

## Houston Ryan White Planning Council Speakers List

### How does HIV Impact the Business Community?



**John A. Nechman, Attorney At Law**  
**Katine & Nechman L.L.P.**

713-808-1000

[Jnechman@lawkn.com](mailto:Jnechman@lawkn.com)

John received his law degree from South Texas College of Law in Houston, where he has served as an adjunct professor since 2003 teaching courses such as "Sexual Orientation and the Law" and "HIV and the Law." He served as chair/president of several national, state, and local legal organizations. He has become a frequent speaker on immigration, business, human rights, and GLBT/HIV-related legal issues, and he often visits Houston-area schools to speak to students on such topics as the importance of jury duty, becoming a lawyer, and the dangers of drug and alcohol use.

### The Affordable Care Act and HIV+ Employees



**Januari Leo, LMSW**  
**Director of Public Affairs**  
**Legacy Community Health Services**

832-548-5112

[jleo@legacycommunityhealth.org](mailto:jleo@legacycommunityhealth.org)

Januari is a master's level social worker highly experienced in working on legislative policy issues, as well as mobilizing groups to participate in advocacy that affects them both personally and on a community level. Well versed in relationship building, highly organized, and puts a strong emphasis on civic engagement and participation.

### Are People Still Getting HIV/AIDS?



**Shital M. Patel, MD, MSc**  
**Assistant Professor, Infectious Disease**  
**Baylor College of Medicine**

713 798-3793

[shitalp@bcm.edu](mailto:shitalp@bcm.edu)

Dr. Patel received her medical degree from West Virginia University where she also completed an Internal Medicine and Pediatrics residency. She moved to Houston in 2003 to complete an Infectious Diseases Fellowship and a Master's of Science in Clinical Investigation at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM). She currently serves as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine, Section of Infectious Diseases at BCM; Clinical Investigator, at the BCM Vaccine Research Center; and the Clinical Director for the Houston Local Performance Site (Thomas Street Health Center) of the Texas/Oklahoma AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC). Dr. Patel has provided care for patients living with HIV/AIDS since 2003 and serves on the Houston Ryan White Planning Council. She and the Houston LPS AETC team's work have strengthened the capacity of health care professionals to care for people living with HIV/AIDS through training and technical assistance.

## **Routine HIV Testing in Houston Emergency Rooms**



**Nancy Miertschin, MPH  
Manager, HIV Projects  
Harris Health System**

713 873-4185

[nancy.miertschin@harrishealth.org](mailto:nancy.miertschin@harrishealth.org)

Nancy received her Master's degree from the UT School of Public Health and has been Manager of HIV Projects for Harris Health System since 1997. She is a member of Houston's Ryan White Planning Council, and the Texas HIV Medication Program Advisory Committee, and previously chaired the Texas Statewide Coordinated Statement of Need (SCSN) Steering Committee. She is the project manager for two programs funded by CDC and Texas Department of State Health Services which provide 100,000 routine HIV tests annually throughout the Harris Health System. Currently, she manages a project to link individuals who are homeless and HIV+ with needed services and resources.

## **HIV, Social Determinants of Health and Community Impact**



**Nike Blue, MPH  
Director of Programs  
AIDS Foundation Houston**

713 623-6796, Ext. 261

[bluen@afhouston.org](mailto:bluen@afhouston.org)

Nike received her Master's degree from the UT Health Science Center in Houston and has over 9 years of experience in the non-profit sector. Her leadership knowledge includes community planning, public health research, and program management & oversight. She has been a member of the Houston HIV Prevention Community Planning Group since 2007, Texas Community Planning Group since 2006, Urban Coalition for HIV/AIDS Prevention Services since 2012 and a member of the African-American State of Emergency Taskforce (SOE).

## **Personal Stories: Living and Working with HIV**



**Steven Vargas  
Case Manager  
Association for the Advancement  
of Mexican Americans (AAMA)**

713 926-9491

[svargas@aama.org](mailto:svargas@aama.org)

Steven is an HIV Early Intervention case manager who says working directly with HIV+ individuals has put a face to the numbers used to make decisions and plan for HIV prevention and care services. Steven is the current Chair of the Ryan White Planning Council and has served as a member for 8 years. He has also chaired and/or co-chaired the Latino HIV Task Force, the MSM Task Force (MPACT), and the Hepatitis C Task Force.