

CHOICES

THE NEWSLETTER OF HAWAII ISLAND HIV/AIDS

April

06



Bush Abstains From Appointing HIV Experts

by Lucile Scott

March 15, 2006—An antigay pastor with no HIV-related experience is to be sworn in tomorrow in Washington to help advise President George W. Bush on how best to fight the epidemic. The president hasn't been one to shy away from making openly political appointments to the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA)—or from otherwise beefing up “abstinence-only” influence on government policy and funding. But some of his critics say he has gone too far in choosing the Reverend Herbert Lusk.

“The appointment of a minister who is essentially homophobic is very disturbing,” says Ronald Johnson, a PACHA member under President Clinton who is now associate executive director of New York's Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC). Adds Julie Davids, head of the Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project (CHAMP), “[Lusk's] positions will lead to more infections, more stigma and more marginalization.”

The reverend, who presides over the Greater Exodus Baptist Church in Philadelphia, is on the board of the antigay group Alliance for Marriage and has worked alongside Focus on the Family, one of the nation's most politically powerful right-wing Christian groups. What advocates like Johnson and Davids are asking is this: How will Lusk square his abstinence-till-marriage and anti-same-sex-marriage crusades with PACHA's mission to develop programs for a disease in which the majority of infections are still among gay men?

Carrie Gordon Earll, senior policy analyst for bioethics at Focus on the Family, told POZ of Lusk, “It's a free country, and he can oppose same-sex marriage if he wants to. It's a stretch to assume he cannot help people in this community just because of that.” Lusk himself did not respond to an interview request.

Four other new PACHA panelists will join Lusk at tomorrow's swearing-in, including Alan Homer, former president and CEO of Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)—the nation's largest drug lobby, with a long record of battling efforts to distribute less expensive, generic HIV drugs.

What makes PACHA members different from most other presidential appointees is that they are selected and continue to serve without any congressional input. That wasn't always a problem. When the panel was founded under President Reagan in 1987 (at first, as the President's Commission on the HIV Epidemic), it was considered a more balanced and science-driven body. Effectiveness often won out over political expediency—to the point where PACHA publicly lambasted Reagan's HIV policy. Bush Sr. continued that tradition with the appointment of an outspoken Magic Johnson, and Clinton followed suit.

“The [Council] was independent,” recalls Ronald Johnson of his time on PACHA. “We directly challenged President Clinton; and at one point, even gave his prevention policies a public F, because he wouldn't legalize needle exchanges.”

All that changed with George W.—starting with the day in 2001 that he threatened to disband the body completely. “It's not even worth discussing what role this committee could serve,” says Davids of PACHA's panelists now. “Because all they are is a rubber stamp for bad administration policies.”

CONTENTS

HIHAF	2
NEWS	3
NEWS	4
POZ People	5
NUTRITION	6
TAX INFO	7
NOTICES	8
NOTICES	9

CHOICES

is a publication of the
Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation
75-240 Nani-Kailua Dr. Suite 5
Kailua-Kona, HI. 96740
Phone: 331.8177
Fax: 331.0762
E-mail: hihaf@hihaf.org

16-204 Melekahiwa Pl.
Kea'au, HI. 96749
Phone: 982.8800
FAX: 982.8802

Georgie Kennedy/Executive Director

Staff Hilo

Kate Nawahine/Benefits Specialist
Kelly Sullivan/Treatment Advocate
Cindy Medeiros/Shelter coordinator-Medicaid
Jeff Seyfried/Prevention Services to PLWH
Cyd Hoffeld/Prevention for Women & Teens
Daron Scarborough/Prevention
Wailana Simcock/Prevention, MSM
Keli'i Wilson/TG Outreach
Bob Kraus/Office Assistant

