



**IAM, A vital hand-up  
for people affected  
by HIV/AIDS Since 1989.**

**Be Still And Know That I AM (Psalms 46:10)**

## Our Mission

Interfaith AIDS Ministry of Greater Danbury Inc. (**IAM**) offers critical support services to families faced with the nutritional, physical and spiritual challenges of living with HIV/AIDS while providing vital education programs that respond to the greater community.

**(IAM)** brings a spiritual perspective to the services we offer to those in our care. Our coalition of congregations provide spiritual counseling on request and volunteer support to those seeking assistance.

## Contact

**Melinda Storey Weisberg**

Executive Director

**Email:** iammelinda@sbcglobal.net

**Voice:** 203.748.4077 **Fax:** 203.748.2841

**Web:** <http://www.danbury.org/interfaith>

## AIDS Education

**Youth Reacting To AIDS (YRTA)** Our award winning peer AIDS education & community service youth group, also sponsors an annual state wide youth conference.

**IAMPowerment & Projeto VIHDA** are HIV prevention programs for the greater Danbury & Brazilian communities.

**Literature in Spanish & Portuguese.**

## Our Services

**The Living Pantry.** The only HIV Specific food pantry in the region with fresh meats, vegetables, dairy, fruit and personal care items, consultations with a nutritionist, food preparation & education are available.

**Adopt a Family Programs.** Back to school supplies, children's birthdays, holiday meals/holiday gifts.

**Emotional support**

**Emergency financial assistance**

## Funding

Interfaith AIDS Ministry (**IAM**) is a tax exempt non-profit United Way organization. Financial support comes from the generosity of over 30 local congregations of various faith perspectives, individual donations and several grant sources including: **Connecticut Department of Public Health, United Way of Northern Fairfield County, City of Danbury, Altria Foundation (Positive Helpings), University of Connecticut Food and Nutrition Program, The Perrin Family Foundation.**



*Hablamos Español,  
Fablamos Portugues*

**Daniela DeCastro, Community Educator**  
E: iamdaniela@sbcglobal.net

**Alaor Gontijo, AIDS Educator**  
E: iamgoiano@sbcglobal.net

**Mike Marsicano, Director of Communications**  
E: iammikemars@sbcglobal.net

**Karina Wojcik, Coordinator of service delivery**  
E: iamkarina@sbcglobal.net

**Silvio Soares, Living Pantry Director, AIDS Educator**  
E: iamsilviosoares@sbcglobal.net

**Peggy Zamore, CDN, RD, Nutritionist**  
E: peggyz18@aol.com



### Come by and visit with us.

Our office entrance is on the right side of the building in this picture. The Living Pantry is in the back of the building and has ample parking.

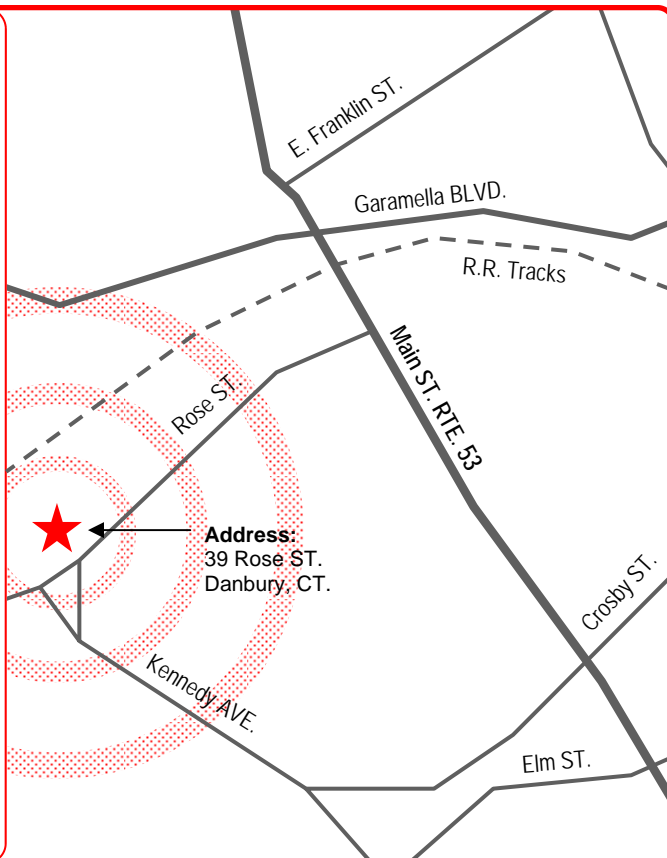
### Living Pantry hours are:

12-4:30 Wed, 12-4:30 Thurs during food weeks. Please call for exact dates & times for bi monthly food pickup.

