

DOING NON-PROFIT DIFFERENTLY



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022

A portrait of Larry Scott-Walker, a Black man with long dreadlocks, smiling and looking slightly to the left. He is wearing a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt. The background is a solid dark color.

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, **LARRY SCOTT-WALKER**

**‘I HAVE
COMMITTED MYSELF TO
REMOVING THE SHAME
OF LIVING WITH HIV’**

June 5th, 2007 was the day my life would change forever, "Mr. Walker, your test is reactive. Did you have an idea?" My mind began to race. "How could I? I knew better. My life and worth have changed forever!" I thought that because I worked at a community-based organization and was no stranger to HIV and its impact on the Black gay community, I should have been able to avoid finding myself a part of the statistics. Never once did I consider that the trajectory of my life, having been raised in an abusive environment and having endured many adverse childhood events, were the true causes for my being highly susceptible to contracting HIV. The residents of East Baltimore, like most inner-city Black neighborhoods, have likely never heard the term social determinants of health, though their situations are largely dictated by them. They're not having access to fresh foods, clean parks, adequate education, safety, and employment play a much larger part in their overall development than they know. When approached, in 2014, by Daniel Driffin, about taking on this "new project," a support group for Black gay men living with HIV, I turned him down immediately. Unbeknown to him, though I was comfortable with him knowing my status, I was still largely ashamed and insecure. It would not be until I would learn that my sister has been living with HIV for 24 years secretly and had fallen extremely ill, that my mind would change. I thought that if maybe I had been more forthcoming with my sister about living with HIV, maybe we could have supported one another. I never wanted anyone else to have to deal with HIV alone. Unfortunately, my sister would never recover to her once vibrant self, and now she exists in supportive care, unable to walk, speak, or care for herself. To honor my sister and all of those who have lost their fight against HIV, I have committed myself to removing the shame of living with HIV, as stigma is the root cause of much of the death we were and are seeing all around us.

Since 2015, my mission has been to help my community to Transform HIV Resentments Into Victories Everlasting, understanding that the only way we THRIVE is by addressing the totality of what we as a people traverse against. To date, we have provided innovative solutions that have fostered community for more than 4,000 Black and Brown people living with HIV. We have revolutionized what linkage to medical care and community look like. With culturally responsive programming such as the "Project Griot" storytelling project, we have reshaped the narrative of what it means to be a Black gay man THRIVING with HIV. With this 2020-2022 Plan to strategically forge into the future, we endeavor to continue to innovate as a way of invigorating and liberating our communities. We are using what we are constantly learning to inform our programming and to incubate and grow smaller newer Black grassroots organizations, setting them up for success. Utilizing our community connection and creativity, we will chart a new course forward that elevates not only Black people living with HIV, or any other co-morbidity; rather, we are building solutions that will elevate the community as a whole.

My first of many personal experiences regarding HIV started way back in 1994 when I found out the person I looked up to and admired more than anyone else in the world had fallen ill, and I didn't know why. At the time, no one told me what happened because they didn't think I would be able to handle it. I was entering into my senior year of college, and I felt lost because the one person that meant the most to me wasn't going to be there. Even though we talked, it was never about his illness. I never knew my cousin had contracted HIV and was given 6 months to live. I made the decision to leave school, taking my senior year off to be by his side. This is when I found out the severity of my cousin's illness and learned he was living with HIV. Although he was my first cousin, he was really more of a big brother to me, and now he needed me. As I watched his painful decline, a reality set in that HIV would forever be a big part of my life's journey. When my cousin ultimately passed away, it took something away from me... but it also gave me so much more. It sparked something inside of me that I didn't know existed. Much of my focus for the past 25 years have been for him and my own healing. The next 25 will be for me leading and following while being a part of ending the HIV epidemic. THRIVE SS has a special place in my heart. I see how THRIVE SS participants and leaders are full of courage and faith. I wish I had that same constitution some 15-20 years ago to step out on courage and faith. Back then, I did what I had to do. My commitment to THRIVE is to be in both leadership and "followership" in a way that is strategic and meaningful.

FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR, **ERNEST WALKER**

to ensure THRIVE SS is in a position of LEADERSHIP to become the "go-to" agency that supports the individual needs of their clients and the capacity building needs of agencies locally, nationally and internationally. My vision for THRIVE SS is to not only be a major resource to the Black LGBTQ+ community but the entire black community, to act as the conduit addressing the social determinants of health.

Our Charge is to be always and not limited to: Health Care, Housing, Community beautification (owning and appreciating where we live), Self-love, and Activism.





OUR **MISSION**

TO ACHIEVE HEALTH EQUITY FOR BLACK GAY MEN THROUGH DIRECT SUPPORT, ADVOCACY, AND BUILDING COLLECTIVE COMMUNITY POWER.

OUR **VISION**

TO END DEATH, STIGMA, AND SHAME FOR BLACK GAY MEN LIVING WITH HIV.

OUR **PHILOSOPHY**

WHEN IMAGINING AN ANSWER TO THE MYRIAD OF QUESTIONS AND UNMET NEEDS COMING OUT OF THE HIV LANDSCAPE, WE KNEW THAT WE WOULD BE CREATING NEW SOLUTIONS BORROWING FROM THE FRAMEWORKS CREATED FOR US BY BLACK PIONEERS IN THE FIGHT FOR HEALTH EQUITY. AS EARLY AS OUR FIRST MEETING, WE HAVE CREATED A LANGUAGE AND CONCEPTS TO AFFIRM OUR EXISTENCE. WE CREATED THRIVE AS A REMINDER OF OUR COLLECTIVE POWER AND RESILIENCY. WITH LEADERS LIKE RON SIMMONS AND DAZON DIXON DIALLO IN OUR SIGHTS, WE COMMITTED THAT OUR ENDEAVORS BE UNAPOLOGETICALLY AND AUTHENTICALLY REFLECTIVE OF BLACK CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES. OUR EFFORTS ARE FORGED OF THE RICHNESS OF OUR COLLECTIVE WORLDVIEWS AND CELEBRATORY OF DIVERSITY.



OUR VALUES

OUR VALUES ARE INTEGRATED INTO OUR
POWER BUILDING MODEL:

WE OPERATE WITH
QUALITY FIRST..THEN GROWTH

WE SERVE WITH **COMPASSIONATE CARE**

WE CONDUCT OURSELVES WITH **TRANSPARENCY**

WE BELIEVE IN **TRUTH SEEKING**

THRIVE IS A **WE MOVEMENT**

WE LEAD WITH **INTEGRITY**

WE BUILD **TRUST**

WE FOSTER **INNOVATION**

ABOUT THRIVE SS

THRIVE SS is a 501c3 nonprofit organization located in Atlanta, GA that created the Undetectables Model - a tiered peer support model that combines online support, traditional in-person support, and friend/social/ "Judy support" - to address issues that Black people living with HIV face. In the United States, many people of color living with HIV have trouble reaching viral suppression or "Undetectable" status, disclosing their HIV status to partners, family, and friends, addressing their hierarchy of needs (shelter, employment, medical care, and gaining support). On May 4th, 2015, THRIVE SS was formally established to provide support to Black gay/bisexual men living with HIV in the Atlanta metro and a portal through which to share pertinent, lifesaving information and build community.

By 2019, the agency had achieved several accomplishments:

- 1) Hosted hundreds of events, health forums and meetings
- 2) Produced many HIV self-love and acceptance campaigns
- 3) Increased membership to 860 Black gay/bisexual men and 205 Black women in the Atlanta metro area.

We have been able to replicate this model in other high prevalence jurisdictions around the country (Tennessee, California, South Carolina, North Carolina, and the District of Columbia). We hope that the amazing outcomes we have seen in Atlanta will be mirrored in cities like yours so that we can continue to reduce the community viral load and, by doing so, reduce the number of new infections.

Source: <https://www.thrivess.org>.



