

# Campbell Foundation Celebrates 20th Anniversary

Staff Report

Photos: Campbell Foundation.



The Campbell Foundation, a Fort Lauderdale nonprofit organization dedicated to funding research into a cure for HIV, recently celebrated its 20th anniversary with a cocktail reception for supporters at the Riverside Hotel in Fort Lauderdale.

More than 100 people were in attendance. A silent auction and raffle with items that included Miami Heat tickets, a spa day at Bloomingdale's and several pieces of original artwork and prints helped to raise approximately \$20,000.

Dr. Michael Sension, Medical Director of the Comprehensive Care Center gave the keynote address. A number of other nonprofit organization leaders who serve



the gay and lesbian community were on hand including those from Tuesday's Angels, Broward House, Latinos Salud and The Poverello Center. Many of them have been recipients of the Campbell Foundation's annual "holiday hug."

In addition to funding research, each year the foundation hands out funding to nonprofit organizations that serve the HIV-AIDS community year-round. Last year, 19 organizations around the country each received \$2,000 to be used in whatever way they see fit.

Since 1995, the foundation has been funding innovative and groundbreaking research by scientists around the world who are trying to find a cure for AIDS. It was founded by the late Richard Campbell Zahn who was a chemist and who died of AIDS — this is his legacy.

During its 20 years, the Campbell Foundation has given away more than \$9.5 million dollars, with about \$1 million going to direct services. **SFGN**



For more information go to: [CampbellFoundation.net](http://CampbellFoundation.net)

# Interview with Tami Haught on HIV Criminalization

Sean McShee



On April 3, 2015, SFGN interviewed Tami Haught, SeroProject Criminalization Conference Coordinator to discuss the HIV Criminalization Task Force in Florida.

**Could you define "HIV criminalization" for the readers of SFGN?**

"HIV criminalization" is the wrongful use of HIV status in a criminal prosecution, even when transmission was unlikely or impossible (a condom was used, the PLWHA had an undetectable viral load, or the behavior posed no risk of transmission, such as in biting, scratching, or spitting).

**In discussions of HIV criminalization, "intent" has a similar importance to "consent" in discussions of sexual behavior. Could you explain how important "intent" is in this discussion?**

The lack of intent is much easier to prove than intentional transmission. The lack of intent can be proven if you are doing everything right, like so many people living with HIV are. You're taking your medication, you're virally suppressed, or you're using protection. Those defenses show that you are not intentionally trying to transmit HIV, because you are protecting yourself and your partner by taking your medications and using protection. Any of this would indicate an interest in not transmitting the virus, but under current HIV criminalization law, using a condom, or adhering to a medication regimen are irrelevant.

**These laws appear to be based on a "protectionist" model of sexuality rather than an empowerment model. Could you discuss how the "protectionist" model has the potential to harm the very people it's supposed to benefit?**

When people think of sexual protection, generally it's women being protected from men. Women, however, go to the doctor more often, and are more likely to take the HIV test than men are. These laws only target people who have taken the test and gotten their results.

Men have used the threat of these laws to keep HIV positive women from leaving them. After a break up, people have filed complaints based on these laws as revenge.

**Could you discuss how HIV criminalization has worked in Florida?**

There have been 250 charges filed in Florida and 153 convictions in Florida from 1998 to 2012. So far, the project has not been able to get breakdowns by race, gender, or sexuality. Lambda Legal and the ACLU are involved in this project.

**You're in Florida to set up an HIV Criminalization Task Force. Can you describe what you hope that Task Force will do?**

The task force should include diverse people willing to advocate but also to reach out to legislators in Tallahassee for the reform of these laws. Floridians need to decide on how you want your laws to be modernized and what your political reality is. There will come a time when Floridians have to determine what is the minimal change that you will accept.

We have to reach out to faith based communities, everyone. It is not an easy conversation to have. It often takes more than one conversation. We're going to have to be ready for the long haul, be persistent, and never give up. Because it can be done, but it's definitely not easy.

**Is there anything else you would like to say to the readers of SFGN?**

We need your voices. We need your stories. Not just to legislators but also to other community members. It is by touching people's hearts that we can make a difference to change the law.

**If people wanted to find out more about the Florida HIV Criminalization Task Force, how could they?**

To get involved with the Florida HIV Criminalization Task Force, people can email me at [tami.haught@seroproject.com](mailto:tami.haught@seroproject.com) and I can get you added to the google group. **SFGN**

## Fort Myers Event on HIV Criminalization

On Monday, April 27, 2015 from 10 to 11:30 a.m., a forum on HIV criminalization will occur at Florida Department of Health in Lee County, 83 Pondella Rd., North Fort Myers, FL 33903. RSVP to Tami Haught at: [tami.haught@seroproject.com](mailto:tami.haught@seroproject.com)