**Voice:** 203.748.4077

**Fax:** 203.748.2841

**Email:**  
iamgeneral@sbcglobal.net



**Address:**  
39 Rose St.  
Danbury, CT.

## Worth your support

As a not for profit agency, (**IAM**) relies on volunteers and contributions to help keep its programs and services operating. (**IAM**) welcomes your support at any level.

- Please add my name to the mailing list.
- I would like to volunteer.

Enclosed is my contribution:

- \$25     \$50
- \$100     \$250     Other Amt: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CC Type \_\_\_\_\_

CC # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address2 \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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## Board of Directors

## Agency Background

**Sid Rosen, President**

**Katia Ferreira, Secretary / Treasurer**

**Rita Kovacs**

**Joseph Mandracchia**

**Marion Lynch**

**Nanci Stockmann**

**Melinda Weisberg, Executive Director**

**Louise Strohmeier**

**Michelle Torre**

**Doris Turansky**

**Vicki Taylor-Bloch, Advisor**

Interfaith AIDS Ministry of Greater Danbury, Inc. is a (501-C-3) tax-exempt, non-profit United Way organization. IAM's financial support comes from over 30 local congregations of various faith perspectives, individual donations through fund-raising from various grant sources.

Interfaith AIDS Ministry was formed in 1989, as a logical outgrowth of monthly prayer and healing services offering support for people affected by AIDS that were held at St. James' Episcopal Church in Danbury beginning in 1987. (Rev.) Carole Johansen was IAM's first director. Under her guidance, IAM developed strong pastoral and spiritual support in the community.

IAM's Board of Directors are very active in fund-raising. Several events are held annually and are becoming more and more successful as the Board has been actively courting community participation.

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➤ Past YRTA Members at youth conference X

## Could this be you?

**Founded by a few students in 1993, Youth Reacting To AIDS (YRTA)** consists of area high school students that are committed to educating themselves and their peers about HIV/AIDS. They take a stand on the issue of HIV/AIDS today.

**YRTA members donate their time** to attend trainings that will make them HIV/AIDS peer educators. Once trained, they use this information to make presentations to their peers in schools and community organizations throughout the greater Danbury area. YRTA teaches in high school health classes, speaks in parent-teacher forums, and presents at local World AIDS Day celebrations.

**Outside the classroom,** YRTA works Directly with the care receivers of Interfaith AIDS Ministry. For most YRTA members, this is a surprising experience as they realize that AIDS does not just affect individuals but friends and families as well. **These experiences promote essential compassion and acceptance in YRTA members.**

**We promote acceptance.** Prejudice against people affected or infected by HIV is very prevalent today. Many people are still misinformed and fearful. We speak out against prejudice and transform ignorance into personal power.

## The Power of We!

**We Enlighten!** Many students, upon hearing a YRTA presentation admit to not knowing as much as they thought about HIV/AIDS. Being a part of YRTA is an enlightening experience.

**We Educate!** YRTA members become certified in peer HIV/AIDS education. We present at local schools and church groups to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

**We Empower!** YRTA plans a yearly state wide Youth Empowerment conference as a community forum for peer education and fun!

**We Volunteer!** YRTA and Interfaith AIDS Ministry help people affected or infected by HIV. When you give time to those in need you will gain personal strength and vitality.

**We are Recognized!** In 2002, YRTA received the Good Samaritan Award from the American Red Cross as well as official US Congressional recognition.

**We have Fun!** Working with people committed to a cause is fun but so are bowling, movie nights, dinners, and training retreats – other YRTA activities.

## Believe it...

"The most enriching facet of the group is that the material is being taught by teens for teens."

- Jack, Past YRTA Member

"When we go to other schools I am amazed how unprepared students are in relation to how much knowledge there is out there about HIV/AIDS."

- Roni, Past YRTA Member

"I love being able to go out to the surrounding schools and teach my peers about how HIV/AIDS affects 43% of the teen population in CT."

- Tina, Past YRTA Member

"If it weren't for YRTA and our regular meetings I might not know everything I do now and I wouldn't be able to share it with my peers."

- Katrice, Past YRTA Member

"You all have so much power. You can make a difference. You are all here to help your community and each other and that is bigger than all of us. That is greatness."

- Jennifer Jako, HIV-positive keynote speaker at the YRTA Youth Empowerment Conference X.



