ANNUAL REPORT
LATINO COMMISSION ON AIDS
2014
In reviewing 2014, it’s important to reflect on the impact we’ve had and to outline the challenges and opportunities for 2015.

Everyone at the Latino Commission on AIDS worked with dedication in reaching many accomplishments in 2014. We faced challenges that will require us to continue our hard work and innovative creativity in advocacy and restructuring our leadership. The passing of our long-term Director of Finances and the departure of two key middle managers was difficult.

We have provided services that have positively impacted the lives of thousands of low-income individuals from diverse communities, as well as improved the skills of health departments and community-based organizations to serve the Latino community with our capacity building services.

Our programs have allowed us to create partnerships, build networks, and develop leadership within the Latino community. We’ve reached out to non-HIV health networks to become actively involved in issues that impact the lives of Latinos and communities of color. We have embraced social media, strengthening our community mobilization, and engaged our communities in health advocacy initiatives more broadly. We have developed recommendations for the New York State Plan to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2020, a plan that will serve as a blueprint for the nation in ending the AIDS epidemic. In 2014 we kept the HIV-focused efforts aimed at preventing new HIV infections (especially among young Black & Latino MSM), increasing HIV Testing, improving treatment education and access to care in a culturally sensitive manner.

Our commitment to result-driven health promotion in Latino Faith-based communities, community-driven and participatory research, participation in social movements that have an impact on the health and well-being of Latinos such as immigration reform, and community mobilization have shown success. Throughout our work, we have never lost sight of communities that have been most impacted by HIV, such as Latino Gay and Bisexual men, Trans individuals, and Latinas, reaching their needs through innovated engagement and empowerment.

At the end of 2014, we remembered Dennis De Leon, as we reached five years since his passing and will continue to honor his legacy through the work we do.

In 2015, we will commemorate twenty-five years of continued work of the Latino Commission on AIDS. We will move forward with our strategic plan and support initiatives that will have a transformational impact at the local, regional and national levels. We will need to keep in mind the impact of the “Medicalization of HIV&AIDS” in our communities. Our participation in advocating for legislation that will positively affect the health of all immigrants, gender equality and stigma reduction, along with the fair implementation of healthcare reform, and the action steps of the New York State Plan to End the AIDS epidemic will be relevant. More work will need to be undertaken to support the President’s Executive Action on immigration relief and continued advocacy for a humane immigration reform that will keep our families together.

We recognize that the most important resource of the Latino Commission on AIDS is our workforce, partners, and supporters. We value our staffs’ work driven team efforts and purposeful leadership in the community. We embrace our own diversity. We value our supporters for your continued commitment to recognize that the Latino Commission addresses the changing health needs of our communities. Our partners and supporters allow us to adapt to meet the new challenges and demands we face in our work, which will continue to promote a culture of peace with dignity, free of stigma, homophobia, transphobia, and advocating for full access to health care for all.
The Hispanic Behavioral Research Center (HBRC) brings together diverse voices of the Hispanic communities to improve health outcomes through research, evaluation, education and community networks. Our goals are to 1) increase the amount and quality of research that puts the experience of Latinos at the forefront; 2) heighten the use of analytic and evidence-driven policy and programming; and 3) empower the community to use data & research as an effective mobilization tool.

**Highlights**

HBRC has continued to collaborate on a research study looking at how HIV criminalization and immigration laws impact how Latinos in North Carolina and Tennessee access and utilize healthcare, particularly for HIV prevention and treatment. Under the leadership of HBRC from 2012-2014, the Latinos in the Deep South program conducted an environmental scan to assess how Latinos perceive and are perceived in southern states. Additionally, and under the leadership of the Black AIDS Institute, a forthcoming national report was release on assessing the HIV workforce knowledge and attitudes on biomedical prevention and HIV treatment. Results from this research were disseminated broadly and fuel forthcoming capacity building assistance services. We also continued improving our community dissemination through our blog in which we have posted nearly 62 posts with over 5,000 views and 80 comments.