Staff Kona

Wing Takakuwa/Treatment Advocate
Terry Hollowell/Benefits Specialist
Gene Smith/Client-Prevention Services-P4P
Victor Manongdo/Mens Prevention
Mark Kimbell/Medicare-Medicade Services
Wes Smith/Office Manager
Ginny Cohen/Fund Development
Dennis Walsh/Administration Assistant
Pia Wadkins/Accounting Assistant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. James Stanley/President
Barbara Zacchini/Secretary
Melissa Geiger/Treasurer
Philip Hema
Joanne Iritani
Dr. Anne-Marie Muramoto
Barbara Zacchini
Ed Henrickson

Editorial Policy

The articles contained in this publication are meant to inform and entertain only. They do not constitute an endorsement. The publication of any name or image does not necessarily imply anything about that persons condition, health or sexual orientation. The opinions expressed are those of individual authors and do not necessarily represent official positions of HIHAF or any other organization mentioned herein. Contributions of articles and other materials for publication are encour-

Hawai'i Island HIV/AIDS Foundation

Mission Statement

The Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting those affected by HIV/AIDS to maximize their quality of life, and to ending the spread of HIV. We also utilize the lessons learned in the HIV epidemic to care and advocate for others in the fight against related diseases.

Vision

To build a healthier, stronger, and more sustainable community that supports all its members with a focus on HIV issues.

Core Values

Responsiveness: To people with HIV/AIDS and their families and to the prevention education needs of the community.

Accountability: To our consumers, funding sources, and the community at large.

Integrity: To provide services to the entire community in a humane, loving, non-judgmental manner.

Diversity: To embrace the philosophy of "inclusiveness".

Collaboration: To establish and maintain partnerships within the community that maximizes resources and decreases duplication of services.

Leadership: To set the highest standards for responsibility to our mission, vision and values, and be recognized as a positive, inspirational role model in our community.

Advocacy: A collective public voice to speak on behalf of those affected by HIV/AIDS.

In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt.



Margaret Atwood

D.C. and Maryland Not Naming Names?

March 13, 2006—The District of Columbia and Maryland may lose federal AIDS funds if they don't comply with CDC rules on reporting HIV infections by name instead of encrypted code, according to the Washington Post. HIV is the only disease ever reported to states by code instead of name, and many advocates of no-name privacy are now supporting a switchover.

China Detaining AIDS Protesters

March 7, 2006—People with HIV demanding better treatment are among the protesters and activists being detained this month in China, according to the Associated Press. A special 10-day legislative session now underway in Beijing has traditionally been a time to voice grievances from around the country—and just as predictably, the season for government officials to detain and harass the petitioners.

NEWS

Home HIV Tests Face a Test

March 14, 2006—An FDA advisory committee has told OraSure Technologies that the company's rapid HIV test might win approval for over-the-counter sales if the company can prove the test is effective at home. The debate is between the value of getting more people tested and fears for those testing positive without immediate access to counselors.

First Annual Women's HIV Day

March 10, 2006—Eighty-three percent of new U.S. infections between 2001 and 2004 were among African-American and Latina women, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports on the first annual National Women and Girls HIV Awareness Day. Younger women are especially vulnerable—making up 38% of new infections among Americans under 25.

15 Years For Not Disclosing

March 3, 2006—An HIV positive man in British Columbia, Canada, was sentenced to 15 years in prison yesterday for failing to inform seven women that he was HIV positive before having unprotected sex with them. Canada prosecutes such cases under sexual assault law

Los Angeles County's Ryan White grant cut by \$1.9 million

The federal Ryan White AIDS grant to Los Angeles County for 2006 has been cut by \$1.9 million, and federal HIV prevention funds to the county have been slashed by \$400,000, reports AIDS Project Los Angeles. The county is set to receive \$34.9 million in Ryan White funds for the year, down 5.2% from last year's funding level. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is allocating \$12.8 million to the county for HIV prevention programs in 2006, down 2.9% from 2005.

More than 57,000 HIV-positive people live in Los Angeles County, about 5% of the nation's total HIV cases.

