

amfARTM

MAKING AIDS HISTORY

INNOVATIONS

MARCH 2016

amfAR Establishes HIV Cure Research Institute

Cornerstone of
\$100 million
cure investment
strategy

Also Inside:

End of the Ban?

**Progress, Plans,
and the Prospects
for a Cure**

**The Broad Benefits of
AIDS Research**

MARCH 2016

The biannual newsletter of amfAR,
The Foundation for AIDS Research

120 Wall Street, 13th Floor
New York, NY 10005-3908
T: (212) 806-1600
F: (212) 806-1601

1100 Vermont Ave. NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
T: (202) 331-8600
F: (202) 331-8606

TREAT Asia
Exchange Tower
388 Sukhumvit Road
Suite 2104
Klongtoey, Bangkok 10110
Thailand
T: (+66) 2 663-7561
F: (+66) 2 663-7562

www.amfar.org

Innovations Staff:
Andrew McInnes, Editor
Lucile Scott, Senior Staff Writer
Raoul Norman-Tenazas,
Creative Director
Yolande Hunter-Johnson,
Creative Coordinator



amfAR meets the BBB
Wise Giving Alliance's
Standards for Charity
Accountability

bbb.org/charity



COVER STORY

10

amfAR Establishes HIV Cure Research Institute

Launched with a five-year, \$20 million grant to the University of California, San Francisco, amfAR hopes the new institute will be an engine of innovation that accelerates progress toward a cure.

POLICY

- 4 **End of the Ban?**
- 5 **Increasing PEPFAR's Transparency**
- 5 **Plugging the Gaps**

RESEARCH

- 6 **Progress, Plans, and the Prospects for a Cure**
- 8 **New Cure Grants Spur Innovative Collaborations**
- 8 **The Broad Benefits of AIDS Research**
- 9 **Additional Research Grants Total \$7.4 Million**

GLOBAL

- 12 **WHO Calls for HIV Treatment for All, Regardless of CD4 Count**
- 13 **Broadcasting Against Stigma...**
- 13 **...And Building a Youth Movement**
- 14 **Democratization and HIV in Myanmar**

FEATURE

- 15 **Celebrating Six Years of LifeRide**

EVENTS

- 16 **Benefit Event Highlights (Inspiration Gala New York and Los Angeles, amfAR Milano, Two x Two for AIDS and Art, and more)**



From the CEO

Kevin Robert Frost flanked by Dr. Paul Volberding (left), director of the new amfAR Institute for HIV Cure Research, and amfAR Chairman Kenneth Cole

Our Moonshot

In my 22 years at amfAR, few days can rival November 30, 2015—the eve of World AIDS Day—for filling me with hope for the future. That’s when we announced the establishment of the amfAR Institute for HIV Cure Research with a five-year \$20 million grant to the University of California, San Francisco. The Institute is the centerpiece of our \$100 million investment strategy aimed at developing the scientific basis of a cure by the end of 2020 (see pages 10-11).

Working in collaboration with other teams of researchers addressing the scientific challenges that stand in the way of a cure, the Institute has the potential to become the nerve center for HIV cure research in the U.S. Without doubt, it brings together many of the finest minds and most experienced researchers working in the field today.

HIV cure research has largely evolved from a process of discovery to a challenge of technology. Getting to a cure will require the development of better tools and agents than we currently have today. Armed with new tools and new

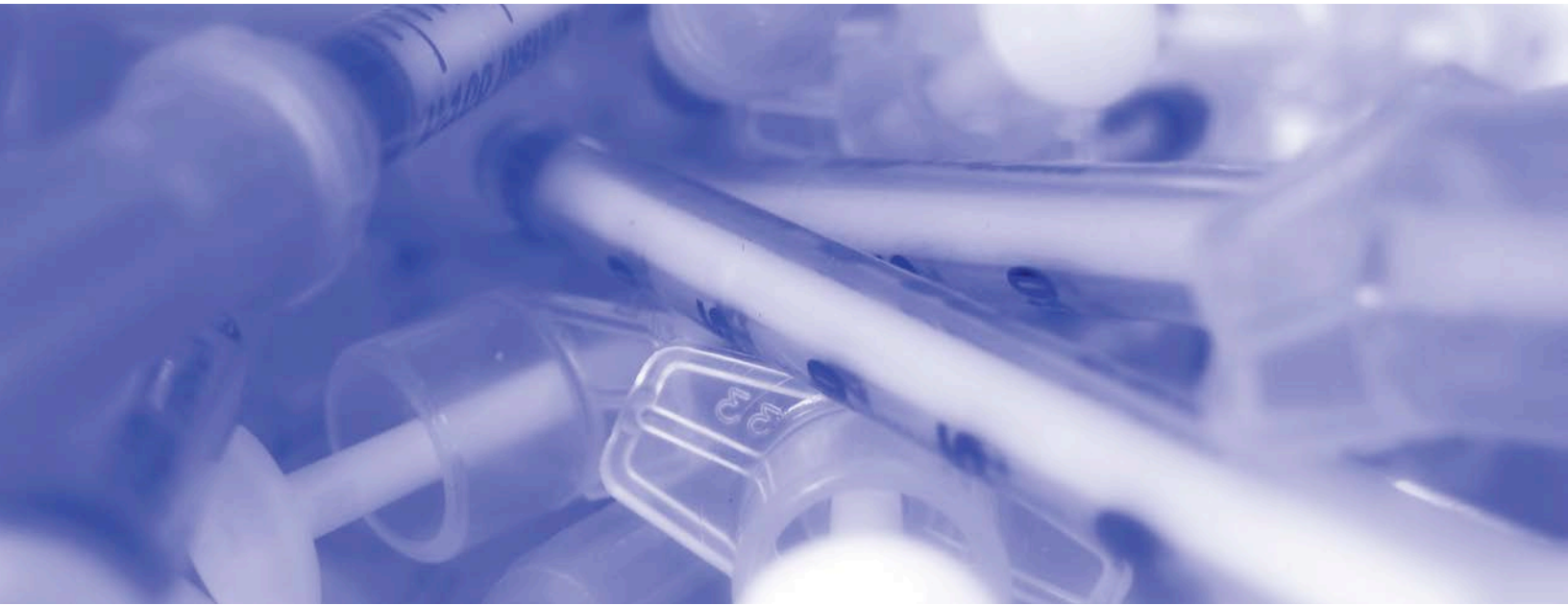
knowledge, our expectation is that within a few years we can begin to cure some of the people some of the time, then most of the people most of the time. Ultimately, we hope, we’ll have a safe and effective cure that can be made available to all who need it.

