

## **Foundations - amfAR**

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amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research, is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to the support of AIDS research, HIV prevention, treatment education, and the advocacy of sound AIDS-related public policy.

In the early 1980s, a group of researchers and scientists including Mathilde Krim, Ph.D., then a researcher at New York's Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, formed an informal study group to investigate the condition that came to be known as AIDS. In 1983, Dr. Krim, Dr. Joseph Sonnabend, Michael Callen, and several others launched the New York-based AIDS Medical Foundation. In Los Angeles, Dr. Michael Gottlieb and Dame Elizabeth Taylor spearheaded the creation of the National AIDS Research Foundation. The two organizations merged in September 1985 to become amfAR.

When amfAR was founded, Dr. Krim and Dr. Gottlieb were named Founding Chairmen and Dame Elizabeth Taylor became Founding National Chairman. More than twenty years later, amfAR remains one of the world's leading organizations dedicated to fighting the AIDS epidemic, and has invested more than \$307 million in support of its mission.

Since its inception, amfAR has supported innovative research into HIV prevention and treatment, providing funding to researchers for early-stage projects and enabling young researchers to establish their careers studying HIV/AIDS. amfAR grantees have produced some of the most groundbreaking discoveries in AIDS research, including studies that led to the development of three classes of antiretroviral drugs, the use of antiretroviral therapy to prevent mother-to-child transmission, and the legalization of syringe exchange programs that have drastically reduced the spread HIV among injection drug users. amfAR has supported more than 2,000 research teams worldwide.

amfAR's TREAT Asia program (Therapeutics Research, Education, and AIDS Training in Asia) is a network of clinics, hospitals, and research institutions working with civil society to ensure the safe and effective delivery of HIV/AIDS treatments across Asia and the Pacific. The TREAT Asia Network encompasses 20 adult and 22 pediatric sites across Asia and the Pacific. TREAT Asia has made significant contributions in numerous areas, including research reports on the natural history of HIV/AIDS in Asia and responses to antiretroviral therapy; the creation of the first HIV/AIDS observational databases in the region; the foundation of a pediatrics network to improve treatment and care and extend the lives of HIV-positive children; treatment education for healthcare workers and people living with HIV/AIDS; and the publication of special reports on issues such as the rise in HIV among men who have sex with men in Asia.

The MSM Initiative was launched in 2007 to reduce rates of HIV infection among men who have sex with men (MSM) in resource-limited countries. This initiative provides small targeted grants to grassroots organizations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe to support HIV/AIDS services for MSM. Through the Initiative, amfAR is a staunch advocate of increased funding for prevention and treatment programs for MSM, and speaks out against stigma, discrimination, and violence.

As an advocate of evidence-based AIDS-related public policy, amfAR works to secure necessary increases in funding for HIV/AIDS research, promote the development of a comprehensive national HIV/AIDS strategy, expand access to care and treatment, and protect the civil rights of all people affected by HIV.

amfAR distributes information on important AIDS-related research, treatment, prevention, and policy issues to a range of audiences. In addition to its website, it publishes the biannual newsletter *Innovations* and the quarterly *TREAT Asia Report*.

amfAR's board of trustees is led by Chairman of the Board Kenneth Cole. Dr. Mathilde Krim is Founding Chairman and Elizabeth Taylor is Founding International Chairman. Longtime supporter Sharon Stone is Global Fundraising Chairman. Acclaimed actress Natasha Richardson was involved with amfAR for more than 15 years and served on the board from 2006 until her death in March 2009. Kevin Robert Frost became amfAR's CEO in 2007.

#### Fundraising

amfAR gala at the Austrian parliament building (Life Ball 2010)As one of the world's leading organizations dedicated to fighting HIV/AIDS, amfAR has invested more than \$307 million for research, prevention, treatment education, and advocacy. It regularly holds benefit events, including Cinema Against AIDS galas in Cannes, Dubai, and Toronto; annual gala events in New York and San Francisco; and TWO x TWO for AIDS and Art, held in Dallas.

Numerous public figures have lent their support to raising funds for amfAR's programs. At its gala events, amfAR honors individuals who have made significant contributions of time, talent, and resources to the fight against AIDS with its Award of Courage. Recipients include Zackie Achmat, Richard Gere, Whoopi Goldberg, Larry Kramer, Tony Kushner, Patti LaBelle, Sumner Redstone, and Anna Wintour.

**[Submitted by Radical Red]**