

# one ♀ at a time







## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Reflecting on the past year, I can only describe 2012 as a banner year in the fight against HIV. The International AIDS Conference (IAC) came back to the U.S. for the first time in more than 20 years, after the lifting of the travel ban prohibiting HIV-positive individuals from entering the country. In the U.S., the first over-the-counter, at-home HIV test was approved, allowing individuals to receive their results privately. For the first time, a medication preventing the transmission of HIV became available. And news about HIV was everywhere. Coverage about the election described candidates' voting records on HIV and AIDS. Women and HIV were highlighted in the public debates about the Affordable Care Act and attacks on Planned Parenthood.

2012 was also a big year for The Well Project. We launched our first mobile app, in an effort to better serve our growing global audience. We brought together eight of our *A Girl Like Me* bloggers from around the world at IAC. The Women's Research Initiative on HIV/AIDS annual meeting in March was one of our most successful yet and we followed it up at IAC with a panel presentation that attendees described as enlightening and empowering.

All of these activities have created an amazing sense of momentum for the organization. Our goal, to fill the need for women-focused HIV information and research, has never been more important than it is today. Despite huge advancements, some things haven't changed: every minute of every day, a young woman is newly infected with HIV.

As always, our efforts in the coming year will encourage women and girls to empower themselves and their communities. We will continue to roll out our multi-tiered global initiative to provide an online space where women in even the hardest-to-reach areas will be able to find the treatment information and support they seek in their own languages.

We look forward to updating you on our progress through our e-newsletter, Twitter, and Facebook. And as always, we thank you for your partnership and support – we could not do this without you.

Thank you,

Dawn Averitt

*Founder and chair of the board*



## OVERVIEW AND MISSION

The Well Project is a non-profit organization whose mission is to change the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic through a unique and comprehensive focus on women and girls. We do that by focusing on three areas: **information access, targeted research, and community support.**

- The Well Project creates web-based and live programs that provide education, advocacy, and awareness tools.
- We identify gaps in research and care for women and move the research agenda forward.
- Our programming nurtures and supports women and girls living with HIV, their caregivers, and health care providers.

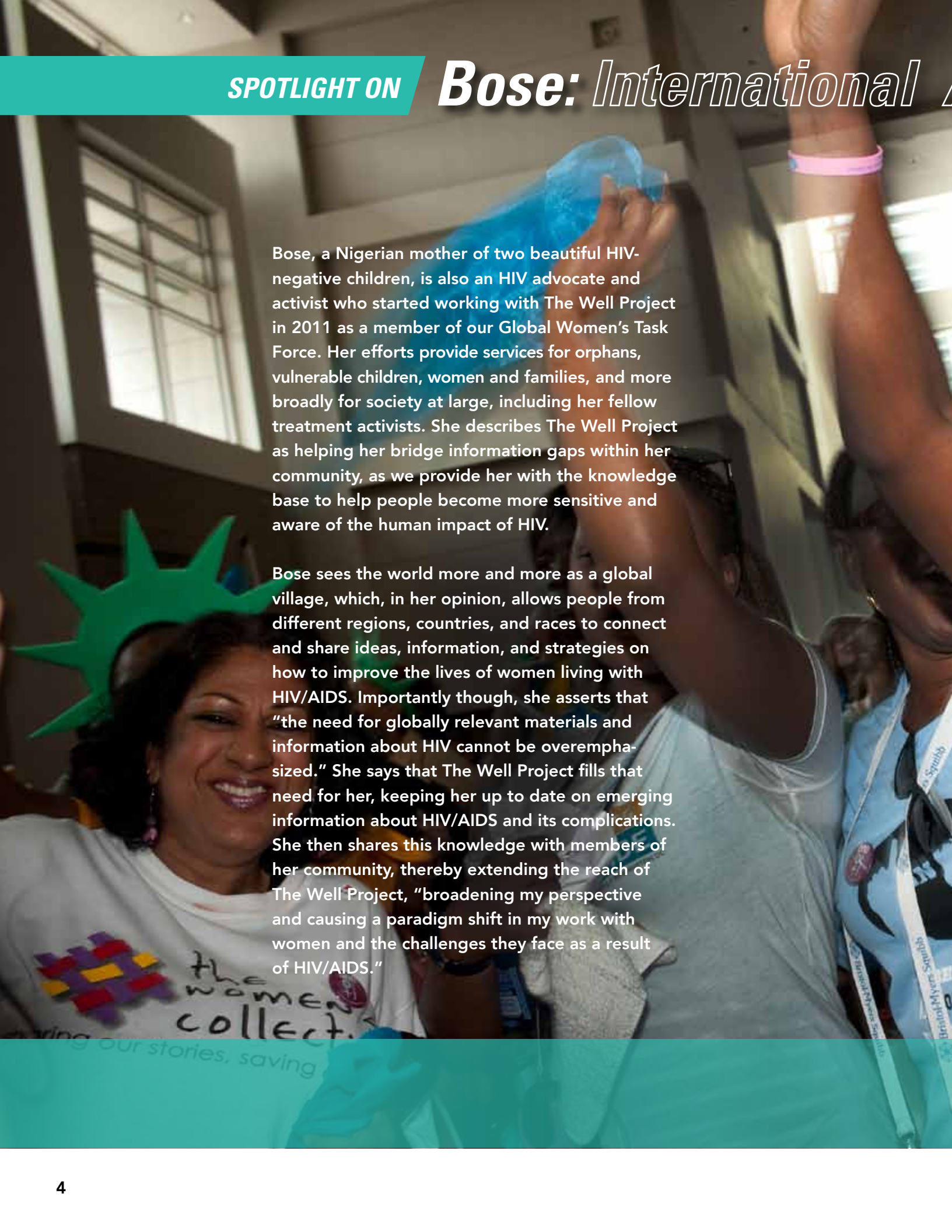
The Well Project is recognized as leading the charge for women and girls living with HIV. A recent survey demonstrates the impact of our work:

