Watch Eight Influencers Mobilize Black Gay Men to Fight Monkeypox

GLAAD's #FactsAndVax campaign on Instagram Reels enlists Black influencers to educate about mpox. [VIDEOS]

December 29, 2022 By Trent Straube

One of the year's biggest health stories was the outbreak of monkeypox, now referred to as mpox, which primarily affects men who have sex with men. Although cases have drastically decreased since its peak during the summer, disparities remain among people of color and in the South. To engage African-American gay men in efforts to get informed and vaccinated, LGBTQ advocacy group GLAAD teamed up with influencers in the community for a series of Instagram Reels and a social media campaign.

The first video in the #FactsAndVax influencer campaign launched November 20, with a humorous Reels in which life coach Obio Jones, playing multiple roles, brings up the topic with a friend who says he got vaxxed two years ago—he is likely confusing the mpox shots with the COVID-19 vaccines, because mpox vaccines weren't out in 2020. When he's corrected on the facts, he disappears, presumably off to his health care provider.

The campaign directs folks to GLAAD's Factsheet for the LGBTQ Community on Mpox, which includes information sections such as "Am I eligible to be vaccinated against Mpox?" and "Are people living with HIV/AIDS more likely to get Mpox?"

Since the campaign's debut, seven other Reels have been posted. The list below includes the influencers in the campaign and links to their Reels. The Instagram posts are also embedded beneath the list.

- Kvng David, an Atlanta-based influencer and musician

- Reggie Rich, a Washington, DC–based influencer and party promoter

- Obio Jones, an Atlanta-based life coach and LGBTQ advocate

- Dustin Ross, a New York City–based actor, writer and television host
- Antonio “Forever Mistah,” an Atlanta-based influencer and party promoter
- Kenni Javon, a New York City–based DJ and party promoter
- Henry Philyaw, a New York City–based community influencer and writer
- Maria Van Cartier, a New York City–based community influencer

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by KVNG DAVID (@kvngdavidsworld)

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by REGGIE. ???????? (@reggieriich)

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by Obio. (@obioojones)



View this post on Instagram

A post shared by LookAtDustin (@lookatdustin)



View this post on Instagram

A post shared by ???? Speak Life (@forever_mistah)

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by Kenni Javon (@kennijavon)

[Editor’s Note: The post by Henry Philyaw is currently not available to embed; you can visit the Instagram acount at @justxhenry.]

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by Maria Van Cartier ???????? (@dearmarianyc)

In related news, mpox was among POZ magazine's Top HIV Science Stories of 2022. To learn more about the topic, click #Monkeypox, where you'll find headlines such as

- "Southern States' Lackluster Monkeypox Efforts Leave LGBTQ+ Groups Going It Alone,"
- "Monkeypox Can Be Severe in People Living With HIV,"
- "How Well Does the Monkeypox Vaccine Work?" and
- "Monkeypox Declines, but Disparities Persist."

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