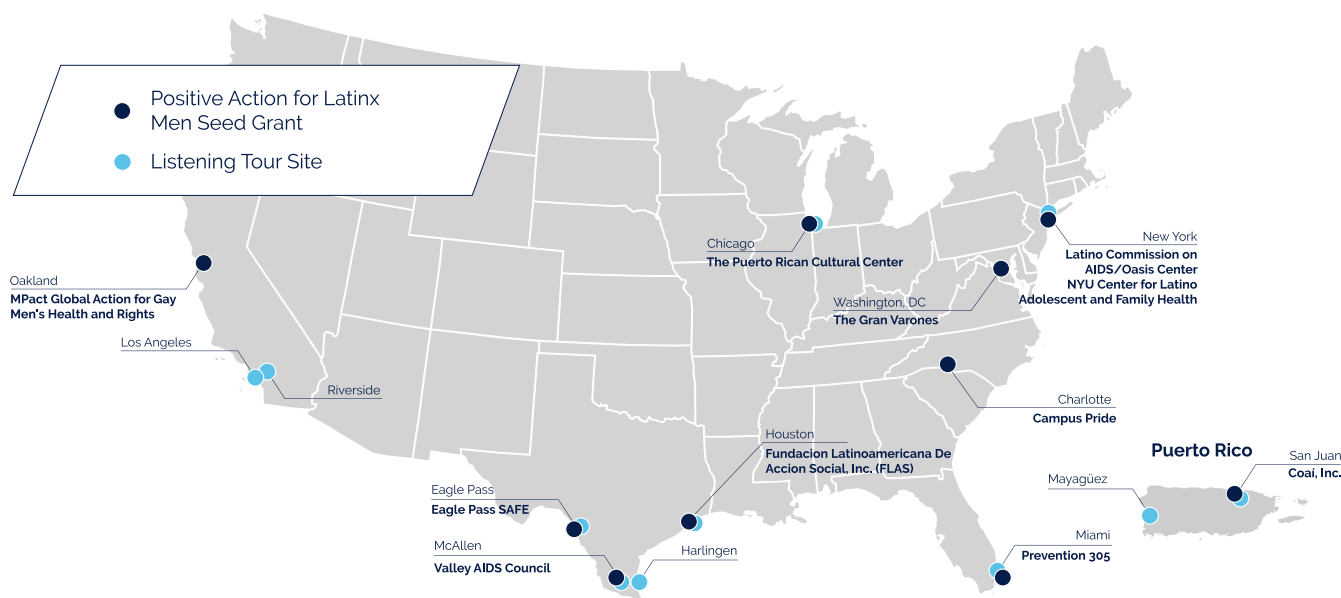


# FROM COMMUNITY LISTENING TO LAUNCH: SEED FUNDING IMPACT-AT-A-GLANCE

In 2018, with the help of leaders and communities across the country, ViiV Healthcare conducted an extensive listening initiative entitled ***Here as I Am: A Listening Initiative with Latinx Gay and Bisexual Men Affected by HIV***. ViiV sought to better understand what helps Latinx men living with or affected by HIV achieve positive health outcomes. Learnings from the initiative were summarized in a [report](#), available in both English and Spanish.

While the listening initiative was taking place, we heard urgent calls for immediate support of community-led efforts. ViiV responded to those calls by offering seed funding to select projects while ***Positive Action for Latinx Men: An Initiative for Gay, Bisexual and Trans Men*** was being fully developed. Over \$650K in seed funding supported 16 projects to develop or enhance safer spaces and trusted networks for Latinx gay, bi and trans men to mobilize communities and engage in care. This brief celebrates the one-year anniversary of the release of the *Here as I Am* report by showcasing the impact of both the listening initiative and resultant seed funding.

## POSITIVE ACTION FOR LATINX MEN, SEED FUNDING PERIOD, 2018-2020



## HERE AS I AM A Listening Initiative with Latinx Gay and Bisexual Men Affected by HIV



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THE FULL REPORT AND  
AUDIO STORIES >

### REPORT FINDINGS AT-A-GLANCE

- Family and community are central to men's lives and identities, shaping their health and wellness for better or worse.
- Men want diverse and responsive care that reflects their needs, identities, and language.
- Interruptions in care happen for many reasons beyond men's control.
- Resilience is activated through networks and services by and for Latinx men, especially youth.
- Anti-Immigrant sentiment and anti-immigrant laws have a powerful effect on men's health.

### 400 MEDIA OUTLETS

The report was mentioned in 400 media outlets

### 66.4M+ IMPRESSIONS

Garnered 66.4 million + impressions in satellite tours

### 1,400 AIRINGS

Aired 1,400 times on radio, television, and online outlets

The following snapshot summarizes evaluations of ViiV Healthcare sponsored amplification and cultural activation in 2020, including the work of seven grantees: **Coai, Inc., Eagle Pass SAFE, Fundación Latinoamericana De Acción Social, Inc (FLAS), Latino Commission on AIDS (LCOA), MPact, Prevention 305, and The Gran Varones.** The work led by these organizations weaves direct threads to the findings from the *Here as I Am* report as described below.



