REPORT FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

During the last year, ACR Health has been on the leading edge confronting two persistent epidemics: HIV/AIDS and Opioids. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has called opioid (including heroin) addiction the deadliest drug crisis on record in our nation’s history, and reports that an estimated 64,000 Americans died of accidental overdoses in 2016. That represents a 22% increase over 2015. Drug overdose, predominantly from opioids, is now the leading cause of unintentional death for individuals between the ages of 25 to 54.

In 2016-2017 ACR Health greatly expanded services for people who use opioids and other substances. With our Drug User Health Hub Medical Clinic, we markedly increased our ability to provide medication assisted treatment for substance users; to place people in treatment; to increase enrollment in PREP programs; and we hired a full-time Narcan trainer.

The “End the AIDS Epidemic by 2020” campaign, underway since 2014, reports a 10% decrease in new HIV cases among men who have sex with men – the most at risk group. In New York State, 67% of people with HIV are virally suppressed, greatly reducing the risk of spreading the virus. In Central New York 71% are virally suppressed, a significant achievement to which ACR Health contributed.

Our goal is to continue to be the leader in providing necessary services to those most in need. The issues surrounding the opioid epidemic are no different. This is difficult work and is often emotionally hard on staff members who are literally on the front lines saving people’s lives.

We are proud of our accomplishments and credit our capable and committed professionals for their dedicated and unparalleled work. We also thank you, our supporters, who have stood with us through the AIDS epidemic, an enemy New York is now subduing, and who remain by our side to conquer the new plague of opioid addiction, a fight we have just begun.

While it is impossible to know what new challenges will come our way in 2018, we promise to follow our mission and keep opening doors to services that enhance the well-being of all.

OUR MISSION:
To create healthy communities by opening doors to services that enhance the wellbeing of all

OUR VISION:
A community in which every person has the opportunity to achieve optimal health and equality

OUR VALUES:
Commitment to Excellence
Respect for People and Community
Wellbeing
Integrity
Empowerment
Teamwork

Shannon O’Connor
Chair

Anthony Adornato
Vice Chair

Franchesca Clemente
Secretary

M. Paul Mahalick
Treasurer

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Kristie L. Fuller
Suzanne Kondra-Defuria
Andrew S. London
Cynthia Morrow, M.D.

Served during 2016-2017
Jason Centolella

ACR Health

ACR Health Relocates Flooded Office Space

ACR Health, with major support from United Way of Central New York, conducted a record number of HIV tests during National HIV Testing Day on Monday, June 27, 2016 and advanced our year-round work with specialized Support Services and Insurance Programs.

The Director of the AIDS Institute, New York State Department of Health, Johanne E. Morne, arrived from Albany to celebrate the AIDS Walk/Run at 25 with HIV in New York. ACR Health, with individual awards from Lewis, St. Lawrence, and Jefferson Counties.

The grant provides $147,000 a year to provide rent for 12 youth and pay the salary of a case manager to assist them in becoming self-sufficient.

While it is impossible to know what new challenges will come our way in 2018, we promise to follow our mission and keep opening doors to services that enhance the well-being of all.

Will Murtaugh
Executive Director

Shannon O’Connor, Esq.
Board Chair
**2016-2017 ACR HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS**

**END THE AIDS EPIDEMIC UPDATE: FIRST NUMBERS SHOW SUCCESS**

There is significant good news to report in New York’s campaign to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2020. The state saw a decrease of 10% in the number of new HIV infections from 2014 to 2015 in MSM (men who have sex with men). **This marks the first time in a decade that the number of new HIV infections diagnosed in MSM has decreased significantly in New York State.**

- In 2014, nearly two-thousand men – 1,975 – were newly diagnosed with HIV in New York.
- In 2015, new HIV infections in MSM came in at 1,775.

ACR Health has greatly expanded HIV testing which is a priority for ending AIDS. Testing is up 545% in 2017 compared to 2012.

**THE AIDS WALK/RUN AT 25**


The Director of the AIDS Institute, New York State Department of Health, Johanne E. Morne, arrived from Albany to celebrate the day. “The rain could not dampen the spirit of family and friends coming together to honor those who have passed, raise money to fund essential services for those living with HIV/AIDS, and ultimately be part of the plan to end the epidemic both in your region and across the state by the end of 2020. **Congratulations to ACR Health on an incredibly successful event. Thank you for all you do!”**

**RECORD ENROLLMENT SYRINGE EXCHANGE**

Every week, 25-30 new people walk through the doors of ACR Health Syringe Exchange Program (SEP) offices and enroll to receive clean, sterile syringes free of charge. **By June 30, 2017, SEP enrollments totaled 2,993.**

SEP has syringes for every use, including medical conditions like diabetes, but most syringes go to people who inject banned substances like steroids, cocaine, and heroin. Sharing syringes and other equipment for drug injection is a well known route of transmission for HIV and Hepatitis C. Syringe exchanges are public health initiatives that have decreased significantly the number of HIV cases.

