

IT'S ALL  
ABOUT LIFE



**FOUR A's**  
ALASKAN AIDS ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION

2013  
COMMUNITY  
IMPACT REPORT

## A message from the BOARD PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE WRITING THESE WORDS IN THE FOUR A'S 28TH YEAR OF SERVICE TO OUR CLIENTS AND COMMUNITY. With dedicated staff and volunteers, Four A's continues as an essential resource for HIV positive people seeking accurate information and access to case management that will assist them with medication, adequate housing, mental health support, substance abuse counseling, and referrals to other resources they may need to lead a better quality of life. For other community members, Four A's continues to provide the education and preventative services that will reduce their risk of contracting HIV whether it be through outreach, rapid HIV testing, condom distribution, making clean syringes available, or educating about harm reduction.

The past year has brought attention to the challenges the future will bring in continuing to provide this level of service. There are unknowns relative to the Affordable Care Act and how our clients will obtain necessary assistance in the complicated federal system. The continued reallocation of federal prevention funds to high prevalence areas compels us to rethink how we will support these life saving programs. The reclassification of HIV from an acute illness to a chronic disease has changed societal attitudes toward HIV, drawing attention and resources away from a pandemic that continues to rage on.



*Candace Bell*  
CANDACE BELL  
Board President (left)

*Heather Davis*  
HEATHER DAVIS  
Executive Director (right)

Thankfully, the advances in treatment that prompted that reclassification are resulting in virtually normal life expectancies for HIV positive people who receive good care. That care must now include collaboration with other agencies over long periods of time, and the mobilization of personal and social networks for support and long-term funding for extended services. Staff is also working with clients on the effects of HIV and aging and the physical and emotional impact of dealing with a long-term illness.

Although Four A's faces challenges in the future, those are eclipsed by the challenges faced daily by our clients. "It's all about life" and life brings challenges. But we at the Four A's know the services we provide improve lives because our

clients tell us through their own stories – some of which we share with you in this year's community impact report.

Please read the stories and see firsthand, how by working together to be proactive in reaching out to people, Four A's, its partners and friends can carry on its life affirming work in supporting our clients and their families, preventing virus transmission, and eliminating the stigma of HIV/AIDS. Thank you all for the part you have played in the past; we look forward to working with you in 2014 and beyond.

## LIFE STORY

Philip was met in the hospital with end stage HIV/AIDS after a fast, six month progression from infection to advanced HIV/AIDS. The prognosis was not good considering Philip was chronically homeless - living on the streets of Anchorage by day, "camping" at night and drinking alcohol heavily. With staff assistance Philip was able to secure SSI and APA disability income and Medicaid, immediately began a medication regimen, and achieved an "undetectable" viral load. With subsidy support, Philip now lives independently in a safe and affordable apartment and has developed healthy, non-drinking relationships. Most important, since learning of his HIV infection Philip has remained sober. Philip is a positive role model for others living in despair and hopelessness who seek to change their lives.

## FINANCIAL STATS

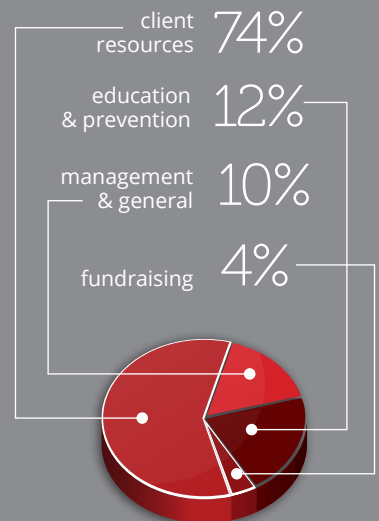
### REVENUE COMPARISON

FY13	\$1,856,619	
FY12	\$1,979,126	
FY11	\$1,952,932	

### REVENUE SOURCES

	FY11	FY12	FY13
grants	1,264,493	1,314,930	1,134,970
earned income	310,187	329,726	373,546
direct giving	330,213	318,703	330,962
in-kind	48,039	15,767	17,141
total	1,952,932	1,979,126	1,856,619

### FY13 EXPENSES



## CLIENT RESOURCES

AMAZING ADVANCES HAVE BROUGHT HOPE TO THE WORK OF CLIENT RESOURCES. Ever improving medications for HIV/AIDS and associated survival rates have impacted healthcare in such a way that the once death sentence of diagnosis was affirmed this year as a chronic disease. Still much work remains. The focus has moved from what can be done to improve quality of life in the last days, to what will be the effects of long-term medication use. Case work provides the supports needed to move systems forward.

