



May 16, 2009

Dear Colleague:

“A woman who is convinced that she deserves to accept only the best, challenges herself to give the best.” --Maya Angelou

We at AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth & Families believe that women have the power to change the world. For over nine years, our Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program continues to be a powerful vehicle for this change. Since our inception, our trained corps has educated over 32,000 consumers in their local communities across 39 states, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico. These informed and energized consumers are essential allies in getting people living with HIV into care and ensuring meaningful access to care.

The Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program is an intensive, nine month program, supported by a cooperative agreement from HRSA. Thanks to this support, we are able to offer the training at no charge to your program or to the consumers who participate.

The program uses a train-the-trainer model that engages participants in diverse skill building and educational programs, including the latest in HIV education, public speaking, workshop presentation skills, and personal leadership development. The Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program offers life-changing potential for your nominee and continues beyond as she brings the same messages to others. Like a stone thrown in a pond, the ripple effect of the program continues in an ever-widening circle.

Today, I am asking you to recommend at least one HIV-positive woman for consideration as an applicant to the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program. This free program of education and training, personal development, and self-empowerment will bring many positive benefits to your own program and to the women who become part of the Leadership Corps — benefits that only increase over time.

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The application materials are available online at www.aids-alliance.org.

As with all our AIDS Alliance endeavors, we work best and accomplish the most through strong partnerships with you, our members! We look forward to your nomination of an eligible woman living with HIV for the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program.

We will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Feel free to contact me directly, at (202) 785-3564 extension 150. Your consumer participation will enrich the community you both serve for years to come!

Warmest wishes,

Linda H. Scruggs

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Questions Part D Projects Frequently Ask
About the AIDS Alliance
Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program

1. Why is AIDS Alliance offering this program to my project?

We share your commitment to better care for people living with HIV, a network of family-centered services, and stronger communities. Trained and empowered consumers are your partners in achieving all of these things. With cooperative agreement support from the Health Resources and Services Administration, AIDS Alliance is able to offer the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program to your project at no charge to you or to the consumers who participate.

2. What is the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program?

It is a nine-month training program for women living with HIV. Through this program, AIDS Alliance is developing a national corps of positive women who are trained and supported as trainers of others in their local communities. We bring the women together twice in the program year to take part in intensive training sessions. We provide ongoing support throughout the program to reinforce what they learn and to support their local training efforts. Taking part in the Consumer Leadership Corps empowers women living with HIV to better care for themselves and to share what they have learned with others.

3. How does my program benefit directly if a woman affiliated with my program takes part in the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program?

Nominating a woman to participate in our consumer training program will benefit your program in many ways!

- The women who participate in the program acquire new skills as trainers and leaders for other consumers and as partners for care providers. At no cost to your program, you will be adding a valuable partner to the resources available to you and your program when it comes to case-finding, in-service training, and consumers as advisers and team members.
 - Leadership Corps participants -- with ongoing support from AIDS Alliance -- are required to conduct 12 community workshops to reach women, youth, and families living with or at high risk for HIV with information that will motivate them to get into care and stay in care.
 - Many of you have consumers in paid or volunteer positions in your program and are looking for resources to help make these positions successful. The training, education, and practical skills building provided through our training program is a great in-service opportunity for women who are already consumer volunteers or staff members.
 - Many graduates of our training program are able to assume new leadership positions, such as serving on program and agency advisory committees. If

you are looking for partners to strengthen your Consumer Advisory Board, a graduate of the Consumer Leadership Corps will be a wonderful resource for you.

- By demonstrating your support for consumer education and empowerment, you will be a role model for other providers and a source of hope and inspiration to the consumers you serve.

We would be very happy to connect you with project directors and other providers whose programs include Consumer Leadership Corps graduates. They will be able to tell you how their programs have benefited.

4. What should I look for when I choose a woman to nominate?

There are certain program requirements. Program participants must be:

- A woman living with HIV who is receiving care
- At least 18 years old
- Connected to a program that is funded through the Ryan White CARE Act – either as a person who receives care from the program, a volunteer, or a staff member
- Willing and able to travel to attend two national group training events and participate in one web-based training
- Willing to commit to conducting at least 12 workshops with other consumers in her local community (AIDS Alliance will provide her the training she needs to learn how to do this, as well as expense reimbursement for the 12 workshops)
- Willing and able to complete required paperwork after each workshop
- Willing and able to work hard on the program and to commit to sticking with it over the course of the program

We believe – and our training program is founded on this – that there are strengths and resources present in all people that can be supported and built upon. Many successful program graduates are in recovery, living in difficult circumstances, or otherwise coping with considerable challenges. Therefore, we hope you will not eliminate women from consideration for these reasons alone. Project directors and coordinators often tell us that there is a certain drive to overcome circumstances and help others that they see in women who have been successful candidates for our training program.

