



# thewellproject

ANNUAL REPORT 2019





# Virtual **Connection** Real **Impact**



ANNUAL REPORT 2019

## Letter from the Executive Director



In early 2020, as we reflected upon 2019, we decided to focus our annual report on the power of connection, as it is a foundational element of our work. Connection counteracts isolation and stigma. It creates an environment that facilitates creativity and fosters empowerment through knowledge sharing. And, perhaps most important, connection just feels good – it lifts our spirits to know that we are in it together.

**And then COVID-19 entered all of our lives.**

As we started to wrap our heads around this new pandemic, it became clear that everything was about to change and that many of the inequities faced by our community were further amplified by COVID-19. In response to heightened fears about COVID-19 and amidst global lockdowns, The Well Project worked quickly to identify ways to meet the needs of our community. We implemented new programming, including educational resources and a series led by and for women living with HIV to cultivate connection and well-being.

**But the spring of 2020 wasn't done yet. On May 25, George Floyd was brutally murdered by police in Minneapolis.** This atrocity, another in a long line of police murders of Black people, inspired outrage, protest, and action around the U.S. and the world. We, especially our Black and Brown community members, found ourselves in further pain – and consumed by a hunger for radical, long-overdue change.

Addressing this pain will take long, hard work. It will require us to dismantle the institutional, structural, and systemic forms of racism that undergird our society. It will require those of us with privilege (like me) to be co-conspirators and actively fight for racial justice. We know that we have work to do within The Well Project and ourselves and are fully intentional about combatting racism with every step forward. As a team, The Well Project is also committed to exercising our right to vote and being highly engaged in the U.S. election process over the next several months.

For nearly two decades we have been connecting people from diverse backgrounds, building community through a virtual platform, and lifting up the commonalities of our experiences. Our goal remains to ensure that every woman living with HIV has the opportunity to sit at every change-making table she wants. We will continue to do everything in our power to make sure that all women living with HIV—Black, Brown, white, trans, cis, young, old—have access to the tools they need to manage their health and well being and live fully and free from stigma.

We are committed to strengthening our partnerships in these extraordinarily challenging and ever-evolving times. None of us is alone, even when we feel isolated. When we come together, the change we can effect is multiplied and magnified.

**We are honored to stand beside you,**

Krista Martel  
Executive Director

COVER ART designed by artist Farah Jeune, who utilizes her love for art as a tool for social change and works to uplift the voices of people living with HIV. The inside cover art (above), designed by Sweet Potato Design, was our original report cover, conceptualized in April 2020 after the emergence of COVID-19, but before the social uprising against racial injustice in the wake of George Floyd's murder.

**MISSION:**  
**To change the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic** through a unique and comprehensive focus on women and girls



**VISION:**  
**We envision a world in which women living with or vulnerable to HIV have the information, support, and tools they need** to advocate for their health and well-being and live a life free from stigma.



## MISSION AND VISION

**The Well Project's mission is to change the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic** through a unique and comprehensive focus on women and girls. We envision a world in which women living with or vulnerable to HIV have the information, support, and tools they need to advocate for their health and well-being and live a life free from stigma. How do we do that? By leveraging technology to dramatically improve health outcomes and quality of life for women living with HIV.

### EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

**We are committed to building agency and health literacy** among women living with HIV by developing and providing access to culturally responsive, scientifically accurate, women-focused HIV information. Our comprehensive library (in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) of educational fact sheets and slide sets addresses a wide range of issues related to HIV and women's health. We regularly review and update all of our content to ensure scientific accuracy and create new content based on gaps that we identify with our [community advisory board](#) (CAB).

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**The HIV community has demonstrated over and over again that we are stronger together** than we are alone. The Well Project works to foster a strong and engaged global network and community of women living with HIV through our English and Spanish blogs, [A Girl Like Me](#) and [Una Chica Como Yo](#), the online community that we nurture through our website, and our social media efforts.

### ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP

**The Well Project supports leadership development of women living with HIV** to help advance the next generation of HIV advocates. We offer programming that enhances treatment advocacy and capacity building among women living with HIV, including a [webinar series](#) addressing topical issues and paid opportunities for our bloggers and CAB members (such as presentations at scientific, advocacy, and policy conferences, and others).

### COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT

**The Well Project develops mission-aligned partnerships** to advance common goals with some of the most important leaders in the HIV community, including [30 current collaborators](#). We take seriously the role of lifting up one another's work and ensuring that all of our endeavors add value by uniquely addressing gaps in current programming and resources.

### WOMEN-FOCUSED RESEARCH

**The Well Project identifies opportunities to advance the research agenda on women** and ensure the implementation of evidence-based strategies. We founded the [Women's Research Initiative on HIV/AIDS \(WRI\)](#) to advocate for "more, better and faster research" in HIV in women, which we do by bringing together an extraordinary group of leaders in HIV to identify key opportunities to accelerate our understanding of HIV in women.

#missionvision

# 2019 AT-A-GLANCE

## DEVELOPED 5 NEW FACT SHEETS

- 1 Women, Gender, and Sexuality: Identity, Attraction, Connection, and Community
- 2 Advocating for Women Living with HIV in Prisons or Jails in the U.S.
- 3 Women and HIV in U.S. Prisons or Jails, Moving Forward
- 4 Living with HIV: Considering Education or Training
- 5 Economic Empowerment Resources for People Living with HIV

## PRESENTED AT 5 NATIONAL CONFERENCES:

- 1 IAPAC Adherence Conference
- 2 USCA
- 3 Let's Talk about Sex
- 4 ANAC Annual Conference
- 5 Iris House Summit

## PROVIDED HONORARIA (18) & SCHOLARSHIPS (12)

to women living with HIV (including CAB members/ bloggers) to attend/present at conferences and webinars



**PUBLISHED THE WELL PROJECT 2018-2019 SURVEY REPORT:**  
*Together, We Are... Making an Impact*

**HOSTED WRI 2019:** *Women Living with HIV Over the Long Term and Across the Lifespan*; created and disseminated issue brief

Providing ongoing counsel to U.S. government on **Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE): A Plan for America**

**AUTHORED SIGN-ON LETTER TO PRINCIPALS OF EHE:**  
signed by >100 organizations, 300 individuals

## 6 NEW ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS

Black AIDS Institute   Visual AIDS   Life and Love with HIV  
Positive Support (PS, Women)   Transgender Strategy Center  
National Working Positive Coalition

AND MORE!

**>3.6 MILLION**  
*reached with online content + social media*

**16,000**  
**WELL PROJECT MEMBERS**

Nearly **19,000** social media followers



**>1.7 MILLION IMPRESSIONS**  
ACROSS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

**PUBLISHED 135 BLOGS**  
*by women living with HIV*

**FIFTEEN NEW BLOGGERS ADDED**



## TOP 10 COUNTRIES REACHED BY THE WELL PROJECT

1. United States
2. Philippines
3. Mexico
4. India
5. South Africa
6. United Kingdom
7. Columbia
8. Canada
9. Spain
10. Argentina

## CREATE & REGULARLY UPDATE

**170 fact sheets** (120 English, 45 Spanish, 2 Hindi)  
**52 slide sets** (33 English, 19 Spanish)

**SPANISH FACT SHEETS**  
**>448,000 impressions**

## TOP 5 FACT SHEETS IN 2019

1. Sexually Transmitted Infections or Diseases
2. Oral Sex: What's the Real Risk? (Spanish)
3. What are HIV & AIDS
4. HIV-Related Pain (Spanish)
5. Oral Sex: What's the Real Risk? (English)

#ata glance



# Building **Advocacy**

Supporting and helping to develop a strong network of women leaders who are living with HIV is a core focus for The Well Project. Why? Because community leaders:

- Inspire others living with HIV to end their own self-stigma and value their worth
- Advocate for the needs of their community and impact policy and research
- Galvanize others to become leaders themselves

When asked to assess The Well Project's influence on their advocacy development, women living with HIV responded they were **"somewhat" or "much" more likely to:**