**2015 Goals**

The Hispanic Behavioral Research Center will increase its work in several areas strategic to addressing our mission to fight the spread of HIV&AIDS in the Latino community, particularly in these times of change. Key areas for 2015 include the release of key publications and concurring events that highlight diverse Latino experiences in the Southern region of the US, particularly around health care, prevention, policy, and society.
The “Hands United” capacity building assistance (CBA) program, funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides assistance to community based organizations (CBOs) across the US, including Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, to strengthen their HIV Testing, Prevention with Positives, and Organizational Development & Management. We successfully completed our 2nd cycle of funding and entered our third 5 year cycle (2014-2019). As a seasoned provider we were able to hit the ground running, making 2014 a successful year.

**Highlights**

Our Grant Writing training was selected as part of a national grant writing series organized by the CDC and will be the basis to develop a self-paced online training course. We completed two regional assessments to determine the needs and gaps in knowledge of the HIV workforce in North Carolina and Florida, and implemented a Combination Prevention Training Institute in North Carolina and pre-institute trainings in Florida based on these findings. We finished the year with a total of 42 requests for capacity building services from various providers across the nation, surpassing our expectations and deliverables for the first cycle of this grant.

Although our program is focused on providing services to CBOs, we have provided creative integration of services and reached health department and community clinics as well. We collaborated with 9 other CDC funded CBA providers and 5 health departments on various projects this year. Our internal evaluation of this program has found participants’ satisfaction rate is high and we have been able to increase: knowledge, accessibility and availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate CBA services; utilization of the new state of the science CBA services; capacity of CBOs and their workforce to implement HIP; partnerships between CBOs, health care organizations, health departments and other key stakeholders.

**2015 Goals**

Our goal for the coming year is to expand and improve our use of technology. We hope to provide more web-based tools, reports, live webinars and online tutorials, as well as develop relevant e-learning courses- starting with courses on social marketing, and recruitment and retention. We will also continue to collaborate with our funder (CDC) to train the HIV workforce on how to implement various Effective Behavioral Interventions (EBIs) in their communities (ARTAS, Couples HIV Testing and Counseling, CLEAR, social network strategy for high impact testing). We will implement two Comprehensive HIV Prevention Institutes with a focus on MSM in Georgia and Florida. Finally, we will hold a Social Network Strategies (SNS) special initiative consisting of a series of webinars and face-to-face coaching sessions.
This bilingual treatment education program provides treatment updates and clinical advances about HIV in a simple, yet medically accurate language, increasing the capacity of participants to become their own advocates and become a partner in health care decision-making. We accomplish this by training front line staff, peer educators, case managers, counselors, social workers, nurses, and consumers. The training also facilitates partnerships amongst service agencies and local Health Departments. The Tratamiento Ahora (Treatment Now) training curricula was developed, and is regularly updated, to include medical advances in the field, and taking in consideration the need of both Spanish and English dominant communities.

**Highlights**

This year we provided 5 trainings in 1) El Paso Texas, 2) Brooklyn, New York, 3) Chicago, Illinois, 4) Los Angeles, California, and 5) Orlando, Florida, reaching a total of 85 individual service providers. In addition we provided a cultural competency roundtable at the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC) conference titled “Latinos and the Service Provider”. Finally, in collaboration with the Latino Commission on AIDS’ capacity building assistance division, we provided two “Finding Positives” trainings in North Carolina and Wisconsin.

**2015 Goals**

In 2015 Tratamiento Ahora/Treatment Now will continue to expand funding resources in order to provide trainings in more cities across the country, including Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. In addition, we will continue to collaborate with local and state Health Departments and CBOs in order to reach those most in need with this important treatment information.
Health Policy and Advocacy

Giving a voice to our communities and making change happen.

The Latino Commission on AIDS has become a trusted national voice for Latinos in the US, working hard to promote the needs, interests and concerns of our community and our constituency through city, state, and federal legislation and policies. We also develop grassroots efforts with community leaders and institutions to create awareness and better reach the underserved with expanded HIV&AIDS prevention, treatment, care and supportive services. In New York City much of our work is accomplished through the Community Mobilization Program (CMP), a longtime New York State Department of Health program created to provide Community Level Intervention activities in an effort to reach the Latino community with HIV, Hepatitis C, and STI prevention, education and awareness information.

