



Opinion / Letters

## Learn your status on HIV Testing Day

June 15, 2015

June is Gay Pride Month and a time to recognize and celebrate the many inroads the LGBT community has made.

For some, this is a time for parades and parties; for others, it is a time for reflection and remembrance of those who have fought for the many rights that the gay community now enjoys, and for those we have lost along the way.

The week of June 21-27 also is the first-ever National HIV Testing Week for the U.S. It leads up to National HIV Testing Day, which is June 27. The week is designed to make more people aware of their HIV status and to promote early detection by communicating the benefits of HIV testing.

Although there have been a number of breakthroughs in recent years toward eradicating HIV and AIDS, a cure remains elusive. Since 1995, the Campbell Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Fort Lauderdale, has used its initial endowment and donations to fund alternative, nontraditional avenues of research that will have direct clinical impact and relevancy to the HIV care and research community within five to seven years.

AIDS is not a disease that just impacts the gay community; it impacts men, women, straight, gay, black, white, Hispanic and children. As we celebrate Gay Pride Month, let us not forget we have come a long way, but we have a lot further to go — particularly when it comes to finding a cure for HIV/AIDS.

*Ken Rapkin, program officer, The Campbell Foundation*