

Message from the Executive Director



Dear Friends, this World AIDS Day, as we mark the 30th year of the epidemic, we're starkly reminded of the devastation that HIV

has wrought within our community and among individual families and friends. We also continue to see extraordinary reaction in the face of tragedy as those affected step forward to offer their support.

You'll find a poignant example of this on page two of this newsletter, where we profile parents—Bob and Lois North—who lost their only son, Vance, to AIDS. Bob and Lois chose to honor Vance's legacy with an extraordinary legacy gift from his estate. Their donation will help keep the shelves stocked at our food pantries well into the future and will serve as a strong and stable source of support for our HIV prevention and advocacy work, too.

This is also a time of year when we reinforce our focus on helping our clients meet their basic needs—linking them to crucial medical care and offering food for holiday meals, as well as support as they face too-frequent companions of HIV—like depression, anxiety, and addiction.

That's why we're honored to re-dedicate our food pantry network—the largest of its kind in the country—as the **Vance North Necessities of Life Program**. You can read more about the North family's incredible journey inside.

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It's also a time when we must reinvest in building a strong and loyal community of

supporters like you. In these last three months of the year, we must raise over 60 percent of our annual revenue—through signature events like AIDS Walk Los Angeles—and with individual gifts from donors who wish to remember those in need.

We also cannot forget the still-pervasive stigma that surrounds this disease: People living with HIV are cut out of family gatherings or, as one recent client told me, forced to eat from disposable plates when others are not. This is a harsh reminder of the myths that remain with us today.

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Growing Pains: A Client's Story

“Mr. Coughlin, it appears you have 'GRID'; Mr. Coughlin, it seems you have what is called 'ARC'; Mr. Coughlin, you have acquired HIV; I'm sorry, Mr. Coughlin: You have AIDS.” In 1984, Robert Coughlin was, in fact, trapped in a whirlwind of confusion and uncertainty plaguing communities across the nation. A mysterious, deadly disease was taking lives, and Coughlin was up next.

The turbulent onset of the epidemic, along with cocktails of experimental treatments, would leave Coughlin's frail, sick body “damaged from severe side-

effects.” The relentless fear and exhaustion would quickly draw him into an unending battle with drug and alcohol addiction—a fight that would leave Coughlin homeless and hopeless—until nine years ago, when he found APLA.



“I was homeless at the time, so APLA immediately connected me to their Necessities of Life Program [NOLP] food pantry and gave me food that I was able to prepare without a kitchen,” recalls Coughlin.

With a raging addiction, “the last thing on my mind was housing,” recalls Coughlin. “But after APLA connected me to NOLP, the agency helped me access affordable housing. I was beginning to regain self-worth that I didn't even know I had lost,” he added.

“My case manager, Stacey, knew I was struggling with addiction, but she also knew that sobriety had to be my choice. She was there for me—unconditionally and without judgment—and allowed me to make that decision for myself. Now, I have been clean and sober for five years.”

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Volunteer Opportunities

Each year, APLA benefits from the work of over 1,500 volunteers who contribute more than 65,000 hours of service annually at a value of \$1.1 million per year. Below you will find opportunities for volunteering at APLA. To learn how you can help, call 213.201.1379.

Give a Day to APLA

Days vary: Help distribute groceries to our clients at APLA food pantries. With nine convenient locations, there's sure to be one near you!

Tuesdays through Thursdays: Sort groceries and help stock our warehouse at our North Hollywood food pantry—the distribution hub for all our sites!

Saturday: Spend a day at a food drive at a local market and help stock our shelves. Great for those with weekday jobs.

Saturday: Spend a morning supporting our TEAM TO END AIDS runners. Cheer them on as they train to finish the 2012 LA Marathon.

Take an evening to volunteer at one of our exciting special events. With so many different positions, we've got the perfect fit for you.

We need your help.

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

Visit apla.org for a full list of our other volunteer opportunities.

