

COMMEMORATING 24 YEARS OF SERVICE



The Four A's would like to thank a phenomenal woman, Karen Jenkins. Karen became involved with Four A's in 1989 when the NAMES Quilt Project came to Anchorage for the first time. Karen began to orchestrate the Friday Luncheons with local churches and volunteers, and assisted the AIDS Helpline by assembling mail-out campaign newsletters and "date" packs. In 1997, Karen was asked to design and create a panel to represent Alaska as part of NAMES Quilt Project. In creating the 12'x12' quilt panel, Karen worked with local and rural communities to send in blocks and beaded forget-me-not flowers. Karen was able to secure funding to support the cost of the project and upon completion, the panel traveled around the state to a variety of communities. The quilt panel currently resides with the NAMES Quilt Project in Atlanta.

Karen's efforts did not stop but continued! She was a Four A's employee from 1999-2000 as an Outreach Health Educator for drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers. In 2002 Karen was asked to sit on the Board of Directors, and served as its President from 2007-2009.

Karen recently stepped down from the Board, but the Four A's will always be an important part of her life.



This year when you **Pick.Click.Give**, please consider sharing a portion of your PFD with the **Alaskan AIDS Assistance Association**.

With your support, people living with HIV/AIDS and their families are able to live a better quality of life.

CATCH YOU LATER!

Phoebe Rohrbacher, Coordinator of Southeast Services, resigned effective January 31st to pursue a position as an Art Studio Assistant, allowing her to work in her field of study. Phoebe acted as a client case manager, conducted HIV testing, provided HIV education and outreach, and operated the syringe exchange.

Phoebe commented, "I have learned so much from the people we all serve, and my experience here will continue to inform my professional and personal life as I move forward." We wish Phoebe the best and look forward to still seeing her around Juneau.

17th ANNUAL \$1 MILLION GIVEAWAY

For the 17th consecutive year, Alan Shaw Feinstein will divide \$1 million among non-profit agencies nationwide that fight hunger, using it as a spur to help the agencies raise donations during March and April 2014. Feinstein's past spring challenges to fight hunger have raised over \$2.0 billion for over 1,800 agencies and houses of worship nationwide.

Please consider donating. Your donation will make you a partner in the most successful ongoing grassroots effort ever to fight hunger. Donations can include cash, checks and food items (valued at \$1 per item or pound).

For more information contact Sharron Johnson, Director of Development at (907) 263-2046.

CLIENT HOLIDAY PARTY

Four A's kicked off the holidays with the annual Client Holiday Party on December 20th. This year the party included the Four A's Holiday Singing Trio – Paige Langit (left), Davy Norris (center), Heather Davis (right), Sharron Johnson (far right), two elves from the North Pole (Melba Cooke and Angela Dunn) to hand out gifts, a Christmas chef (Derek Johnston) serving up prime rib, and staff, board members and volunteers acting as cheerful helpers to serve clients.

The afternoon at Four A's was festive, fun, and filled with Christmas cheer. All clients received a stocking filled with goodies, along with a ham or hen and all the trimmings for a wonderful Christmas dinner. More than 30 gifts were given away as prize drawings and one lucky client walked away with a 32" LCD TV and Blu-Ray DVD player.



Our Mission: To be a key collaborator within the state of Alaska in the provision of supportive services to persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families and in the elimination of the transmission of HIV infection and its stigma.

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- Mark Rhodes, Treasurer
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Proud to be an Agency Member of
the United Way of Anchorage

Anchorage Office

1057 W. Fireweed Lane, Suite 102
Anchorage, AK 99503
(907) 263-2050
(907) 263-2051 (fax)
aaaa@alaskanids.org
Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

Juneau Office

174 S Franklin Street, #207 (Physical)
PO Box 21481 (Mailing)
Juneau, AK 99802
(907) 586-6089
(907) 586-1089 (fax)
1-888-660-2437
aaaase@alaskanids.org

Giving Back, Even Time Makes a Difference



"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 population 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

For more information on how you can make a difference in someone's life, contact Sharron Johnson, Director of Development at (907) 263-2046 or sjohnson@alaskan aids.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◇ March 5th – **The Addams Family Cabaret** @ Mad Myrna's
- ◇ April 5th – **Fetish Ball** @ Mad Myrna's
- ◇ April 24th – **Femme Fatale** @ Rendezvous Bar
- ◇ April 25th - 26th – **Femme Fatale** @ Juneau Arts & Culture Center



Fellow cast members of West Side Story.