**ACR HEALTH RELOCATES FLOODED OFFICE SPACE**

ACR Health “Annex” offices at 835 West Genesee Street suffered catastrophic flood and sewer damages late last year, forcing permanent closure of that office and relocation to 990 James Street, second floor (at the corner of James and Oak Streets). The James Street space contains offices for specialized Support Services and Insurance Programs.

**HOUSING FOR HOMELESS YOUTH**

Money from HUD, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, funds a program for homeless Onondaga County LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning) youth aged 18-24. Studies estimate that 40% of all homeless youth identify as LGBTQ. The grant provides $147,000 a year to provide rent for 12 youth and pay the salary of a case manager to assist them in becoming self-sufficient.

**UNITED WAY SUPPORT**

ACR Health, with major support from United Way of Central New York, conducted a record number of HIV tests during National HIV Testing Day on Monday, June 27, 2016 and advanced our year-round work with youth. ACR Health receives support from United Way organizations throughout our nine-county service area, including United Way of the Valley and Greater Utica, and United Way of Northern New York, with individual awards from Lewis, St. Lawrence, and Jefferson Counties.
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

TOTAL REVENUE
$9,719,788

- Government Grants: 23%
- Medicaid: 3%
- United Way and Community Grants: 4%
- Special Events and Donations: 70%

TOTAL EXPENSES
$10,285,482

- Support Services: 51%
- Prevention Services: 28%
- Administration: 17%
- Special Events: 4%

Volunteers (771 this year) are critical to the delivery of ACR Health services and programs.

79 cents of every dollar at ACR Health went to client program and prevention services for the fiscal year July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017

ACR Health financial statements have been audited by Buffington & Hoatland CPAs. A completed audit is available at ACRHealth.org or upon request at AIDS Community Resources, Inc., doing business as ACR Health.
ACR Health would like to recognize the individuals, corporations, and organizations that support our mission. The donor list below reflects gifts we received between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017.

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY FINANCIAL SUPPORT

SILVER LEADER ($10,000 +)
Allyn Family Foundation
Broadway Theatre League of Utica
The Dorothy & Marshall M. Reisman Foundation

MAJOR LEADER ($5,000 +)
BNY Mellon Community Partnership
Bradley Clifford Caine Memorial Fund
Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS, Inc.
Empower Federal Credit Union
Dr. Frederick & Dennis Farrar
GalilMedia
Jeff Kalpak
M&T Charitable Foundation
Noble Health Services

SUSTAINER ($2,500 +)
AI Talent Solutions
AXA
Bousquet Holstein PLLC
Cathy J. Berry, MD & Associates
Dupli
Gianelli Sausage
Georgina Hegney
Kinney Drug Foundation
MetLife
Samaritan Medical Center
SKY Armory
Frank C. Smith
Walgreens
Wegmans

BENEFACCTOR ($1,000 +)
Alot Hotel
Alejandro Ameequa
Allied Services of MVCC
Bank of New York Mellon
Jeff Beter & Timothy Irving
Bell’s Brewery, Inc.
Beltone Hearing (GN Hearing Care Corp.)
Berkshire Bank Foundation
William Blake II
Bonide Foundation Inc
Richard Bunce
Robert & Diane Caine
Carriage Federal Savings & Loan
Centura Heating + Cooling
Colonial Launderomat
Countryside Veterinary Clinic, LLP
County of Jefferson
Millicent Davis
DJ Puff Advisors Group, Inc.
Fideliis Care New York
First Niagara Bank
Food Bank of CNY
GAP Foundation Gift Match Program
Goldwell New York
The Hartford
Hartford Fire Insurance Company
Jeffery Herrick
Frances B. Howard Foundation
Kingdom Strongholds Ltd.
Kohl’s - Community Relations
Laci’s Tapas Bar
MassMutual New York State
Tracey McLean
Mid-State Raceway, Inc.
Wil Murtaugh & Bill Louer
National Grid
Thomas A. Nami & Darryl Bell
Geoffrey R. Navias
Nicole Paullin & Carimilius Con
Pharmblue LLC (870 Southern Drug Corp.)
Porter Nordby Howe, LLP
Rebecca Gruchew
Perry Singleton & Will Sudderth
Syracuse Orthodox Specialists, PC
Gregor Kacyster & Dave Mievoll
Tom Viola
WalMart Distribution Center #6038
WalMart Store #2093
Westhill Central School - Sr. High Activities Fund
White Deer Run Treatment Center

