

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

Southern AIDS Coalition





a tapestry
of partnership

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OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Special thanks to our impact partners and funders who made our work in 2023 possible:

AIDS United
Black AIDS Institute
Broadway CARES/Equity Fights AIDS
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Center for HIV Law & Policy
Cicatelli & Associates
Cobb & Douglas Public Health
Community Education Group
Elton John AIDS Foundation
Emory Rollins School of Public Health
Equality Federation
Equity & Impact Solutions
Fulton County Board of Health
Georgia HIV Justice Coalition
Gilead Sciences
GLAAD
GO Care Community Health Center
HIV Prevention Trials Network
HIV Vaccine Trials Network
Johnson & Johnson
Latinos in the South/Latino Commission on AIDS
Medical College of Wisconsin
NASTAD
National AIDS Memorial
National Association of County and City Health Officials
North Carolina AIDS Action Network
Northwestern University
The SERO Project
Treatment Action Group
University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work
ViiV Healthcare
Wake Forest University Faith COMPASS Center



MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Strategy. Action. Community.

That was our charge in 2023. A year of rebuilding and refocus across our movement, as we entered the new reality of a “post-COVID” world. A weary public health and community workforce was striving to keep pace, addressing the needs of those living with and most impacted by HIV, navigating a surge in state and local policy actions targeting the communities we are charged to serve.

Strategy. Action. Community. From Tennessee to Washington, DC and beyond, we partnered with thousands of you through strategy sessions, advocacy, listening tours, quilting workshops, grantmaking, trainings and so much more. All of this with one goal in mind—to build a better south for all southerners.

More than once this year I was told “SAC is everywhere.” While that might be a slight exaggeration, we were able to be present across so many spaces thanks to you—the checkwriters and cheerleaders—those who believe in our “small but mighty” team and our coalition of partners across the region.

The commitment to our mission is demonstrated by our work—and the substantial allocation of resources we place into our communities. It is only possible because we have partners like you—who understand the power of collaboration. Thanks to you we get to do work that reflects our values—centering lived experience, building meaningful partnership, and always prioritizing ending HIV’s disproportionate impact on southerners and our communities.

Thank you to the staff, Board, and everyone who has demonstrated your support for our communities and our organization in this moment.



Strategy. Action. Community. All three are necessary. As we seek to build upon 2023, I hope that we can count on you in the years ahead.

In partnership always,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dafina Ward'.

Dafina Ward
Executive Director, *Southern AIDS Coalition*

LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

To the Southern AIDS Coalition Family:

My tenure as Board Chair at SAC from 2021–2023 has allowed me to witness progress and momentum in the fight against HIV in the South.

The Southern AIDS Coalition is a beacon of hope, comprised of a collective of advocates and agencies across the South who advocate for better health outcomes.

I'm so proud of all that our team at SAC have achieved in recent years, led by our ambitious, compassionate, and dedicated executive director Dafina Ward. While the fight is continuous and often arduous, Southern AIDS Coalition was dedicated to stopping cuts to HIV funding, joining the U=U National Task Force, and meeting with advocates living with HIV and empowering them to teach others how to advocate in their community. These actions underscore our collective dedication to achieving ambitious targets—ensuring individuals living with HIV know their status, have equitable access to healthcare, and thrive throughout the Southern United States. This commitment reflects a shared vision of progress and resilience.

As I step down and welcome Angela Johnson, my Vice Chair and now Board Chair, let us draw inspiration from SAC's success stories and redouble our efforts to safeguard the health and well-being of all individuals. Together, we can forge a future where HIV is no longer a threat to our communities.



Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lee Storrow". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lee Storrow
2023 Board Chair, *Southern AIDS Coalition*



SOUTHERN MISSION

The mission of Southern AIDS Coalition (SAC) is to end the HIV and STI epidemics in the South by promoting accessible and high-quality systems of [HIV and STI] prevention, treatment, care, housing, and essential support services.

SOUTHERN VISION

We envision a South where every person has access to high-quality health care and essential support services (including safe, decent, affordable housing), free from stigma and discrimination. We also envision a South where every person understands HIV transmission, receives routine screening, and has access to a full range of prevention interventions and harm reduction services.



ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

2023

ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

SAC: A TAPESTRY OF PARTNERSHIP

2023 was a year of working in partnership with communities, weaving together multiple strategies and approaches to ending the HIV and STI epidemics in the South. Communities led the way in making demands for policy change, increased support, and the end of stigma to improve health and access for all southerners.

With millions of people reached in our work, we championed and amplified messages of awareness and advocacy. Of our \$2.9M budget, 42% was used to support our communities through grants, travel support, event sponsorships, and more.

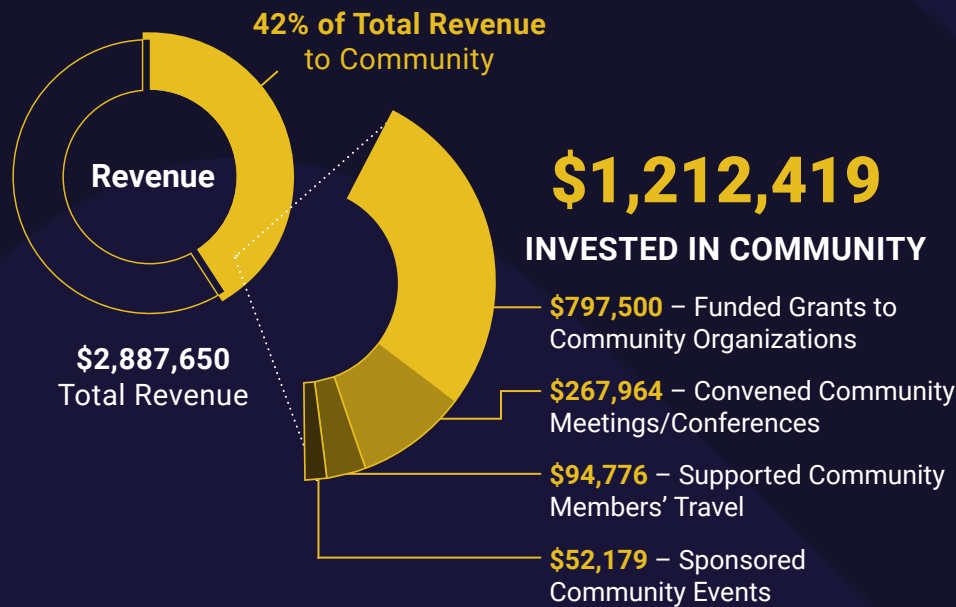
- Through the **generous support of funding and impact partners**, we equipped organizations in the South to create tapestries of change in their own backyards.
- Through **Change the Pattern**, quilts were made to honor the lives of southerners lost to AIDS-related illnesses.
- Through our annual **Saving Ourselves Symposium**, southern Black LGBTQIA+ communities were empowered and connected.
- Through the **Gilead COMPASS Initiative**, community-based organizations received resources and training to address HIV-related stigma.

These are just some examples of our commitment at Southern AIDS Coalition, and why we need your support in 2024 and beyond.



2023
ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

101,925 +
SOUTHERNERS IMPACTED



Audiences Reached



22
grants awarded to community



3,000+
attendees engaged at events



375,300+
reached through social media

Policymakers Transgender Men
Gender Diverse Communities **Black Communities**
Persons Living with HIV Youth
Clinical / Medical Providers **LGBTQ+ Communities**
Students **Community Advocates**
Transgender Women **Latine/Hispanic Communities**
Rural Communities Public Health Staff **Researchers / Scholars**
Community-Based Service Providers



PROGRAM SPOTLIGHTS



SAVING OURSELVES SYMPOSIUM

SAC held Saving Ourselves Symposium: Say It Loud! (SOS) in Atlanta this year. A sacred space for learning and love, centering Black LGBTQ+ southerners. Thanks to the support of our generous sponsors, over 50 community members, received scholarships to make their attendance possible.

Held August 3-6, 2023 in Atlanta, GA at the Renaissance Atlanta Waverly Hotel & Convention Center



4 days
of education and celebration



26 sessions
focused on research and strategies



40 speakers
engaged in advocacy, care, and prevention



50 community members
awarded scholarships to attend and participate



232 attendees
made their way to Atlanta



CHANGE THE PATTERN

CHANGE THE PATTERN

Change the Pattern is a multi-year collaboration with a focus on increasing the presence of southerners, and communities of color, in the fabric of the AIDS Memorial Quilt through quilt displays and workshops. Programs also include community discussions about changes that need to happen locally to end the HIV epidemic, and end patterns of injustice. In 2023 our work took us to Louisiana, Tennessee, and Texas for multiday community activations! Change the Pattern is a collaboration with the National AIDS Memorial and Gilead Sciences.