Client Resources provides client support in two major areas: Medical and Housing. Each case is different as to which of these takes precedence. Sometimes a client needs to begin medications, however, without a home from which to rest regularly it is tough to organize the tasks of medical compliance. With long-term housing provided, nutrition through regular meals is addressed and soon the client feels better able to take care of medical needs. Other times, the associated costs of care pre-empt the ability to pay rent and utilities. Staff is able to assist with short-term support in addressing these costs, allowing the whole system to stay on track. Or, sometimes clients have to end their jobs and do not have the ability to pay once their insurance transitions to COBRA. Four A's can assist with those payments so clients who are compliant with their medical treatment remain consistent in that domain. Case managers often accompany clients to provider appointments, lending not only transportation support but the ability to help clients understand sometimes complicated treatment protocols. Case managers also assist with language barriers as Alaska sees more refugee resettlement and migration.

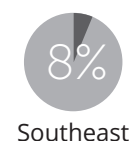
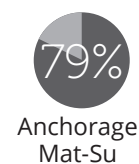
### LIFE STORY

Alexander, Inge and daughter Chrissy came seeking housing assistance. Alexander's health was variable as they lived here and there. Homeless, they were reluctant to stay in a shelter as family beds are few and families often split. Alexander had started a job; Inge was seeking employment. They wanted a home to establish a routine that would allow better health, advance their careers, and prepare Chrissy for kindergarten. Staff secured a home using subsidy assistance. Within nine months Alexander received a job promotion, Inge secured a part-time job, and they reached the milestone where subsidy support was not needed. The family is proud of their personal achievements and their 'graduation' from subsidy.

At the Four A's we run the range from newly diagnosed to long-term survivors in our work with HIV positive clients. We deal with clients transitioning from out-of-state to getting off the street. Some folks are willing and able to participate in medical treatment, others need assistance in removing barriers to treatment. While HIV/AIDS has become a very survivable illness, it remains a formidable foe to many who still need our help.

## CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

258 =  
clients served in FY13



### FOOD

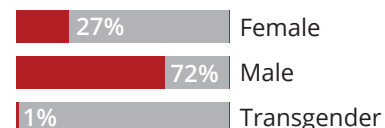
884  
Lunches  
provided

2,088  
Meal assists via  
Food Pantry

103

Individuals and family  
members received  
short or long-term  
housing assistance.

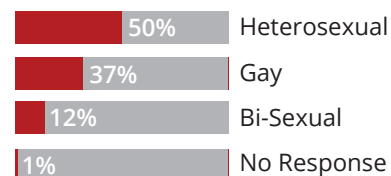
### GENDER



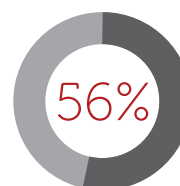
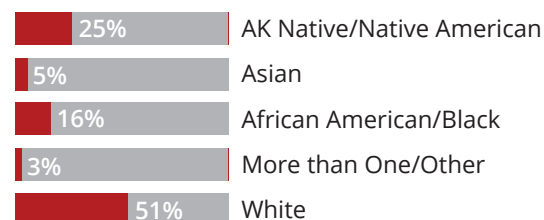
### HIV STATUS



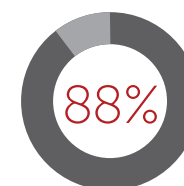
### SEXUAL ORIENTATION



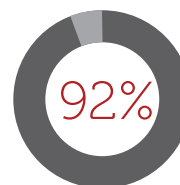
### RACE



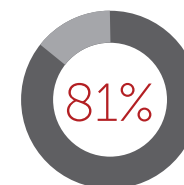
of clients have been  
receiving services from  
the Four A's for more  
than 5 years.



of clients say the  
quality of their life  
has improved after  
accessing services  
through the Four A's.



of clients say their  
case managers  
support them in  
achieving their goals.



of clients utilize  
permanent housing  
services and 84% say  
it has helped to  
improve their health.