APLA Dedicates Vance North Necessities of Life Program to Honor a Family Legacy

APLA marked this year's World AIDS Day on December 1 by naming its food pantry network to honor the legacy of a son lost too soon—and parents who transformed their personal tragedy into a crucial gift that will ensure the agency's stability long into the future.



Vance North was an eye-catching, six-foot, 175-pound, tan California boy with a perfect, pearly white smile that captured gazes as he would pass by. Son to Bob and Lois, Vance was prominent in the West Hollywood social scene in the early '90s as his star rose with a successful modeling career. But in 1995, he would unexpectedly check into a local hospital and tragically die five days later, at only 33.

"I remember [Vance] came to visit us on a Saturday and left on Sunday. Everything seemed fine; then we found out he was hospitalized. It all happened so quickly. Everything shut down in three or four days, and Vance was gone by Friday," recalls his father, Bob. Bob and Lois would learn that their young son had died of AIDS-related complications. Days later, they buried their son in Woodlawn Cemetery in Santa Monica next to two empty plots—one each for his mother and father, who never imagined that their son would predecease them.

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If you haven't already received my email, you'll soon have a unique opportunity to communicate directly with our clients. I'm asking that you write a brief note of support at this time of year, and we'll slip one inside each of the thousands of bags of groceries that we must distribute from our food pantries in the winter chill. I also ask that you please consider returning your note online or in the enclosed envelope with a special gift of support for those who need it most. We'll put your donation to work right away.

North still routinely visits Vance at the cemetery—and sadly, now Lois, who died in 2007—and he doesn't miss an opportunity to tell others about the incredible life they shared together. An avid race car and food buff, North has owned several drag-racing strips and food businesses across Los Angeles over the years. He explains his humble beginnings and proudly describes the life he built with his loving wife and son.

In fall of 2011, Bob approached APLA to carry out an exceptional commitment that he and his wife had made together soon after their son died: They wished to honor Vance's memory through a legacy gift to APLA. By leaving their estate to APLA, Bob and Lois offer an enduring source of support for APLA's newly dedicated Vance North Necessities of Life Program, the largest network of its kind in the country and a life-sustaining source of nutrition for thousands of low-income Angelenos.

"[Vance] had so much compassion and love for the people around him," says Bob. "Lois and I just wanted to make sure that his legacy lived on in the community he cared so much about." Now it can. ■

To learn more about APLA's legacy giving program, contact Associate Director of Development Joel Wyatt at 213.201.1564 or jwyatt@apla.org.

As some ramp down for the holidays, please remember that we must continue to ramp up. We cannot afford long holiday closures or lost ground. We simply can't leave the thousands who depend on us out in the cold.

Thank you for being with us. ■

Craig E. Thompson,
Executive Director

DEVELOPMENT Corner

Give a Gift of Hope

For many, the end of each year is marked by celebration and generous gift-giving. During this holiday season, we hope you will remember to make your year-end contribution to AIDS Project Los Angeles. Your donation is tax-deductible and allows us to continue providing programs and services to more than 10,000 people each year.

Your financial support helps us to continue to provide vital programs and services including home health care; residential support to assist clients in securing safe, affordable housing; dental services through our freestanding and mobile dental clinics; and a range of multimedia prevention and education programs that reach many thousands of people throughout the county and beyond.

There are a number of ways to consider giving to APLA:

- Employee giving programs
- Individual gifts
- Matching gifts
- Tribute giving
- Legacy giving
- Corporate sponsorship
- Monthly giving through the Sustaining Partners program

Our Development staff is available to provide you with additional information about our work and how your gift makes a difference to support people living with or at risk for HIV/AIDS.



For additional information on making a donation to APLA, please contact Joel Wyatt at 213.201.1564 or at

jwyatt@apla.org.