We increased awareness about the AIDS Memorial Quilt and Change the Pattern through various earned media tactics, including news releases, urban radio PSA announcements, billboards, and local reports. Change the Pattern received a Bronze Anthem Award in Community Voice.



276.3K reached
across social media

1M+ audience
reached through iHeart radio

32.4M total
earned media reach

3.5B reached
across Global Newswire



COMPASS INITIATIVE®

GILEAD COMPASS INITIATIVE

As part of our Gilead COMPASS Initiative® efforts to reduce HIV-related stigma, we partnered with 22 grantees, awarding a total of \$1,042,500. Our Community Outreach Associate, Marnina Miller, conducted multiple LEAD & Yunity workshops this year. In the last quarter alone, the two programs had 68 participants. More impactful, the LEAD participants were able to conduct 12 Teachbacks, concluding with over 280 people living with HIV receiving the tools to advocate to end the epidemic, from October to December 2023.

OUR 2023 COMPASS GRANTEES

Arkansas Black Gay Men’s Forum • Borderland Rainbow Center • Campbell Health Solutions • Cherokee County Health Services Council • Community Health Education • Community Health Prevention Intervention Education & Research (CH-PIER) • Eagle Pass Safe • Engaging Arkansas Communities • Game Changing Men • Gender Benders • Heather Ivy Society, Inc • Helping Everyone Receive • Ongoing Effective Support (HEROES) • H.Y.P.E. to Empower, Inc. • “LILA” LATINX LGBTQI INITIATIVE INC. • MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR JUSTICE • Orixia Healing, Arts, Well and Spiritual Centre • Out My Closet, Inc. • Professional Association of Social Workers in HIV & AIDS (PASWH) - Collaborative Solutions • Texas Health Action (Waterloo Counseling Center) • The Pride Center at Equality Park • This Is Your Moment Network (Soul Model LLC) • Twin • Health and Wellness Center • Whatsinthemirror?



22 organizations
awarded grant funding



\$1,042,500 awarded
in total grant funding

SPONSORED COHORTS

Thanks to the generosity of funders, Southern AIDS Coalition had the privilege of selecting and leading cohorts to attend various HIV education and advocacy events. These included the following:

- United State Conference on HIV/AIDS
- Biomedical HIV Prevention Summit
- Saving Ourselves Symposium
- Tennessee Advocacy Group



ADDITIONAL EVENTS

Our organization had the distinct opportunity to present at a number of events, including:

- Ending the HIV Epidemic Mentorship Convening
- Arkansas HIV Prevention Planning Retreat
- Association of Nurses in AIDS Care Conference
- South Carolina HIV, STD, & Viral Hepatitis 40th Anniversary Conference
- Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference 2023



PUBLIC POLICY & ADVOCACY

Overarching SAC Policy Priorities:

- Increasing awareness of the disproportionate impact of HIV on the South and the need for new, flexible resources that can be used to mount an effective response to the epidemic.
- Protecting and promoting access to high quality health care and essential support services, including Ryan White Program, Medicaid, Medicare, the ACA, HOPWA, and private insurance.
- Ensuring that Southerners living with HIV and other marginalized communities are free from stigma and discrimination.
- Protecting and promoting access to a full range of prevention interventions and harm reduction services across the South.

Actionable Policies:

- Support Medicaid Expansion in 7 remaining states in the South.
- Public Health separated from law enforcement - modernize HIV criminalization laws
- Stabilize or increase HIV funding, specifically in Southern States.
- Expand PrEP access through various vehicles, such as a federal National PrEP Program and through scope of work expansion for pharmacists in Community Pharmacies.