## HIV PREVENTION

HIV PREVENTION IS A DYNAMIC MIX OF STRATEGIES, PROCESSES, AND INTERVENTIONS. Interdisciplinary in nature, HIV prevention borrows concepts from public health epidemiology, social work, and counseling psychology. Research reveals that early initiation and adherence to Highly-Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART) is a powerful prevention tool known as Treatment as Prevention (TasP). We know HIV positive individuals are dramatically less infectious when they adhere to medication therapy and thus less likely to transmit the virus. However, most new HIV infections occur as the result of an HIV positive individual being unaware of their status, hence the continued need for HIV prevention methods like outreach testing and harm reduction.

### LIFE STORY

A middle aged woman who uses IV drugs came in to get her first HIV test at the Four A's. She told staff "I'm pretty sure I don't have HIV, because I'm pretty safe most of the time." She said that getting tested for HIV was "a real wake-up call" to take charge of her health and make her drug use safer. "Even though I can't quit using right now, I don't want to have HIV when I do stop." She has been back for HIV testing at the Four A's two more times in the past 12 months, and remains HIV-Free.

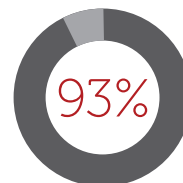
Four A's prevention staff, located in Anchorage and Juneau, fight the spread of HIV through HIV rapid testing, education, harm reduction, and structural interventions. Confidential HIV rapid testing takes place in the office setting and various outreach locations. You may find staff conducting education and prevention activities in bars, homeless shelters, substance abuse recovery programs, correctional facilities, community centers, or clinics. Four A's operates a syringe exchange program known as the Four A's Syringe Access Program (FASAP). The spread of HIV and Hepatitis C (HCV) is reduced by providing an outlet for injection drug users (IDUs) to safely dispose of dirty needles and use sterile syringes and equipment when they inject, and the program offers IDUs the opportunity to talk with someone if they are ready to reduce their usage. IDUs are also recruited for HIV and Hepatitis C rapid testing. Availability and access to condoms in rural Alaskan communities can be challenging; statewide condom distribution is provided to bars, health clinics, nonprofits agencies, schools and youth centers. Condom use is a proven structural intervention to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections.

Everything the Four A's prevention team does is to reduce the spread of HIV in Alaska through proven "High Impact Prevention" strategies. We consider each completed HIV rapid test, each individual reached through education, each syringe exchanged, and each condom distributed to be a major success because we know the elimination of HIV happens one person at a time.

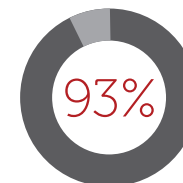
TOTAL  
NUMBER OF

HIV rapid tests = 1,172  
HCV rapid tests = 217  
sterile syringes given out = 398,114  
dirty needles returned = 229,911  
condoms distributed = 57,800

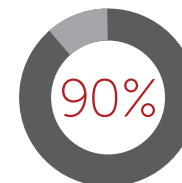
### SYRINGE ACCESS PROGRAM



of clients have utilized the resources or knowledge obtained from syringe exchange staff.



of clients feel supported by the syringe exchange.



of clients feel the syringe exchange program has improved their quality of life.

### HIV TESTING PROGRAM



of clients feel the HIV testing program is valuable.



of clients feel their knowledge of HIV and healthier behaviors has increased because of the program.



have referred family or friends to the Four A's for HIV testing.