- 73% said that because of The Well Project, they felt less alone and isolated.
- More than 50% of users said The Well Project decreased their self-stigma, positively impacted their self-esteem and enabled them to improve their self-care, including mental health, nutrition, and exercise.
- 30-40% credited The Well Project with improving their adherence to medication, access to health care, communication with their health care provider, and/or their practice of safer sex.



Together, we  
can change the  
course of the  
Hepidemic...





Bose, a Nigerian mother of two beautiful HIV-negative children, is also an HIV advocate and activist who started working with The Well Project in 2011 as a member of our Global Women's Task Force. Her efforts provide services for orphans, vulnerable children, women and families, and more broadly for society at large, including her fellow treatment activists. She describes The Well Project as helping her bridge information gaps within her community, as we provide her with the knowledge base to help people become more sensitive and aware of the human impact of HIV.

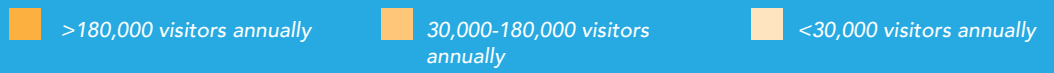
Bose sees the world more and more as a global village, which, in her opinion, allows people from different regions, countries, and races to connect and share ideas, information, and strategies on how to improve the lives of women living with HIV/AIDS. Importantly though, she asserts that "the need for globally relevant materials and information about HIV cannot be overemphasized." She says that The Well Project fills that need for her, keeping her up to date on emerging information about HIV/AIDS and its complications. She then shares this knowledge with members of her community, thereby extending the reach of The Well Project, "broadening my perspective and causing a paradigm shift in my work with women and the challenges they face as a result of HIV/AIDS."



# Advocate



***"The need for globally relevant materials and information about HIV cannot be overemphasized."***







## INFORMATION ACCESS

Our online global resources provide easy-to-understand, accurate, current information on HIV/AIDS for women and girls. The Well Project's award-winning English and Spanish web portals attract more than 1 million unique visitors each year from every country in the world and feature more than 150 articles covering medical, personal, and cultural topics related to both HIV-positive and negative women and girls. Initially developed as a U.S.-based resource in 2002, today the number of visitors from India surpasses those from the U.S. Other countries with a very high number of annual visitors include Mexico, U.K., South Africa, Spain, Philippines, Argentina, Australia, and Colombia.