In his famous 1961 speech to Congress announcing his intention to put a man on the moon within a decade, President John F. Kennedy said there was no point agreeing to the proposition unless the country was prepared to “do the work and bear the burdens to make it successful.”

At amfAR, finding a cure for HIV is our moonshot, and we’re willing to do the work and bear the burdens. And I’m confident that, with the right investments and with your continued support and partnership, we *will* find a cure for HIV.

End of the Ban?

Congress eases restrictions on funding for syringe exchange



In one of its final acts of 2015, Congress quietly lifted the longstanding ban on federal funding for syringe services programs (SSPs)—but not entirely. The measure, which was included in an omnibus spending bill passed in December, allows states and local communities to use federal funds to pay for all operational costs at SSPs.

“The legislation only allows for funds to be used if there is evidence of a current or impending infectious disease outbreak.”

But in a huge irony that speaks to the continuing staunch opposition to syringe exchange on the part of many lawmakers, the funds cannot be used to pay for the syringes themselves. At pennies per unit, syringes are a small part of most SSP budgets, and the change should allow the much-needed programs to emerge in

certain areas of the U.S. where they are currently sparse or absent.

“This is fantastic news, but there is still more that needs to be done,” said Greg Millett, amfAR vice president and director of public policy. “The legislation only allows for funds to be used if there is evidence of a current or impending infectious disease outbreak. SSPs should be standard public health practice as a preventative measure without restrictions, and not only as a fallback tool to use after an increase in hepatitis C or HIV diagnoses.”

The partial repeal was reportedly spearheaded by Republican Congressional leaders from Kentucky, and it follows an unprecedented HIV outbreak last summer among injection drug users in neighboring Scott County, Indiana, and a decision by Kentucky to implement SSPs for the first time.

Injection drug use—both heroin and prescription opioids—is surging across America, particularly in rural areas like Scott County without access to SSPs, leading to an alarming increase in HIV and hepatitis C infections. According to the CDC, unsafe injection drug use has contributed to a 150% increase in acute cases of hepatitis C

in recent years, and Kentucky has the nation’s highest rates of hepatitis C cases.

Scientific evidence demonstrates that SSPs are highly effective at reducing the transmission of HIV and other blood-borne diseases among people who inject drugs (PWID), without increasing drug use. They also increase public safety and help link PWID to health services, including HIV and hepatitis C care, substance abuse treatment, and overdose prevention. And they are extremely cost effective, averting millions of dollars in HIV and hepatitis C treatment costs.

“Outbreaks in Indiana and elsewhere have been powerful reminders that PWID can be at very high risk for HIV and hepatitis C,” said Dr. Jonathan Mermin, director of the CDC’s National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention. “The CDC has historically recommended that states ensure PWID have access to integrated prevention services from a reliable source. Congress’s decision makes that job easier.”

For more information on the need for SSPs, visit www.amfar.org/endtheban.

Increasing PEPFAR's Transparency

amfAR's database of PEPFAR funding will help improve civil society engagement in the global HIV response

Launched in 2003, PEPFAR—the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief—is the largest international program responding to the global HIV/AIDS epidemic and represents the largest commitment one nation has ever made to combat a disease internationally. Between 2007 and 2014, Congress budgeted more than \$29 billion in PEPFAR resources through a process that involves Country and Regional Operating Plans (COPs/ROPs).

Due to the size and formatting of these plans, which can be hundreds of pages long, it has historically been difficult to track PEPFAR allocations. To remedy this, amfAR has created a PEPFAR Country/Regional Operational Plan Database, a comprehensive, navigable database of PEPFAR's planned funding of HIV/AIDS activities from 2007 to 2014. The amfAR database is designed to help civil society organizations, ministries of health and finance, researchers, and other stakeholders access and understand PEPFAR's programs and priorities at a deeper level than was previously possible.

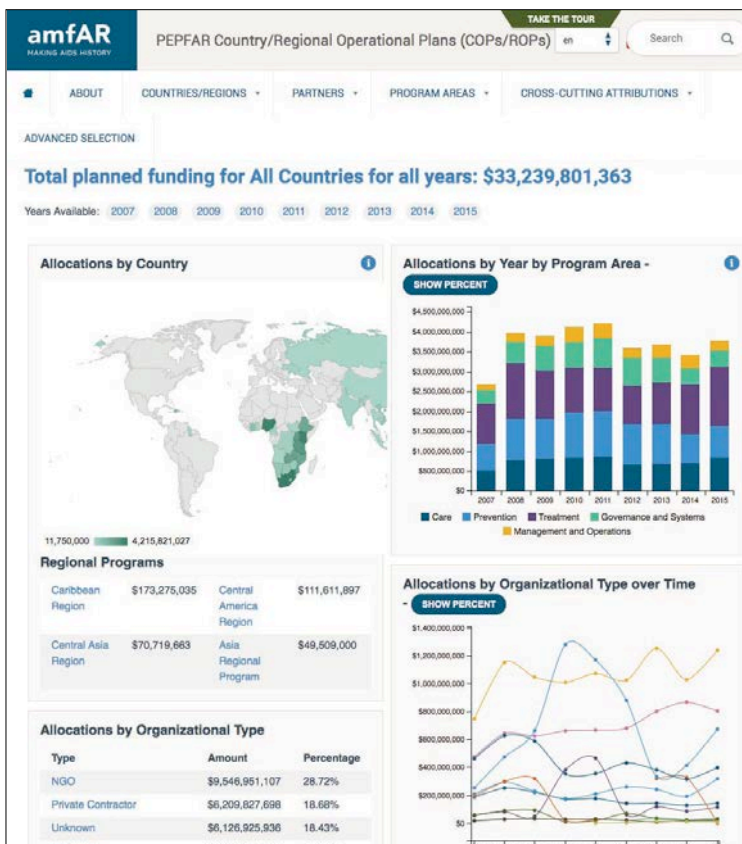
"This database not only shows trends, but also allows users to investigate who is being funded for what work in which country," said Brian Honermann, senior research advisor for amfAR and lead developer of

