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## San Francisco AIDS Foundation records

Finding aid created by GLBT Historical Society staff using RecordEXPRESS

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## **Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** San Francisco AIDS Foundation records

**Dates:** 1983-2006

**Collection Number:** 2006-03

**Creator/Collector:**

**Extent:** 13.42 linear feet (6 record cartons, 2 manuscript boxes, 2 medium boxes, 1 oversized box, and 1 jumbo box)

**Repository:** GLBT Historical Society

San Francisco, California 94103

**Abstract:** This collection contains records documenting the activities of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation (SFAF) from 1983 through 2006. The bulk of the collection is from 1989-2005. The collection has a particular emphasis on SFAF's public policy and advocacy work at the local, state and federal levels. The collection includes correspondence, photographs, news releases, newsletters, and posters.

**Language of Material:** English

### **Access**

Collection is open for research.

### **Publication Rights**

Copyright to unpublished manuscript materials has been transferred to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

### **Preferred Citation**

San Francisco AIDS Foundation records. GLBT Historical Society

### **Acquisition Information**

Donated to the Library by Mark Cloutier, Executive Director of SFAF in March of 2006.

### **Biography/Administrative History**

The San Francisco AIDS Foundation is one of the largest and oldest community-based AIDS service organizations in the United States. The mission of the Foundation is to end the AIDS pandemic and the human suffering caused by HIV. The Foundation is a major resource center that educates the public about how to prevent the transmission of HIV, helps individuals make informed choices about AIDS-related concerns and protects the human rights of those affected by HIV. The Foundation provides necessary client services for residents of San Francisco who are affected by HIV, and assists other organizations achieve related goals. In April 1982, a group of GLBT community leaders, activists and physicians, including Marcus Conant, M.D. and Cleve Jones, founded the Kaposi's Sarcoma Research and Education Foundation (KS Foundation). Their goal was to educate the public about the new illness that was reaching epidemic proportions in the gay community and causing fear among gay men. Initially, the KS Foundation was a volunteer-operated, single telephone information and referral hotline located in a tiny back room at 520 Castro Street. By the fall of 1982 it had moved into a small suite at 512 Castro and was becoming nationally recognized for its up-to-date information about AIDS. The KS Foundation obtained its first contracts for educational services with the San Francisco Department of Public Health and the state of California in late 1982 and early 1983. In 1983, the KS Foundation produced its first educational materials and held many community forums. As its reputation grew, an attempt was made to expand the local KS Foundation into a national organization. It was reorganized as the AIDS/KS Foundation, Inc., with Phil Conway as National Director. Chapters formed in Sacramento, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Rick Crane served as Director of the San Francisco branch. When the national organization faltered, the three California chapters split off. The San Francisco office, which expanded to 8 paid staff and moved to larger offices on 10th street in October of 1983, served 1,500 individuals and answered nearly 6,500 calls in 1983. That same year, a holiday food drive generated a new service, a food bank for people with AIDS (PWAs). Cary Norsworthy became the Food Bank's first coordinator. A year later, Norsworthy and the Foundation's food bank organized a Thanksgiving Dinner for PWAs at the Valencia Rose, a gay-owned cabaret. This became an annual event. In 1990, the Foundation partnered with Project Open Hand to deliver food to people with AIDS. After a year of joint operation, in July 1991, Project Open Hand assumed sole administration of the AIDS Food Bank. The Foundation's Client Services Department was also founded in 1983. The Department provides health counseling, support groups, housing, client advocacy and referrals to people with HIV/AIDS. Specially focused services exist, or have existed, for women, people of color and non-English speakers. Steve Pratt, the first head of Client Services, started in 1983 and left the next year. Tristano Palermينو succeeded him, serving from 1984 to 1986. In 1984, the Department served over 500 people; by the next year, its clientele had tripled. Hank Tavera headed Client Services from 1986 through 1989. He also served as co-chair of the Third World AIDS Advisory Task Force during much of this same period. Michael Lee replaced Tavera as Client Services