CONTRIBUTOR ($500 +)
Allergy Care, PLLC
Tom Angiolillo
Arc Of Oneida
Peter Bailey
Sierra Barns
CNY Community Foundation, Inc.
Michael E. Cinnin
CyberGrants
Del Frigo
Job Dickguist
Emmanuel Congregational Church
Entergy
Fairmount Community Church
Karen & Andrew Felter
Fringe Salon & Spa Inc.
Geddes Federal Savings
Cody & Lee Gilkeson
Martha & Hamner
Hancock Estabrook, LLP
Joanne Harris
Herbert S. & Eleanor L. Howard Charitable Foundation
Sandy Jarvis
Gary Jones
Karin Jean Total Body Waxing
KEYBANK Foundation
Michael & Raymond Kyle-Ducharme
Sarah F. Larimore
John Leonard
Barbara Ljung
Paul Mahalick
McDonald’s
Anthony Meceher & Michael Riecke
Jeremy McKay
Mitchell & Louis Shuman Charitable Trust
Mohawk Valley Health System
Leah J. Mulcahey
Jeanne A. Murtaugh Reath & Andrew R. Reath
MVP Health Plan
North Country Prenatal Council
Northern New York Community Fund Inc.
Faye Panaci
David & Janice Panasci
Pathfinders Bank
Santangelos’s Ristorante, Inc.
Douglas Sedgwick

Sixton’s Market
Cynthia Seymour & Laura Serway
Michael Shelton
Chuck Simpson
Stewart’s Shops
Student Assoc. of Jefferson Comm. College
Studer Faculty Assoc-SUNY Upstate Medical University
Ryan Temming
Jeffrey Unaris
Valdezky For Transparance
Welch Terrace Housing Dev Fund, Inc.
West Genesee Central School District
Tom E. White
Robert Wittman & William Bartle

PATRON ($250 +)
Anthony C. Adornato
Aetna Foundation, Inc.
James L. Alexander
AmeriCU Services, LLC
Antique Underground
Kevin & Ludger Viethues-Bailey
Bank of America Employee Giving Campaign
Bank of New York Mellon
The Benevity Community Impact Fund
Michael A. Benny & Nick Stamoulacatos
The Black & Latinx Student Union
Black River Systems
BMS Matching Gift Program
Boulangierie, Ltd.
Bridgeview Real Estate Services LLC
Winifred Byrne
David Campinnile
Cheap Seats Sports Bar & Grille Inc.
Richard Chester
Chittenango Self Storage Inc.
Clictomania
Terri & Vince Cook
Robert Coughlin
David Davis
Maribel Dieppa
Divine Destiny Creations, LLC
Maureen Diugoszima
Mary Jane & Eric Duah
Margaret & Joseph Dwyer
Timothy A. Farley, PC
Fidelis Care - Utica
Kyle Frageta
MandyLynne Fry
Garney General Construction
Mitchell C. Gilkeson
Michael Goodnough
Hamilton College
Hammond Presbyterian Church
Jacki Hannon
Sheila Harnson
Scott W. Hier
Pam Hummert
Geri L. Jackson
Jacob Hullar Ill Trust
Jay-K Independent Lumber Corp.
Jefferson & Lewis SEFA Campaign
Jorge Auto Repair
Jean Kessner
Michael Knowles
Eric R. Kuehmeier

Robert Leo
Cathy Leogrando
Rachel Leonardo
LeRoy Inc.
Rachel Lewis
Ken Martin
Joe Maszewski
Jane McCurley
Holly McDowell
Jackie Millard
Sara Miller
Mohawk Hospital Equipment
Bill A. Morgan
Michael Pahane
People for Magnarelli
Angela Petrucco

REFEE ($100 +)
Karen Abar
Nancy Abbott
Advantage Travel of CNY, Inc.
AK Studio
Cheryl Alger
Nancy Allen
Wayne Allen
Wendy Allen
Douglas Allen-Leonard
Al’s Wine & Whiskey Lounge
American Legion Post #789
Sylvia Amoroso
Amy Auclair-Martini
Arc Oneida-Lewis Chapter
Artistry In Hanover
Terry Auclair-Leonard
Terrence T. Averill

List continues on page 30
Jesuit Volunteer with plans to study medicine

“I’ve learned this year that addiction and chronic illnesses like HIV do not discriminate against age, race, or socioeconomic status. I will not judge a patient’s actions or make assumptions; I will not underestimate a patient’s ability to overcome obstacles, health-related or otherwise, because the clients and volunteers that I’ve met this year have amazed me time and again with their perseverance, motivation and positivity in the face of adversity.”

Brooke Hendricks

What’s your New Year’s Resolution?

If you want to make a difference in people’s lives, come volunteer with ACR Health. Opportunities abound!

Volunteer@ACRHealth.org
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**SWITCHBOARD LUNCH RELIEVERS**
If you visit ACR Health’s Utica office at lunch time, you’ll be greeted by one of these dependable “First Responders,” as Volunteer Director Mary Doody calls them: Allyson Ryan, Patrice Taurisano, Betty Murtaugh, ACR Health’s longest serving and most versatile volunteer; Mel Oriolo, Amanda Nortz, Malaki Hailstork, and John Leech. Thank you, Volunteers. What a relief you are!

**STAR VOLUNTEER COUPLE**
You are cordially invited to join Jeannine and Andy on the Events Committee, which plans and presents ACR Health’s highly successful fundraising events and is now seeking new members. Want to join? Volunteer@ACRHealth.org.

**JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017**
- **771 Volunteers**
- **22 Interns**
- **13,767 hours of service**
- **794 No-Hitch Luncheon meals served**
- **487 individuals served through food and personal care pantry**

**RESOLVE...** this year to volunteer with ACR Health and be part of a strong community that offers many ways to serve.

**New Year’s Day**
**Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
**6th Annual Eddie Fund Party**
5:30 p.m. at Laci’s
ACRHealth.org/events

**Chinese New Year**

ACRHealth
800.475.2430 • ACRHealth.org
Anthony Abbott had a relationship with a young man he was very comfortable with and trusted him enough to have unprotected sex.

“We had condoms, we just didn’t use them. I just gave that responsibility over to him.”

Anthony was tested for HIV regularly. In April 2015, the test came back positive. He was shocked, devastated, and grief-stricken. “I felt separate – almost untouchable. I remember thinking that there was nothing left. That I’ve reached the end of my story.”

The HIV diagnosis was NOT the end of his story, but it was the beginning of a new story. Anthony connected with ACR Health. He takes his meds religiously and his HIV virus is now undetectable. The boyfriend apologized and Anthony forgave him, but is no longer so open and trusting. Along the way Anthony managed to forgive himself.

“If there is one thing I have learned through all of this is that it is okay to put yourself first. To be your own best advocate.”

Do your part. Get tested.
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"If there is one thing I have learned through all of this is that it is okay to put yourself first. To be your own best advocate."

HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY
ACCORDING TO THE CDC:
• The rate of new HIV cases among Black adults/adolescents is 8 times that of whites and twice that of Latinos
• 58% of new HIV cases among Blacks were from male-to-male sexual contact and 34% were from heterosexual sex

K. Daniel Reed, Community Prevention Coordinator, oversaw increased HIV testing activity.

Comparing the years 2014 and 2016, ACR Health
• increased HIV testing by 21% and
• experienced a 32% increase in the number of clients served in MSM and COC prevention programs

BE THE CHANGE!
Compete in the 8th Annual Sled for RED
• Form a team
• Build a sled (cardboard tape & paint)
• Raise a minimum of $250
• Sign up today

SUPPORT THE Q CENTER!
BLOWOUT 2018
A fantasy hair show for professional salons “SUPERHEROES AND VILLAINS”

VIP tickets available
Register your salon today!

ACRHealth.org/events
Dawn Kohler needed a safe place to rebuild her shattered confidence and sense of well-being.

She divorced four years ago and, because she truly hates being alone, quickly entered a relationship with a man who was sometimes physically - and nearly always emotionally - abusive to her. She believed his promises; left her job and moved out of state with him; a decision that she regretted almost immediately. When she returned home her job had been filled and her adult children refused to have anything to do with her until she “got rid of that guy.”

She was briefly homeless and was spiraling out of control when her aunt took her to ACR Health’s Women’s Support Group. The group is a safe place to go where she can feel comfortable – even while crying, which Dawn says she is doing too much of these days. “They welcomed me with open arms and did everything possible to make me feel better.”

Participation has forced Dawn to focus on her future. “My dream is to be stable again, financially and emotionally. I want to have my family back. I want to believe in myself again.”

To learn more about the Women’s Program, call 800.475.2430 or email Woman@ACRHealth.org
Dawn Kohler needed a safe place to rebuild her shattered confidence and sense of well-being. She divorced four years ago and, because she truly hates being alone, quickly entered a relationship with a man who was sometimes physically—and nearly always emotionally—abusive to her. She believed his promises; left her job and moved out of state with him; a decision that she regretted almost immediately. When she returned home her job had been filled and her adult children refused to have anything to do with her until she “got rid of that guy.”

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ACR Health has received an HIV, STD, HCV Prevention and Related Services Grant for Women with a Focus on Women of Color through November 2022. This grant allows ACR Health to continue to serve women throughout our nine-county service area.

Tracie, Maile, and Johnna bring a wealth of experience to the program and are committed to ending the epidemic of HIV in their communities. Each year they will work with around 300 women, helping them learn their HIV status, and sharing strategies for staying HIV free.

JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017

Under the Women’s Program:
• 313 Women tested for HIV
• 76 Women engaged in groups
• 55 Engaged in Linkage and Navigation to services
• 425 Unduplicated women served

To learn more about the Women’s Program, call 800.475.2430 or email Woman@ACRHealth.org

Weekly Numbers

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ACRHealth 800.475.2430 • ACRHealth.org
Youth Services Adds Essential Programs

Comprehensive Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program

- Onondaga County has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in Upstate New York.
- ACR Health has sexual health educators in schools and community centers to work with young people aged 11-21 at increased risk for unintended pregnancy.
- We have worked with youth since 1992, and we know from experience that they respond positively to comprehensive, culturally competent information about reproductive and sexual health.

