to volunteer with APLA!

For more information, contact Jim Williams, our Volunteer Resources program manager at jwilliams@apla.org or 213.201.1379.