5. Do I have any obligations if I nominate a woman for the program?

No, although we are confident that you will wish to provide moral support and encouragement to anyone from your program who participates in the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program. If you nominate a woman who is a staff member with your program, you will need to provide her with time off to attend two trainings including travel. Each training lasts for 3-4 days.

We believe that once you see the personal growth and other positive changes in Consumer Leadership Corps graduates, you will want to partner with them in new ways to strengthen your program and community. For some programs, this means partnering on the local workshops; but, this is a choice, not a requirement. Many project directors and coordinators find that these workshops are a great case-finding resource because they encourage women to know their HIV status and motivates HIV-positive women and youth to get into or return to care and to remain in care.

6. Is there a curriculum for the program? What topics does it cover?

Yes. AIDS Alliance uses a comprehensive train-the-trainer curriculum, developed and refined over the seven years that this consumer training program has been in existence. The curriculum covers a range of topics, encompassing HIV health care, communication and public speaking, consumer/provider partnerships, training skills, self-advocacy, and leadership development. We continue to add to and revise the curriculum as we learn what works best.

Our curriculum and program approach helps consumers recognize and build on their strengths, challenge their weaknesses, and share what they learn with others.

Questions Consumers Frequently Ask
About the AIDS Alliance
Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program

1. Can you tell me about the goals of this program?

The most important goal of the program is that consumers learn how use the education, training, and information we provide to help them make decisions for their life, and then, use this same information to help others.

Our goals include your helping to build consumer/provider partnerships, motivating other people to learn (as you will) the following:

- How to be involved in the HIV health care system
- To be confident and know that information is the key to being a powerful person for yourself and others
- To have control over the best decisions for your life and your care
- That you teach others, so that they can be empowered with new information and, in turn, teach others

2. How do I know if I am eligible to participate?

It's easy! You must be the following:

- A woman living with HIV who is receiving care
- At least 18 years old
- Connected to a program that is funded through the Ryan White CARE Act – either as a person who receives care from the program, a volunteer, or a staff member
- Willing to commit to the program and to work hard to succeed
- Able to travel to attend two national group trainings over the course of the nine-month program
- Able to participate in one online based training session
- Willing to identify organizations in your community that will host workshops that you will teach (we will help you learn how)
- Willing to be a leader

3. Do I have to pay to take part in the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program?

No. There are no costs to you or to the local program that recommends you. Our consumer training program is funded by an agency of the federal government, the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). AIDS Alliance will pay your costs to travel to the trainings.

4. What kind of process do you use to choose who will participate?

We use a scoring process. There is an application for you to fill out. Then, all the applications are reviewed by a committee who looks at each woman's strengths and potential, as well as the letters of support she provides for her application. The women whose applications receive the highest score are interviewed by phone. After the phone interviews, we make our final selection. Everyone who applies will receive a letter to let them know about the decision. If you are not selected this year, you can apply again next year.

5. Can you tell me the specific tasks you expect me to perform?

If you are accepted into the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program, we will expect you to do the following things:

- Attend our national training sessions. There are two during this nine-month program. Each lasts 3-4 days.
- Complete one web-based training session.
- Based on what you learn in our training program, you will be required to conduct at least 12 workshops in your own community for people who are living with HIV or at high risk for HIV infection. You will teach the audience what you have learned.
- You will advertise and promote these workshops in your community. After each workshop, you will prepare and submit the required follow-up forms to AIDS Alliance.

6. How will this program benefit me personally?

You will benefit in many ways!

- You will learn more about HIV and AIDS.
- You will become a skilled and experienced trainer.
 - You will be able to organize workshops.
 - You will be able to use a training curriculum.
 - You will be able to share what you have learned with others.
- You will learn more about partnering with health care providers.
- You will have opportunities to improve communication, self-confidence, and leadership – within yourself, and in the lives of others.