Highlights

Through media interviews, articles and the distribution of over 63 press releases, we reached more than 500,000 individuals and over 3,000 organizations nationally with information related to HIV, Hepatitis C and STI awareness. Additionally we reached over 3,000 individuals with training events at approximately 300 agencies. We developed 5 briefs focused on various issues in New York City and State, including health disparities, HIV, Hepatitis, young Latino MSM and HIV among older Latinos. Our New York City and State Advocacy Days included a briefing in New York City with 35 city council members and staff, service providers and advocates from across the city. For New York State we organized a statewide advocacy team, made up of 15 individuals representing the top ten counties in New York with the largest concentration of Latinos. This team held 21 legislative meetings to present the most pressing needs of Latino constituents around New York State. For World AIDS Day we led a faith based committee as part of the first ever NYC World AIDS Day event, formed by a coalition of over 40 organizations, creating visibility on the plan to end AIDS by 2020. Finally, our President, Guillermo Chacon, was invited to be part of the task force assigned to make recommendations in the development of Governor Cuomo’s Plan to End the AIDS Epidemic by 2020.

2015 Goals

We plan to launch the “Ten County Project” expanding our reach to organizations in the ten New York State counties with the largest Latino populations. We will also continue to produce briefs, focusing next on women and HIV, mental health, Latinos and HIV, and health literacy. Finally we will work to develop and strengthen partnerships with key organizations focusing on health disparities and chronic conditions at the city, state and federal levels, as well as continue to facilitate the participation of people in the community living with HIV & HCV.
Annually on October 15th, NLAAD partners with local, regional and national organizations to mobilize community based organizations, leaders of the Latino community, health departments, and elected officials to spread awareness within the Latino community about HIV&AIDS, and bring about improvements in HIV related health practices by building capacity, developing and disseminated resources, utilizing media channels, and casting the spotlight on Latino faces behind the epidemic. The NLAAD website (www.nlaad.org) serves as an information-sharing and community mobilizing vehicle where network members are able to publicize organization information, advertise local NLAAD activities, and interact with other NLAAD members.

**Highlights**

This year 151 clinics, health departments, academic institutions, healthcare, faith based and community based organizations registered 98 NLAAD events. OraSure Technologies provided us the opportunity to distribute 3,150 free HIV testing kits across the nation. CDC and Penngood support allowed us to develop the NLAAD website, produce Facebook ads which had over 1 million impressions and over 11 thousand clicks, and distribute over 4,000 NLAAD 2014 posters to our partners nationwide. Five webinars and two live twitter chats, in partnership with @SaludTues and @NPINChat/@AIDSgov, provided capacity building and community engagement. Our partnership with Hispanic Communications Network made it possible to disseminate our NLAAD radio PSA to over 250 Spanish language radio networks, reaching over 11.5 million listeners. In collaboration CDC’s One Conversation at a Time campaign, we hosted NLAAD events in Charlotte, Houston and Los Angeles. Our 2014 Congressional Briefing, held in honor of NLAAD, focused on the impact of HIV&AIDS and Viral Hepatitis in the southern region of the US and Puerto Rico. 65 individuals from partner organizations and legislative offices attended the briefing in Washington, DC and 83 individuals watched the briefing via our live online broadcast. We are able to secure Proclamations from the Mayor’s office in DC and the New York City Council commemorating October 15th as National Latino AIDS Awareness Day. Finally, we continued to develop our Leadership Council Members, 15 individuals from eight US regions, who provide guidance and feedback around NLAAD, and conducted street intercept surveys in 6 key cities to evaluate the impact of NLAAD in the community.

**2015 Goals**

We plan to focus on the expansion our traditional and social media reach through Radio PSAs, Video PSAs and online ads through fostering partnerships with television networks, Facebook, and social media streams such as Pandora and Spotify. We will also focus on fostering deeper partnerships with key supporters in the south and grow our Leadership Council.

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3,150 **Number of OraSure Technologies HIV testing kits distributed for free to NLAAD partners across the nation to facilitate HIV testing at their local events.**
National Hispanic Hepatitis Awareness Day (NHHAD)

A national social marketing campaign to raise awareness of Hepatitis in the Latino community.