"Los Angeles is losing ground in the fight against AIDS," said APLA executive director Craig E. Thompson in a press statement. "We've lost 12% of our Ryan White funding since 2003. The only growth we've seen is in demand for services, the cost of providing care, and the county bureaucracy."

The county Office of AIDS Programs and Policy is working with the Commission on HIV and the county board of supervisors to streamline the office's allocation of federal AIDS dollars, including eliminating inefficiencies and making the funding process more transparent. APLA's Thompson also said the office must cut down the amount of money it spends internally, currently about 20% of the county's total AIDS budget.

Ryan White funds provide medical and dental care to low-income Los Angeles County HIVers, as well as such vital services as food banks, transportation, and mental health counseling. (*The Advocate*)

Mortality higher among HIV-positive patients during illicit drug use

Last Updated: 2006-03-06 16:33:10 -0400 (Reuters Health)

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - HIV-infected patients who persistently use cocaine and heroin are at increased risk of opportunistic infections, disease progression, and death compared with nonusers, investigators in Baltimore report. Among patients who use illicit drugs intermittently, their risk is as high as that of persistent users while they are using, but the risk drops when they are abstinent.

To assess the longitudinal association of drug use with HIV disease progression, Dr. Gregory M. Lucas, at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and his associates surveyed patients every 6 months using confidential computer-based interviews, starting in 1998.

As reported in the American Journal of Epidemiology for March 1, the 1851 participants included 1028 nonusers, 588 intermittent users (defined as using drugs a median of 14 days in the prior 6 months), and 235 persistent users (using drugs a median of 27 days in the prior 6 months).

At 3 years, the estimated survival rates were 87% for nonusers, 80% for intermittent users and 68% for persistent users ($p < 0.0001$ compared with nonusers).

After adjustment for age, race, gender, nadir CD4 cell count, and peak HIV RNA level, the hazard ratio of death was 1.9 among intermittent users and 2.9 for persistent users.

During periods of abstinence the risk of developing new opportunistic infections was similar to that of nonusers (odds ratio 1.4). The risk was closer to that of persistent users (OR 2.1) when intermittent users were actively using drugs (OR 2.3).

Results were similar for disease progression, with ORs of 1.3, 1.6 and 1.9, respectively, compared with nonusers.

Red Cross calls for end to ban on gay blood donors

Officials from the American Red Cross, speaking at a recent blood donation conference in Maryland, called for an end to the federal government's ban on gay and bisexual blood donors, the *Washington Blade* reports. A Food and Drug Administration policy in place since 1985 bans donations from any man who's ever had sex with another man—even one time—since 1977. Even gay men who've tested negative for HIV antibodies and those who are in monogamous relationships are barred for life from donating blood. Government officials, when launching the ban, said it was needed to guarantee the safety of donated blood in the country since gay men were significantly more likely to be infected with HIV than heterosexual men.

But the Red Cross is now joining with the American Association of Blood Banks and America's Blood Centers in calling for an end to the lifetime ban on gay donors.

"The AABB, ABC, and ARC believe that the current lifetime deferral for men who have had sex with other men is medically and scientifically unwarranted and recommend that deferral criteria be modified and made compatible with criteria for other groups at increased risk for sexual transmission of transfusion-transmitted infections," the groups said in a joint statement issued at the advisory panel meeting, reports the *Blade*.

Because of advances in blood-screening technology, the ban on gay blood donors is unnecessary since virtually all infected blood—from both heterosexual and gay donors—is caught in the screening process. Instead of barring gay donors, prospective donors of all sexual orientations should be asked about any recent risky sexual activity, particularly in the three weeks prior to donating blood, as it is possible for very early HIV infections to be missed during blood screening.

The American Association of Blood Banks in 2000 lobbied for an end to the lifetime ban of gay blood donors, calling instead for a one-year deferral for all gay-male donors. The Red Cross, which supplies about half the nation's blood supply, was opposed to the proposed change, but the organization now says that with better screening methods in place it is now comfortable in calling for an end to the gay ban.