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Director in 1990, and Catherine Maier was coordinator of Women's Services during the late 1980s and early 1990s. In early 1984, the AIDS/KS Foundation became the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and Jim Ferrels replaced Crane as director. That same year, the Foundation's Education Department produced its first training video and safe sex poster and launched its initial media campaign on AIDS awareness and prevention. The first head of the Foundation's Education Department was Mitch Bart. Lyn Paleo replaced Bart and headed the department for a few years, along with long-time staff member, Chuck Frutchey. In the early days of the Foundation, Paleo ran the state-funded Northern California Program (often referred to as NorCal). Starting in 1984, she and her staff traveled throughout the region to give workshops and encourage the development of AIDS services at the local level. As more local agencies opened, the need for the regional outreach diminished, and the NorCal project ended in 1987. Paleo left the Foundation around 1988, and Frutchey was named Director of Education, a position he retained until his retirement in 1994. Among all his other duties, Frutchey served as the unofficial historian of the Foundation. He repeatedly rescued and protected Foundation materials; it is because of his diligence that many of the records in this collection have survived. In 1985, the growing Foundation moved to more spacious offices at 333 Valencia Street. That same year, Jim Ferrels resigned, and Tim Wolfred replaced him as executive director. Wolfred managed the Foundation for five years, and the agency and its programs grew rapidly. In 1987, needing more space, the Foundation's administrative offices moved again, to 25 Van Ness Avenue. In 1988, as the epidemic began to spread at an alarming rate amongst people of color and women, the Foundation responded by developing the Bilingual Multicultural Program and the Women's Services Program. These programs offered case management, benefits counseling and support groups, among other services. In 1989, a funding crisis resulted in extensive cutbacks in staff and programs. After guiding the Foundation through this difficult financial period, Wolfred stepped down as executive director that same year. Pat Christen, who began as an assistant in the education department and later moved up to Director of Public Policy, became the Foundation's fourth executive director. In 1990 all the Foundation's programs were moved from Valencia Street to the Van Ness Avenue location in order to consolidate services. The organization moved several more times in the Nineties to accommodate its growth and increase its efficiency. By late 1995, the entire agency had relocated to 10 U.N. Plaza. In 1994, the Foundation began its collaborations with the UC-San Francisco's AIDS Health Project and Shanti and started the Housing Subsidy Program, which provided rental assistance to PWAs in the expensive San Francisco rental market. 1996 was a busy year for the Foundation. The Treatment Education and Advocacy Department fought for fast-track approval and price reductions of new HIV treatments; the Foundation's HIV Prevention Project, the largest needle exchange program in the country, exchanged 2,000 needles; and Foundation outreach workers distributed more than 600,000 condoms through community outreach. In 1997, the Foundation started several new campaigns and services, including an HIV prevention/harm reduction program for hundreds of homeless youth and one-on-one consultations regarding treatment regimens. The latter included social programs for women and forums on how to manage complex new HIV treatment regimens. A year later, the organization created a HIV Services and Treatment Support Department and developed a new prevention program called "Gay Life," which took a holistic approach to prevention. This was the first program of its kind in the nation. The Foundation also moved to a new location on Market Street and consolidated all of its programs and services. In 2001, in an attempt to address the needs of the nearly 40 million people living with HIV worldwide, the Foundation created an organization to address the global pandemic, the Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation. Over the next few years, the Pangaea Foundation would collaborate with the William J. Clinton Foundation and several African governments to expand access and treatment to care for people with HIV. In 2002, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation was forced to lay off staff to try to close a 2.5 million budget gap. Despite these financial struggles, the Foundation staff ensured that client services remained operational. In 2004, Executive Director Pat Christen resigned after 18 years of leadership. A year later, Mark Cloutier became the Foundation's fifth executive director. In 2006, in response to the rising use of crystal meth, the Foundation implemented another innovative harm reduction program, the peer-based Speed Project. The Foundation continues to educate the public about HIV/AIDS. It has used three main strategies to promote education. The first, the AIDS Hotline, was a de facto operation from the day the telephone was connected in the Castro office in 1983. Over the years, its services have been used by hundreds of thousands of callers (in 1992 alone, the hotline answered over 100,000 calls, a remarkable feat for a completely volunteer-staffed service). In addition to English, the hotline offers services in Spanish and Tagalog. The second strategy employed by the Education Department is community outreach through forums, workshops and other events. The third strategy uses individual educational campaigns that highlight a particular message or target a specific group. In addition to targeting specific groups, such as intravenous drug users, young gay men or African American women, the Foundation also uses educational and media campaigns designed to dispel the myth that AIDS only strikes white gay men. The Foundation's educational outreach materials have included safe sex posters, pamphlets, videotapes and a coloring book. The Education Department has also sponsored two publications. The first, Bulletin of Experimental Treatments for AIDS (BETA), a technical journal focused on AIDS treatments, premiered in 1988. As of 2006, BETA was still an important source of information on new treatments and therapies for HIV disease. The second publication, Positive News, a general educational newsletter, debuted in English, Spanish, Filipino (Tagalog) and Chinese in 1991. Other important offices at the Foundation include Media Services and Public Policy. The former was