In 2012, The Well Project launched our first mobile application, to better serve our growing global constituency, many of whom increasingly rely on mobile phones or tablets to access information. This was the first step in a multi-tiered global initiative that will exponentially expand the reach of our current web content in an effort to:

- Provide an online space where women in even the hardest-to-reach areas can find treatment information and support in their own languages
- Enable the global community of women and caregivers to contribute locally relevant knowledge and content, as well as their own experiences



Tonia, who has been involved with The Well Project since it was founded more than 10 years ago, has been an integral player in the fight against AIDS since 1989 when she began volunteering at an AIDS service organization in college. As a physician assistant, she devoted her clinical practice to providing compassionate, knowledgeable medical care to people with HIV, with a special focus on women. Having recently completed her PhD, she now works as the key populations advisor in the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator where she is responsible for providing evidence-based technical assistance to U.S.-funded international programs on HIV prevention, care, and treatment services for populations at highest risk. She currently serves on the executive committee for the Women's Research Initiative on HIV/AIDS (WRI), a body that is responsible for convening the annual think-tank style meeting.

She describes the WRI as a unique and fulfilling experience. "I look forward to our annual gatherings where I get to spend two to three days with a brilliant, interdisciplinary group of people who are committed to making a difference in the epidemic by focusing on women living with and at risk for HIV. WRI provides a rare space away from the business of our regular lives, in which we can leverage our creative thinking and planning to identify and address the gaps in HIV research among women."

A close-up portrait of a woman with dark skin and long, thick dreadlocks. She is wearing glasses with a silver frame and a green top. She is smiling slightly and looking off to the side. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

## *e Committee Member*

***“WRI provides a rare space away, in which we can leverage our creative thinking and planning to identify and address the gaps in HIV research among women.”***







## TARGETED RESEARCH

The Women's Research Initiative (WRI) was established to elevate, enhance, and expedite HIV treatment and prevention research on women and girls and identify gaps in clinical care and research. The Well Project created the WRI in 2003 to address the critical questions about HIV/AIDS in women that remain unanswered. Our annual meeting, an expert, transdisciplinary think tank, brings together national HIV/AIDS thought leaders representing clinical care, research, academia, advocacy, government, the pharmaceutical industry, and women living with HIV.

In March 2012, The Well Project hosted the annual WRI meeting, with a focus on *Contextualizing Women's Lives: Enhancing HIV Research and Care for Women Living with and at Risk for HIV Disease*. The meeting highlighted the need to consider the context in which HIV enters and becomes a part of women's lives in order to execute appropriate and effective HIV prevention and treatment for women. To read the report generated from this year's meeting and learn more about the WRI and our members, please [click here](#).

In July, the WRI hosted a symposium at AIDS 2012, entitled "Women In HIV Research: Effecting Change," featuring WRI members who addressed the challenges and opportunities affecting U.S. women's participation in HIV research and delved into strategies for optimizing their inclusion, retention, and health outcomes.



Maria is an internationally known activist who has worked as a peer educator, motivational speaker, HIV trainer, small business owner, and blogger for *A Girl Like Me*, a program of The Well Project. Diagnosed at the young age of 16, Maria is passionate about educating young girls about prevention as well as ending the stigma attached to HIV. For the last three years, she has been writing about her experiences as an HIV-positive woman and describes her work with us as “impacting me deeply. Especially when someone living in shame tells me that I have inspired them or given them hope. I benefit so much from that! Showing my face and writing about my experiences living with HIV for almost 24 years empowers me and helps me by helping others.”

Maria says that The Well Project and *A Girl Like Me* serve as important resources for her as she conducts outreach to women and girls around the world. They serve as an “endless fountain of information, providing different views on women and girls from all over the world.” In Maria’s mind, what differentiates *A Girl Like Me* is that “it is a place where women can really come together; although men come to the website...it truly focuses on us and on our experiences.”



# *Me Blogger*



***"I feel that showing my face and writing about my experiences living with HIV for almost 24 years empowers me and helps me by helping others."***









## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The *A Girl Like Me* blog ([www.girllikeme.org](http://www.girllikeme.org)) is a unique online global support community that increases awareness and decreases stigma for women and girls with HIV by enabling them to share their stories and experiences in a safe space. *A Girl Like Me* normalizes HIV/AIDS and increases self-advocacy while addressing stigma, discrimination, and the need for enhanced leadership and advocacy for women and girls affected by HIV. The blog currently features more than 20 active bloggers representing diverse experiences from the U.S., South Africa, India, Uganda, Nigeria, U.K., and Canada.