Annually on May 15th we come together to recommit ourselves to bring awareness of hepatitis and engage our communities in a strong and fruitful response to address the viral hepatitis epidemic. This national campaign was launched in 2012 and has mirrored the Latino Commission on AIDS’ successful flagship social marketing campaign, NLAAD, as a model in reaching key partners and the community nationwide to bring awareness to Hepatitis in the Latino community.

Highlights

During the course of NHHAD 2014, three key mediums were utilized to solicit partner collaboration and engage local community mobilization: 1) Three knowledge enhancing webinars on Hispanics and Hepatitis, which engaged 213 partners with information about Hepatitis prevention, testing and treatment; 2) Local NYC Press Conference commemorating NHHAD in tandem with Hepatitis Awareness Month, and National Hepatitis Testing Day, where representatives from community based organizations, local and federal public health officials, NYC Council members and patient advocates gather on the steps of city hall to raise awareness; and 3) Cross partner social media presence via a live webcast panel of experts on Hispanics & Hepatitis, where viewers were asked to engage in the dialogue through twitter using the hashtag #NHHAD during the livestreaming. Each component served to meet the campaigns key programmatic model of enhancing knowledge, mobilizing communities, and providing local reach.

2015 Goals

In the coming year our priority is to expand our traditional and social media reach through Radio PSA’s in conjunction with the Hispanic Communications Network, Video PSA’s and online ads through fostering partnerships with television networks, Facebook, and social media streams such as Pandora and Spotify. We will also seek multi-year funding to support program develop and staffing.

#nhhad

Hashtag used to promote the live webcast panel of experts on Hispanics and Hepatitis where viewers were asked to engage in the dialogue.
This community mobilization program seeks to provide a voice and strengthen the public health infrastructure for the growing Latino population in the southern states. We utilize community organizing, capacity building assistance and community based participatory research in order to develop grassroots leadership and mobilize communities to address the health needs and impact of HIV/AIDS in the south. Our North Carolina based team travels across the southern region from Texas to Florida to build networks, foster partnerships, cultivate innovation and build leadership in the Latino workforce and those serving the Latino population in the south.

**Highlights**

We completed another cycle of the Dennis de Leon Sustainable Leadership Institute, where we enhance and develop the skills of emerging community leaders in the south through group webinars, individual coaching sessions, face-to-face mentorship and collaborative opportunities, in order to impact HIV/AIDS local, state and federal health policy affecting Latinos. Participants developed capstone projects which consisted of encouraging mentorship, advocacy and media products, and that focused on Medicaid expansions, the Affordable Care Act, HIV Criminalization and anti-immigrant policies in their home states. These capstone projects were presented at our three-day Leadership Summit in Montgomery, AL where we convened the participants, their mentees and local partners for skills building and advocacy, including legislative visits with Alabama state representatives. Due to the success of the Dennis de Leon Sustainable Leadership Institute, we were asked by the Georgia Department of Health to recreate the initiative specifically for their state leaders. This year we also reinitiated the Latinos in the Deep South Webinar Series to provide webinars on various topics and in partnership with AIDSVu, the National Immigration Law Center, National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Official Educational Fund. Finally, in June of 2014 our President, Guillermo Chacon, was invited to the White House by the Office of National AIDS Policy to participate in a meeting on HIV in the south.

**Goals for 2015**

From 2012-2014 Latinos in the Deep South conducted an environmental scan to assess how Latinos perceive and are perceived in southern states. In 2015 we will release the groundbreaking report, The State of Latinos in the Deep South: Being Visible by Piercing the Stigma Veil. The report provides important findings and recommendations for mobilizing the growing Latino population. Throughout 2015 we will focus on disseminating these findings and helping local leaders utilize our work to mobilize communities throughout the south by developing state by state strategies to enhance networks of collaboration.

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Number of community leaders who graduated from the last cohort of the Dennis deLeon Sustainable Leadership Institute and have gone on to position the Latino agenda in North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi.
The annual training institute, held in Albany, NY, is designed to disseminate strategies for building a comprehensive approach to the healthcare needs of Latinos in New York State. We open the program with a plenary of key stakeholders and decision makers from various state and federal institutions, and end the morning with an opportunity for the advocates and people living with HIV&AIDS in the audience to voice their needs and concerns directly to these decision makers in an open forum. The remainder of the institute is comprised of skills building workshops on various topics.

