



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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World AIDS Day

JESSE HAMILTON December 1, 2015

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This World AIDS Day, let's honor the family, friends, and neighbor's we have lost by confronting the challenge HIV/AIDS continues to pose. As this year's theme for World AIDS Day reminds us, "The time to act is now." While we celebrate the progress that has been made, we must also redouble our efforts to raise awareness, educate the public, further reduce infections, and get treatment to those in need.

SUNY Downstate's HIV Center for Women and Children presents a sobering reminder of the work we still have to do. In reviewing HIV/AIDS in Brooklyn the Center writes, "Brooklyn has been heavily affected by HIV/AIDS over the past three decades and has some of the city's highest prevalence rates.[...] In the first half of 2014, Brooklyn had the terrible distinction of having NYC's highest percentages of new HIV diagnoses (29.3%) and AIDS diagnoses (28.2%), and NYC's second highest percentage of deaths (29.2%). Brooklyn consistently has the largest number of individuals who when diagnosed with HIV are also diagnosed with AIDS, meaning that they are not benefitting from the access to care and treatment which could extend their lives."

As New Yorkers, as Brooklynites, as concerned members of this community, we have to continue in our efforts to promote awareness, prevention, and treatment. HIV/AIDS continues to be a significant public health challenge. Like all public health challenges, we can overcome HIV/AIDS by acting as a community.