TuSalud

# LOVE IT: Phoenix Unveils a Colorful Mural to Spotlight HIV Advocacy

The uplifting Phoenix mural raises awareness of HIV and U=U at a time when new diagnoses are increasing in Arizona.

April 4, 2025 By Trent Straube

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Like a belated valentine delivering radiance and joy to downtown Phoenix, a bright new mural spells out LOVE in predominant shades of red and pink while spotlighting several people of color, the phrase “U=U,” numerous hearts and plus signs and more. Unveiled April 2 on a facade of the Parsons Center for Health and Wellness, the mural aims to raise HIV awareness, educate about prevention and treatment and honor those lost to the epidemic.

Parsons is home to Prisma Community Care, which provides HIV and sexual health services to Arizonans, notably to underserved and minority populations, such as Latinos, LGBTQ and African Americans of all ages and genders.

The mural was created by local artists Quinn Murphy and Jake Early. Inspired by interviews with individuals affected by HIV, the artists wanted their work to convey an upbeat message showing happy and healthy people enjoying their lives.

“It’s not a death sentence anymore,” Early told KJZZ 91.5 news. “There’s joy.” He describes the folks depicted in the mural as regular people. “They may or may not be positive,” he added. “We don’t know, because they’re living a normal life.”

What’s more, according to KJZZ, the mural made its debut as Arizona reports a 20% increase in new HIV cases. AIDSVu.org, an interactive site that maps and visualizes HIV data on communities across the nation, offers more detailed statistics. In 2022, about 18,700 people were living with HIV in Arizona, about 86% of whom were men. Among the newly diagnosed, 45% were Latino, 30% were white, 17% were Black and 5% were Native American, according to AIDSVu.org data.

The mural came together via the collaborative efforts of the City of Phoenix, Mayor Kate Gallego and the Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture in partnership with Artlink and with support from Prisma Community Care, one n ten, Valleywise and Aunt Rita’s Foundation.

Mayor Gallego spoke at the mural’s unveiling. “We are so proud to celebrate this incredible mural,” she said. “It’s a significant day in illustrating our values for those we lost, those who are

thriving and the science that helped lead to longer lives for residents diagnosed with AIDS or HIV. You can see the beautiful message of love that this mural strongly communicates—and it's a message that is very timely." (Watch Gallego and other leaders speek at the unveiling in the video at the top of this article as well as on the city of Phoenix's YouTube channel.)

The mural also serves as an educational tool, she explained. It features a QR code that allows people to use their phones to connect to information about the Phoenix Fast-Track initiative to end the HIV epidemic.

Launched in 2014, the global Fast-Track Cities initiative was spearheaded by the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the City of Paris. Fast-Track Cities is a partnership encompassing over 500 cities around the world as well as global HIV organizations with the goal of ending HIV in urban settings by 2030. To accomplish this, they aim to get:

- 95% of people living with HIV to know their status;
- 95% of those people on HIV meds (antiretrovirals);
- 95% of people on meds to achieve viral suppression;
- To Zero HIV stigma.

Here's a video that's part of the Phoenix initiative to end HIV stigma:

To learn more about this global effort, click #Fast-Track Cities. In related news, Dr. José M. Zuniga, who is President/CEO of the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (@IAPAC) and the Fast-Track Cities Institute (@FTC2030), pens a POZ blog titled Zero HIV Stigma.

The phrase "U=U" that appears in the mural stands for "Undetectable Equals Untransmittable." It refers to the fact that people with an undetectable viral load don't transmit HIV to others through sex. What's more, people with HIV who achieve and maintain viral suppression experience slower disease progression, enjoy better overall health and are less likely to develop opportunistic illnesses.

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