

# THE NIA ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2011

Volume 4, Issue 1

## *When Care Meets Concern*

For Nia, we have traditionally worked in the area of prevention; but for most of us, we joined Nia because we have been affected by the disease and for others, it's more personal.

Knowing the challenges with meeting basic needs do the economy and other personal factors, coupled with the constant threat of budget cuts from the Republicans, providing basic items for those infected with HIV/AIDS is becoming more of a challenge.

Nia, while we always ask and encourage you to join us at our sponsored events, which are normally free to attend, we are asking your support for this fundraiser to benefit the Ryan White Greater Bridgeport HIV/AIDS Consortium.

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Greater Bridgeport HIV/AIDS Care Consortium  
Presents

## **"RED Night Out"**

Friday-May 20, 2011  
7pm - 12am

Tickets: \$25 per person

Red Dress Code Required

**Ramada Inn**

225 Lordship Blvd  
Stratford, CT

**Door Prizes**  
**Raffles**  
**Silent Auction**  
**Vendors**

*Fundraiser  
to Benefit  
the Client  
Emergency  
Fund*

*Entertainment  
Food & Fun*

For tickets call:  
Latisha B. (203) 690-7994  
Betty Lorde (203) 953-4443  
L.J. Pollard (203) 394-7375

### RYAN WHITE GREATER BRIDGEPORT HIV/AIDS CONSORTIUM

Is a collective group of agencies that provide client emergency assistance, health needs fund and case management services to persons and families with HIV/AIDS in the Greater Bridgeport area.

All proceeds from **RED NIGHT OUT** will benefit the Client Emergency Fund, which provides basic needs for individuals living with HIV/AIDS in the Greater Bridgeport area. Please, bring a friend!

*Week of Prayer Close-out Service and Nia Cohort Graduation*

Shiloh Baptist Church will host its Annual Youth Concert Jamboree as a close out service for the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS, which for Nia has traditionally included a full month of services to engage houses of worship in the City of Bridgeport and the surrounding areas.

Please join us on Sunday, March 27 for dinner and a spirit filled afternoon featuring local, area gospel choirs, praise dancers, mimes, and more. Dinner starts at 3pm and the program will begin promptly at 4pm.

Shiloh Baptist Church, 477 Broad Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604

During this event we will also present certificates of completion to our newest Nia Alliance graduates.

**Congratulations to:**

**Valerie Billingsley  
Sandra Fisher  
Tiffani Green  
Karen Simmons  
Mescha Wilson**

*We hope you can join us in fellowship!*

*In the News...*

[HIV Transmitted from a Living Organ Donor --- New York City, 2009](#)

Routine screening of organ donors for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection has made transmission of HIV through organ transplantation rare in the United States. However, despite routine screening, transmission of HIV can be an uncommon complication of organ transplantation and is a public health concern. In 2010, the New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC DOHMH) was notified of a potential transplant-related HIV infection. This report summarizes the results of the subsequent public health investigation, which confirmed HIV transmission through transplantation of an organ from a living donor.

Reported by the CDC in their Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)  
March 18, 2011

*(PLEASE CLICK ON THE TITLE "HIV Transmitted..." TO ACCESS FULL ARTICLE)*

*A focus on HIV in the Caribbean - St. Lucia*

## SAINT LUCIA



### COAT OF ARMS

**MOTTO:** “The Land, The People, The Light”

<b>CAPITAL:</b>	CASTRIES (Largest City)
Language(s):	English, French-based Creole
Demonym:	<b>Saint Lucian</b>
<b>GOVERNMENT:</b>	Parliamentary Democracy & Constitutional Monarchy
Monarch:	Elizabeth II
Governor:	Dame Pearlette Louisy
Prime Minister:	Stephenson King
<b>INDEPENDENCE:</b>	From the United Kingdom, February 22, 1979
<b>POPULATION:</b>	173,765 (2009 Census)

#### STATISTICS:

Since the first case of HIV was diagnosed in Saint Lucia in 1985, a total of 760 HIV cases have been reported through December 31 2009, of these cases a total of 314 (41.3%) have died. Due to improved reporting and an increase in testing in 2009, the country reported 51 new cases of HIV. The age group with the highest HIV incidence continues to be the 25-49 years age group, which recorded 22 cases (43%). It is also noted that Syphilis is the most prevalent Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI), in the general population and among people who were living with HIV. While the trend for new HIV cases is beginning to show a decline, there is an increase in number of AIDS cases and number of deaths over the past 3 years. However, there still exist poor surveillance of groups involved in high-risk behaviors, and under reporting due to stigma and discrimination.