the database. "Stakeholders will now have a wealth of extremely detailed information at their fingertips, and we'll update the database as more information becomes available."

The database, which can be found at copsdata.amfar.org, shows allocations by year, host country, primary partner, strategic area (Care, Treatment, Prevention, Governance and Systems, Management and Operations), budget code, and organizational type. In addition, country epidemiological profiles and PEPFAR targets are available to provide context and show the public health impact of investments.

Plugging the Gaps

In three new reports, amfAR identifies strategies for filling gaps in the national and international HIV responses



- ▶ In its *Harm Reduction and the Global HIV Epidemic* report, amfAR assesses the state of harm reduction worldwide by focusing on the steps that five sample countries—Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Ukraine, and Vietnam—have, or have not, taken to address the HIV epidemic among people who inject drugs (PWID).

<http://www.amfar.org/special-report-harm-reduction-and-the-global-hiv-epidemic/>

- ▶ *Bolstering State Efforts to Implement the National HIV/AIDS Strategy: Key Indicators and Recommendations for Policymakers and Community Stakeholders*, outlines recommendations for how states across the U.S. can improve their HIV prevention and care responses. It was released to coincide with the White House's 2015 update to the Strategy.

<http://www.amfar.org/key-indicators/>

- ▶ Implementation science seeks to understand the causes of gaps in healthcare responses and identify effective strategies for closing them, but in the past, this approach has often been neglected in the realm of HIV. *Towards Defining an HIV Implementation Science Agenda for Key Populations in Low- and Middle-Income Countries* makes a case for prioritizing implementation science in the global HIV response.

<http://www.amfar.org/plugging-the-implementation-gaps/>

Progress, Plans, and the Prospects for a Cure

Researchers deliver community update at 2015 HIV Cure Summit



Rowena Johnston, Ph.D., amfAR Vice President and Director of Research



Mike McCune, M.D., Ph.D.

amfAR teamed up with UC San Francisco for the second annual HIV Cure Summit on World AIDS Day, December 1, at the UCSF Mission Bay campus. The summit followed a November 30 press conference where amfAR announced the establishment of the amfAR Institute for HIV Cure Research, supported by a five-year \$20 million grant to UCSF (see p.10).

Following introductory remarks by amfAR Chairman Kenneth Cole and CEO Kevin Robert Frost, and UCSF Chancellor Dr. Sam Hawgood, veteran AIDS researcher Dr. Paul Volberding expressed his enthusiasm for the new amfAR Cure Institute. Dr. Volberding, Professor of Medicine at UCSF and director of the UCSF AIDS Research Institute, will direct the amfAR Institute.

Warner C. Greene, M.D., Ph.D., Nick and Sue Hellmann Distinguished Professor of Translational Medicine and co-director of the Center for AIDS Research at UCSF and the Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology, discussed the primary cure strategy being pursued by the researchers at the amfAR Institute: shock and kill. The idea is to find agents that can effectively ‘shock’ latent

“I’m a big believer that with the appropriate commitment of talent and resources, we will find a cure for HIV by the year 2020.”

–Kenneth Cole, amfAR Chairman of the Board



Warner Greene, M.D., Ph.D.

@amfAR: “Our goal for the amfAR Institute for HIV Cure Research is to close the final chapter of this history.”
Sam Hawgood @UCSF
#HIVCureSummit



Setting up the scientific presentations, Dr. Rowena Johnston, amfAR vice president and director of research, provided an overview of current knowledge, recent progress, and the key scientific challenges that stand in the way of a cure. Scientific presentations followed, delivered by the principal investigators at the new amfAR Institute, each addressing one of these key challenges.

virus out of its hiding places so that it can be 'killed' by the immune system or antiretroviral drugs.

Dr. Greene cautioned that it may not be possible to achieve complete eradication of the virus. "If not," he said, "we hope to decrease the reservoir sufficiently to allow the adaptive immune response to control the infection, thereby allowing discontinuation of antiretroviral



Satish Pillai, Ph.D.

the organs of the body and the different types of cells in which it resides will facilitate the delivery of interventions targeted specifically at the reservoir.

Satish Pillai, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Laboratory Medicine at UCSF and Associate Investigator at Blood Systems Research Institute, talked about the multiple challenges inherent in determining

@HIVandHepatitis: McCune: the #HIV community has been an integral part of the discussion from the get-go and has galvanized our current work #HIVCureSummit



few as one in a million CD4+ T cells actually harbor HIV DNA. Dr. Pillai and his colleagues are using advanced techniques, such as digital droplet technology, to greatly increase their ability to detect tiny amounts of virus.

Steven Deeks, M.D., Professor of Medicine at UCSF and the Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology, rounded out the afternoon with a presentation on the clinical trials his team is pursuing to test the effectiveness of some promising latency reversing agents. Dr. Deeks is joined in this effort by investigators at the Infectious Disease Research Institute, a new model of global health nonprofit that combines state-of-the-art research with product development capabilities, and the biotech company Geovax.