PUBLIC POLICY & ADVOCACY

In 2023, the Southern AIDS Coalition (SAC) engaged in several critical initiatives aimed at reducing stigma, increasing funding for HIV specific and other related programs, and improving healthcare access for underserved populations. Highlights of events include, joining Tennessee advocates for their Day on the Hill, where significant funding was restored and increased for HIV initiatives, demonstrating SAC's pivotal role in the South of both being a bridge and a megaphone for advocacy. SAC's engagements spanned from advocacy at AIDS Watch 2023, to educational webinars like "The Tennessee Decision," which explored regional policy impacts on health and "End the Epidemic," which focused on policy, pathways, and pitfalls across HIV.

SAC proudly assisted community members in Tennessee, including partner Jimmy Samuels. Our support made it possible for these advocates to voice concerns in DC and at several conferences.

“Your support made it possible for members of the Midsouth Unaligned Consumer Alliance to attend conferences and advocacy days and make sure our voices were heard. We thank you.”

– Jimmie Samuels, *Tennessee*





SAC MAKING MOVES

SAC MAKING MOVES



CDC Listening Tour | SAC facilitated listening sessions across the South with NACCHO and the CDC, Divisions of HIV and STD Prevention. Hundreds attended sessions that explored HIV services, sexual health, and more to gain insight in the ways that local health departments can effectively partner with communities.

Champions of Change | Our Executive Director, Dafina Ward, was featured in Gilead's Champions of Change: A Celebration of Black Women Changemakers in HIV.



Congressional Black Caucus | The SAC team is proud to have presented at the Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference 2023.

Ella/Her at the Biomedical Summit | SAC partnered with the North Carolina AIDS Action network and Latinos in the Deep South to bring a cohort of powerful Southern women to the 2023 HIV Biomedical Prevention Summit!



SAC MAKING MOVES

HETF

HIV Equity Task Force for Ending the Epidemic | Our Public Policy Director, Will Ramirez, was appointed to the inaugural HIV Equity Task Force for the End the Epidemic: Examining Health Equity Implications of Health Systems, Policy, and Data Gaps for People Living with HIV.

International Conference on Stigma | Our Deputy Director, Mardreus Harris, was the keynote speaker for this year's International Conference on Stigma at Howard University in Washington, DC.



Jennifer Hudson Show | For World AIDS Day our Executive Director, Dafina Ward, appeared on the Jennifer Hudson Show along with Ian Haddock of the Normal Anomaly.

Northwestern Partnership | We co-sponsored the second annual Summer Intensive Program in partnership with Northwestern University's Center for Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing (ISGMH) and Third Coast Center for AIDS Research.



SAC MAKING MOVES

POZ 100 List | SAC made the 2023 POZ 100 List! This year, they celebrated the collective effort of organizations working to end the HIV epidemic.



PACHA

Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS | Our Executive Director, Dafina Ward, was appointed to the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS (PACHA). Council members provide advice, information, and make recommendations to the Secretary, Assistant Secretary for Health, and to the Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy.

Southern Science | Our Southern Science programming was revitalized by our Community Science Programs Manager, Brady Maiden, with support from the HIV Vaccine Trials Network.



Southern Solidarity Summit | In collaboration with the Emory COMPASS Coordinating Center and ACT NOW: END AIDS, SAC hosted the Southern Solidarity HIV Advocacy Summit in Atlanta, GA.