**81%**

Advocate for the needs of others living with HIV



**80%**

Advocate for my own needs when I seek care and support



**69%**

Join an advisory board for an HIV organization



**67%**

Take on a leadership role in an HIV advocacy organization



**66%**

Speak at an HIV-related conference



**64%**

Engage with media about HIV-related issues



**62%**

Join an HIV planning council



*"The Well Project has breathed so much life in me. They allowed me to know that I have a voice and that my voice is worthy to be heard. I feel like I have sisters in this diagnosis that I can call on for almost anything. They allow me to explore new skills and support me along the way."* – Ciarra Covin, Community advisory Board (CAB) member

*"As an African-American woman born with HIV, The Well Project has provided me with a platform to reach out and connect with these populations. I want to inspire people who grew up with HIV to not only survive, but to LIVE their lives out loud, and to the fullest — UNAPOLOGETICALLY and without any SHAME."*

– Porchia Dees, CAB member



# and **Leadership**



*"The Well Project allowed me to find a safe and supportive space to publicly work out my feelings of stigma, self-doubt, and shame. The Well Project uplifts and elevates cis and trans women equally and is thus an organization I will continuously support."* – Aryah Lester, CAB member

*"The Well Project has given me the opportunity to reach the masses and has supported me to be independent through work! And, I have been able to mentor cis and trans women who were living in silence, many of whom have grown into huge advocates all over the world."*

– Maria Mejia, CAB member, Global Ambassador



*"The Well Project has motivated and inspired me and enhanced my HIV knowledge and advocacy skills. They have built up my hope, allowing me to give back to my community by bridging the gap of HIV information in Nigeria."* – Abosede Olotu, CAB member, Global Ambassador

*"The Well Project was the first organization to take me under its wings and allow me to express and be myself with nothing but love and acceptance. They help expand your knowledge and training to bring you to the tables to make a difference."*



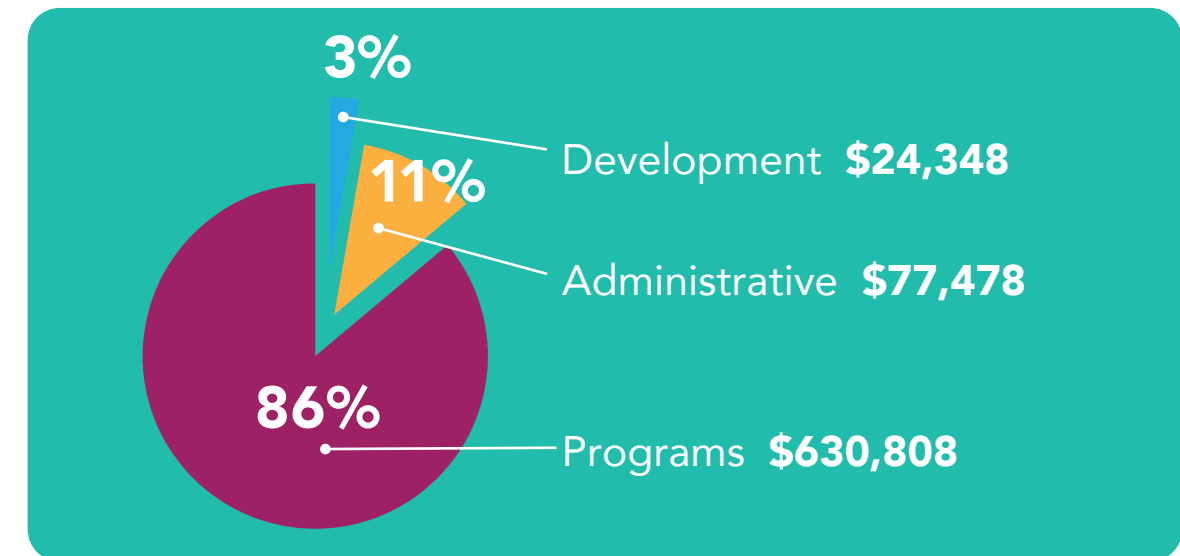
*"I use The Well Project to add fuel to my fire so that I don't forget my WHY, to remind myself that I am not alone. The Well Project has played a beautiful role in my survival in that I no longer had to dig to find diverse voices of this epidemic."* – Masonia Traylor, CAB member