“Everyday youth make choices that impact their lives. Many times they don’t have the ability or information to help them navigate the consequences.” said Diane Kuklinski, ACR Health Youth Services Coordinator. “Youth need information and people they trust to talk to about their bodies and sexual health. We equip teens and their parents with sex-positive knowledge, skills, and access to services to prevent unintended pregnancy.”

For information about adolescent pregnancy prevention call 800.475.2430 or text us at: 315.415.6041

CAPP staff: Julia Cramer, Michelle Cartino, Diane Kuklinski, Youth Services Coordinator; Meredith Ouderkirk, Annabelle Fears, and Shelby Cusson-LaRue

Jaime Alicea
Syracuse School Superintendent

Be proud.
Be responsible.
**THE YOUNG MEN'S PROJECT**

As part of the End AIDS by 2020 campaign, the Young Men's Project received a $150,000 grant to work with young men who have sex with men (YMSM), ages 13-29.

Lloyd Mitchell and Stephen Simone test for HIV, Hepatitis C, and Sexually Transmitted Infections. They provide comprehensive sexual health education for HIV+ and at-risk YMSM, safer sex supplies and link clients with other prevention services, such as PrEP.

**JULY 1, 2016-JUNE 30, 2017**

**YOUTH SERVICES STATISTICS**

- 178 clients served through Young Men’s Project, including
  - 167 HIV Tests
  - 106 HCV Tests
  - 156 STI Tests

- 519 youth served through Comprehensive Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention
  - 19 youth housed through Rapid Re-housing
  - 60 youth received Case Management
  - 1,144 youth educated about HIV and STIs
  - 223 youth participated in LGBTQ groups
  - 298 youth and 183 parents served through Q Centers

**BE THE CHANGE!**

20th ANNUAL HIKE FOR LIFE

Join the fight to conquer:

- HIV/AIDS
- Addiction
- LGBTQ Inequality
- Poverty

INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

ACRHealth.org/events
ACR Health’s medical clinic has become a Drug User Health Hub, further expanding our existing services for drug users. The initial Health Hub grant is for $250,000 for a one-year period beginning July 1, 2017. There are now six Drug User Health Hubs statewide.

ACR Health clinic services now include
- Acute medical care
- Medication assisted treatment (Suboxone)
- Overdose prevention, aftercare, and safety planning for individuals who experience opioid overdose
- Connection of individuals to substance treatment
- Training for providers to ensure availability of medical, mental health, and substance use services for people who use drugs
- On-site mental health counseling services

“The HUB money has allowed us to better serve our clients by adding more staff to the roster,” said Drug User Health Hub Director, Alexandra Punch. “We now have dedicated staff to do naloxone training and outreach to end stigma, services desperately needed to help save lives.”

To learn more about the Drug User Health Hub and its free services, call 800.475.2430, or email Clinic@ACRHealth.org.
ACR Health’s Medical Clinic is supported by a grant from Noble Health Services

**PAINT THE TOWN RED**

Help launch six days of awareness about crucial community challenges:
- HIV/AIDS
- Addiction
- LGBTQ Inequality
- Poverty

Meet us at Clinton Square at 10:00 a.m. on the day after Memorial Day and help us Paint the Town RED!

ACRHealth.org/events

**DRUG USER HEALTH HUB**

419 clients received Clinic Services.
• 141 received Care Management Services
• 124 received Harm Reduction Counseling
• 265 were linked to Primary Care and other services
• 215 were referred to treatment
• 130 received medication assisted treatment through the Clinic

*May 2018*

*SUNDAY* | *MONDAY* | *TUESDAY* | *WEDNESDAY* | *THURSDAY* | *FRIDAY* | *SATURDAY*
---|---|---|---|---|---|---
3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9
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**APRIL**

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**MAY**

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**JUNE**

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**ACRHealth** 800.475.2430 • ACRHealth.org
In spring of 2013, her children started asking Denise Smith, “What’s wrong with Ronny?” The oldest of Denise’s six children, Ronny worked full time as a nurse’s aide. His siblings said he was having trouble walking and just seemed ‘off’ mentally. “Something’s just not right with Ronny,” they said and asked their mother to intervene.

Denise wanted answers. Her son was really hurting. They were eventually referred to University Hospital in Syracuse where Ronny was admitted and subjected to a barrage of tests. Ronny balked at getting an HIV test but Denise prevailed.

“I think he was afraid,” Denise said later. “I think he suspected that it might be HIV, but he couldn’t bring himself to get tested and face a future he was afraid to imagine.” The test confirmed Ron’s worst fear. He had HIV and the disease had progressed to AIDS.

AIDS had a firm grip on Ronny and wasn’t letting go. “In the end he lost his ability to communicate, but not before he made it clear that he understood he had sacrificed his life out of fear.”

Ronny’s death provoked a spark inside Denise to do everything possible to prevent this tragedy from happening to any other family. She set up a Facebook page so Ronny could share his lesson learned: don’t be afraid to get tested for HIV. HIV, when detected and treated early, can be contained. HIV positive people can live long and well. Ronny had 400 followers.

