

Alliance for Research with Chicagoland Communities

Honoring the PrEP4Teens Partnership:

ARCC 2025 Dr. Virginia Bishop Community-Academic Research Partnership Award Winner

The [Alliance for Research with Chicagoland Communities](#) (ARCC), a program of the Center for Community Health at Northwestern University, established the [ARCC Community-Academic Research Partnership Award](#) in 2012 to recognize research partnerships that exemplify strong community-driven research principles and work to impact health equity in Chicagoland communities. This annual award was renamed in 2022 to honor the leadership and partnerships of the late Dr. Virginia Bishop. Dr. “Gini” Bishop, who passed away in February 2020, co-founded ARCC, and served as ARCC’s co-director from 2007–10, alongside ARCC co-founder and current director Jen Brown. “Gini was an inspiration and example of both the art and the science of community partnerships,” Brown said. “Her vision and leadership created the path to establish ARCC at Northwestern and drives not only *what* we do but *how* we do it, centering community leadership and relationships at every step.” Read more about her impact [here](#).



The 2025 Award honors PrEP4Teens partnership. This partnership to strengthen Chicago teens’ sexual health through an arts and advocacy-focused social marketing and community mobilization education campaign is between [TaskForce Prevention and Community Services](#) (Lead: [Christopher Balthazar, PhD](#)), a grassroots community-based organization in Austin that has been serving the HIV/STI and wellness needs of predominantly Black adolescents and youth living in disenfranchised communities for over 30 years; Jim Pickett Consulting (Lead: [Jim Pickett](#)) focuses on advocacy in support of HIV prevention research and implementation; and Northwestern University (Lead: [Kathryn Macapagal, PhD](#)). *Scroll below to see a listing and photos of participating partners.* TaskForce has been supported by ARCC Partnership Development & Research Pilot [seed grants](#) on separate but related work.



PrEP4Teens is a Chicago-based social marketing campaign that aims to raise awareness about and destigmatize PrEP and sexual health for adolescents. Each year, one in five new HIV infections occur in 13-24 year olds, most of whom are Black, Latine´, and/or LGBTQ. HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a revolutionary biomedical strategy to prevent HIV approved for HIV-negative adults in 2012 and adolescents in 2018. Like birth control but for HIV, PrEP is up to 99% effective in preventing HIV. But, relative to other age groups, adolescents and young adults show the most limited awareness, access, and uptake of PrEP despite having the highest need. prEP4teens began in 2020 as an exploratory research project and gradually expanded to include a variety of clinical and community partners across the city. Local Chicago-area LGBTQ youth learned about public health social marketing and relevant research findings and then developed and revised with additional youth input a PrEP4teens campaign consisting of physical (posters, stickers, murals) and digital elements (social media) that lead to a teen-friendly informational website, blog, and provider locator in English and Spanish. Youth leadership has been central to driving and designing the campaign throughout including collaboration with artists on campaign murals and taglines, and planning a launch celebration event that was attended by over 150 youth, community members, and their families, as well as local alderpersons. The official campaign launched in fall 2023 and has reached tens of thousands of people locally and nationally. Since the launch, PrEP4Teens



has been shared at Chicago PrideFest, PFLAG Illinois, South Side Pride, Peacepalooza, Latinx Health Summit, Illinois PrEP Summit, Chicago Public Schools, Centers for Disease Control/PEPFAR, National Ending the HIV Epidemic Conference, and blogs on the prep4teens.com website, all of which has collectively reached tens of thousands of people across the world – youth, funders, parents, healthcare providers, outreach workers, educators, lawmakers. One local example of impact is that several providers at Lurie Children’s outpatient adolescent health clinic (where a second PrEP4Teens mural and posters are in provider offices) have shared that multiple teens have asked them about the campaign materials, which has given them an opportunity to answer teens’ questions about PrEP, and/or navigate them to teen-friendly PrEP providers at Lurie. PrEP4Teens has been covered by WBEZ Chicago, Chicago Reader, POZ magazine, and presented in a US congressional report as a success story of the federal Ending the HIV Epidemic initiative.



Participating Partners:

[TaskForce Prevention and Community Services](#): Christopher Balthazar, PhD (Executive Director), Skai Underwood, DeMario Adams, and Daryl Layson



Jim Pickett Consulting: [Jim Pickett](#)



Northwestern University: [Kathryn Macapagal, PhD](#) (Associate Professor, Medical Social Sciences, Northwestern Feinberg School of Medicine), Bryant Norton, and Jim Carey



Additional individuals critical to the launch and implementation of PrEP4Teens include Silvia Valadez-Tapia (AIDS Foundation Chicago); artists and designers David Gauna, Harlan Thompson, Karen Reinstein, Josue Rivera; and youth leaders Milan Leon Martinez, Ryder Kennedy, and Sadia Haidari.

The award recipients will be honored at ARCC’s upcoming Community Research Learning Exchange on March 20, 2025 (12-4 pm in McKinley Park community). Registration [here \(linked soon\)](#). Find further information about the partnership and award at www.ARCCOnline.net.

ARCC Background

Established in 2008, the [Alliance for Research with Chicagoland Communities](#)’ (ARCC) mission is to catalyze and support research partnerships driven by and rooted in Chicagoland communities’ unique assets and experiences to achieve health justice. We support authentic community-academic research partnerships between Chicagoland communities and Northwestern University by providing partnership facilitation, capacity-building resources and technical assistance, seed grants, and advocacy for supportive structural and institutional systems and policies in



the research enterprise that center community leadership. Guided by a [Steering Committee](#) of thirteen Chicagoland community- and faith-based organizations, two public agencies and eleven Northwestern scientists, ARCC supports community-academic research partnerships by providing partnership facilitation, capacity-building [resources](#) and [technical assistance](#), [seed grants](#), [monthly information and resource updates](#), and advocacy for supportive structural and institutional systems and policies in the research enterprise. ARCC is a program of the [Center for Community Health](#), in [Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine](#) serving the [Institute for Public Health and Medicine](#) (IPHAM) and [Clinical and Translational Sciences \(NUCATS\) Institute](#).

For more information, www.ARCCOnline.net or ARCC@northwestern.edu