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End of an era

Metrolina AIDS Project abruptly closes shop, to reopen under new name, leadership

by Matt Comer . Q-Notes staff

CHARLOTTE — It is the end of an era, as Charlotte's largest AIDS service organization, founded by six gay men in 1985, comes to its end. After more than two decades of service in the greater Charlotte-Mecklenburg area, Metrolina AIDS Project (MAP) as the community has known it will cease to exist, as it shuts down and begins operation under a new name and leadership.

The surprising move, never publicly announced, but revealed by *The Charlotte Observer* during the last week in January, comes after more than a year of speculation that operations at MAP weren't going all that smoothly.

MAP's demise

On Jan. 26, former MAP executive director Ann White left her position at the organization. Associate Director Robert Oltz declined to discuss her departure with anyone saying only that White "left as of 5 p.m." that Monday. The same day, 32 MAP employees were told they'd be laid off.

Only two days later, however, Oltz said the decision to completely shutdown had been reversed and that the employees would stay.

"We thought we might be closing," Oltz told *Q-Notes*. "We've had discussions with other providers and we are working through a transitioning process so that we will continue to provide services."

Dr. Jose Diaz, a consultant for the federal government, is currently aiding MAP with "technical assistance" during their transition from the old organizational entity to a new one. Diaz told *The Observer* that federal funding for the organization — about \$1.2 million in *Ryan White CARE Act* funds — had been "put on hold" pending a "routine review." Diaz said MAP was not under investigation and that the money could be restored to MAP's successor.

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HRC Gala

Annual event brings
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