Make a Difference

HONOR A LOVED ONE



A memorial gift is the perfect way to honor the life and work of a loved one while supporting our dental clinics, HIV youth prevention program, and more.

To learn more, call Joel Wyatt at 213.201.1564 or send an e-mail to jwyatt@apla.org

HOST A HOLIDAY PARTY



Bring your friends and family together in the true spirit of the holidays. Host a holiday party to give back to your community. Over 63,000 people live with HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles, and 10,000 of them are APLA clients who need the support of donors like you. In lieu of holiday gifts, ask your guests to bring a donation of funds or canned food for APLA clients. APLA offers food and vital services throughout the holidays, and we can't do it without supporters like you.

DONATE YOUR OLD VEHICLE



Is an old car, truck, or boat taking up space in your garage? Consider donating your vehicle (whether it still runs or not) to support APLA. We'll tow away your donation free of charge, you'll get a tax deduction, and proceeds from the sale of the vehicle will benefit APLA programs and services. Learn more by visiting apla.org and click the "Giving" option.

BE OUR FRIEND



Become our friend on Facebook and get first news of APLA events and action alerts. We'll keep you current on the HIV/AIDS news you need to know—and we'll never post annoying photos on your "wall." Link to us on Facebook (and YouTube or Twitter) at apla.org.

... Growing Pains *continued from page one*

"Robert was my first client 10 years ago," says Stacey, a veteran social worker with APLA's Home Health Program. "I've watched him completely transform and blossom over the years. I'm so proud of him."

Coughlin says the years of drug addiction and self-neglect also left him with barely any teeth and that APLA dentists helped him get his smile back.

With that new smile, he says his diet improved, and with a better diet, he came to develop higher self-esteem.

Twenty-seven years after his initial

diagnosis, the years of AIDS treatments have left Coughlin's body with painful arthritis. He recently underwent invasive hip replacement surgery and with the help of his APLA home health nurse,

Jeannie, "I am able to stay independent," he says.

Today, Coughlin is a successful, certified organic vegetable grower; his plump heirloom tomatoes,

juicy watermelons, and exotic collections of boutique lettuces are a continuous reminder of his own personal growth and incredible transformation. ■

"... after APLA connected me to NOLP, the agency helped me access affordable housing. I was beginning to regain self-worth that I didn't even know I had lost,"

Please Join Today—Become a Sustaining Partner

Sustaining Partners is a special program developed to help uphold the work and mission of APLA by providing reliable financial support for vital programs and services.

By pledging a monthly gift using a credit card or check, you provide stable support to APLA and its services.

The Auto-Pay Plan option is easy and convenient. Preauthorized monthly giving saves time, money, paper, and postage. Moreover, you can change or cancel at any time. Best of all, your monthly

contribution of \$10 or more will allow us to have a predictable revenue source that will enable us to maintain services and programs to those in our community who most need them—services like in-home care for our most fragile clients, free food for those who face HIV and hunger, housing assistance, HIV prevention, and much more.

If you would like to become a member of the Sustaining Partners Program, please see the form below, or visit the **Donate Now** page of our website at apla.org. ■

Mission Statement

AIDS Project Los Angeles is dedicated to: improving the lives of people affected by HIV disease; reducing the incidence of HIV infection; and advocating for fair and effective HIV-related public policy.



YES!

I want to become a member of APLA's **Sustaining Partners Program** and help APLA provide vital programs and services to those living with HIV/AIDS!

My name: _____

My address: _____

My e-mail address: _____

My monthly contribution: \$10 \$15 \$20 \$25 \$_____

I authorize AIDS Project Los Angeles to deduct the above amount each month from my credit card as indicated above. I understand I can change the amount or cancel at any time.

Please charge my: VISA MasterCard American Express Discover

Card Number: _____ Expiration date: _____

Signature: _____

I've enclosed a check payable to APLA.

Send this form along with your donation in the enclosed envelope. Thank you!

APLA
AIDS Project
Los Angeles

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