“We think that having a cure would be a far better strategy than trying to keep millions of people on constant antiretroviral therapy for the rest of their lives.” – Dr. Paul Volberding, Professor of Medicine, UCSF, and Director, amfAR Institute for HIV Cure Research

therapy.” Such an approach is known as ‘reduce and control.’

Mike McCune, M.D., Ph.D., chief of the Division of Experimental Medicine at UCSF, addressed the challenge of determining the precise locations of the viral reservoirs. Comprehensive knowledge of the distribution of virus throughout

exactly how much virus is in the reservoirs. This is critical for determining whether experimental therapies are having a meaningful impact on the persistent HIV reservoir.

One of the problems is that HIV-infected cells are extremely rare in people who are virally suppressed through antiretroviral therapy—as



Steve Deeks, M.D.

amfAR Institute Director Paul Volberding, M.D., Ph.D.

New Cure Grants Spur Innovative Collaborations

Enlisting help from an unlikely source—scientists working outside the field of HIV



Dr. Alexander Zelikin

In a move that adds extraordinary new dimensions to the field of HIV cure research, amfAR has awarded \$1 million each over four years to Harvard physicist Dr. David Weitz and bioengineer and polymer scientist Dr. Alexander Zelikin of Aarhus University in Denmark. The two will bring their expertise to bear in the effort to eradicate the viral reservoir that is considered the principal barrier to curing HIV.

The new awards are the latest to be funded by amfAR through its \$100 million Countdown to a Cure for AIDS

initiative. The grants were aimed specifically at recruiting the expertise of scientists working outside the field of HIV in areas that could directly inform efforts to cure HIV. Drs. Weitz and Zelikin will collaborate with leading AIDS researchers Dr. Bruce Walker at Harvard and Dr. Martin Tolstrup at Aarhus University, respectively.

“AIDS cure research has evolved from a process of discovery to a challenge of technology,” said amfAR Chief Executive Officer Kevin Robert Frost. “And recent technological advances have brought with them some

exciting opportunities for the cross-pollination of ideas and for adapting cutting-edge technologies to the field of HIV cure research.”

Dr. Weitz, Professor of Physics and Applied Physics at Harvard University, is a world leader in the field of microfluidics. He has developed a technique that uses fluid mechanics to specifically isolate the most effective killer T cells from those that are less potent. He proposes to isolate these cells—a critical weapon

of the immune system against virally infected cells—from patient samples, clone them in a petri dish, and use a mouse model to test whether the reinjection of these killer cells can lead to a functional cure of HIV.

Dr. Zelikin is an expert in prodrugs—temporarily inactive drugs that become active only when instructed by a second stimulus—which he plans to use to eliminate the HIV reservoir. The project will involve a two-component cocktail. One prodrug will be developed to gently reawaken the latent HIV using a drug that Dr. Tolstrup has shown to be effective in patients. The second prodrug will be designed specifically to initiate the

killing of virally infected cells. Acting in tandem, it is hoped that the two prodrugs administered together will activate the latent viral reservoir and kill the cells harboring HIV without harming healthy cells.

“The ‘outside the box’ approaches proposed by Drs. Weitz and Zelikin will both expand and invigorate the field of HIV cure research,” said Rowena Johnston, Ph.D., amfAR vice president and director of research. “Each holds enormous potential for depleting, and perhaps even clearing, the persistent reservoir of HIV.”

The Broad Benefits of AIDS Research

In addition to improving and prolonging the lives of millions of people living with HIV, AIDS research has provided insights into the causes of and novel treatment for a range of diseases and conditions—from cancer to hepatitis to heart disease. Here are just a few examples:

- ▶ **Cancer** – In 2012, a young girl with acute leukemia on the brink of death was given an experimental treatment using an anti-cancer gene that could only be delivered to her cells using disabled HIV as a carrier. The treatment worked, and she remains cancer-free. Researchers are also studying drugs originally designed to block the CXCR4 receptor—a protein used by HIV to enter immune cells—to determine whether they might be used in treating lung cancer.
- ▶ **Hepatitis** – Three drugs developed to treat HIV are now the mainstays of therapy for hepatitis B virus infections. Additionally, a drug called sofosbuvir modeled on one of the main classes of anti-HIV drugs is being used to treat and cure hepatitis C.
- ▶ **Heart disease** – HIV appears to cause inflammation in small blood vessels in the heart and brain, making HIV-positive adults and children vulnerable to heart attacks and strokes. Methods of controlling inflammation and detecting it early in HIV patients should limit these damaging processes in non-HIV-infected individuals as well.
- ▶ **Alzheimer’s disease** – The characteristic plaques that fill the brain cells of an Alzheimer’s patient are formed partly by enzymes called proteases, so scientists are now investigating the use of protease inhibitors—first developed to treat HIV—to treat this debilitating dementia.

For more information on these and other benefits of AIDS research, visit www.amfar.org/The-Broad-Benefits-of-AIDS-Research.

Additional Research Grants Total \$7.4 Million

In July 2015, amfAR awarded grants of \$2 million each over four years to three research teams pursuing basic, animal, and clinical studies aimed at curing HIV. Each project takes a different approach to tackling the major impediment to a cure: the persistence of latent HIV in individuals on antiretroviral therapy (ART) with an undetectable viral load.

“These new grants represent the continued expansion of amfAR’s investments in research to find a cure for AIDS, and they are among the largest grants we have ever awarded,” said amfAR Chief Executive Officer Kevin Robert Frost. “They are a reflection of our optimism around cure research and our collective determination to develop the scientific basis of a cure for this disease.”

The research teams will be led by Dr. Dan Barouch of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston; Timothy Henrich of the University of California, San Francisco; and Sharon Lewin of the University of Melbourne, Australia.

The Foundation also awarded an \$850,000 grant to a consortium of European researchers aiming to replicate the case of the “Berlin patient,” who became the first and only person known to have been cured of

HIV after receiving a stem cell transplant from a donor with a rare genetic mutation conferring resistance to HIV infection. Led by Dr. Javier Martinez-Picado of IrsiCaixa in Spain and Annemarie Wensing of University Medical Center Utrecht in the Netherlands, the consortium hopes to generate new knowledge that can inform more widely applicable interventions.