## BUILDING NATIONAL ADVOCACY NETWORKS

*Here as I Am* highlighted Latinx communities' support of Latinx-led organizations and networks to activate resilience and connect leaders in order to strengthen and sustain the HIV movement. This support is particularly important to address systemic barriers, such as anti-immigrant laws, and increase diverse representation and empowerment at decision-making tables.

**858**

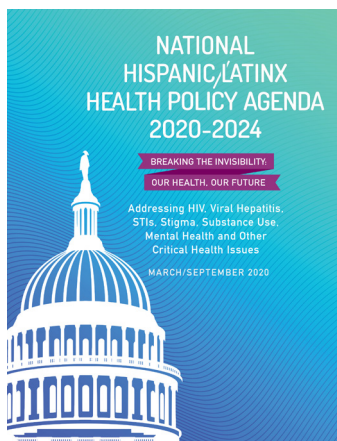
**LATINX ADVOCATES REACHED**

**18**

**ADVOCACY EFFORTS  
(E.G., BILINGUAL TRAININGS,  
POLICY ACTIONS)**

- **MPact** (OAKLAND, CA) and the **Latino Commission on AIDS** (LCOA, NEW YORK, NY) **led and built the capacity of national networks of Latinx advocates**, reaching 858 people, 500 of whom are living with or vulnerable to HIV.

## SEEN ON THE SCENE



- **Latino Commission on AIDS (LCOA)** championed the National Hispanic/Latinx Health Leadership Network that brought together leaders and PLWHA to discuss topics relevant to ending the epidemic. Such conversations inspired the National Hispanic/Latinx Health Policy Agenda (available [here](#)) which was presented during the 2020 Hispanic/Latinx Health Action Agenda Summit in Washington, DC as a call to action for leaders and policymakers.



- **MPact** authored and advanced a [National Call to Action Addressing the HIV Crisis Among Latinx Gay and Bisexual Men](#). Their advocacy networks led to increased solidarity, appreciation, understanding, and inclusion of Latinx gay, bisexual and trans men's communities nationally and in rural jurisdictions not included in the National Ending the HIV Epidemic (EHE) Plan.



## ELEVATING VOICES AND CULTURE FOR STIGMA REDUCTION AND SUPPORT



Latinx gay, bi and trans men in the *Here as I Am* listening initiative shared over and over again how central families and communities are to men's lives and identities. Imagery, stories and networks that value people's diverse identities, interests, experiences and strengths can help heal and provide tools to nourish relationships that help men get closer to their health and wellness goals.

### 14,300

#### COMMUNITY MEMBERS ENGAGED

- **Eagle Pass SAFE** (EAGLE PASS, TX), **The Gran Varones** (WASHINGTON, DC) and **FLAS, Inc.** (HOUSTON, TX) reached a combined **14,300 community members** through community-designed, culture-centered video and photography campaigns to increase self-love and commemorate the lives of the Latinx queer community members who were lost to COVID-19.

#### SEEN ON THE SCENE



- **The Gran Varones** Positive Digital Arts Fellowship supported Latinx gay, queer, trans and bisexual men living with HIV to develop leadership skills, combat HIV stigma and promote family acceptance in Latinx communities through digital storytelling and cultural organizing. Fellows described how the mentorship and training helped build confidence and value in their own stories as catalysts for community change, from Mexico City and Chicago to small towns in Texas.

## CULTURAL ACTIVATIONS

Findings from the *Here as I Am* report inspired cultural activations to amplify men's experiences, insights and desires, including a [Facebook Live Community Reflection](#) and a **Poesía Slam** to commemorate National Latinx AIDS Awareness Day 2020.

### HERE AS I AM, A POESÍA SLAM

Hosted by Louie Ortiz-Fonseca from The Gran Varones

Poets Included [Marc Travis Rivera](#), [Aces Lira](#), [Eduardo C. Corral](#) and [Benjamin Garcia](#)

The Poesía Slam, held in English and Spanish, brought together 32 people virtually to watch four poets perform their verses on gender, living with HIV and the Latinx identity.

*"Poetry, my shield, through its protection  
I let out my cry of war that  
these verses are of courage, resilience, and of protest; that  
these verses are yours, and mine — and ours."*

— SNIPPET FROM ViiV HEALTHCARE'S COMMISSIONED POEM  
["I RAISE MY FLAG, WITH PRIDE"](#)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Read the poem [Izo mi bandera con orgullo / I Raise my Flag with Pride](#), commissioned by ViiV Healthcare from Jacqueline Loweree of TCC Group, and inspired by findings from Positive Action for Latinx Men's report *Tal Como Soy / Here as I Am*. The poem was read during the *Here as I Am, A Poesía Slam* by Louie Fonseca from The Gran Varones.