FDA officials were unavailable for comment, reports the *Blade*. (Advocate.com)

Truth Be Told

Well, I finally did it. After threatening for four years (in my “Anonymous” column in the pages of this magazine) to disclose my status—I now stand before you. Please allow me to introduce myself: I’m your new HIV positive editor in chief (yes, that’s me on the cover). After living in secret for nearly a decade, I decided it was time to share my status and my story with you.

Why now? Because there’s a real need for positive people to be visible—AIDS needs to be in the spotlight again. In his speech on World AIDS Day last December, POZ founder Sean Strub alerted us to the dangerous decline in our influence and voice, particularly within the AIDS service organizations (ASOs) founded by people with HIV to protect and serve us. (Missed his speech? Read it on POZ.com.) I’ve always had tremendous appreciation for the work of AIDS activists of the ’80s and ’90s. Lately, their good work is being undermined. Changes in the Ryan White CARE Act, ADAP budget cuts and the Christian Right’s dangerous obsession with abstinence-only HIV prevention upset me. Awareness and prevention efforts in this country are not where they should be: AIDS is a preventable disease, yet last year there were more than 40,000 new infections in the U.S., including higher numbers of women and people of color than ever before. Not to mention that the stigma surrounding the disease, even after a quarter-century of education efforts, is still so severe that many with HIV feel they have to live in shame and secrecy.

Despite my desire to speak out, my temptation to remain silent was huge, right up to the moment I made my final decision. (After all, it’s one thing to disclose anonymously and another thing to put your name and face on a magazine about AIDS.) I liked feeling and being treated like a perfectly healthy person. But hearing too many times what people really think about HIV/AIDS and the people who have it—a frightening reality—inspired me to tell my tale and the truth of HIV.

From the moment I first read POZ in 1996, it empowered and inspired me by connecting me to the HIV/AIDS community and giving information I found invaluable when making decisions on how best to live with the disease.

POZ’s tradition of editorial excellence will be enhanced because we recently joined forces with AIDSmeds.com, one of the world’s most reliable sources on HIV/AIDS (stay tuned for more exciting news about AIDSmeds.com in May). Like Sean, AIDSmeds.com founder Peter Staley is HIV positive and a highly respected AIDS activist. Together, they helped establish an empowered AIDS movement. It’s an honor to be asked to help them with their ongoing mission—found in the pages of POZ and at both POZ.com and AIDSmeds.com. Fortunately, I have their help, as well as an outstanding staff.

As with many difficult things, it’s easier to turn away from the truth of HIV than it is to face it. But looking it square in the eye is the first step in beating it, and that goes for society at large as well as for every person with the virus. Here’s to continuing the fight.

Regan Hofmann
Editor-In-Chief
POZ Magazine
e-mail: editor-in-chief@poz.com



Food Play

Life with HIV can make a puzzle of good nutrition. Match each food with its health benefit:

1. Kiwi
2. Garlic
3. Cinnamon
4. Cherries
5. Broccoli
6. Buckwheat noodles
7. Onion
8. Cranberries



- Contain antioxidants that boost insulin and lower blood sugar.
 B. May lower blood sugar (they did so in diabetic rats in a study).
 C. Its compounds may boost sugar metabolism.
 D. Its antioxidants may protect against cancer and heart disease.
 E. Have more of a key antioxidant than any other common fruit.
 F. Holds a compound that seems to lower the rate of bone loss.
 G. May relieve gastritis and help block stomach and skin cancer.
 H. May defend against carcinogenics in charbroiled meat.

Answers on page 9



Hawaii Site Listings for Tax Season 2006

A Volunteer Return Preparation Program (VRPP) Sponsored by
AARP Tax-Aide, Internal Revenue Service (IRS), State of Hawaii Department of Taxation,
Armed Forces, Community Organizations & Educational Institutions

FREE TAX HELP

Do you need help with your income tax return? You may want to visit a volunteer site. Trained and certified community volunteers can help you with some tax credits for which you may qualify. AND, this help is absolutely FREE!

