

BE THE GENERATION

TO END THE AIDS EPIDEMIC

BTG News

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From the Editor

“All movements for social change must lead with love.” My friend and colleague from Cape Town, Leigh-Ann van der Merwe, said this on [a webinar](#) we just did together. Dr. Cornel West [recently said](#), “Black love has nothing to do whatsoever with hating others.” And as I write this, Rihanna’s pre-Valentine’s Day Super Bowl performance is right around the corner. It seems like everyone has “Love on the Brain.”

When I think about our HIV & AIDS movement history, so much of it is characterized by rage. Many of us can vividly recall that clip of Larry Kramer screaming, “Plague! We are in the middle of a f---ing plague!” And how many of us can relate? We’ve lost too many. We’ve had too many disappointments. We’ve fought so hard, and the epidemic still isn’t over. Anger is an entirely valid and useful emotion.

But let’s not forget what underpins the anger that is so characteristic of our movement: love. Only love can inspire such outrage! We may not remember him this way, but I believe Larry Kramer was *overflowing* with love for his community. Do we sometimes forget how much love plays a role in our movement? Let’s make an effort to relocate the love we bring to this work, and to look for it in our colleagues too. The recognition of love could very well be the ingredient that ends the epidemic. After all, what possibilities may unfold when all of us realize the power of our collectively open hearts?

Read on to learn more about recent successes, failures, and how we harness all of it to advance our mission. As always, share our [resources](#) and [stay in touch!](#)

Happy Valentine’s Day,

Brian Minalga &
The Legacy Project

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HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN)

Happy 2023 from the HPTN! Last year was a major one for us as a network, field, and community. It produced exciting HIV prevention accomplishments, moving us one step closer to eliminating HIV as a global health issue. In light of these reflections, we invite you to check out a video summarizing [HPTN's Year in Review](#).

Building upon last year's accomplishments, the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) takes place February 19-22 at the Summit Convention Center in Seattle. HPTN researchers will present 11 abstracts (four oral and seven posters) covering [HPTN 071](#), [HPTN 083](#), [HPTN 084](#), [HPTN 084-01](#), and the [HPTN Modelling Centre](#). We hope to see you there!



HIV VACCINE
TRIALS NETWORK

HIV Vaccine Trials Network (HVTN)

On January 18, 2023, the HVTN [announced](#) that The Mosaico study – also known as HPX3002/HVTN706 – had been discontinued. This study tested a “mosaic”-based HIV vaccine candidate in multiple countries around the world among cisgender men and transgender people. It was discontinued following a planned, interim review by the study's independent Data and Safety Monitoring Board. In a disappointing hit to the search for a safe and effective HIV vaccine, we learned that the vaccine being studied in the Mosaico trial—although it was shown to be safe—did not work to prevent HIV.

This is a big deal. The Mosaico study was not the first study to test a potential HIV vaccine candidate. Over the years, several large-scale HIV vaccine trials have put possible HIV vaccines to the test, but none have ever proven effective enough for use outside of a study. Many had hope that Mosaico would yield a different result. And a lot was riding on that hope, because at the time that the study was ongoing, Mosaico was the world's only Phase 3 study of an HIV vaccine candidate on a path to licensure. The fact that Mosaico's vaccine candidate was shown to be ineffective means that we are not likely to have an HIV vaccine anytime soon. Clinical trials cost an immense amount of money, effort, and most importantly, time. Some are estimating that it could be another ten years before we have another Phase 3 HIV vaccine study.



While Mosaico's result is certainly disappointing, all is not lost. Clinical trials are not designed purely to tell us how something works; they are also designed to inform us how something doesn't work. The data tell us that we need to do something different in the search for an HIV vaccine. Scientists have some ideas on what exactly we need to do differently moving forward. The HVTN and AVAC co-hosted a global stakeholder webinar on January 25th to discuss the outcome of Mosaico and next steps; you can listen to the webinar recording [here](#). Dr. Stephaun Wallace of the HVTN was also interviewed about Mosaico in the latest episode of [H=H](#), the HANC Legacy Project's podcast focusing on the human side of HIV research. Check out these resources to learn more about where we go from here.

It's also important to remember that we already have the tools with the potential to end the HIV epidemic. We know that people living with an undetectable HIV viral load cannot sexually transmit HIV, and an undetectable viral load can be achieved through existing antiretroviral medications. We also have several forms

of pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP, including pills and injections, that are extremely effective at preventing people from acquiring HIV. And let's not forget that many of these advancements in HIV prevention came about in the last ten years—imagine what is possible in the next ten years! We must continue to explore all avenues for ending the HIV epidemic—and the search for an HIV vaccine carries on.



Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC)

HANC is pleased to share these updates and other resources:

- [Be the Generation website](#): the best place to go for trustworthy information on biomedical HIV prevention research. Features sections on PrEP, U=U, Microbicides, HIV vaccine research, inspiring videos from researchers and community members, and even a quiz to test your knowledge of HIV prevention research.
- The [H=H Podcast](#): The podcast that centers on the 'Human' in 'HIV.' This podcast is sponsored by the HANC Legacy Project and presents content on the human side of research, featuring scientists, community members, and affirming communities disproportionately affected by HIV.
- [Webinar Library](#): a collection of over 30 of our webinar recordings on topics such as Monkeypox, HIV & race, HIV & women, HIV genetic sequencing, HIV & aging, outreach & marketing, Native Americans & HIV, microbicides research, pregnancy & lactation in HIV research, HIV in the Latinx community, community engagement, and more.
- [Understanding Science Video Series](#): More than ever, communities need trustworthy information on the basics of science. HANC therefore formed a work group with international membership to develop videos on several important topics. Why is science essential? Why is research important in science? The short videos answer these and other questions, aiming to make understanding science and clinical research easier.
- [Transgender Training Resources Homepage](#): the Division of AIDS at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases has put all its amazing resources related to research with transgender communities in one place. All resources are free; you may just need to create a free account if you don't have one already.

Important Dates

Feb 17: [International Workshop on HIV & Women](#)

Feb 18: Pre-CROI Community HIV Cure Research Workshop

Feb 19-22: [Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections \(CROI\)](#)

Mar 10: [National Women & Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)

Mar 20: [National Native HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)

Apr 10: [National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)

Apr 11-12: [NMAC Biomedical HIV Prevention Summit](#)

Apr 18: [National Transgender HIV Testing Day](#)

May 3-5: [HIV Vaccine Trials Network Full-Group Meeting](#)

May 5-7: [National Transgender Health Summit](#)

May 10-13: [National Latinx Conference on HIV/HCV/SUD](#)

May 19: [National Asian & Pacific Islander HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)