THE LONG GAME

The following section provides a high level, long-range view of the future THRIVE SS. As such, these pillars are bold, innovative, and progressive, to match the agency's mission to advance community power collectively. The ultimate goal is to design and catapult programs that are:



100%
FOR AND BY
PEOPLE LIVING
WITH HIV

100%
VIRTUALIZABLE

100%
PORTABLE

100%
AMAZING

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS / THRIVE365 APP

THRIVE will host a series of community conversations that will center the lived experiences, feedback, and recommendations of Black SGL (gay, bi, queer) cis and trans men living with HIV. With the feedback gleaned from these spaces, THRIVE will create the THRIVE365 mobile application. This app acts as portal to the health and wellness for the user. A space tailored to the needs and specifications of the user; this app will not only bring people of like minds and experiences together it will provide information vital to THRIVING with HIV. By placing at the fingertips a virtual concierge to address the user's social determinants of health, we hope to support them being their healthiest selves. Also built into the app are places to provide vital feedback regarding HIV care provision, issues related to COVID or just everyday challenges, so that we are able to be constantly responsive to the needs of our users, members, and community. The most exciting feature is that it will provide a means of peer support for those living with HIV.

THE LONG GAME CONTINUED

THRIVE TA CENTER (SEPTEMBER 2020)

THRIVESS.org/TA - Technical Assistance (TA) will be formally launched with a landing page that will serve as a menu for CBOs and Health Departments across the country/globe who have challenges reaching our target demographic. These partners will receive TA from capable people living with HIV in establishing THRIVE SS programs, groups, or services in their areas.



ITHRIVE CYBER CLINIC (BY DECEMBER 2021)

THRIVE, listening to the needs expressed by our members, is beginning to reimagine what care provision looks like for Black and other marginalized communities. We understand the unique challenges and perspectives that come from the Black experience and have created a model that provides high-level, holistic care. Being Black people living with HIV, we know how to design systems of care that do the least amount of harm and come with the fewest barriers possible. This cutting-edge model takes the best of existing care models and melds them in a way that enlists, emboldens, and accommodates PLWH.



2019 STRATEGY MAP

I. OPERATIONALIZE OUR NICHE-UNDERSTANDING AND REPRESENTATION OF BLACK GAY MEN LIVING WITH HIV

1

Brand and Implement power-building principles embodying a “WE MOVEMENT”

2

Establish approved workplan for programs, training and community mobilization

3

Set forth agreement on power building and empowerment approaches & pillars - well-being self-love empowerment etc.

4

Formalize criteria setting and vetting process for new programs, special events, services and grants

5

Create and professionalize models and curricula packages for copyrighting and possibly publishing

6

Assess global, national and regional trends impacting health, social and economic equity for Black Gay Men Living With HIV and factor into 1-5



2019 STRATEGY MAP

II. PROFESSIONALIZE INFRASTRUCTURE



1

Formulate Accountability DNA [Infrastructure Focus - Bylaws, Job descriptions, Evaluations & Performance Reviews, Legal Requirements, Fundraising Goals]

2

Establish Communications process; standardized policies and procedures

3

Recruitment and Orientation, Training and Onboarding Process for Board members, new staff and volunteers

4

Establish Annual process for Financial projections and Budgeting; regularize quarterly benchmarking

5

Develop Sustainability Plan with goals

6

Complete Audit and address fiscal controls

7

Assess Physical Space & Technology Needs and Plan

2019 STRATEGY MAP

III. INNOVATE ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

1

Brand Mantra - "Quality First, Then Growth"

2

Finalize Vision, Mission & Values

3

Develop and execute HIV Counternarrative for Black Gay Men
Project Griot, Silver Lining Project

4

Define and Harness Community Capital: "Buy-In"

5

Formalize Governance Structure and Guidelines for Board

6

Future, differentiated programming and reach [example Regional TA/CBA Center];
Explore Fee for-Service opps - Marketing, trainings, Retention services, UTrack (intervention)

7

Brand and Implement power-building principles embodying a "WE MOVEMENT"





2038 STANTON ROAD EAST POINT GA 30344
404 267-1519
WWW.THRIVESS.ORG



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