Graphic portraits of CAB members  
created by Farah Jeune @studiojeuneart

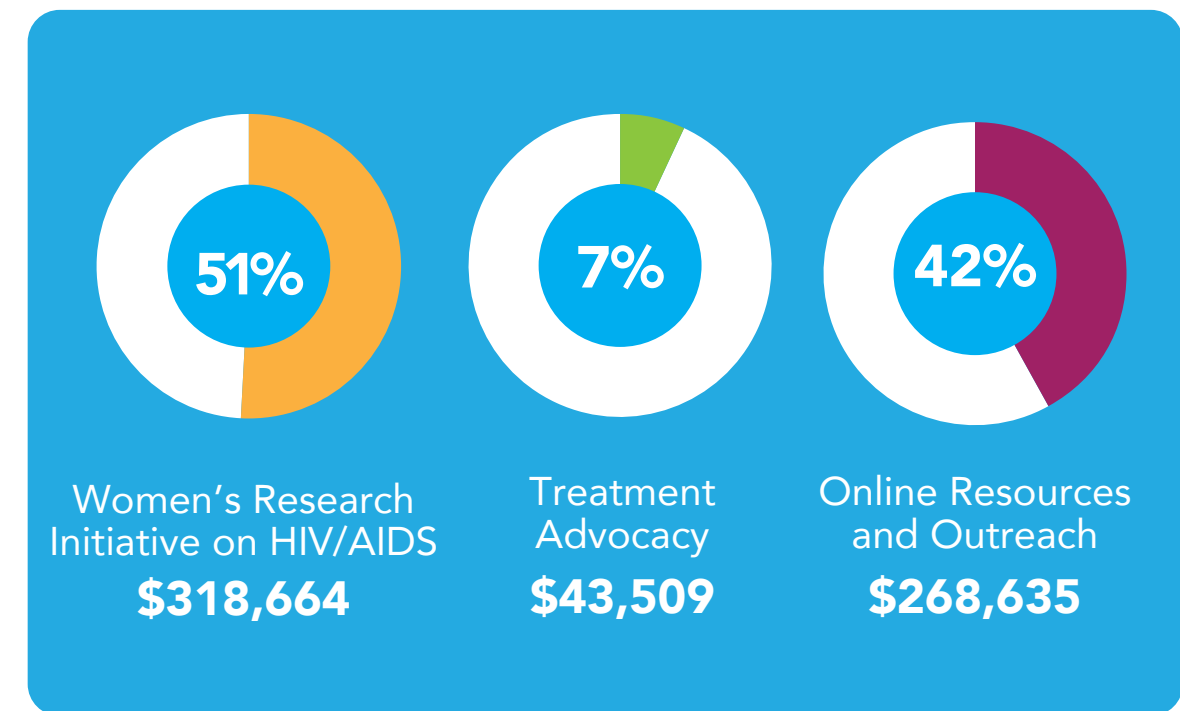
## Sources of Revenue: TOTAL=\$1,411,972



## Expenditures by Function\*: \$732,634



## Expenditures by Program: \$630,808



\*Does not include non-cash expenditures from in-kind donations of \$548,454.

# 2019 SUPPORTERS

## FUNDERS

We are profoundly grateful to the following organizations that support The Well Project through grants and donations.

- Amazon Smile
- Allstate Cybergrants
- Dick and Sandi Averitt Foundation
- Gilead Sciences
- Janssen Therapeutics
- Merck
- ViiV Healthcare

## IN-KIND DONORS

We deeply appreciate the following individuals and organizations that donate their services to The Well Project.

- Judith D. Auerbach, PhD
- Google Ad Grants
- Kim Reed
- Underwood & Roberts, PLLC

## PARTNERS

We have the profound honor of working with organizations that share our vision of connecting women living with HIV across the globe to each other and to lifesaving information. We are humbled to be part of such a remarkable community that over and over again has endeavored to change the world.