This program offers help with preparation of basic Federal and Hawaii State income tax returns for those who cannot prepare their own tax returns and have low-to-moderate income (\$38,000 and below). Special services are also available for the Armed Forces, disabled, limited English speaking, and/or the elderly.

The AARP Tax-Aide designated sites give special attention to those who are age 60 and older. The HABC designated sites give special attention to EITC returns. Check this site listing for the volunteer site nearest you or **call 24 hours daily (FREE 24/7) for the latest updates:**

AARP Tax-Aide at 1-888-227-7669; or

Aloha United Way at 877-275-6569 or AUW Hotline at 211(Toll free 24/7)

Are YOU eligible for the Refundable EARNED INCOME CREDIT?

Do you qualify for the maximum Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) of \$4,400 for tax year 2005? If you have a valid Social Security Number (SSN) and at least \$1 of earned income (such as, wages, salaries, or tips) and meet certain other requirements, then you may be eligible for the EIC!

Ask a volunteer for help in figuring the credit or visit the IRS Web site to check if you qualify by using an interactive tool ONLINE—the **EITC Assistant**.

Get a FREE copy of **Publication 596, Earned Income Credit**, by mail or by downloading from the IRS Web site at:

www.irs.gov



FREE electronic filing (IRS e-file) of your Federal and Hawaii State income tax returns is available at most volunteer sites. It is a fast and accurate way to file and get your refund in half the time. Direct Deposit of your Federal refund is FREE and goes directly into your bank account in about 7 to 10 days. If you owe tax, you can e~file early and electronically designate payment for a later date in a single step. And, YES!—Your Electronic Signature means no more postage stamps. Ask about the Self-Select PIN to sign your tax return. Both spouses must be present to sign the tax return if Married Filing Jointly.

A nine-digit site identification number at the bottom of your tax return will identify your return as one of thousands prepared by trained volunteers. It in no way affects the likelihood of an IRS examination (audit) of your return.

WHAT ITEMS TO BRING to the Site?

1. Must bring photo identification.
2. Social Security Card(s) for you, your spouse & dependent(s).
3. Birth date(s) for you, your spouse & dependent(s) on the tax return.
4. Current year's Federal & Hawaii State tax form packets if one received
5. Wage & earning statement(s) Form W-2, W-2G, & 1099-R from all employers
6. Interest & dividend statement(s) Form 1099-INT/DIV from banks.
7. Copy of last year's Federal & Hawaii State income tax returns if available.
8. Bank Routing Transit Number & your Account Number for Direct Deposit of your refund (or electronic funds withdrawal of your balance due). Must show a bank check or document for verification of Savings or Checking Account Number to elect Direct Deposit or electronic funds withdrawal.
9. Other relevant information about income & expenses, such as, unemployment compensation; Social Security Benefits statement(s) Form SSA-1099; total paid for Day Care; Day Care providers identifying number; Tuition statement Form 1098-T; and also to claim possible credit(s)
10. Total rents paid & your landlord's Hawaii Tax ID Number.

Continued on page 8

STARTING JULY 1ST ALL MEDICAID RECIPIENTS WILL HAVE TO DOCUMENT CITIZENSHIP

As of July 1, 2006, people who apply for Medicaid or people who are getting re-certified as eligible will have to provide specific proof of citizenship. The proof must be a birth certificate, passport or certificate of naturalization. (Resident aliens are exempt.)

Medicaid eligibility will be cut off immediately for those who are unable to produce a birth certificate, passport or certificate of naturalization.

In Hawaii Medicaid eligibility is re-certified once a year based on when Medicaid benefits started.