A Rocking, Singing Good Time

On January 22nd, the cast of *West Side Story* danced and sang their way into the hearts and souls of the audience. This non-stop night of singing and dancing rocked its way to \$2,000 for Four A's!

Stay tuned for the next cabaret – *The Addams Family*.

For more information on the Broadway Cabarets contact Sharron Johnson, Director of Development at 263-2046.

DAY PROGRAM in the MAKING

Four A's is delighted to announce the introduction of a weekly activity program for our clients! So far clients have joined in to walk along the coastal trail, decorate holiday cookies, take crochet lessons, and visit the Mann Leiser Memorial Greenhouse at Russian Jack. Clients really enjoy the opportunity to socialize with others and make new friends.

This weekly activity program is being organized and run by our Jesuit Volunteer, Chris Vaudo. Any suggestions and/or volunteer support is welcomed to help us make this program a success.

For more information contact Chris Vaudo at 263-2050 or cvaudo@alaskan aids.org.

A NEW LEASE ON LIFE

Philip was met in the hospital with end stage HIV/AIDS after a fast progression; six months from infection to advanced HIV/AIDS. At the time, 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 assistance from Four A's staff, Philip was able to secure SSI and APA disability income and Medicaid, immediately began a medication regimen, and achieved an "undetectable" viral load soon after. With Four A's subsidy support, Philip is now living independently in a safe and affordable apartment in a secured building and has developed healthy, non-drinking relationships. Most important, since learning of his HIV infection Philip has been sober and not gone back to drinking alcohol. Philip is a positive role model for others living in despair and hopelessness who seek to change their lives.

Paving the way to Prevention

As the Four A's transitions through funding cuts coupled with staff changes, the HIV prevention team needs your continued support now more than ever. The success we do enjoy is contingent upon our relationship with community partners. As the lead of the HIV Prevention program here at the Four A's, I'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank, with utmost gratitude, all of our community partners who are so vital to our work. Whether it's donated space for HIV rapid testing and counseling, volunteers from various agencies to assist us at events large and small, or simply an extended invitation for our presence, we appreciate you and what you mean to the important work we do together.

Contact Day Norris, HIV Prevention & Education Coordinator at (907) 263-2048 or dnorris@alaskan aids.org.



From the Executive Director, Heather Davis



The past year has brought attention to the challenges the future will bring in continuing to provide our clients and community members with supportive services and HIV prevention/education. There are unknowns relative to the Affordable Care Act and how this change in health insurance provision will effect our clients. 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.

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 thanks and stories. As to challenges that arise in the future for Four A's – they will continue to be met head-on so our clients will continue to have their life-saving stories to share.

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November 2013 through February 2014

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Teresa Laughrey
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UAA Charitable Giving Campaign
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Make your dollars go further in the fight against HIV/AIDS by utilizing your employer's matching gift program!

"Ask not what you can do for your country. Ask what's for lunch." – Orson Welles

Four A's is seeking businesses, churches, civic groups and/or individuals to sponsor a Friday Lunch. Every Friday, Four A's provides a nutritious meal to clients and their families. In 2013 Four A's served more than 1,400 clients and family members with help from the community.

If you are interested in sponsoring a Friday Lunch contact Melba Cooke at 263-2053 or mcooke@alaskan aids.org or Sharron Johnson at 263-2046 or sjohnson@alaskan aids.org.



Welcome to the Team!

Four A's would like to welcome Colby Bleicher and James Hoagland to the team! Colby is our new administrative Assistant in the Anchorage office.

James is our new Coordinator of S.E. Services in the Juneau office.

Say hello to Colby and James the next time you are in the Anchorage or Juneau office.