- Advocates for Youth
- AIDS Foundation of Chicago
- AIDS United
- Arianna's Center
- Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC)
- ATHENA
- Be-PrEPared
- Black AIDS Institute
- Christie's Place
- Empowered/Greater than AIDS
- HIVE
- Housing Works
- International Association of Providers in AIDS Care (IAPAC)
- International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW) North America
- Iris House
- Latino Commission on AIDS
- Life and Love with HIV
- National Black Leadership Commission on Health, Inc.
- National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day/Office of Women's Health
- National Working Positive Coalition
- Please Call Me By My True Names
- Positive Support
- Positive People Network
- Positive Women's Network – USA
- POZ
- Prevention Access Campaign (U=U)
- SisterLove, Inc.
- SMART
- The Afiya Center
- The Center for HIV Law and Policy
- The Women's Collective
- TheBody.com
- Transgender Law Center
- Transgender Strategy Center
- Until There's a Cure
- U.S. Women and PrEP Working Group
- Until There's a Cure
- Visual AIDS
- Women's HIV Program at UCSF
- W.O.R.L.D.

## DONORS

The Well Project's annual fundraisers increase awareness about the organization, expand our funding base, and support our activities. Thank you to everyone who was able to make a donation in 2019.

- Mark Abramson
- David Adler
- Rukayat Ajayi
- Matt Ammentorp
- Karen Ammentorp
- Shelby Ann
- Judith Auerbach
- Dorothy Auerbach
- Dawn Averitt
- Dick & Sandi Averitt
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- Beth Wright-Blaszczak
- Artra Wynn
- Marvelous Yeukai
- Shum Yum
- Evelyn Zachary
- Carmen Zorrilla

#gratitude

# LEADERSHIP

## Team

- **Kelly Bower**, operations manager
- **Jenna Conley**, communications director
- **Lisa Fitzpatrick, MD**, medical editor
- **Olivia G. Ford**, managing editor
- **Darlene Harden-Fuller**, art director
- **Juliana Hawawini**, director of operations and online resources
- **Barbara Jungwirth**, consulting editor
- **Krista Martel**, executive director
- **Maria Mejia**, global ambassador
- **Theresa Mack, MD, MPH**, medical editor
- **Bose Olotu**, global ambassador
- **Lauren E. Richey, MD, MPH**, medical editor

## Community Advisory Board

- **Kimberly Canady**, New York, U.S. (emeritus)
- **Gina Brown, MSW**, Louisiana, U.S.
- **Ciarra Covin**, Pennsylvania, U.S.
- **Porchia Dees**, California, U.S.
- **Jyoti Dhawale**, India
- **Aryah Lester**, Washington DC, U.S.
- **Arianna Lint**, Florida, U.S.
- **Tiommi Jenae Lockett**, Arkansas, U.S. (emeritus)
- **Vicki Lynn**, Florida, U.S. (emeritus)
- **Maria Mejia**, Florida, U.S.
- **Bose Olotu**, Nigeria
- **Ieshia Scott**, Florida, U.S.
- **Destiny Smith**, Iowa, U.S.
- **Wanona Thomas**, Georgia, U.S.
- **Masonia Traylor**, Georgia, U.S.

## Board of Directors

- **Judith D. Auerbach, PhD**, board co-chair, University of California, San Francisco
- **Dawn Averitt**, emeritus board member, founder
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- **Jennifer Kates, PhD**, Kaiser Family Foundation
- **Krista Martel**, The Well Project
- **Linda H. Scruggs**, Ribbon Consulting Group
- **Fulvia Veronese, PhD**, DAIDS, NIAID



**Join us.**

Together, we can change the course  
of the HIV epidemic... **one woman at a time.**

Visit [www.thewellproject.org](http://www.thewellproject.org) to access:

#EducationandInformation

#CommunitySupport

#AdvocacyandLeadership

#CollaborativeEngagement

#WomenFocusedHIVResearch



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#connect



#virtualconnection

#realimpact

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