“These new grants represent the continued expansion of amfAR’s investments in research to find a cure for AIDS.”

In addition, the Foundation granted a total of \$600,000 in Mathilde Krim Fellowships in Basic Biomedical Research to four promising young scientists. Named in honor of amfAR’s founding chairman, the fellowships are awarded annually to nurture new talent within the HIV research field. This year’s fellows are Luis Agosto, Ph.D., of Boston Medical Center; Liang Shan, Ph.D., of Yale University; Louise Scharf, Ph.D., of the California Institute of Technology; and Amit Sharma, Ph.D., of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle.

“The Krim Fellows are doing work that could produce major contributions to HIV/AIDS cure and vaccine research,” said Rowena Johnston, Ph.D., amfAR vice president and director of research. “Their projects are exciting and innovative, and we look forward to closely following their progress.”



Dr. Javier Martinez-Picado

amfAR Establishes HIV Cure Research Institute

Cornerstone of \$100 million cure research investment strategy

“We intend to quicken the pace of cure research by supporting a collaborative community of leading HIV researchers in one cohesive enterprise,” said amfAR Chief Executive Officer Kevin Robert Frost in announcing the establishment of the amfAR Institute for HIV Cure Research on the eve of World AIDS Day, December 1.

The Institute will be based at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), which will receive a \$20 million amfAR grant over five years, the largest grant the Foundation has awarded in its 30-year history. The Institute will support scientists working across the research continuum—from basic science to clinical studies—tapping into UCSF’s extensive research network across the region. It will involve collaborations with the Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology (GIVI) and Blood Systems Research Institute, as well as Oregon Health and Science University; University of California, Berkeley; Gilead Sciences; and the Infectious Disease Research Institute in Seattle, Washington.

“We intend to quicken the pace of cure research by supporting a collaborative community of leading HIV researchers in one cohesive enterprise.”

“The Institute will allow them to conduct the science, share ideas, and test and evaluate new technologies and potential therapies in a state-of-the-art environment. And I can think of no better base for such an enterprise than the San Francisco Bay Area, the crucible of technological innovation in America,” said Frost. “Furthermore, establishing an institute dedicated to finding a cure for HIV in a city that was once considered ground zero of the AIDS epidemic brings full circle the outstanding work that UCSF’s researchers have been doing over the past 30 years.”

Current antiretroviral therapy (ART) can help people with HIV live longer and healthier lives, but it cannot eliminate the virus. There is general consensus among the scientific community that the principal remaining barrier to a cure is the reservoirs, or pockets, of virus that persist in a person even after they have reached “undetectable” levels of HIV as a result of ART.

“For those of us who watched helplessly as thousands died, the opportunity to try to develop an HIV cure is truly amazing,” said Paul Volberding, M.D., a UCSF Professor of Medicine, who will direct the amfAR Institute. “We are proud to have been chosen by amfAR as the only amfAR HIV cure institute in the nation.”

The teams will work collaboratively, across institutions and across disciplines, to address the four key challenges that must be overcome to effect a cure: pinpoint the precise locations of the latent reservoirs of virus; determine how they are formed and persist; quantify the amount of virus in them; and finally, eradicate the reservoirs from the body. The effort is the centerpiece of amfAR’s \$100 million investment strategy to achieve a cure for HIV.

“The San Francisco area has a higher concentration of scientific thought leaders in HIV than anywhere else in the world,” said amfAR Vice President and Director of Research Rowena Johnston, Ph.D. “The Bay Area has consistently led the way in developing and implementing scientific advances in HIV prevention and treatment, and the potential for this team of researchers to develop a cure is unparalleled.”

“This will bring together a broad team of leading scientists who believe a cure is possible, and that it will happen here,” said Dr. Volberding. “We’re ready to end this epidemic.”



The amfAR Institute will be based at UCSF’s Mission Bay campus.

Module

C

Chart the locations of the viral reservoirs



Principal Investigator:
Mike McCune, M.D., Ph.D.
Chief, Division of Experimental Medicine, UCSF

Module

U

Understand how the reservoirs are formed and sustained



Principal Investigator:
Warner C. Greene, M.D., Ph.D.
Director and Nick and Sue Hellmann Distinguished Professor of Translational Medicine, Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology; Professor of Medicine, Microbiology and Immunology, UCSF; Co-Director, UCSF-Gladstone Center for AIDS Research

Module

R

Record the precise amount of virus contained in the reservoirs



Principal Investigator:
Satish Pillai, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Laboratory Medicine, UCSF; Associate Investigator, Blood Systems Research Institute

Module

E

Eliminate the virus from the reservoirs



Principal Investigator:
Steven Deeks, M.D.
Professor of Medicine, UCSF and the Gladstone Institute of Virology and Immunology

amfAR Institute

FOR HIV CURE RESEARCH



Director:
Paul Volberding, M.D.
Professor of Medicine, UCSF
Director, UCSF AIDS Research Institute
Co-Director, UCSF-Gladstone Center for AIDS Research

“This will bring together a broad team of leading scientists who believe a cure is possible, and that it will happen here.”

Collaborating Institutions



WHO Calls for HIV Treatment for All, Regardless of CD4 Count

In September 2015, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued new guidelines recommending that all people living with HIV initiate antiretroviral therapy (ART) as soon as possible after infection, regardless of their CD4 count. The new recommendations also

Sohn, director of amfAR's TREAT Asia program. "We should all work together to address the remaining barriers to treatment access and advocate for the global HIV funding that will be needed to fulfill the goals outlined in the new recommendations."