➤ YRTA Members at Youth Conference XI with the creator of Who's Positive Tom Donohue!

## Contact Us!

**Interested?** Youth Reacting to AIDS welcomes any high school student to join. YRTA meets in your school and at 39 Rose Street in Danbury.

**Contact:**

Daniela De Castro, Community Educator  
Interfaith AIDS Ministry  
39 Rose ST. Danbury, CT. 06810

**Email:** iamdaniela@sbcglobal.net

**Voice:** 203.748.4077

**Fax:** 203.748.2841

# YRTA Club sign up

All personal information is kept in the strictest confidence and not shared with any other organization or agency.

## Contact Information:

## Emergency Contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Where did you hear about YRTA?

## Availability:

If you are willing to join, what days and times would you be available?

\_\_\_\_\_

What School do you go to now?

\_\_\_\_\_

What skills (computer, clerical, translation, advocacy, etc.) do you have to offer?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why does joining YRTA interest you?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the best way to contact you?

\_\_\_\_\_

When is the best time to contact you?

\_\_\_\_\_

How old are you?

\_\_\_\_\_

IAM Staff Notes:

**Thank you** for taking your time to fill out this application.

We look forward to talking to you!

# IAMpowerment

Projeto VIHDA (Project Life)

●○ Alaor Gontijo  
●● Silvio Soares  
HIV/AIDS Educators



## IAMpowerment

**IAMpowerment** closely follows the model of the Mpowerment Project which is an intervention model that has proven effective with young gay men ages 18-29. The model will expand on our present Projeto VIHDA program that uses our staff of AIDS educators for group, community and individual interventions by adding a corps of young gay males who have already “graduated” from VIHDA to serve as peer volunteers and support.

**IAMpowerment** will provide four interventions during the year which will include four multi-group sessions, single-session workshops, and a retreat. In addition,

**IAMpowerment** will produce a quarterly newsletter and maintain a website.

The Workshops will include discussion and training regarding unsafe sex and misconceptions regarding safe sex, skill-building exercises and safer sex negotiation practice.

## Projeto VIHDA

**Projeto VIHDA** is an innovative program seeking to prevent HIV/AIDS in the Brazilian community through increased awareness, knowledge and empowerment to reduce risk.

**Projeto VIHDA** was created by Interfaith AIDS Ministry at the request of the Brazilian community to address perceived growing needs for prevention and education.

**Projeto VIHDA** provides HIV/AIDS education, prevention, materials and services in Portuguese specifically for the Brazilian community.

**Projeto VIHDA's** Programs are developed and tailored to meet the specific needs of the Brazilian community. VIHDA's services include but are not limited to; pamphlets, lectures, group workshops, peer training sessions and general discussion groups all lead by our state certified HIV/AIDS Educators.

## Proven and Tested

**The Mpowerment Project is a model HIV prevention program** that has been designed specifically to address the needs of young gay and bisexual men.

**The Mpowerment Project** is the first documented HIV prevention intervention for young gay/bisexual men to succeed in reducing sexual risk behavior. The program has been carefully developed, evaluated and continually refined over the course of twelve years by prominent behavioral scientists from the University of California, San Francisco's Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS), a leading-edge HIV/AIDS research institution.

**The Mpowerment Project** is listed in the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Compendium of HIV Prevention Interventions with Evidence of Effectiveness and it has been named an Exemplary Substance Abuse Prevention Program by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

## Guiding Principles

- ➔ Personal and community empowerment.
- ➔ Diffusion of new behaviors through social networks.
- ➔ Peer influence.
- ➔ Putting HIV prevention within the context of other compelling issues for young gay/bisexual men (e.g., social issues).
- ➔ Community building.
- ➔ Uses Gay positive approaches.
- ➔ Young men are very concerned with social and self-esteem issues.
- ➔ Peer influences are strong among young Gay/Bisexual men.

## To get connected call: 203.748.4077

**Alaor Gontijo**, AIDS Educator  
**Email:** iamgoiano@sbcglobal.net

**Silvio Soares**, Living Pantry Director/AIDS Educator  
**Email:** iamsilvioaires@sbcglobal.net

**Interfaith AIDS Ministry**  
39 Rose ST. Danbury, CT. 06810

**Voice:** 203.748.4077 **Fax:** 203 748 2841

- ➔ Building healthy community among young Gay/Bisexual men.
- ➔ Empowerment promotes more lasting changes in behavior.
- ➔ Community-wide change occurs through interpersonal networks.
- ➔ Gay – Positive and Sex – Positive messages encourage behavior change.