## SUPPORTING EMPOWERMENT, PREVENTION AND ACCESS TO CARE AND SERVICES

*Here as I Am* gathered stories from men, allies, and providers that described the healing power of safer spaces and families of choice to build and model community. Men were clear on their health goals and desires, but described how interruptions in care happen for many reasons beyond their control. Having diverse, responsive care that reflects their needs, identities and language is critical to supporting men through times of challenge, from immigration to juggling multiple jobs and a global pandemic.

### 5,305 COMMUNITY MEMBERS ENGAGED

→ **Coai, Inc.** (PUERTO RICO), **LCOA's Oasis Wellness Center** (NEW YORK, NY), and **Prevention 305** (MIAMI, FL) created safe spaces and outreach strategies to support Latinx gay, bi and queer men **reaching 5,305 people living with or vulnerable to HIV**. Such spaces provided on-site and virtual judgment-free zones to relax, connect with peers, and seek healthcare advice from professionals.

*"Our work creates a safe space and brings the opportunity to exchange information and experiences one-on-one as well as a group, creates empathy, deals with stigma and internal homophobia, among other issues."*

— COAI, INC.

### 4,838 CONNECTIONS TO PREVENTION INFORMATION

### 657 LINKAGES TO PREP OR PEP

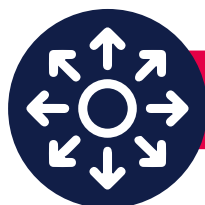
### 527 PEOPLE ENGAGED IN NETWORKS OF SUPPORT

### 12 MENTOR/LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

#### SEEN ON THE SCENE



→ **PrEP EQUITY**, a project championed in the greater Miami region by **Prevention 305**, meets people where they are to most effectively link them to care. Their peer navigators use dating apps like Grindr, Scruff, and Jack'd in high-HIV prevalence regions to connect and interact with individuals vulnerable to HIV in their home environments in a private and anonymized fashion that allows for frank conversations and expands client reach.



## LEVERAGING FUNDING FOR EXPANSION

Overall, grantees in the 2020 evaluation were able to leverage funds from ViiV Healthcare to secure more resources from other funders and expand their programming in Latinx communities across the country.<sup>2</sup>

### \$1 = \$2.13 SEED FUNDING YIELDS DOUBLED RESOURCES

→ **Grantees more than doubled their resources:** For every \$1 ViiV invested in seed funding, organizations leveraged **\$1.13 additional dollars** from other funders.

*"We approached various community and corporate partners to secure additional funding and participation throughout this process."*

— LCOA (NATIONAL HISPANIC/LATINX HEALTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK)

<sup>2</sup>This includes seven grantees based on data available.



# THE BOTTOM LINE

**ANTI-IMMIGRANT SENTIMENT CONTINUES TO AFFECT HOW LATINX MEN ACCESS AND ENGAGE WITH CARE.**

*"Many Latinx gay and bisexual men continue to face housing and food insecurity as many do not qualify for federal or state aid due to their immigration status. In some areas, COVID-19 symptomatic individuals who were undocumented were not able to access testing or medical treatment due to harmful public charge rules imposed by the previous administration and/or the fear of possible detention and deportation."*

— MPACT

**DESPITE CHALLENGES LIKE COVID-19, ORGANIZATIONS CAN ADAPT THROUGH RESILIENCE AND RESOURCEFULNESS.**

*"COVID-19 presented many challenges. We had to adapt quickly to ensure services could continue and that we could support the most vulnerable during this traumatizing pandemic."*

— LCOA (OASIS WELLNESS CENTER)

**LANGUAGE ACCESS IS NONNEGOTIABLE WHEN SERVING LATINX COMMUNITIES.**

*"Unfortunately, although telehealth was implemented in many places, unless a provider is bilingual or interpretation services are built into service delivery models, it is not always effective. **Some of the technology used did not allow for simultaneous medical interpretation, potentially adding another barrier to access to care.**"*

— MPACT

**PAID ADVERTISEMENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS CAN EXPAND CLIENT REACH.**

*"We were able to reach more members of this community with paid advertising. While our organic social media efforts generally resulted in a 5% response rate, **paid advertising on social media tends to generate closer to a 10% response rate among Black MSM.**"*

— PREVENTION 305

**BETTER COMPENSATION FOR PEER NAVIGATORS CAN PAY OFF.**

*"A consistent challenge, since Day One, has been the ability to retain talent. **Because of our ability to increase starting wages, and provide merit and cost of living increases, we have seen our employee retention rates improve.**"*

— PREVENTION 305

Building on the findings from the *Here as I Am* report, and learnings from seed grant funding period, ViiV Healthcare announced **\$5.5M in funding to 21 new PALFM projects** that will take place from 2021-2024, with several new projects being added each year.

## POSITIVE ACTION FOR LATINX MEN, 2021-2024 GRANTEES



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all advisors, *Positive Action for Latinx Men* seed grantees and their community members for being part of the seed initiative and evaluation. In addition, thank you to our grantee and advisor reviewers who provided their expert guidance on creating this summary of learnings to ensure it is reflective and meaningful for the community and field.