# Highlights From the 2023 U.S. Conference on HIV/AIDS

#2023USCHA was “A Love Letter to Black Women”—and a joyous family reunion for the HIV community. [VIDEOS]

September 15, 2023 By Trent Straube

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The 2023 U.S. Conference on HIV/AIDS (USCHA) ended September 9 in Washington, DC. But nearly a week later, many of us 4,000 attendees are still unpacking—literally and figuratively. Spearheaded by NMAC and held in a different city each year, the HIV conference is an epic immersive experience spanning five days (and nights) and loaded with education, entertainment, inspiration and emotion. It’s a lot.

To give you sampling of the conference offerings, we rounded up a selection of social media posts. You can find many more by searching #2023USCHA.

#USCHA2023 DAY 1 RECAP! We are in the nation’s capital spreading our love to black women EVERYWHERE! pic.twitter.com/PqMZ2XuwvA

— NMAC (@NMACCommunity) September 7, 2023

The theme of this year’s event—“A Love Letter to Black Women”—was fully evident in each day’s lunchtime plenaries, events that brought all attendees together in a massive dining hall for food, networking and presentations that ranged from inspiring speeches to spoken word poetry, gospel choirs, theatrical monologues and more.

Incredibly moving to see the face of the late, great poet and #HIV icon Mary Bowman reading her iconic piece

“Dandelions” on video at the #USCHA opening plenary. #2023USCHA pic.twitter.com/RvLMudRSsT

— Mark S. King (@MyFabDisease) September 6, 2023

A quick recap of my DC trip #USCHA pic.twitter.com/0F3KVgD3UB

— TailClu6 (@Wallobwoy93) September 11, 2023

Representative Maxine Waters (D–Calif.) headlined the opening plenary, asking “Are you ready for this fight?” The next day, at Gilead Sciences’ plenary “In Her We Trust: She Is Glorious,” original Dreamgirls and Abbott Elementary star Sheryl Lee Ralph had the audience shouting Amen with her call to empower and uplift Black women. The praising only grew louder during a rousing show by gospel great Yolanda Davis.

Q: How to uplift & empower #blackWomen & those affected by #HIV ? At #2023USCHA … @thesherylralph spells out the answer! ???????????????? #PREACH #InHerWeTrust @pozmagazine #abbottelementary pic.twitter.com/Kv8vubyojH

— Trenton Straube (@trentonstraube) September 15, 2023

That evening, “In Her We Trust” continued with a special event at the National Museum of African American History and Culture, where attendees had a chance to take in a selection of the galleries.

Among the works and artifacts by cultural greats such as Kehinde Wiley and Tina Turner, we spotted photographs by activist Lola Flash, recently spotlighted in POZ. The evening's highlight had to be a panel disccussion with civil rights icon Ruby Bridges, who became worldvfamous in 1960 when, at age 6, despite a wall of hateful protesters, she was one of the first Black children to attend a formerly all-white public school in Louisiana.

Highlight of #2023USCHA #HIV conference was a trip to national museum of #AfricanAmericanHistory to hear #civilrights icon @RubyBridges ???????????? @pozmagazine #InHerWeTrust pic.twitter.com/ru60g3j0Ai

— Trenton Straube (@trentonstraube) September 15, 2023

Friday's plenary, sponsored by ViiV Healthcare, delivered a three-act presentation, "The S Salon: Desire, Pleasure & Intimacy," that included poet Safia Elhillo, comedian Amanda Seales and larger-than-life personality TS Madison.

Highlight of #2023USCHA #HIV conference was funnygurls @TsMadisonatl1 @amandaseales poet #safiaelhillo @mafiasafia + other #BlackWomen talk #desire #intimacy & #pleasure ???????????????? @pozmagazine pic.twitter.com/cRBxXpNQwz

— Trenton Straube (@trentonstraube) September 15, 2023

Saturday's closing plenary panel spotlighted Black women working in federal programs aimed at ending the HIV epidemic. You can read more about that—and watch a video discussion—here on HIV.gov's POZ blog.

Each morning and afternoon, USCHA attendees had their pick of workshops and lectures to attend. One included a screening of the short film Unexpected, about Masonia Traylor and Ciarra Covin, who formed an underground network of women helping Black mothers cope with and survive an HIV diagnosis in the rural South. (It's produced by Sheryl Lee Ralph and has been playing the festival circuit; keep an eye out for wide release and screenings soon.)

