

# POSITIVE REACTION

MARCH 2006

## THE STATE OF FUNDING

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<b>BY: CHARLIE GRINDLE</b>	

### HIV/AIDS: FACT OR FICTION

- If you are a woman with HIV you have to give up the hope of having children because it is impossible to give birth without infecting the baby.
- FICTION: With the advancement in modern medicine it is possible for women to have children that are not infected with HIV by getting prenatal care, having a C-section and not breastfeeding their baby.

**“A hopeful society acts boldly to fight diseases like HIV/AIDS, which can be prevented, and treated, and defeated. More than a million Americans live with HIV, and half of all AIDS cases occur among African Americans. I ask Congress to reform and reauthorize the Ryan White Act, and provide new funding to states, so we end the waiting lists for AIDS medicines in America. We will also lead a nationwide effort, working closely with African American churches and faith-based groups, to deliver rapid HIV tests to millions, end the stigma of AIDS, and come closer to the day when there are no new infections in America.”**

These were the words of President Bush on January 31, 2006, during the State of the Union Address. This was beautiful rhetoric that left many filled with hope that strides would be made by our federal government to “end the stigma of AIDS” and promises for more adequate funding would be fulfilled. However, this was not the case, in mid-February the Bush Administration released its 2007 federal budget proposal, which did not live up to the President’s words.

Along with slashing Medicaid, Bush’s budget would only provide flat funding to most Ryan White

programs, so as the number of HIV cases and need for services increase the amount of funds available remain the same. Bush set aside only \$70 million in new funding for state drug assistance programs, which is far less than the estimated \$303 million that would be needed to end all waiting lists for AIDS meds. The proposed budget also showed a \$15 million cut in AIDS research. All the while, increasing funding to abstinence-only programs that leave teens without all the knowledge needed to make accurate decisions about the risk involved with their choices. To comment on these issues see information on page 2.

## WANT TO SHARE YOUR STORY?

FPC is trying to revive it Speakers’ Bureau. This group will be made up of clients or other HIV positive folks who want to play a role in education and prevention. They will be asked to go to different speaking engagements and share their first hand account of the reality of living with HIV. We realize that

this level of sharing takes tremendous thought and preparation. Therefore, we are holding a mandatory training for all those who wish to be considered for this group on Tuesday, March 14, 2006 at 2pm at the Frannie Peabody Center. We welcome all who are interested in receiving this training but

want you to be aware that space is limited and that not all who attend will be guaranteed a space on the Speakers’ Bureau. If you have any further questions or would like to be signed up to attend this training please call or email Mary Martha Gantt at 774-6877x116 or [mmgantt@peabodycenter.org](mailto:mmgantt@peabodycenter.org).



Contact elected officials and let them know what you think. You deserve to have your voice heard!

President George Bush  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500  
president@whitehouse.gov

The Honorable Olympia Snowe  
United States Senate  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
United States Senate  
461 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Allen  
U. S. House of Representatives  
1127 Longworth House Office Bldg  
Washington, D.C. 20515



**FEMALES TAKE NOTE**

March 10, 2006, marks the first National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. This day is set aside to raise awareness on the increasing impact of HIV/AIDS transmission on women and girls. Since the beginning of the epidemic, the proportion of women and girls newly diagnosed with AIDS has increased, especially among

women of color. In 1990, women made up 11 percent of those newly diagnosed and by 2004 that number had risen to 27 percent.

In an effort to raise awareness and get women tested, the Prevention Office will be offering free rapid HIV tests by female staff for women only, as well as free safer sex

supplies, food, drink and a relaxed safe atmosphere. This event will be taking place at 510 Congress St. on Friday, March 10th from 11-6. Call Jennifer Putnam at 749-6818 if you have any further questions. We hope to have a great turnout so please let any women that you feel would be interested know about the event.

**NEWS FROM POSITIVE HEALTH CARE**

You may have seen an article in the Portland Press Herald about a month ago on a "new" STD that was affecting gay men. The infection is a type of chlamydia called Lymphogranuloma Venereum, or LGV for short. We have not seen any cases of LGV in Maine yet, but there have been a handful of cases in Boston. In the past, LGV was most commonly seen in Africa, India, Asia and South America, but just in the last year there have been 27 cases of LGV in the U.S. The U.S. cases, as well as some cases that have

popped up in Europe, have all been among men who have sex with men, most of whom are HIV positive.