If you need help getting the proof of citizenship necessary to continue your Medicaid benefits or you are thinking about applying for Medicaid, please call Teri in Kona or Kate in Hilo. It takes some time to get a birth certificate, so let us help you right now!

**Sites begin February 1st & end April 15th, 2006; CLOSED on State Holidays (see exceptions).
*** Subject to Changes without prior notification*****

City By County Zip Code Site Name & Address Day(s) Hours & Special Notes Program Type

Hawaii County

Captain Cook	96704	Yano Hall Wednesday 9 AM - 1 PM AARP Tax-Aide 82-6156 Mamalahoa Hwy For Information, call (808) 334-1212
Hilo	96720	Kamana Senior Center Thursday 8 AM - 12 NOON AARP Tax-Aide 127 Kamana Street Appointment required, call (808) 961-8777
Hilo	96720	St. Joseph Church - Conference Room Tuesday 8 AM - 12 NOON AARP Tax-Aide 43 Kapiolani Street Appointment required, call (808) 961-8777
Kailua Kona	96740	AARP Information Center Monday & 1 PM - 5 PM; CLOSED Feb.20 AARP Tax-Aide Royal Kona Resort Hotel Wednesday Appointment required, call (808) 334-1212 Japanese Spoken
Kailua Kona	96740	County Office/ Meeting Room Saturday 8 AM - 2 PM AARP Tax-Aide Kuakini Hwy & Hamana Place
Kailua Kona	96740	Hale Halewai Community Center Thursday 8 AM - 2 PM AARP Tax-Aide 75-5760 Ali'i Drive For Information, call (808) 334-1212
Kamuela	96743	Waimea Senior Housing - Meeting Room Monday & 8 AM - 12 NOON; CLOSED Feb.20 AARP Tax-Aide 67-5165 Kamamalu Street Thursday Appointment required, call (808) 885-4560 thru Apr.17 Anne Gomes



Do you qualify for a low-income refundable Tax Credit? Give Bob a call at 982.8800 to find out and to get information for tax returns.

Answers: 1:D, 2: H, 3: C, 4: A, 5: G, 6: B, 7: F, 8: E

**RUMMAGE SALE
WILL BE ON
SATURDAY
MAY 6
AT
KONA UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
DONATE
VOLUNTEER
BUY**

The Hawai'i Island HIV/AIDS
Foundation offices
will be closed

Monday
May 29
For
Memorial Day

FOLLOW-UP TO SERVICE ARTICLE LAST MONTH

I was extremely surprised that not one client, and there are almost 200 of you, is interested in serving on our Board of Directors.

We are still seeking new board members, if you know of anyone in the community who might want to serve, please contact me.

Georgie Kennedy, Executive Director

Free and Anonymous HIV Testing Locations and Dates

Free and anonymous HIV testing and counseling is available to the public on a regular, on-going basis. The testing is confidential and totally needle free.

Hilo/Kea'au

Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation – Kea'au Office
Shipman Business Park – 16-204 Mele Kahiwa Place,
Suite 1

Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:00pm

Pahoa

Pahoa Family Health Center, Pahoa Village
Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of month, 9:00am-
12:00pm

Kona/West Side

Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation – Kona Office
75-240 Nani Kailua Drive, Suite 5

In the Pines Plaza , Kailua-Kona

Monday-Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm

West Hawaii Community Health Clinic

Every Friday from 1:00pm-4:00pm

Special Dates and Locations

Saturday, February 11 – 9:00am-1:00pm


Kalani Honua Café (Hwy 137 – "red road")

For more information on testing and additional testing dates and times, please call us at 982-8800 (Hilo) or 331-8177 (Kona)

April 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Anuenue Potluck
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Support group Hilo 5:00 pm	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

May 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 LEI DAY	2	3	4	5 RUMMAGE SALE	6 Anuenue 
7	8	9	10	11	12 SEE PAGE 9	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Support group Hilo 5:00 pm	24	25	26	27
28	29 Closed Memorial Day	30	31			