If you're at #USCHA, join PrEP In Black America for "Intersectional Identities as Artifacts of Systemic Racism and HIV Prevention" workshop at 1:45 PM. #PrEPSaves pic.twitter.com/e6d05BeGPY

— PrEP In Black America (@PrEPInBlkUS) September 6, 2023

LIVE from #2023USCHA! A full house ???? for "Turning Trauma-Informed Approaches (#TIA) into Practice," presented by NASTAD's Manager of Health Equity, Nicole Holmes, and developed by our Senior Manager of Organizational Excellence, Mahelet Kebede. ?????????????? @NMACCommunity pic.twitter.com/qCDzMuH4KI

— NASTAD (@NASTAD) September 7, 2023

Our team members, Danielle and Wanda, worked together to lead the workshop entitled “Truth Telling: Conversations on Recruiting Black Women in HIV Research” at this year’s US Conference on HIV/AIDS! Learn more about their project at https://t.co/KTlvyon7UZ #USCHA2023 #USCHA pic.twitter.com/o29YO3E4Dh

— iSTRIVE Research Lab (@iSTRIVE_lab) September 8, 2023

Fantastic session and discussion on #longtermsurvivors and #HIV cure research today at #2023USCHA. Thanks to all the amazing speakers and panelists! pic.twitter.com/lqZXqcxjfU

— The Reunion Project (@Reunion_Project) September 8, 2023

Live from #2023USCHA: P.J. Moton-Poole kicks off our #Mother2Son session:

“Who do Black men listen to? Their biological mothers, grandmothers, ball mothers and chosen mothers. That’s how this program was born — to explore the vulnerability and strength of these relationships.” pic.twitter.com/uM4BdxcQj1

— ViiV Healthcare US (@ViiVUS) September 8, 2023

Happiness is your all-star panel of #HIV activists reading book excerpts at #USCHA with the jacket art printed on their T-shirts. What a fun surprise. pic.twitter.com/u42dpl00cV

— Mark S. King (@MyFabDisease) September 7, 2023

Amid all this excitement, everyone made time to peruse panels of the AIDS Quilt, an installation highlighting Black women as champions of change and poster presentations of new research.

Advancing health equity for all, including Black women and girls, is extremely personal for Deborah Telman. Here, she highlights her experience at #USCHA2023 and shares her perspective on Gilead’s commitment to supporting communities with the greatest unmet needs.

— Gilead Sciences (@GileadSciences) September 13, 2023

#2023USCHA stop by our poster presentation today at 1:30pm on M3 to learn more about our Low Literary Patient Portal. #RDE #eCOMPAS pic.twitter.com/iKFqk293kP

— RDE Systems (@rdesystems) September 7, 2023

Attendees also networked among the two exhibitor halls packed with booths representing community and governmental organizations, pharmaceutical companies and much more. Among them were Team Friendly, The Reunion Project, AIDSVu, My Brother's Keepr, U=U plus, AIDS United, The Well Project, Gilead, ViiV, Merck, Janssen, CVS special pharmacies, Mistr, NASTAD, OraSure, POZ magazine (of course) and many more.

Live from the AIDSVu booth (booth 317) at #2023uscha! We hope to see you there! pic.twitter.com/McoxNod5q0

— AIDSVu (@AIDSVu) September 7, 2023

Highlight of #2023USCHA #HIV conference is working the @pozmagazine booth & connecting IRL w coworkers & the 4K+ attendees. Proud to be part of this inspiring team & community! ??????????❤❤❤ #USCHA2023

#HIVAIDS pic.twitter.com/UqkwnGakZv

— Trenton Straube (@trentonstraube) September 15, 2023

With 2023 USCHA now in the rearview mirror, it’s time to look ahead. Mark your calendars now for the 2024 event, slated for September 12 to 15 in New Orleans. Hopefully, we’ll be fully unpacked before then.

And that is a wrap on the 27th U.S.Conference On HIV & Aids this week in Washington! We are so proud to have represented San Antonio and fostered connections across the nation that we will continue to lean on to help our team continuously learn and grow!

Until nxt year!✈ #uscha pic.twitter.com/MzZHtRvzKH

— Operation BRAVE San Antonio (@Operation_BRAVE) September 9, 2023

@NMACCommunity team at #2023USCHA. See you in New Orleans next year. pic.twitter.com/K8xpGUYQC7

— tonidnewman (@tonidnewman1) September 12, 2023

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/highlights-2023-us-conference-hivaids