7. What is the benefit to my local community from my participation in this program?

Once you have finished this program, your local community will recognize that you are a valuable resource to help others. You will be able to use your leadership skills and education to reach out to others who are at risk for HIV. With your special training, you will be able to motivate and teach people the important messages you learned so that they can be better informed about their health care options, and the medicines and social services available to them. Through you, your community becomes empowered to be a stronger network of shared resources for people living with HIV.

8. Do I need a sponsor to recommend me for participation?

We require that all applicants have an ongoing affiliation with a program funded through the Ryan White CARE Act, either as a woman receiving care, a volunteer, or a staff member. If you are interested, talk with someone in your program about recommending you for the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program.

9. Can you explain what family-centered care is, and why it is so important to this program?

AIDS Alliance believes that when care providers, people living with HIV, and family members are all working together, it increases the quality of life and the quality of care. This care model allows for many people to participate in decisions that affect the lives of people with HIV, and promotes a respect for all people's culture, ethnicity, language, and personal choices.

We believe caring for people with HIV is not just caring for a disease but caring for a whole person, and the involvement and support of family, friends, and community are essential for the consumer's well being.

Finally, we believe that providers and agencies that use this approach can better identify the needs of the individual and can bring other agencies and services into the picture of care. Family-centered care is a win-win for providers, for consumers and their families, and for the community.



**Consumer Leadership Corps
Training Program**

2009-2010 Application



Please read the **Frequently Asked Questions** and **Eligibility Requirements** before you apply to make sure that you are eligible and that the program is right for you.

To apply, you must be an HIV-positive woman (at least 18 years old) who is receiving HIV care. You also must be connected in some way with a Ryan White CARE Act funded program, either as a person who receives care from the program, a volunteer, or a staff member. We will give priority to women who are affiliated with a Part D Program.

Please type or print legibly in blue or black ink. **Please read through the entire application before you start filling it out so that you are sure you understand what you will need to do.**

SECTION 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Daytime Phone Number _____ Other Number _____

Age: 18-24 25-39 40-50 51+

Gender: Female Transgender

Sexual Orientation (optional): Heterosexual Lesbian Bisexual

Ethnicity/ Race (optional):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African American/Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White (non-Hispanic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian American/ Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latina | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

Are you openly living with HIV? Yes No

Do you work or volunteer in the AIDS field? Yes No

If so, for how long? _____

What is the highest level of education that you have completed (please circle one):

8 9 10 11 12 GED Some College College Other

SECTION 2: PROGRAM INFORMATION

What is the name of the Ryan White CARE Act funded program where you receive care, volunteer, or are employed? _____

Does this program receive Part D funding? Yes No Don't Know

Program Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Program Director or Coordinator _____

Phone & Fax Numbers _____

Email Address _____

Do you work or volunteer for this program? Yes No

If so is your position paid or are you a volunteer? Paid Volunteer

If so, how long have you worked or been a volunteer there? _____

Please describe your responsibilities. (If you need more space, attach another sheet of paper.)

Do you have regular access to the following? (Please check all that apply.)

- Fax Machine Computer Email (Required)

If you have access to a fax machine, what is the number? _____

What is your email address (required)? _____

Please type or print legibly

Do you regularly use email to communicate? Yes No

If so, how often do you check you email? Daily 2-3 times a week Once a week

SECTION 3: LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

Have you participated as any of the following in your local community in the past three years?
(Please check all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning Council Member | <input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS Educator |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consortium Member | <input type="checkbox"/> People Living with HIV Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning Group (CPG) Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Advocate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support Group Facilitator | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Advisory Board (CAB) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Have you done either of the following? (Please check all that apply.)

- Public Speaking Presenting a Workshop or Other Training

If you have presented at a workshop or done any public speaking, please describe what you did and what your role and responsibilities were. (If you need more space, attach additional sheets of paper.)

SECTION 4: PERSONAL INTERESTS

(If you need more space to answer the questions in this section, please attach additional sheets of paper.)

Why do you want to participate in the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program?

Why do you think AIDS Alliance should choose you? What do you think you bring to the program?

How would your Ryan White CARE Act funded program and your community benefit from your participation in the Consumer Leadership Corps Training Program?

Have you participated in any HIV/AIDS training? Yes No

If yes, please describe the training, including certificates, diplomas, or awards you may have received.