**Heterosexual transmission** accounts for 44% of all reported cases, while close to 50% of the mode of transmission remains unknown. The methods of transmission of HIV infection as a result of unprotected heterosexual intercourse includes:-

- \***Transactional** sex where no cash is exchanged but gifts are given for support supplied.
  - \***Sex for drugs** (crack cocaine) transaction; while injecting drugs is not a problem for St. Lucian, many crack cocaine users have been tested positive for HIV, and
  - \***More traditional- Commercial** sex (sex work) where cash is exchanged for sexual favor.
- In addition, there is a hidden but believed to be substantial population of men having sex with men (MSM) and bi-sexual men who have sex with both sexes. Male bi-sexuality has created a bridge for the virus to migrate between sexes. Since female sex work, male on male sexual contact and crack use are heavily stigmatized and illegal this significant but neglected aspect of the epidemic remains largely unstudied.

*A focus on HIV in the Caribbean - St. Lucia, Continued*

The fear of being found out impedes some to access prevention education and health services that they need to protect them and others from contracting HIV/STI. Many Sex workers (SW) self-medicate using traditional methods to treat (STI's) due to mistreatment by the formal health system - (STI's) increase one's risk of both acquiring and transmitting HIV. In fact, (SW) reported that they charge higher rates for sex without a condom.

It is customary for **young women** to engage in relationships with older men - 26% have sex before age 15 with risky sexual practice (low condom use). Sex is traded to meet basic family needs, food or transport; for some who are already employed, it is viewed as a means to earn a second salary. A 2% infection rate has been reported among prisoners.

**Major Achievements (2005-2009)**

**\*Stabilized** incidence of HIV and reduction in (STI) rate.

**\*Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT):** due to scale up of testing of pregnant women, there has not been a single case of pre-natal transmission of HIV in St. Lucia since 2006 among all those enrolled in care.

**\*Anti-retroviral therapy** has been made widely available, and taken up by two-third of those medically eligible clinic patients registered in clinic, leading to a reduction in both mortality and morbidity.

**\*Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) and Provider-Initiated Testing and Counseling (PITC):** since 2006 outreach efforts have led to an increase in the number of tests from 4,852 in 2005 to 20,430 in 2009, with growing acceptance of the importance of testing. According to records, 25% of all the tests done in 2009 incorporated both pre and post test counseling. This figure though may be an understatement since Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) conducted for 'walk-ins' at the Labs are not always reported. Encouraging clients to return for blood results continue to be challenging for health care workers. Although VCT increased in 2009 from 2008, performance decreased regarding return of clients for results and especially within the two weeks period after the test.

Although in care patients continue to increase, patient enrolment into care and treatment continues to be a challenge. Less than 50% of known PLHIV (People Living with HIV) were enrolled into care in 2009. Despite the fact that some patients access care privately and overseas, some patients are yet to register.

**Sources:** [Wikipedia.org](http://Wikipedia.org)  
United Nation Special Assembly  
Special Session on HIV & AIDS  
(UNGASS)

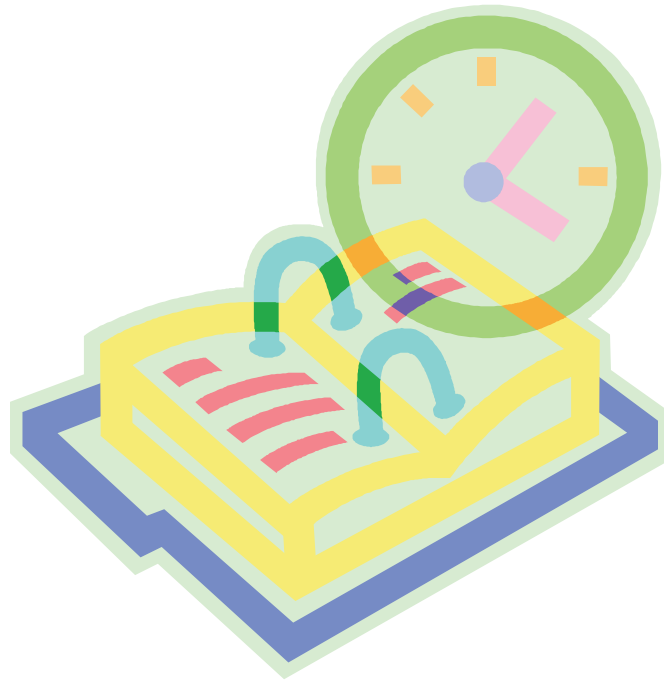
Submitted by Deacon Doreen Cotter, 3rd Cohort