**Highlights**

While HIV&AIDS is still a primary concern for us, we shifted the focus this year to include other health conditions and develop strategies toward the elimination of health disparities. This allows us to provide a more realistic view and focus on the wellbeing of our communities overall. In addition to including a focus on health disparities, we also highlighted new prevention tools, such as PEP and PrEP, and other biomedical interventions currently being researched. Over 100 service providers, advocates and people living with HIV&AIDS attended the 2 day training institute.

**2015 Goals**

We will continue to expand our focus on other health conditions affecting Latino communities in New York State and focus our coming year on Governor Cuomo’s Plan to End the AIDS Epidemic in New York by 2020. We will also focus on the new realities of HIV prevention and treatment, with emphasis on biomedical intervention, access to HIV testing and interventions designed to work with populations at high risk. We will continue to educate the community about new realities of access to health care, Medicaid redesign implementation, and the Affordable Care Act implication in our state.

**100 Number of service providers, advocates and people living with HIV/AIDS who attended the 2 day training Reunion Latina on March 2015.**
Latino Religious Leadership

Engaging communities of faith throughout New York City in an effort of educate the community about the realities of HIV & AIDS.

Since 1995, this program has engaged faith based leaders as gatekeepers to their congregations and communities in order to alter community attitudes about HIV&AIDS and other health conditions. Understanding the centrality of religious institutions within the Latino community, we have been able to promote health education through faith based networks as a means to preventing the spread of HIV and to promote overall wellness and preventative health in our communities.

**Highlights**

We directly engaged 27 communities of faith representing various denominations and boroughs throughout New York City, providing them with mini-grants to conduct monthly health education workshops and HIV testing events for their congregations. Our staff directly supported their activities by offering 4 capacity building events, 3 citywide community events and assisting with coordination and logistics as needed for the implementation of their individual workshops and testing events. The communities of faith surpassed the projected participation in their activities across NYC, holding a total of 197 workshops that reached 6,600 individuals and holding 17 HIV testing events where 155 individuals were tested for HIV. Several communities of faith distinguished themselves this year. Coordinators at three of the long-standing members continued their roles as mentors to other newer participating members, sharing their strategies for community outreach. Such collaborations are crucial to the long-term sustainability of the program.

**2015 Goals**

In the upcoming year, the Latino Religious Leadership Project will develop several training curriculum; expand outreach to new communities of faith in the NYC metropolitan area in order to enlarge the network of participant communities of faith; continue promoting information and activities about the innovative HIV prevention initiatives on HIV prevention and Testing in NYC; promote and provide Hepatitis-C testing as part of the scope of services provided by communities of faith; work to secure funding and expand educational services to include cancer, cardiovascular diseases, as well as organizational management skills.

155 Number of individuals who were tested during the 17 HIV testing events hosted by participating communities of faith
Access To Care

Testing our community for HIV-HCV and linking and retaining them in medical care.

Access to Care and Services provides direct services to the community in New York City and State. As part of its service portfolio, Access to Care serves HIV Positive and HIV Negative individuals, those at high risk for Hepatitis C and other health related needs, while navigating consumers to other needed social and emotional support services. We provided holistic, sensitive, inclusive services for all our clients. Through our services and partnerships our clients benefited from access to healthcare, insurance enrollment, life skills building sessions, social services support, basic education needs, job placement, housing assistance, and immigration legal assistance. The department has been recognized on multiple occasions by its funders as experts in linking to care newly HIV diagnosed clients in to care in less than 30 days.

Highlights

In 2014 a wide variety of Latinos, primarily immigrant, women, Gay young men, as well as African Americans walked in to our doors. Through outreach events we were able to reach out to communities of individuals less likely to actively look for services. Joining efforts with churches, food pantries and shelters we were able to reach homeless individuals and those with other pressing needs that inhibit them from accessing life changing health services. We tested 1,387 individuals for HIV and indentified 28 positives, linking them to care through our extensive network of HIV treatment and care providers. 40 HIV positive women successfully graduated from “Mujeres Unidas” program, a gender positive, stigma reduction and domestic violence management intervention designed to empower women living with HIV. 48 young men graduated successfully from “Somos Hombres” program, a series of workshops designed to address sexual health risk reduction strategies. 55 individuals were screened and enrolled into health insurance between October and December 2014. This year came with its share of challenges, including shifts in the field, new biomedical interventions that are redefineing what prevention means for both HIV positive and negatives. We were very successful at adjusting to these challenges by implementing Community High Impact Prevention strategies that fall in line with the National HIV&AIDS Strategy brought forth by the White House.