Symptoms of LGV include swollen, tender lymph nodes in the lower abdomen, genital sores, groin pain, blood in stools, diarrhea, rectal pain and/or rectal discharge. LGV should be treated with antibiotics for 21 days. The symptoms usually appear about 2-3 weeks after unprotected sex, which often includes a history of receptive anal intercourse. LGV can look like other STDs

so make sure your clinician is aware of the symptoms, risk factors, and the correct treatment.

In other news, Positive Health Care is happy to have an additional FPC case manager on our team. Cynthia Chiang will be working alongside our current case manager Megan Bressett at our India St. clinic. Cynthia and Megan are here to help Positive Health Care clients with any case management issues like housing, Mainecare, and other benefits.

**STAFF SPOT LIGHT**

**CYNTHIA CHIANG CASE MANAGER AT POSITIVE HEALTH CARE**

**Cynthia, who is your role model?**

**"Right now, it's my dance teacher. He brings so much humanity and humor to every class. He inspires me to make life more beautiful."**

"I wanted to return to social services... I had worked with people living with HIV before and Frannie Peabody Center's services and vision were compatible with what I was looking for in a non-profit."

These were the words of Cynthia Chiang when asked what originally attracted her to the Frannie Peabody Center. Cynthia was recently hired by FPC to provide case management services out of the India Street clinic. Our

new case manager is a native of California, but has been living on the East Coast for the past eight years. Cynthia comes to us with a host of experiences in a variety of settings. She has lived in New York City, Pennsylvania, and for the past two years, Maine. Her past occupations have been a substance abuse counselor and an organic farmer. In the future, Cynthia hopes to combine her work in social services with her experiences in organic farming.

Cynthia feels privileged to assist people who are opening their lives to her as well as feeling inspired by the dedication of others who serve in this field.

Outside of work Cynthia loves to cook and swim in the ocean. She has recently started taking a modern dance class, which she thoroughly enjoys.

Cynthia is a unique woman who we are proud to have as part of the Peabody Team.

INFO BITS

REMINDER: For all those who use the food pantry, if driving, please remember to park on the street not in the church parking lot.

Interested in submitting work to the newsletter or just want to help with mailings contact Mary Martha Gantt @ 774-6877x116.

United Way is offering free assistance in filing taxes for anyone who makes under \$30,000 a year. If interested please contact Lindsey Mahanna at 874-1000x325

For more information about any of the testing events please call the Prevention Office at 749-6818.

In preparation for National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, on Thursday, March 9, at 3pm there will be a movie showing at the Frannie Peabody Center. The film will deal with a woman's struggle with HIV. If you have any question feel free to call Mary Martha Gantt @ 774-6877x116



Hall of Flags



On March 17, 2006, the Maine AIDS Alliance has reserved the Hall of Flags at the state house as a chance for AIDS service organizations from all over the state to come to the capitol to make their presence known and have their voices heard. FPC welcomes the attendance of all our clients. This event begins at 8:30 and concludes around noon. We encourage everyone planning to attend to contact your representatives and let them know that you are coming and that HIV and the issues that surround the virus matter to you. If you are interested in carpooling to Augusta, need help contacting your representatives, want directions or have any other questions please contact Mary Martha Gantt @ 774-6877x116. Carpooling from FPC will leave at 7am.



