



# Bloom

A newsletter of Iris House | [www.Irishhouse.org](http://www.Irishhouse.org)

SPRING-SUMMER 2024



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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I am delighted to share the remarkable progress and achievements of Iris House during this Spring and Summer seasons. In this issue of Bloom, we will spotlight our Plainfield, New Jersey site and our work in the New Jersey communities we serve. The unwavering commitment to providing essential health services and education has driven us to engage in numerous impactful activities and forge meaningful partnerships that fuel and grow our footprint in NJ.



Over the months of 2024, our outreach has been substantial. Our tireless staff in NJ has tested 285 individuals for HIV, completed 449 STI tests, conducted workshops attended by 742 youth, distributed 84,928 condoms, and screened 96 individuals for PrEP, with 17 enrolling in the regimen. You will see amazing photos and client testimonials included in this newsletter. Throughout these months these accomplishments underscore the dedication of our team and the vital support of our community and partners.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to foster a healthier, more informed community.

With much appreciation,

Ingrid Floyd  
Executive Director

## TAKE ACTION TODAY!

### VOLUNTEER

at Iris House for our Food Pantry and/or Fresh Market Programs. **Contact Serge Jean at 646.548.0100, x202**

### JOIN

**ACT NOW: END AIDS (ANEA)** a national coalition of community-based organizations, health departments, national policy partners, and activists committed to ending the HIV epidemic in the United States.

### DONATE

to Iris House by visiting Supporting Women and Families Impacted by HIV ([donorview.com](http://donorview.com)).

## Congratulations Audria!

We are thrilled to announce the promotion of Audria Russell to the position of Program Director at our New Jersey site. Audria has been a vital part of the NJ Iris House team since 2012 as Program Manager, bringing with her 21 years of experience in program and case management. Throughout her tenure, she has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership, compassion, and dedication to our mission. With five direct reports, Audria has played a crucial role in shaping the success of our programs, ensuring that we continue to provide the highest quality of HIV/AIDS prevention and supportive services in these communities.

Audria shared her thoughts on her new role:

*"I am grateful for the recent promotion to Program Director at Iris House's New Jersey site. I look forward to advancing the mission of Iris House to provide HIV/AIDS prevention and supportive services to the communities in Northern New Jersey."*



Please join us in congratulating Audria on her well-deserved promotion. We look forward to seeing the continued impact she will have in her new role.

## Annual Family Picnic 2024

To celebrate the end of the summer, we had our annual Client & Family Picnic at Riverbank State Park. It was a wonderful day filled with food, games, activities, giveaways, and entertainment. We also distributed 150 backpacks filled with school supplies thanks to our amazing partnership with the Sydney Paige Foundation. We welcomed over 200 attendees inclusive of clients and employees of Iris House. This event was a true celebration of community and connection.



2024 WOMEN AS THE FACE OF AIDS SUMMIT

# YES YOU CAN

Motivated & Mobilized

Moving Forward in a New Era of HIV

**MONDAY, MAY 6, 2024**  
Bethel Gospel Assembly, 2-26 East 120<sup>TH</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10035 • 11am - 6pm



**Iris House's 2024 Women as the Face of AIDS Summit, May 6<sup>th</sup> – Bethel Gospel Assembly.** IH produced another successful and informative event to serve the community. Our annual Summit is our labor of love. This year, with approximately 300 in-person & virtual attendees we engaged in health education and fellowship! Knowledge is Power! Our goal every year is to ensure the community has the tools necessary to stay safe and to empower PLWHA to advocate for a better quality of life.

## STAY CONNECTED TO IRIS HOUSE!

Website: [www.Irishhouse.org](http://www.Irishhouse.org)

Instagram: [Irishhouseinc](https://www.instagram.com/Irishhouseinc)

Facebook: [iris.house](https://www.facebook.com/Irish.house)

X: [@Irishhouseinc](https://twitter.com/Irishhouseinc)

# Iris House – Plainfield, NJ Spring/Summer Highlights

In **April**, we participated in Gaypril at Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, distributing free condoms and Narcan. We hosted an HIV 101 Workshop with PRISM and Lambda Theta Phi Latin Fraternity Inc. at Kean University. At the “Valuing Black Women’s Health” event with the Central Jersey Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, we offered more of our prevention education tools. We continued our giveaways and services at Ebenezer AME Church in Rahway, NJ. Our Seeking Safety program at the Plainfield YMCA began this April, and IH-NJ hosted a teen game night for NYHAAD with teaching the importance of safe sex with workshops and giveaways. Additionally, we welcomed volunteers from the Youth Corps of NJ to support our initiatives.



**May** was a busy month, starting with “Tacos and Testing” with Afro-taco in Newark, NJ, where we combined delicious food with free HIV testing. We continued our educational outreach at Barack Obama Green Charter School with multiple workshops; HIV 101 & Menstrual Cycle Education. We were honored to receive the nonprofit award from the Union County Human Relations Commission. Our 5th Fresh Food Market was another success serving over 225 families, and we also hosted a Teen Health Fair at the Plainfield Public Library. Iris House participated in the Plainfield Flag Raising with our Executive Director as one of the speakers. Lastly, we opened our Iris House Free Community Closet, providing free clothing and essentials to the community.



In **June**, our PRIDE party and Drag Brunch with the city of Plainfield were both huge successes! We partnered with Union County Commissioner Rebecca L. Williams for multiple events, including our brunch at The Coffee Box and our PRIDE party at Plainfield Performing Arts Center. Iris House knows how to throw parties with purpose! We continued our outreach at the Health and Wellness Fair in Plainfield, providing free testing, safe sex kits and life-saving products.



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## IN THIS ISSUE...

- Message from the Executive Director
- Iris House – Plainfield, NJ - Announcements, Highlights and Activities
- Thank you – Women’s Ministry of Shiloh Baptist Church & Scarlet Feather Fund
- Women as the Face of AIDS – Iris House Annual Summit Recap
- 2024 Annual Family & Client Picnic Recap

**And much more!**

## Client Spotlight: Deborah Burt



Deborah has been a client at Iris House for 10 years, with 8 of those years spent actively as a co-facilitator in the W.I.L.L.O.W. and Healthy Relationships programs. She appreciates the family-centered environment at Iris House, where she feels safe, respected, and supported by the incredible staff.

thankful for the life she has and the care she’s received. She extends a heartfelt thank you to Executive Director Ingrid Floyd and the entire Iris House team, expressing her gratitude for the impact they’ve had on her life.

Deborah is already looking forward to next year’s Women as the Face of AIDS Summit.

Thank you, Ms. Deborah, for being a cherished member of the Iris House family. We are honored to continue being an integral part of your journey.

Deborah, who has been living with HIV for over 30 years and is also a cancer survivor, is deeply

### WOMEN’S MINISTRY OF SHILOH BAPTIST CHURCH – PLAINFIELD, NJ

We are delighted to acknowledge the generous \$5,000 donation from the **Women’s Ministry of Shiloh Baptist Church**, Plainfield NJ. Thank you, Carla Beverly, the Women’s Ministry, Reverend Dr. Danielle L. Brown, and the entire Shiloh Baptist Church.

### SCARLET FEATHER FUND

On behalf of Iris House, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to The Scarlet Feather Fund for their generous grant of \$15,000.

**Their support plays a crucial role in enabling Iris House to provide life-saving services to women, families, and underserved populations affected by HIV/AIDS and other health disparities.**