### LIFE STORY

"Thanks to the Four A's syringe exchange program I was able to get clean needles during the nine months that I waited for my treatment program. When I was finally called in for the treatment program I took the step and got my HIV and Hepatitis C rapid tests done at the Four A's. I give full credit to the syringe exchange for keeping me negative from both diseases. So many of the users in my community have Hepatitis C, and because of the clean needles I received at the exchange I was able to keep myself from becoming infected. Being able to enter recovery free from both diseases is a huge deal, because I know once I finish my treatment program I have a new lease on life."

## DEVELOPMENT

FOUR A'S IS COMMITTED TO PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF HIV, SUPPORTING THOSE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS, AND ELIMINATING THE STIGMA ASSOCIATED WITH THE DISEASE. But we don't do it alone; we work to accomplish this mission each day with the help of our community of supporters. Over the years these supporters have embraced our cause, our work, and our clients; and the past year was no different.

Last year more than 130 generous Alaskans made the decision to share a part of their PFD with Four A's through Pick.Click.Give and gave an overwhelming \$9,230. Femme Fatale, Drag Queen Bingo, and Fetish Ball, three of our signature fundraising events, generated \$27,927. Two Broadway casts, Rock of Ages and Mary Poppins, took time during their busy tours to support Four A's by performing in Cabarets raising \$4,917. A new fundraiser, VivaVoom Burlesque, raised \$8,587, and individual donations from community members across the state of Alaska provided an additional \$79,564 to support the work of the Four A's.

### LIFE STORY

"Volunteering at Four A's is an educational and enjoyable part of my week. I have learned the importance of meeting people where they are at and offering assistance in areas they are interested in receiving help. Having the opportunity to take HIV education into the community has made me aware of the diverse populations

affected by HIV and I have learned ways to reach different groups of people. Thank you Four A's for the opportunity to be a part of your team." - Megan Johnson



**VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR**  
Megan Johnson

But it's not just about the dollars we raise; generosity also shines through when people donate their time to the agency. Over the last year community members volunteered 650 hours at the Four A's assisting in the packaging safe sex kits, providing HIV testing, helping those who come to the syringe exchange, filling in at the front desk, and taking part in events such as World AIDS Day and National HIV Testing Day. One of the busiest days of the week for volunteers is Friday, when they join with staff to provide our Friday Lunch program

where clients come for a nutritious meal and the opportunity to socialize with other members of the community.

As we move forward in 2014 and prepare for decreases in funding, your continued support is vital to the provision of much needed services. Whether you attend one of our events, mail in a check, stop by with a \$5 bill, or simply volunteer to serve lunch to our clients, each of these contributions is truly valued by all of us here at Four A's. Thank you for your generosity and support.

### LIFE STORY

Many years ago Sid, a veteran, came to us needing housing assistance, a place to call home. The Four A's provided Sid with the resources and support to help him stabilize his housing, including the acquisition of a federal housing voucher, and eventually Sid was able to purchase his own home with his veteran benefits. After many years of little contact and no requests for assistance, Sid recently called to say he was in need of utility assistance as his lights were being shut off. Sid was home in bed, no longer able to support himself fully, and near death. In his last days the Four A's was able to provide assistance to keep his lights and also the heat going. As a result, Sid was able to die with the dignity with which he led his life.

Thank you to our 2013  
Friday Lunch Sponsors:

Alaska Military Gay & Straight Alliance  
Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship  
Brenton & Sharron Johnson  
Candace Bell  
Color Art Printing  
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**PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR**  
Dan Carter & Al Incontro

*(Accepted on their behalf  
by Mr. Doug Frank)*

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(907) 586-6089 | Fax (907) 586-1089  
(888) 660-2437  
aaaase@alaskan aids.org

STATEWIDE HELPLINE (800) 478-AIDS (2437)

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Pick.Click.Give.

*Thank you to everyone who Picked, Clicked and Gave a portion of their PFD's to the Four A's in 2013. Thanks to your generosity, Four A's received a total of \$9,230.00! When you file for your PFD in 2014, please consider donating through Pick. Click. Give. to the Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association.*

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