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eventually subsumed under the latter, which serves as the advocacy arm of the Foundation. It performs research and development for the local, state, and federal government and private sectors, lobbies legislative bodies, fights discrimination against HIV positive people, holds forums, issues press releases and responds to media requests. This organizational history was largely taken from two sources: the Finding Aid to the San Francisco AIDS Foundation (SFAF) Records, 1982-1995, MSS 94-60 at the University of California, San Francisco, and "25 Years of an Epidemic: Milestones in the Battle Against Aids," accessed through the Online Archive of California and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation's website, August 18, 2007.

### **Scope and Content of Collection**

This collection contains material documenting the activities of SFAF from 1983-2006. The majority of the records in the collection document the work of SFAF as an advocate for people with HIV/AIDS. Types of materials in the collection include correspondence, news releases, event programs, clippings, newsletters, research reports, and photographs. The second largest bulk of material in the collection is related to advocacy. Material includes records related to efforts to establish a sanctioned needle exchange program in San Francisco, as well as a large group of position statement letters to politicians stating SFAF's support or opposition to proposed legislation on a wide range of HIV-related issues. Also documented are SFAF efforts to provide national and local reporters with expert information about HIV-related issues through their Media Relations department. A large portion of the collection is made up of newsletters created by most of the major departments of SFAF, including an all staff newsletter. However, most of the newsletters in this collection are incomplete runs. Since publication of the smaller newsletters was sometimes irregular, it is unclear when some might have actually started or stopped. The largest part of the collection is comprised of published and unpublished monographs created by most of the major departments of SFAF. Also included are research papers written by individuals outside of SFAF. Particular monographs of interest are early SFAF brochures. Material related to SFAF's Education Department is relatively small. However, SFAF's goal to reach at risk groups and its use of focus groups to refine campaigns is documented. There are also images from some campaigns. Material related to the administration of SFAF is also relatively small, but the collection does include some financial records and a small amount of correspondence from early executive directors, including Rick Crane. The collection includes a large number of photographs taken by young gay and bisexual men in San Francisco in 1995 for a publication called *sumt'n ta say/behind our backs*. Most of the photographers are identified, although their subjects are not. All photographs submitted, not just those used in the final publication, are in the collection. There are also photographs from ad campaigns and other events. The collection includes all of the negatives to the *sumt'n ta say/behind our backs* photographs. One item of note is a set of negatives from a Rubber Men event in the 1980s. The collection includes slides and posters that have not been identified. GSSO Linked Terms: [http://purl.obolibrary.org/obo/GSSO\\_000521](http://purl.obolibrary.org/obo/GSSO_000521); [http://purl.obolibrary.org/obo/GSSO\\_007641](http://purl.obolibrary.org/obo/GSSO_007641)

### **Indexing Terms**

AIDS (disease)

Latinx people

[Guide to the San Francisco AIDS Foundation records](#)

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