# The Facts of Life Living With HIV/AIDS

Do you know what you think you know about HIV/AIDS?

How much does a visit to see a doctor at the Danbury Hospital clinic cost without health insurance?

**Answer: \$200.**

How much does your mandatory diagnostic quarterly (every three months) blood testing cost?

**Answer: \$850.00**

How much does a month's supply bottle of a popular AIDS drug cost if you can't get it from an AIDS drug assistance program?

**Answer: Retail \$750 x3 (combination therapy requires at least three drugs to work) total = \$2,150**

What is a waiting list and how long is the average wait in some states to receive treatment?

**Answer: A waiting list is what you get put on in 11 states that are not able to provide immediate access to HIV/AIDS drugs. The wait can be as long as one year and in some cases even more.**

Name 3 common side effects of a given popular HIV/AIDS drug?

**Answer: muscle aches, neuropathy, diarrhea, dizziness, weight gain (internal/in-operable), lypodystrophy, diabetes, belly fat, high cholesterol, joint pain, early onset arthritis and diabetes.**

How much money can you earn annually before you are no longer eligible for AIDS drug assistance?

**Answer: 40-45k or 400% above the poverty line.**

How compliant (in percent) do you have to be to prevent HIV/AIDS from mutating and making your combination therapy ineffective and how compliant on average are most (over 80%) people on any drug regimen?

**Answer: 99.998% to survive HIV/AIDS and usually most people are only ever able to achieve 60% compliance in other drug regimens.**

Which preventative measure is 100% effective in preventing HIV/AIDS infection and which is 98.99% effective?

**Answer: Abstinence and condoms. Abstinence is 100% effective but when it fails its 100% failure. Condoms are a prudent emergency measure that can safeguard your health from a 100% failure in your personal protection.**

Who will take care of you if you become sick and can't work and you have no insurance and you haven't paid much into social security and if your parents throw you out of your house for being HIV+.

**Answer: if you can't answer this question, "see above".**

What states and how many have AIDS drugs assistance waiting lists, right now?

**Answer: 11 states have AIDS drug assistance waiting lists. They are Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, West Virginia, and Wyoming. Moving to these states and being HIV positive can be hazardous to your health.**

What are the two disease vectors that lead inevitably into full blown AIDS and how long do you have before you get them from the time you test positive?

**Answer: PCP Pneumonia, spinal meningitis and between 4-6 years if its not a particularly strong strain, less if so.**

What is the opportunistic infection you get that causes blindness if your HIV goes untreated into AIDS too long and what T-cell count will you be at?

**Answer: Cytomegalovirus (CMV) and under 15T-cells in parts per million in a given sample of your blood. (will vary between individuals)**

Can a separated retina caused by (CMV) be repaired, can you regain your sight?

**Answer: No. There is currently no therapy or even any experimental therapy yet.**

Where can you go get tested?

**Answer: AIDS Project of Greater Danbury (APGD) 30 west ST. Danbury, CT. 06810 (203.778.2437) and Danbury Hospital Adult Health Center 70 Main ST. Danbury, CT. 06810 (203.791.5030)**

If you test positive what human services agencies are ready to help you in Danbury CT?

**Answer: Interfaith AIDS Ministry of Greater Danbury 39 Rose ST. (203.748.2841) and AIDS Project of Greater Danbury 30 West ST. (203.778.2437)**

Let's say you get a job offer in a state that has a waiting list for AIDS Drugs and it takes 6 months to get onto your companies health plan; how much money will you need to save in order to pay for retail doctor visits, blood tests, and AIDS drugs to keep compliant for those 6 months?

**Answer: \$12900+1700+400=\$15,000 Breakdown: Blood tests are needed every 3 months (\$850, CD4 and T-cell). You will need at least 3 separate bottles of AIDS medications, totaling roughly \$2150 per month. You will also need one doctor visit every 3 months (\$200 per visit).**

If your parents find out your HIV+ and are not accepting what will they do? What will you do to support yourself?

**Answer: if you can't answer this question, review the answer about abstinence and condoms.**

What are the two blood tests you must have routinely?

**Answer: CD4 / T-cell count and HIV Viral load. CD4 / T-Cell measures the amount of your immune systems hunter killer cells in your blood. HIV viral measures proteins that are by products HIV spreading through your blood. All measurements are in parts per million.**

What is the "HIV" side effect called that causes you to loose all your body fat reservoirs (buttocks, legs, face, arms)?