2015 Goals

The future looks bright and full of new opportunities. Inclusion of a new line of HIV testing strategies, and development of home grown prevention and evidence based interventions to prepare the community for biomedical strategies are our top priorities. We have identified gaps in awareness and knowledge about PrEP in the Latino community. An innovative national multi-tiered community engagement program that will look at ways to create a structural intervention focused on PrEP is in the planning phases. Finally, we will work hard to secure additional multi-year funding for our different components of Access to Care community prevention initiatives.

1,387 Number of individuals tested in New York City for HIV
Puente Para La Salud

A bridge to health providing capacity building to better serve the Latino LGBT community.

Puente Para La Salud is a capacity building assistance program serving community based organizations and health departments that provide HIV prevention services to the Latino LGBT community in New York City, developing services and skills that are culturally specific to the needs of LGBT Latino communities, with the goal of increasing the long-term sustainability of organizations’ health services to the community and reduce health disparities among Latino LGBT individuals, families and communities by increasing access to and quality of health and human services targeting Latino LGBT.

Highlights

Puente Para La Salud successfully provided trainings to 170 staff/health service providers, people living with HIV&AIDS and the general community in New York City. In addition, Puente Para La Salud conducted 3 focus groups to ascertain the needs of the gay, bisexual and transgender Latino individuals age 40+ in New York City.

2015 Goals

The program will expand its training curricula library. New curricula will include: sexuality in the Latino 40+ gay/bisexual and transgender; andropause; the relationship of human papilloma virus and anal cancer; isolation; and the importance of adherence in treatment and prevention in the PrEP era. In addition we will establish a core group for our “Maduros Sabrosos” initiative, which will be geared towards Latinos over 40 year of age.

LATINO LGBT IN NYC

Number of focus group developed by Puente para la Salud to ascertain the needs of the gay, bisexual and transgender Latinos age 40+ in New York City.
Media and Fundraising

Engaging diverse communities worldwide and sustaining important HIV/AIDS work.

The Latino Commission on AIDS strives to increase awareness around HIV&AIDS and the work that we do in the community across the US, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. We distributed over 60 press releases to our partners, community and media contacts. In addition, we connect with our communities via our websites and social media platforms. We had over 50,000 visits across our websites, including individuals from the United States and over 35 countries around the world.

Latino Commission on AIDS: www.latinoaids.org
National Latino AIDS Awareness Day: www.nlaad.org
National Hispanic Hepatitis Awareness Day: www.nhhad.org
Hands United Capacity Building Assistance: www.handsunitedcbsa.org
Hispanic Health Equity: www.hispanichealthequity.org
Cielo Fundraising Gala: www.cielolatino.org

We continuously work to diversify funding sources in order to maintain the sustainability of the organization, continue to provide essential services to our communities and spread awareness nationwide about HIV&AIDS. In addition to federal, New York State, New York City, foundation and corporate funding, we also organize an annual fundraising gala, Cielo, which is an opportunity to engage media, celebrities, corporations, advocates and individuals to the cause, including a fruitful partnership with the Miss Universe Organization, Macy's and many pharmaceutical companies that conduct important research in developing new medications for our communities. The celebration raises funds to support the programming and infrastructure of the Commission and also promotes the public image and mission of the Latino Commission on AIDS through our media partners.

50,000

Number of visits to our 6 institutional websites where individuals find and download information about HIV, Hepatitis, and health issues affecting Latinos.
# Audited Financials

## Fiscal year end June 30

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We at the Commission feel it’s our duty to provide support, and impact the positive health and growth in our Latino communities nation-wide. Our programs have allowed us to build partnerships with individuals, organizations, corporate and government entities that influence and impact our communities’ lives in order to advocate for the still prevalent need for HIV&AIDS services in our Latino and communities of color.