In July 2012, The Well Project hosted the “A Girl Like Me...with HIV,” booth in the Global Village of the International AIDS Conference, and provided scholarships to eight *A Girl Like Me* bloggers from the U.S., Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda. Visitors from all over the world were able to meet the bloggers and learn about the power of this online global community of women supporting women. The Well Project’s presence in the Global Village was a huge success, and further enabled us to strengthen our partnerships with other organizations around the world as we seek to better serve our ever-growing global audience.



**Together, we can change  
the course of the HIV epidemic...**

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## LOOKING AHEAD

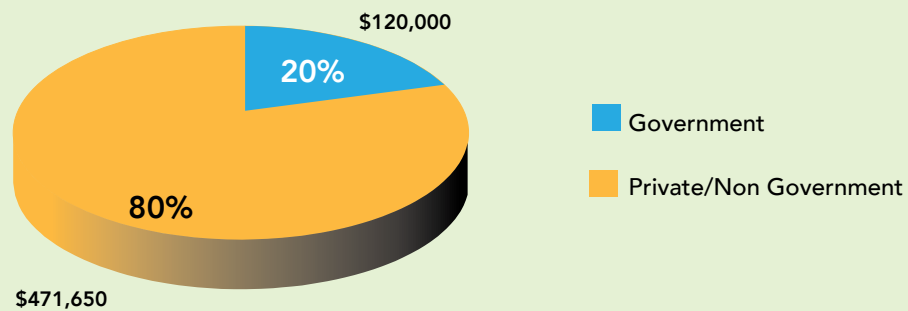
Since 2002, The Well Project has developed programs to increase awareness about HIV/AIDS, expand treatment research, promote better standards of care, educate women on how to manage living with HIV, provide a support community to HIV-positive women, and increase the participation of women in clinical trials. We have directly served more than 10 million people who have used our information to serve an additional estimated 30 million men and women living with HIV/AIDS globally.

Since its founding, The Well Project has shifted from a primarily U.S.-based resource to a global one, with more than 70 percent of our annual 1.3 million visitors coming from outside of the United States. This shift has led us to reevaluate how we best tailor our information and its delivery. The launch of our first mobile app in 2012 was only the first in a multi-tiered global initiative that we are undertaking to ensure that we better serve the global community of women and girls living with HIV. Our goal is to dramatically increase our reach, utilizing novel technologies to increase the availability of current, accurate, and relevant information about HIV for women around the world. Ultimately we believe that by working together with others around the globe, we can change the course of the HIV epidemic...one woman at a time.