**EVENT CALENDAR*****The Ashe Faith Project is Moving - UPDATE!***

***Sometimes the renewal process takes a little longer!***

**Some of us can attest to this fact.  
As such, our Open House for the *ASHE WOMEN'S CENTER*  
has been postponed.**

***We will make another announcement when we're ready for the big reveal.***



**Access our calendar below for information regarding our upcoming events.  
Please come out and support the community as your calendars permit!**

For more information regarding our upcoming events, please bookmark the following web address: <http://niaalliance.com/Events.html>

If you're aware of a community or faith based event and would like to add it to the calendar, please submit the following information to [newsletter@niaalliance.com](mailto:newsletter@niaalliance.com)

- ◇ Event Name
- ◇ Point of Contact
- ◇ Date and time of Event
- ◇ Description of Event

**RESOURCES: WHERE TO FIND IT...**

Need HIV, STD or statistical info and not sure where to find it?  
See the list of resources below.

**FREE LOCAL HIV TESTING LOCATIONS****Ashe Women's Center**

105 Frank St, Bridgeport, CT 06604

Hours: Monday-Wednesday, 10am-2pm

Thursday, 3pm-7pm

Fridays by appointment only

203-870-0761

**GBAPP**

158 Mill Hill Ave, Bridgeport, CT 06604

Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm

203- 384-3629

**Optimus Health Care Incorporated**

982 East Main St, Bridgeport, CT 06608

Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm

203-696-0085

**Southwest Community Health Center**

361 Bird St, Bridgeport, CT 06605

Hours: Mon-Fri., 8:30am-5pm

203-330-6000

**Yale-New Haven Hospital (AIDS Care Program)**

20 York St, New Haven, CT 066511

Hours: Mon., 9am-3pm; Tues., Thurs., Fri., 8:30am-5pm; Wed., 9:30am-3pm

203-688-3298

**Norwalk Health Department**

137 East Ave, Norwalk, CT 06851

Hours: Mon-Fri., 9am-5pm

**Other Related Information:**

**Local Stats:** CT Department of Public Health (DPH)

<http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3135&q=393048>

**National Stats:** Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/index.htm>

STD info: Fact Sheets, Statistics, STD testing Sites, etc:

<http://www.cdc.gov/std/default.htm>

Substance Abuse: Treatment facilities, etc:

<http://www.ct.gov/DMHAS/site/default.asp>

2-1-1: referral services for the entire state of CT:

<http://www.infoline.org/>

**REFERRAL  
SOURCES:**

**TESTING  
SITES,  
STATISTICS,  
ETC...**

## ABOUT NIA

### THE NIA ALLIANCE

MADC  
72 George Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
Tel: 203-870-0761  
[www.niaalliance.com](http://www.niaalliance.com)

The Nia Alliance is an initiative with the goal to develop a volunteer network of men and women who are dedicated to learn and respond to the growing HIV epidemic among women of color. In August 2006, Nancy Kingwood, MSHS, CHIVC developed a training curriculum to prepare men and women of color to serve as volunteer liaisons to faith-based organization. Objectives for participants completing the training workshop are 1) enhance knowledge of HIV, 2) develop skills to engage peers in HIV-related services, and 3) serve as community liaisons and planning body for HIV awareness events sponsored by the Nia Alliance.

### NIA ALLIANCE MISSION STATEMENT

*The Nia Alliance is a community mobilization initiative dedicated to equip people of African descent to respond effectively and emphatically to the AIDS epidemic in communities of color through education, advocacy, direct services and community collaboration. Grounded in faith, we recognize the importance of being inclusive and nonjudgmental as we empower our participants to make informed decisions.*

### The Ashe HIV Faith Project

*funded by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Faith and Community Based Support Initiative*

The Ashe Faith Project aims to reduce substance abuse and HIV/AIDS in communities of color by strengthening the partnerships between local community organizations and faith groups, utilizing a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion to maximize local synergies, promote program collaboration, and encourage service integration.

For more information regarding the Nia Alliance, please contact:

**Contact: Nancy Kingwood, MSHS, CHIVC**

**Project Director**

**Mount Aery Development Corporation (MADC)**

**72 George Street**

**Bridgeport, CT. 06604**

**Tel: (203) 870-0761**

**Fax: (203) 394-9957**

**Email: [ashefaithmadc@yahoo.com](mailto:ashefaithmadc@yahoo.com)**

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contribute to the  
newsletter?**

Please email your article,  
event, pictures, etc to  
[newsletter@niaalliance.com](mailto:newsletter@niaalliance.com)  
by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