TEMPRANO. Both proved conclusively that initiating ART early, before HIV begins to weaken patients' immune systems, drastically reduces the chances of serious illness or death caused both by AIDS-defining illnesses and non-AIDS related events, such as cancer



“We should all work together to address the remaining barriers to treatment access and advocate for the global funding that will be needed to fulfill the goals outlined in the new recommendations.” – Dr. Annette Sohn, Director, amfAR’s TREAT Asia program

called for providing all HIV-negative individuals at “substantial” risk of HIV infection with pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) as part of a comprehensive prevention package that includes regular HIV testing, counseling, and access to condoms and safe injection equipment.

“These guidelines propose an unprecedented expansion of HIV treatment,” said Dr. Annette

The recommendations increase the number of people eligible for ART under WHO guidelines from 28 million to all 37 million people living with HIV worldwide. Currently, approximately 15 million people are accessing treatment.

The release of the new guidelines followed the publication of the results from two large randomized ART trials—Strategic Timing of Antiretroviral Treatment (START) and

or tuberculosis. In START, the incidence of these outcomes was reduced by 57% and in TEMPRANO, by 44%.

Eight amfAR TREAT Asia Network sites in India, Malaysia, and Thailand participated in START, which was led by the International Network for Strategic Initiatives in Global HIV Trials (INSIGHT) with funding from the U.S. National Institutes of Health. In all, the study involved nearly 5,000 patients at 215 clinical sites in 35 countries worldwide. The results were so conclusive that the trial was ended 18 months ahead of schedule.

“I think the WHO recommendation will catalyze governments into action to improve access to ART,” said TREAT Asia Network investigator Dr. Sanjay Pujari, who led the Pune Institute of Infectious Diseases’ participation in START. “More importantly, it can be used as a powerful tool for advocacy to improve access worldwide.”

Broadcasting Against Stigma...

TREAT Asia videos combating stigma and discrimination are broadcast across Thailand

The videos *What Does Every Human Being Want* and *What a Mother Truly Wants* depict true-to-life experiences of a child growing up with HIV and a woman living with HIV seeking to start her own family. Both aim to educate the Thai public about living with HIV in 2016, when the availability of antiretroviral therapy (ART) means the country's HIV-positive individuals can live long, healthy lives and safely have uninfected children. However, the passage of time has done little to reduce the stigma that still clings to the disease.



“This is completely new information for most Thai people,” says Tarandeep Anand, director of both Adam’s Love and Purple Haze, the creative team that produced the videos in collaboration with amfAR’s TREAT Asia program and the Thai Red Cross AIDS Research Centre.

Since their release at the beginning of November, the videos have been featured on Thailand’s leading TV networks, entertainment blogs, and social media networks. They have also been broadcast on LED

billboards at over 60 of Bangkok’s busiest intersections and in buses on some of the city’s most popular bus routes. In addition, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies posted the videos, which are available in 20-second, 30-second, one-minute, and full-length versions, on their global and regional YouTube channels.

You can find the videos at <http://www.amfar.org/new-videos-combating-hiv-stigma/>

“Unfortunately, people living with HIV are experiencing stigma and discrimination in their schools and workplaces every day,” says Phiangjai Boonsuk, TREAT Asia education project manager. “We want to inspire people who publicly or privately fear and reject those living with HIV to change their perspective and recognize that people with HIV deserve the same things in life as others—acceptance and reasons to hope for the future.”

... And Building a Youth Movement

TREAT Asia launches a program to help build capacity for youth HIV advocacy in the Asia-Pacific

Adolescents are the only group of people living with HIV with a rising mortality rate—and HIV is now the second leading cause of death among individuals aged 10–19 worldwide. On World AIDS Day 2015, the United Nations issued a release stating that the Asia-Pacific region is facing a “hidden epidemic” of HIV among adolescents, with an estimated 50,000 new infections in 2014 among youth aged 15–19.

In an effort to mobilize HIV-positive youth across the Asia-Pacific, TREAT Asia has launched a program called Youth ACATA (Asia Community for AIDS Treatment and Advocacy) with support from Viiv Healthcare’s new Positive Action for Adolescents programme.

“Youth ACATA aims to build the capacity and understanding of young people living with HIV

around HIV issues, and provide them with opportunities to help them become leaders in the community,” says Giten Khwairakpam, TREAT Asia community and policy project manager.

The inaugural 2015 class consisted of eight young people living with HIV from Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam. As part of the 12-month program, they attended workshops on HIV, ART, human rights, and advocacy, and agreed to continue to network and discuss ways to coordinate their advocacy work and build a regional youth network. TREAT Asia plans to establish a web-based platform to host these ongoing conversations in the near future.



“After attending the workshop, I felt more motivated to develop a support group for young people, especially those living with HIV, in Jakarta,” said Sepi Maulana Ardiansyah, age 23. “In Indonesia, HIV programs for young people usually only focus on HIV prevention, and I will use this opportunity to improve my knowledge and share the information with all my friends.”

Democratization and HIV in Myanmar

An amfAR research project is on the front lines of Myanmar's evolving HIV response



A nurse at the Myanmar Ministry of Health's AIDS/STD Prevention and Control Programme

In November 2015, as Nobel Peace laureate and democracy advocate Aung San Suu Kyi's political party was swept into power by Myanmar's first free and fair national election in half a century, an amfAR-funded implementation science study to improve HIV testing and treatment among the country's gay men, other men who have sex with men (MSM), and transgender individuals (collectively, GMT) got underway.

"Myanmar was inaccessible to global research prior to 2011, so this study will shed light on what obstacles there are to linkages to HIV treatment and care among GMT," says Sandra Hsu Hnin Mon, who is originally from Myanmar and is a student investigator at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, one of several institutions collaborating on the project.

In a 2000 World Health Organization ranking of world health systems, Myanmar was second to last, ahead of only Sierra Leone. But in 2013, the government began increasing health spending and reforming its dilapidated healthcare system, including its HIV response. This, combined with an influx of funding from PEPFAR, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and other international donors, means that antiretroviral therapy (ART) is now becoming available; however, only 40% of Burmese people living with HIV are currently receiving it.