MARCH 2006

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Food pantry	2 Support Group Portland	3	4
5	6 Wells STD/ HIV Testing	7 Support Group York Sanford STD/HIV Testing	8 Food pantry	9 Movie @ FPC Support Group Portland	10 NWGHAD Women's Testing Events	11
12	13	14 Support Group York Speakers Training	15 Food pantry	16 Support Group Portland	17 Hall of Flags St. Patrick's Day	18
19	20 Spring begins	21 Support Group York	22 Food pantry	23 Support Group Portland	24	25
26	27	28 Support Group York	29 Food pantry	30 Support Group Portland	31	

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Support Group in York Co. meets Tuesday afternoons at 4-6pm to discuss various topics
- Every Wednesday the Food Pantry, located in the bottom of St. Luke's on Park St., is open from 9-1.
- Support Group meets every Thursday evening from 5:30-7:00 at the Frannie Peabody Center, Portland.
- March 6-STD/ HIV Testing in Wells from 4:30-6:30
- March 7- STD/ HIV Testing in Sanford from 4-6.
- March 9-3pm Movie @ FPC
- March 10-National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Testing at 510 Congress
- March 14-Mandatory Speakers Training from 2-4pm at the Frannie Peabody Center
- March 17-Maine AIDS Alliance has reserved the Hall of Flags at the State House in Augusta.



# FRANNIE PEABODY CENTER

comprehensive HIV & AIDS services

Check us out on the web

[www.peabodycenter.org](http://www.peabodycenter.org)

## Frannie Peabody Center

335 Valley Street

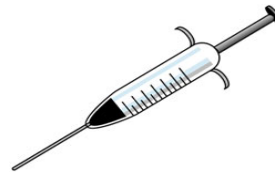
Portland, Maine 04102

Phone: 207/774-6877

Fax: 207/879-0761

Email: [info@peabodycenter.org](mailto:info@peabodycenter.org)

### Portland Needle Exchange



Portland Needle Exchange is an anonymous and hassle free way to acquire clean needles and stay safe. If you inject drugs, or if you know any injectors, please refer them to this service. Located at 103 India St., Portland, open Monday-Friday 8-4:30. They also deliver. Call with any questions 874-8022 or 653-1631.

The Frannie Peabody Center is committed to compassionate care for the community infected with and affected by HIV and AIDS in Maine. The Peabody Center helps the community face and fight the realities of the disease by providing prevention education and direct services, including housing, information, education, advocacy, and counseling services. The Peabody Center treats the whole person with dignity, care and compassion.

## POSITIVE THOUGHTS

BY: CHARLIE GRINDLE

Did Phil say six more weeks of winter? Then we're on the homestretch for Spring! Wind gusts of 60mph? Rain? Lightning? And we haven't signed the Kyoto Protocol!? I haven't checked the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, but I bet we're in for an interesting summer, weather-wise. I hope you all are warm and dry, and have caring people in your lives.

I was speaking with a friend the other day, and we were trying to decide the best time to have 'the talk'-when you reveal your status to people you're interested in dating. I try to get it out of the way fairly early, usually before the 'coupling energy' starts

building, and I treat everyone as if they were and expect the same of them. But what do you do if it's a friendship that suddenly takes a turn for the serious? While most of my close friends know my status (or have guessed), I don't wear a sign announcing it. Some 'acquaintances' who are becoming closer will have to know soon. Shall I just drop it into conversation, "Say, if we're going to be out late, I need to remember to bring my drugs" or "Boy, dating is tough, especially when you're positive?" Although taking drugs in public doesn't draw the assumptions that it used to because everyone seems to be taking a pill for something, that's al-

ways a good opportunity to open dialogue. Although 'poz-aphobia' is still strong in some places, as more folks 'come out' (not again!), it will get easier and safer. Wouldn't it be amazing, if everyone knew their status, to have National Coming Out Positively Day? I can't really see that happening anymore than having all the GLBT folks say "I am, amen." A nice way to make us a closer human family, but a dream, for the present at least. But whatever your decision, be caring and honest in any intimate relationship. Honor your partner with honesty, and yourself with respect.

Be well, Charlie

### Considering donating to Frannie Peabody Center?

Individual support is essential in maintaining our programs in Southern Maine. The community is directly affected by contributions from people whose generosity supports client services, prevention services, housing assistance, and assisted living for people living with HIV/AIDS in Maine.

Frannie Peabody Center welcomes cash contributions, memorial and honorary gifts, gifts of stock, mutual funds, deferred or planned giving, real estate, and tangible or in-kind gifts where appropriate. Donations may be sent to Frannie Peabody Center, Attn: Development Office, 335 Valley Street, Portland, ME 04102. Please contact the Development Office at (207) 774-6877 x128 with any questions.