

HIV Advocates Inspire in “The Cure Chronicles” [VIDEOS]

The video series by American Gene Technologies features interviews with HIV advocates, peer leaders, scientists, TikTokers and more.

January 20, 2023 By [Trent Straube](#)

Sexual molestation as a child, an abusive father, the foster care system, violent street gangs, an [HIV](#) diagnosis as a teenager. “Anything you can think of that’s bad, I’ve been through it,” says [Latina](#) HIV advocate Maria Mejia in an episode of The Cure Chronicles. Despite her challenges, Mejia’s story is one of resilience, hope and inspiration.

She tested HIV positive as a teenager over three decades ago, at a time when she believed HIV only affected gay white men in cities like San Francisco. Today, Mejia is thriving as an ambassador for [National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#) and a global ambassador for [The Well Project](#), an HIV nonprofit for women and girls. You can watch her engaging interview below:

Mejia’s interview is the 16th installment of The Cure Chronicles, a video series created by American Gene Technologies (AGT), a gene therapy biotech company that is trying to develop a functional cure for HIV as well as treatments for other illnesses. The company’s CEO, Jeff Galvin, hosts the series, interviewing a different HIV leader in each episode. Guests include peer advocates, researchers, TikTokers, youth leaders, doctors, bodybuilders, professors and much more.

Although AGT focuses on cure research, topics covered in the series are much broader. Galvin delves into guests’ personal HIV stories and explores their unique brand of advocacy and research, affording viewers rich perspectives on today’s epidemic.

“There’s a misperception out there that HIV/AIDS has been cured and its impacts are minimal on global public health,” [Galvin told biotech news site Bio Buzz](#) about the series. “That’s just not true. While antiretroviral therapies have vastly improved the lives of those living with HIV, there is no cure, and living with HIV places a significant burden even on those with access to treatment; for those without access, HIV/AIDS remains a devastating disease.”

You can watch all of The Cure Chronicles [on YouTube](#) and on [AGT’s website](#). For a preview, several videos are embedded below along with descriptions from the series’ website.

In the meantime, if you're curious about the latest developments in HIV cure research, click [#Cure](#) for a collection of related POZ articles, including "[Researchers Study CRISPR Gene Editing to Cure HIV](#)" and "[Researchers Explore CAR-T Therapy as a Potential Cure for HIV.](#)"

Episode Seven: Daniel Driffin.

Daniel is the co-founder of THRIVE Support Services, Inc., a patient-advocacy and social support network for Black gay men living with HIV.

Episode Thirteen: Emma Cole.

Emma is an HIV activist and a TEDx speaker who hosts annual "Positive Voice" talks for high school students to educate them about HIV. She uses her experience and vast knowledge to challenge HIV stigma.

Episode Fifteen: Michael Fletcher.

Michael is a passionate HIV advocate who has dedicated the last 15 years of his career to raising awareness and education about HIV as a Peer Advocate at "The Horizon Program" in Maine. Michael's role helps ensure people living with HIV in his rural community receive proper access to HIV treatment to prevent the disease from developing into AIDS. He is also a strong advocate for challenging HIV stigma.

Episode Fourteen: Diana Koss.

Diana is a YouTuber who builds awareness about HIV by sharing her story. Her primary goal is to "help those who are positive and educate those that are negative". Diana hosts a series called "Born Positive" which chronicles her journey and experiences after being born with HIV.

Episode Eight: Orbit Clanton.

Orbit Clanton is an HIV/AIDS activist, advocate, and public speaker. He shares his experience as an individual living with HIV for 40 years.