SOCIAL MEDIA

SOCIAL CHANNELS



facebook

3.2K followers



instagram

2.4K followers



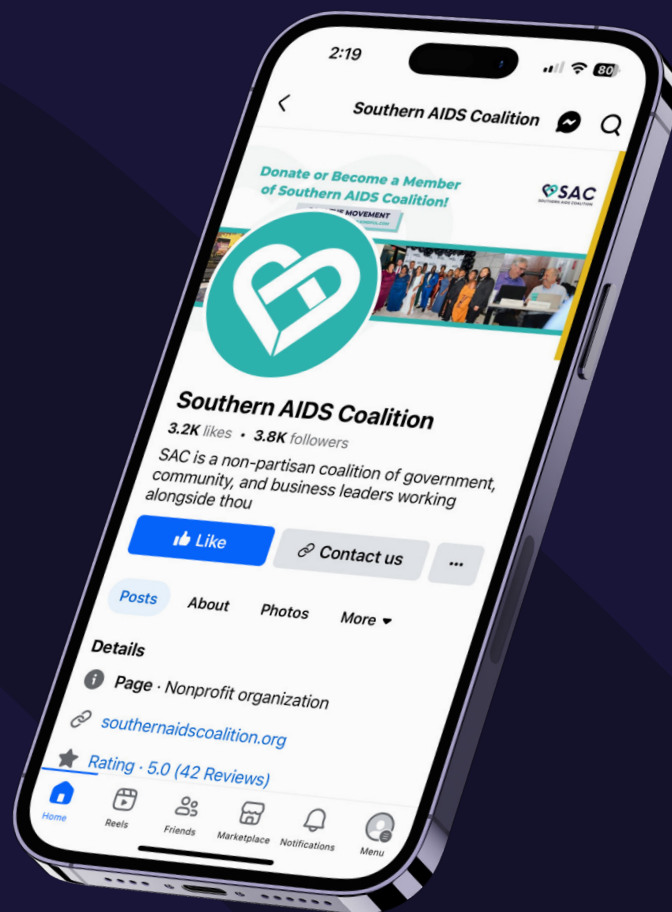
linkedin

1K followers



X

3K followers



Reach across channels: **99K**

Posts across channels: **1000**

Collaborative Reach: **375K +**

Impressions across channels: **171K**

New followers across channels: **1,928**

2023 BOARD & STAFF

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

Storrow, Lee (Chair)
Community Education Group
Chapel Hill, NC

Johnson, Angela (Vice Chair)
NASTAD
Washington, DC

Teahan, Cathalene (Treasurer)
Georgia AIDS Coalition
Snellville, GA

Caracaño, Joaquin (Secretary)
Latino Commission on AIDS
Chapel Hill, NC

CHAIRS

Moton-Poole, P.J. (Development)
ViiV Healthcare
Dallas, TX

Vicks, Reginald (Governance)
CrescentCare
New Orleans, LA

Webb, Robin (Public Policy)
Mississippi Positive Network
Cleveland, MS

MEMBERS

Adams, Jay
West Virginia Ryan White Part B
Wheeler, WV

Hiers, Kathie
AIDS Alabama
Birmingham, AL

McKay, Butch
OASIS Florida
Fort Walton Beach, FL

Burgess, Samuel
Louisiana Department of Health
New Orleans, LA

Lester, Aryah
Transgender Strategy Center
Newport News, VA

Pierre, Randevyn
ViiV Healthcare
Atlanta, GA

Gaddist, Bambi
Public Health Consultant
Columbia, SC

McAllaster, Carolyn
Duke University School of Law (Retired)
Durham, NC

Sabatino, Donna
The AIDS Institute
Flagler Beach, FL

Thompson, Darwin
Gilead Sciences
Washington, DC

STAFF MEMBERS

Coleman, Nayasia (Executive Assistant)

Davis, Nichole (Finance & Administration Director)

Harris, Mardrequis (Deputy Director)

Harris, Sierra (Health Departments Initiative Associate)

Lofton, Justin (Training Manager)

Long, David Wyley (Special Initiatives Associate)

Maiden, Brady (Community Science Program Manager)

Miller, Marnina (Community Outreach Associate)

Patterson, Tiffany (Administration & Operations Manager)

Payton, Mark (Compliance Manager)

Ramirez, Will (Public Policy & Advocacy Director)

Searcy, Justin (Grants Manager)

Shepard, Torrie (Communications Manager)

Ward, Dafina (Executive Director)



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2023 Annual Report for the Southern AIDS coalition was prepared through the leadership of our Communications Manager, Torrie Shepard, in collaboration with our strategic design consultant, Demi McCoy. We would like to further acknowledge our 2023 staff members for their contributions to this report and the 2023 impact report.

Our team extends heartfelt gratitude to the many funders and donating members who made our work possible in 2023 by providing key resources. The significant contributions from our stakeholders helped us achieve widespread success in the South in 2023.

We are excited to share and celebrate these key highlights with you!



GET INVOLVED

GET INVOLVED

Join the Movement Become a Member Today!

Membership Benefits:

- Guide SAC's Policy Strategy
- Magnify Your Voice
- Support Advocacy Efforts
- Stay Informed
- Expand Your Reach
- Network with Colleagues
- Show Your Support
- Gain Valuable Insights

Attend Events & Build Skills
Explore our events and access our trainings by visiting our website at southernaidscoalition.org/take-action




JOIN US

southernaidscoalition.org

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