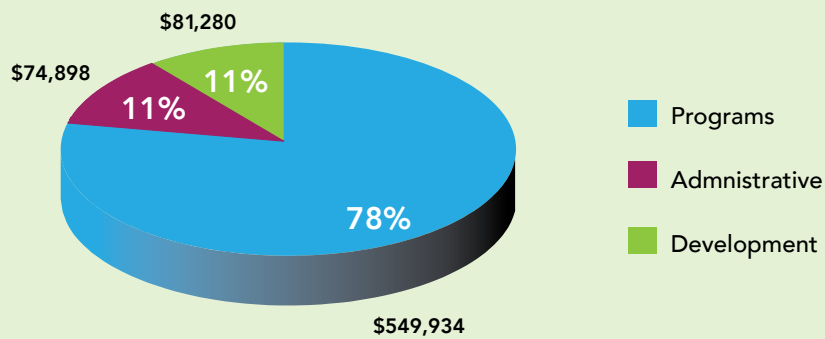


# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

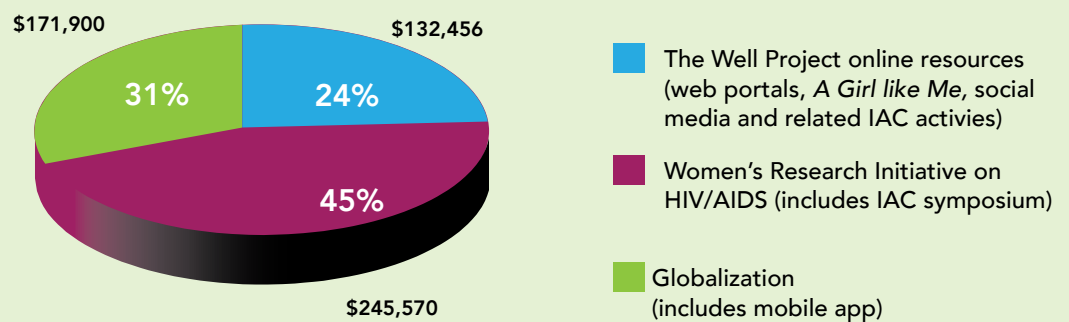
## Sources of Revenue



## Expenditures by Function



## Expenditures by Program







## OUR PARTNERS – TOGETHER WE CAN

The Well Project gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our funding partners through unrestricted grants and donations in 2012.

- ♀ AIDS United
- ♀ Bristol-Myers Squibb
- ♀ eBay
- ♀ Gilead Sciences, Inc.
- ♀ Google Grants
- ♀ Individual donors
- ♀ Janssen Therapeutics
- ♀ Merck & Co., Inc.
- ♀ Office of AIDS Research – National Institute of Health
- ♀ ViiV Healthcare – Positive Action Program

The Well Project is committed to working with similar mission-driven organizations to help us mutually attain our goals more efficiently and increase the reach of our programs. Key 2012 partnerships/ collaborations include:

- ♀ ATHENA Network/Women's Networking Zone (AIDS 2012)
- ♀ I am...Women Living with HIV (international photography project)
- ♀ JBS International
- ♀ mHealth Alliance
- ♀ National HIV Awareness Month
- ♀ The Body
- ♀ Positive Women's Network – United States of America





## OUR TEAM

**Richard Averitt**, co-founder

**Jenna Conley**, communications consultant

**Juliana Hawawini**, web coordinator

**Jennifer Johnsen, MD, MPH**, contributing writer and editor

**Krista Martel**, director of online services

**Susan Richardson, MN, MPH, CFNP**, medical editor

**Tonia Poteat, PhD, MMSc, PA-C, MPH**, medical editor

**Kelly Womack**, operations manager

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Abby Charles**, Institute for Public Health Innovation

**Kim Reed**, Reed International Law & Consulting, LLC

**Maura Riordan**, AIDS United

**Valerie Scott**, The Strategic Continuum Company

## WRI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Judith D. Auerbach, PhD**, consultant, San Francisco AIDS Foundation

**Dawn Averitt**, The Well Project

**Elizabeth Connick, MD**, University of Colorado, Denver

**Monica Gandhi, MD, MPH**, University of California, San Francisco

**Tonia Poteat, PhD, MMSc, PA-C, MPH**, Office of the U.S. Global AIDS coordinator

**Kimberly Struble, PharmD**, Food and Drug Administration





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Stephanie Gross

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Sweet Potato Design, LLC

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*The Well Project advocates that every woman and girl has the right to access quality, current information about HIV/AIDS, which can mean the difference between survival and death. "Together, we can change the tide of the HIV epidemic... one woman at a time."*



#### INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES

**THE WELL PROJECT (NEWS AND ARTICLES):**  
[www.thewellproject.org](http://www.thewellproject.org)

**WOMEN'S RESEARCH INITIATIVE  
ON HIV/AIDS (WRI):**  
[www.womensresearchinitiative.org](http://www.womensresearchinitiative.org)



#### CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

**A GIRL LIKE ME BLOG:**  
[www.girllikeme.org](http://www.girllikeme.org)



[facebook.com/thewellproject](https://facebook.com/thewellproject)



[twitter.com/thewellproject](https://twitter.com/thewellproject)



#### ON THE GO!

**MOBILE APP:**  
available on iOS & Android  
(Search: [thewellproject](#)) to view The Well Project's articles and *A Girl Like Me* blog on your smartphone!

#### CONTACT US!

**EMAIL:** [update@thewellproject.org](mailto:update@thewellproject.org)  
**PHONE:** 888-616-WELL (9355)

#### SUPPORT THE WELL PROJECT!

To find out how you can make a tax-deductible donation or support The Well Project, please contact [kmartel@thewellproject.org](mailto:kmartel@thewellproject.org).



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



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