In August 2016 he stopped taking his meds. It had all become too much and too painful. By December 5, Ronny was gone.
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**RMONY’S TEAM**

Denise Smith (standing, 3rd row center) brought Ronny’s Team comprised of his extended family, to the 25th Annual AIDS Walk/Run where they joined dozens of other teams also dedicated to making AIDS a thing of the past.

**TEAM STUMBLERS**

Team Stumblers once again was named the Top Community Team after raising $22,821. Team Captain Chuck Simpson (front row left) was Top AIDS Walk/Run individual fundraiser with $11,825.

**BE THE CHANGE!**

26th ANNUAL AIDS WALK/RUN

Join the fight to conquer:
- HIV/AIDS
- Addiction
- LGBTQ Inequality
- Poverty

**INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY!**

ACRHealth.org/events

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**2018**
24-year-old Kevin Parker, our co-worker at ACR Health, died of a drug overdose on July 15, 2016. He left behind a two-year-old son and a mother, Donna Beaudoin, who wrote from her heart when she penned her son’s obituary.

“Kevin was a caring, smart, and funny young man who worked at helping others and was destined for greatness. Sadly, he suffered from an addiction, a disease which took his life. He struggled for the past 2 years and had worked so hard to maintain a constant presence in his son, Kaleb James Parker’s, life. The disease knows no social boundaries, economic status, or prejudice. Yet the demons he battled within himself proved to be greater than he.”

Donna made addiction a focal point of Kevin’s obituary because she wanted to take a public stand about drug addiction. “Heroin will grab you and you will be addicted the first time you use it. They say the high is like no other. If you use it once and you are able to walk away, you think you can do it again. And the next time perhaps you are dead within 15 minutes.”

The most important message to those who use injection drugs is DO NOT USE ALONE. There is no one to call 911 and get help. There is no one trained to use naloxone, the heroin rescue drug. There is no shame in reaching out for help.
OVERDOSE WORSE THAN AIDS EPIDEMIC
The federal government reports that 64,000 people died of drug overdoses in 2016, reflecting an alarming 22% increase over 2015.

Overdose is now the leading cause of death for Americans under 50 and is expected to remain the country’s number one threat. Accidental overdose is killing more people faster than AIDS did at the height of the epidemic.

Fatal opioid overdoses can be prevented. Most overdoses are not instantaneous and the majority of them are witnessed by others. ACR Health trains members of the public how to properly administer Narcan, generically known as naloxone, the opioid overdose reversal drug.

JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017
• 898 - individuals trained to use Narcan
• 48 - overdose reversals reported

If someone you know uses injection drugs, Kevin Donovan can teach you how to administer the overdose reversal drug naloxone, also known as Narcan. Narcan@ACRHealth.org.

ACR Health | 800.475.2430 • ACRHealth.org
Allyson Ryan of Utica has been given a new lease on life through ACR Health Care Management Services. She had been hooked on substances since she was 14 years old and her mother made whiskey sours, leaving leftovers in the blender for her children to drink. Allyson and her brother would also get an old guy in the neighborhood to buy them beer or peppermint schnapps. “We were drinking to get drunk, whenever the opportunity arose,” said Allyson, who is now in recovery from opioid and alcohol abuse.

This time Allyson is using Vivitrol, a monthly injection that keeps her opioid craving at bay for thirty days at a time. She is volunteering with ACR Health as a Peer engaging with people who face the same struggles. “I have peace of mind right now, and I love Melinda (Care Manager Melinda Peck). She is a breath of fresh air.”

Nancy Brown of Skaneateles, was in the “lowest, darkest place” when she met Care Management Supervisor Linda Munson. Nancy’s divorce tumbled her from middle class to dead end. When her 14-year old son opted to live with his dad, her alimony and child support ended at the same time, and she lost the mental strength to carry on. “My whole world flipped and I honestly thought I wouldn’t be able to get back up this time.”

“Nancy needed a hand up, not a hand out,” said Ms. Munson. “She had already located available resources, but was behind in her rent and falling more in arrears each day.” Linda identified new FEMA relocation funds that Nancy was qualified for and added “emergency client needs,” fundraised money from ACR Health, to bridge the gap. With a place to stay established, Nancy has been able to find a good job where she is now working toward a management position. “Linda came and sat and listened, and from that, good things are once again happening in my life. My life has changed and I am grateful for all of your help.”

Do you qualify for Care Management Services?
CareManagement@ACRHealth.org
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CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
Total Clients - 1,325
Includes 532 with HIV

HIV positive individuals may receive additional care management help, such as Housing Supportive Services which assisted 287.

Ryan White
The federal Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, named for the Indiana teen that contracted AIDS from a blood transfusion and died in 1991, offers a variety of services that focus on enhancing quality of care and increasing access to services like medical transportation, nutrition, and behavioral health education for HIV+ individuals.

JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017
Number of ACR Health clients using Ryan White programs:
STAR Transportation - 300
Nutrition Health Education - 97
Behavioral Health Education - 45
Case Management - 84
SEPTEMBER

You are at high risk for HIV if:

• You have unprotected sex with multiple partners
• You share injection equipment
• Your sexual partner is HIV+

PrEP is for men and women at high risk.

Pete Emery, Clinical Linkage Specialist
If you need PrEP, we can connect you.
800.475.2430 or PrEP@ACRHealth.org

SEPTEMBER 27 IS NATIONAL GAY MEN'S HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY.

What's your status?
The MENS Project provides free testing for HIV, syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhea, and hepatitis C along with individualized prevention counseling in Syracuse, Watertown, and Utica.

To make an appointment, call 800.475.2430 or Testing@ACRHealth.org.

Dr. Marylene Duah would like to see more at risk individuals using PrEP.

“The HIV/AIDS landscape has changed tremendously since 1997, and HIV infections are far fewer. I get two to five new cases a year. HIV is now found earlier and can be virally suppressed. We’re making good progress, but what we need much more of is PrEP.”

Jason Mungin started using PrEP after a very close call.
He was from out of state and moved to New York with a family friend. That relationship fell apart and he was on his own, in a place where everyone was a stranger – and he was lonely.

He hadn’t been with anyone in a long time and met a man who was both appealing and interested. Without conversation of any kind – including the important discussion about sexual safety – they had unprotected sex.

It wasn’t until three weeks later that Jason learned that the man he had slept with was HIV positive. “The most hurtful thing about it was that he had contracted HIV from a man who did the same thing to him. That is just wrong.”

Jason tested negative for HIV and started taking PrEP, a once daily pill that prevents the spread of HIV. Through the PrEP regimen, Jason gets laboratory tests, counseling about reducing his health risks, and an HIV test every three months. He knows he dodged a bullet – and plans to stay free of HIV from now on, by taking PrEP every day.

Dr. Marylene Duah MD

Protect yourself with PrEP, a once daily pill that prevents an HIV negative person from acquiring the virus if at high risk. Call 800.475.2430 PrEP@ACRHealth.org.
SEPTEMBER
STAY HIV FREE
You are at high risk for HIV if:
• You have unprotected sex with multiple partners
• You share injection equipment
• Your sexual partner is HIV+

PrEP is for men and women at high risk.
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From the North Country – a story about a sick child; a denied insurance claim that nearly wrecked a family’s reputation; and an intervention by ACR Health that saved the day.

This story began October 12, 2014 with a trip to the emergency room for 11-year-old Emily Downey. The family had health insurance to cover the ER visit. When they arrived at the hospital in Ogdensburg they were told that their insurance had been cancelled. Emily’s mom knew for certain they had valid insurance, so she continued with the visit. That’s when the problem began.

Their insurance policies were in good standing, but proving that took 2½ years, countless hours of phone calls, emails, faxes, and the dogged intervention of ACR Health Insurance Navigator and Consumer Health Advocate Sheryl Evans.

The hospital had sent the “unpaid” ER bill to a collection agency which damaged the family’s credit and caused immense emotional and financial stress. “I was not getting anywhere with either the insurance company or the NYS Health Exchange,” said mom Becca Downey.

By working with ACR Health, Becca was able to have just one person, Sheryl Evans, oversee the process and get all of the problems corrected.

The medical bill was eventually removed from collections; taken off the Downey’s credit report and paid; like it should have been in 2014. “If it wasn’t for all of Sheryl’s experience as a Consumer Health Advocate and all of her hard work, I fear this never would have been fixed.”

“Community Health Advocates (CHA) is the foundation of the Insurance Programs Department. It was our first program, in existence before the Affordable Care Act. This program helped thousands of people during a very dark era of healthcare when insurance premiums were out of control, pre-existing conditions were not covered and prescription costs were too high for many to afford. Without CHA, this department would never have been built. It showed the great need for healthcare reform and demonstrated the value of insurance advocates and assistors across the state.”
OVERDOSE: BIGGER THAN AIDS EPIDEMIC
NOPE (Narcotics Overdose Prevention Education) vigils will be held October 25 in Syracuse, Watertown, and Utica. Overdose is now the leading cause of death for Americans under 50 and is expected to remain the country’s number one threat.

The candlelight vigils raise awareness and open the doors to recovery by eliminating prejudice toward injection drug users.

BE THE CHANGE!
19TH ANNUAL FIRST FROST WALK/RUN

Join the fight to conquer:
• HIV/AIDS
• Addiction
• LGBTQ Inequality
• Poverty

INVEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY!
ACRHealth.org/events
Please be generous with ACR Health and watch your investment multiply in the lives of the youth and adults who depend on us.