"Now patients can get treatment, but the problem is we have to find out who the patients who need treatment are," says Dr. Soe Naing, executive director of International HIV/AIDS Alliance Myanmar.

Same-sex sexual activity is illegal in Myanmar, and while prosecutions under the law are rare and many GMT individuals in urban areas live openly, stigma and discrimination remain rampant, preventing many community members from accessing HIV testing and care at government clinics. In the amfAR-funded study, the Alliance and Johns Hopkins are working in collaboration with the Myanmar Ministry of Health, the University of Public Health of Myanmar, and community-based organizations to reach marginalized and "hidden" populations by using innovative HIV testing and treatment methodologists.

These include home-based HIV self-testing, point-of-care CD4 testing — which can determine

a patient's treatment eligibility in minutes, without requiring them to return to the clinic for results—and having peer navigators familiar with

"Now patients can get treatment, but the problem is we have to find out who the patients who need treatment are."

the health system help those who test positive access GMT-friendly healthcare and adhere to treatment.

"We will use this research to make recommendations to the government for it to implement in its future programs," says Dr. Myo Thant, a regional officer of the Ministry of Health's National AIDS Programme and a lead researcher on the project.

Despite the progress, many challenges to improving the national response to HIV remain. But in Yangon, in the aftermath of the election, the talk was of hope and change. "Compared with the old days, things are really improving," says Dr. Naing.



The Alliance's Kaung Htet Thu

New York City, 2014: amfAR CEO Kevin Robert Frost accepts a check from Chris Salgado, as Tyson Beckford, amfAR Trustee Dr. Mervyn Silverman, and other LifeRiders look on.



Grant Reynolds, Pacific Highway, OR, 2013



Celebrating Six Years of LifeRide

Inspired by its history with motorcycles, spirit of adventure, and philanthropic heritage, Kiehl's Since 1851 launched the multi-day, multi-stop LifeRide in 2010 to heighten HIV/AIDS awareness and raise funds for amfAR's lifesaving research programs. Each year celebrity LifeRiders—led by Kiehl's President Chris Salgado and amfAR CEO Kevin Robert Frost—tour a different region of the U.S., making multiple high-profile fundraising stops at Kiehl's stores along the way. Funds raised through the LifeRide have contributed to the more than **\$1.2 million** Kiehl's has **donated to amfAR** over the years.

To find out more about LifeRide, visit www.amfar.org/liferide.

Photos: Travis Shinn



Kevin Robert Frost and Chris Salgado, 2015

The 2013 crew rides through the streets of the Castro in San Francisco, CA.



Grant Reynolds, Conrad Leach, Shameek Bose, Chris Salgado, Ben Cohen, John Beck, Kevin DeSantis, John Corbett, Kevin Robert Frost, and Gilles Marini. 2013, Redwood National Park, California



amfAR Global Campaign Chair Sharon Stone at a LifeRide 2012 event in Washington, D.C.



Inspiration Gala New York

amfAR honored Andy Cohen and Miley Cyrus at the sixth annual Inspiration Gala New York, June 16, for their exceptional contributions to the fight against AIDS. Hosted by Anderson Cooper, the black-tie benefit also featured a live auction of luxury items, gala dinner, and menswear runway show. The event, which raised more than \$1.5 million for amfAR's lifesaving AIDS research initiatives, culminated in a rousing musical performance by nine-time Grammy winner Mary J. Blige.

Special thanks: Harry Winston, M•A•C Viva Glam, Moët Hennessy, Microsoft, The Points Guy, Spring Studios, FIJI Water, and Delta Air Lines (Photos: Getty Images, amfAR, Kevin Tachman)



“So proud of @MileyCyrus on being honored at #amfARInspiration Gala last night. Wouldn't have missed it for anything!!”- @BillyRayCyrus



generationCURE Solstice

More than 300 young professionals joined generationCURE Ambassadors Emerson Barth, Chiara Ferragni, and Kelly Osbourne at the fourth annual Solstice event, June 23. Held at the Hudson Hotel in New York City, the benefit featured music by The Misshapes and Jasmine Chess, a special live art performance by British artist Shantell Martin (left), and a silent auction.

Special thanks: Microsoft, Moët Hennessy, and Artsy

1. Mary J. Blige had the crowd on their feet with a set that included her classic hits “Real Love,” “Just Fine,” and “Family Affair.” 2. Alex Lundqvist and amfAR CEO Kevin Robert Frost 3. Honorees Andy Cohen and Miley Cyrus, with amfAR Chairman Kenneth Cole 4. Sandra Bernhard and Anderson Cooper. 5. Laverne Cox and Kiehl’s President Chris Salgado. 6. Miley Cyrus made a personal contribution to the live auction—three framed depictions of the Vanity Fair cover featuring Caitlyn Jenner, each one artistically embellished by Cyrus and signed by Jenner. 7. Artist Mr. Brainwash. 8. The Inspiration New York Men’s Fashion Show



amfAR Milano

Heidi Klum, Dakota Johnson, Michelle Rodriguez, amfAR Chairman Kenneth Cole, and many others joined the Italian fashion community for the seventh annual amfAR Milano gala on September 26. Held in conjunction with Milan Fashion Week, the spectacular evening featured live performances by legendary rocker Debbie Harry and Swedish electropop duo Icona Pop. Naomi Campbell presented OTB Group President Renzo Rosso with the Award of Courage in recognition of his commitment to the fight against AIDS. The gala raised more than \$1.6 million for amfAR.