**Answer: Lypatrophy. The other side effect is lypodystrophy - Gaining fat in areas you never had it before.**

Why is it necessary to keep taking retroviral drugs for life?

- (A) To continually suppress the HIV in your blood.
- (B) Because HIV remains dormant in your tissue's RNA and can reappear and mutate if not continually suppressed.
- (C) There is no cure or vaccine.
- (D) all of the above.

**Answer: (D) All of the above**



## The Living Pantry

**The Living Pantry is the core of IAM's Direct Care Services Department** and provides essential services for people infected with/affected by HIV/AIDS. These services include food delivery, emotional support and financial assistance to meet daily basic needs not covered by other agencies. We also coordinate service linkages for our care receivers with other AIDS organizations in the region.

**The Living Pantry is the only food/personal care item pantry in the region that seeks to meet the specific nutritional needs of people living with HIV/AIDS** and the only pantry that provides fresh foods and a nutritionist offering assessments, education and counseling to pantry recipients. The Living Pantry provides bi-weekly food pick-up and home delivery services to non-ambulatory care receivers.

**IAM also offers** Thanksgiving and Christmas meals, Christmas presents, birthday gift boxes and back to school supplies for care receiver's families. HIV/AIDS affects whole families causing severe financial strain on household budgets. These services are designed to **help families stay together and increase the quality of their daily life.**

## Living Choice

**A major component of our service is providing food and nutritional education through the Living Pantry.** Food and Personal Care items are both donated and purchased using grant funds. The nutrition education program is supported by a US Department of Agriculture Food Stamp Nutrition Education grant through the University of Connecticut Extension program. A part-time nutritionist directs this portion of the program.

**The Living Pantry operates under the "Shopper's Choice" model.** As care receivers shop a nutritionist and our staff assist the care receivers with their food choices using a shopping list based on our traditional standard bag.

**The goal of the program is to provide services only after each care receiver has an assessment by our nutritionist.** This approach dovetails well with the Shoppers Choice program and allows our nutritionist to identify any special needs that our care receivers may have. Food demonstrations, recipe sharing/tasting and nutritional information are vital nutritional educational components of what we do.

**Home visits offer an additional nutritional assessment tool to get assistance closer to care receivers.** Home demonstrations are included and educational materials are developed and disseminated including printed recipes, informational handouts, cookbooks and videos when appropriate.

Our offices are open from 9:00 – 4:30 Monday through Thurs. We serve the Greater Danbury area that includes Bethel, Brookfield, Ridgefield, New Fairfield, Newtown, Redding, Southbury, Waterbury, Sherman and New Milford.

## The Living Pantry offers

We offer Fresh foods including meats, dairy & vegetables. Food pick-up is available twice a month. Home Delivery of food and medicine is available for non-ambulatory care receivers.

- Bilingual staff is available to assist Spanish and Portuguese speaking care receivers.
- Personal care items are available.
- Food can be customized for cultural and medical needs.
- An onsite certified nutritionist is available to provide recipes, food safety tips and nutritional education/luncheons.
- We are part of the Association of Nutrition Services Agencies (ANSA).
- Care receivers will improve their knowledge and skills to prepare meals/snacks that will help them to satisfy the nutritional needs of the members of their family or household.

## Contact

**Silvio Soares**, Living Pantry Director/AIDS Educator  
**Email:** [iamsilviosoares@sbcglobal.net](mailto:iamsilviosoares@sbcglobal.net)

**To donate or participate in our holiday programs as a volunteer or in our care programs contact:**

**Karina Wojcik**, Coordinator of service delivery  
**Email:** [iamkarina@sbcglobal.net](mailto:iamkarina@sbcglobal.net)

**To schedule a nutrition consultation contact:**

**Peggy Zamore**, CDN, RD, Nutritionist  
**Email:** [peggyz18@aol.com](mailto:peggyz18@aol.com)

**Interfaith Aids Ministry** of Greater Danbury  
39 Rose ST. Danbury, CT. 06810

**Voice:** 203.748.4077 **Fax:** 203.748.2841

# Volunteer!

All personal information is kept in the strictest confidence and not shared with any other organization or agency.

## Contact Information:

## Emergency Contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How Did you hear about us?:

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Availability:

If you are willing to volunteer, what days and times would you be available?

\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any limitations or dislikes that you may have? Please specify...

\_\_\_\_\_

What skills (computer, clerical, translation, advocacy, etc.) do you have to offer?

\_\_\_\_\_

## References:

### Personal:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Professional:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

IAM Staff Notes:

**Thank you** for taking your time to fill out this application. We look forward to talking to you!