ACRHealth.org/donate

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Laura Serway and Cindy Seymour have turned their successful Syracuse restaurant, Laci’s Tapas Bar, into a wellspring for good deeds. They regularly open their doors to charitable events and while they are known as supporters of all good causes, they are especially generous to ACR Health and the Q Center in particular.

Laura and Cindy, along with Paul Mahalick, established the Eddie’s Future Greatness Fund (an education award for Q Center youth) in memory of Laci’s employee Eddie Kirsteins, who passed away in January 2012 at the age of 31. “We’ll keep his memory alive by helping young people accomplish the things he wanted to do but didn’t have time to achieve,” said Cindy.

“There are not many people who ask what you need and then give it to you, and then some,” said Maureen Harrington O’Neill, Assistant Development Director. “Laura and Cindy are amazing.” They were instrumental in building a commercial grade kitchen at the Q Center kitchen, which has provided thousands of meals to youth. This year 75 youth and their families will be spending Thanksgiving together, eating turkey, all courtesy of Laci’s.

If you ask Laura and Cindy why they are so generous to ACR Health, they turn the question back around. “Wouldn’t it be better to ask other people why they are not?”

---

Thankful
Chuck Simpson (Top fundraiser) has raised $76,000 since 2007, and his team, Team STUMBLERS, has raised $213,000.

“My drive for fundraising is two-fold, one to educate my donors and our team community partners about the important work that ACR Health does, and especially as it applies the Q Center – as a way of hopefully making the world a bit kinder for LGBTQ youth. We have made some great strides over the past 10 years, both in issues of health care and acceptance for members of the LGBTQ community – but we still have so far to go!”

Community minded, Michael Speach of Speach Family Candy Shoppe has been a staunch supporter of our Q Center for LGBTQ youth for years. Tabling at events, providing candy buffets at our Pride Proms, and hosting an annual holiday raffle to benefit ACR Health as a whole, Michael, the amazing chocolatier, makes every event sweeter!

Sign up to be a Holiday Angel and share a gift with an ACR Health client in need.

ACRHealth.org/events
The first day of December every year, in ceremonies around the country and around the globe, we pause for moments of silence in recognition of World AIDS Day.

This sacred commemoration was born in 1988, when an AIDS diagnosis meant certain death; usually a painful and lonely death.

Those were the darkest days:
When no funeral home would accept the bodies;
When families turned their backs on hurting partners;
When the terrible wasting of AIDS and the disfiguring lesions were visible on the faces of others waiting their turn.

Now we talk of ending AIDS in New York by 2020.
We have the first evidence of real progress.
We dare to hope that on the first day of December in the year 2020 we will gather to remember and to celebrate. We are working diligently toward that day.
We are not there yet, but we are on the way.
We will be here until it’s over.
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The Mission of ACR Health: Creating healthy communities by opening doors to services that enhance the wellbeing of all.

BE THE CHANGE!
ACRHealth.org/donate

DONATE TODAY
THANK YOU!

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Laurazap Photography
Broadway Theatre League of Utica
Byrne Dairy
Cakes Galore
Canale’s Restaurant
Christine Clemens
CNY Awards & Apparel
Terri Cook
Cook’s Jewelers
Corso’s Cookies
Crazy Daisies
C’S Farm Market
Cupcakes
David Dubrowiak
Jessica Danial
George Deveny
Dinosaur Bar & Chat, Inc.
Domino’s Pizza
Marylene J. Duah
Duffy’s Designs
Dunski Donuts
Eagle Beverage Co.
Eddie Arrangements
Empire Brewing Company
Endeavor Entertainment
Dennise D. Farrar
Fleet Feet Sports
Four Seasons Golf & Ski Center
FOX 43 WSYT
Frito Lay - Central New York Zone
Jewell Gabriel
Garafolo’s
Paige Garnsey
Goldwell New York
Graham’s Goods
Joan Green
Greene’s Ale House
Hannaford Supermarkets
Maureen Harrington O’Neill
Janice Harvey
Hector Wine Company
Jeffery Herrick
Frances H. Hradil
Hullar’s Restaurant
Kate Ingersoll
InKings Tattoo Co.
Janice Harvey
InKings Tattoo Co.
Sandy Jarvis
Julie’s Place (Karen’s Catering)
Karina Jean Total Body Waxing
Jean Kessner
Richard King
Lambert Advertising
Cynthia Lambrinos
Cynthia Lambrinos
Landmark Theatre
Karin J. Leary
Tina Lee
Legends Leadership Concepts
Lighthouse Lanes
Limp Lizard Inc.
Midnight Sun
David Mevoli
Media Finishing
Limp Lizard Inc.
Lighthouse Lanes
Tina Lee
Lamar Advertising
Karin J. Leary
Julie’s Place (Karen’s Catering)
Karina Jean Total Body Waxing
Jean Kessner
Richard King
Lambert Advertising
Cynthia Lambrinos
Cynthia Lambrinos
Landmark Theatre
Karin J. Leary
Tina Lee
Legends Leadership Concepts
Lighthouse Lanes
Limp Lizard Inc.