Special thanks: Harry Winston, Moët Hennessy, Vionnet, and Delta Air Lines (Photos: Getty Images and Kevin Tachman)

1. Blondie frontwoman Debbie Harry 2. Honoree Renzo Rosso, Naomi Campbell, and amfAR Chairman Kenneth Cole 3. Natasha Poly helped introduce "The Lotus Cluster," a pair of exquisite Harry Winston diamond earrings that was purchased in the auction for 45,000 euros. 4. Icona Pop kicked off the after-party, presented by Vionnet, with their hits "Clap Snap," "Emergency," and "I Love It." 5. Heidi Klum 6. amfAR Milano 7. Michelle Rodriguez auctioned off a once-in-a-lifetime experience: the opportunity to race exotic cars with her on a speedway in Las Vegas, Nevada. 8. amfAR Global Fundraising Chair Milutin Gatsby and Carolina Parsons



amfAR Paris

Carine Roitfeld hosted amfAR Paris, an intimate black-tie benefit dinner and auction during Paris Haute Couture Week, July 5, at the famed Pavillon Ledoyen. Seven-time Grammy Award-winner Gladys Knight lent her support to the event with an unforgettable live performance. (Photo: Ryan Emberley)



TWO x TWO for AIDS and Art

Cindy and Howard Rachofsky hosted the 17th annual TWO x TWO for AIDS and Art dinner and art auction, October 24, raising a record \$8.3 million for amfAR and the Dallas Museum of Art. Actor Teddy Sears emceed the sold-out black-tie gala, which featured a blistering live performance by the multi-platinum-selling artist Robin Thicke. During the lively auction, *White Form* by Ellsworth Kelly, recipient of amfAR's 2015 Award of Excellence for Artistic Contributions to the Fight Against AIDS, sold for \$2.3 million.

Special thanks: Harry Winston, U.S. Trust, TODD Events, AUDI of America, Dom Pérignon, NorthPark Center, Fossil, Belvedere Vodka, Lombardi Family Concepts (Photos: Kevin Tachman)

1. TWO x TWO for AIDS and Art. **2.** Robin Thicke revs up the crowd with a rousing performance. **3.** Nancy C. Rogers, Melissa Meeks Ireland, Cindy Rachofsky, and Howard Rachofsky. Cindy and Howard Rachofsky hosted the event at their Richard Meier-designed home, The Rachofsky House. **4.** Cindy and Howard Rachofsky honor Todd Fiscus with the Award of Gratitude, presented by Harry Winston. **5.** The evening's emcee, Teddy Sears, with his wife Milissa Sears. **6.** Quinn Tivey, co-chair of the Los Angeles branch of amfAR's generationCURE.



Bloomingdale's Fashionable Fundraiser

In August, Bloomingdale's pledged a \$75,000 donation to amfAR as part of its four-day Fashionable Fundraiser. During the one-day-only in-store Cycle for a Cure event, shoppers who took a quick spin on a stationary bicycle were registered to win a number of fantastic prizes. Customers also enjoyed special offers and savings on merchandise purchased in stores and online throughout the event.



Inspiration Gala Los Angeles

Lady Gaga received a standing ovation for her powerful performance at the sixth annual amfAR Inspiration Gala Los Angeles on October 29, which raised \$3.1 million. amfAR Chairman Kenneth Cole, Global Campaign Chair Sharon Stone, amfAR Ambassador Cheyenne Jackson, Angela Bassett, Kathy Bates, Matt Bomer, Gwyneth Paltrow, and Julia Roberts were among the attendees who gathered to honor Ryan Murphy for his outstanding contributions to the fight against AIDS. The undisputed highlight of the evening's auction was the sale of a Timothy White photograph of amfAR's Founding International Chairman, the late Dame Elizabeth Taylor, which sold twice to Aileen Getty and Lady Gaga for a total of \$400,000.

Special thanks: Harry Winston, M•A•C Viva Glam, Moët Hennessy, DSQUARED2, 21st Century Fox, FIJI Water, Microsoft, Variety, Cadillac, Chateau Marmont, and Delta Air Lines (Photos: amfAR, Getty Images, Kevin Tachman)



@msleamichele: Proud to support @amfAR's fight for an #AIDS free world at tonight's #amfARInspiration in LA!



1. Lady Gaga's moving performance included her latest emotional ballad, "Til It Happens To You." 2. Sarah Hyland, amfAR Chairman Kenneth Cole, and Matt Bomer (Photo: Getty) 3. Julia Roberts presented the amfAR Award of Inspiration to her friend Ryan Murphy. (Photo: Getty) 4. Gwyneth Paltrow hosted the event. 5. Diane von Furstenberg and amfAR Global Campaign Chair Sharon Stone (Photo: Getty) 6. Jamie Lee Curtis (Photo: Kevin Tachman) 7. Cuba Gooding Jr.



HARRY WINSTON

amfAR
MAKING AIDS HISTORY

COUNTDOWN TO A CURE TIMEPIECE

Twenty percent of the retail sales price will be donated to amfAR's efforts to develop the scientific basis of a cure for HIV by 2020.

AVAILABLE *in* ALL HARRY WINSTON SALONS

amfAR's Countdown to a Cure for AIDS initiative is aimed at developing the scientific basis of a cure by 2020 through strategic research investments of \$100 million.

*For more information, please contact: 1.800.988.4110
or clientcare@harrywinston.com
Price available upon request*

Upcoming Events

- | | |
|----------|---|
| March 19 | amfAR Hong Kong
Kowloon, Hong Kong |
| April 15 | Inspiration Gala São Paulo
São Paulo, Brazil |
| May 19 | Cinema Against AIDS 23
Cap d'Antibes, France |

What Will Your Legacy Be?

Despite tremendous progress in HIV research, nearly 37 million people are still living with this deadly virus, and 1.2 million die of AIDS-related causes each year. Together, we can change that. You can help build an AIDS-free future by designating amfAR as a beneficiary of your will, living trust, life insurance, and/or retirement plan assets. As amfAR Founding Chairman Dr. Mathilde Krim has said, "Only research will end the AIDS epidemic."

To learn more, please contact 800-39amfAR or donors@amfar.org.

amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research
120 Wall Street, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10005-3908
www.amfar.org