



Jen Jones leads a course during the HIV/AIDS Advocacy Conference on Saturday, Oct. 3.



Attendees listen to Jen Jones during The HIV/AIDS Advocacy Conference on Saturday, Oct. 3.

# N.C. conference at WSSU contemplates HIV/AIDS advocacy

BY TEVIN STINSON  
THE CHRONICLE

On Saturday, Oct. 3, the fourth HIV/AIDS Advocacy Conference was held in Winston-Salem, designed to bring people from diverse backgrounds and unique perspectives together to discuss how the HIV/AIDS epidemic has impacted their lives and how to move forward.

The conference was on the campus of Winston-Salem State University and was sponsored by the NC AIDS Action Network and the NC Harm Reduction Coalition.

Lee Storrow, executive director of NC AIDS Action Network, said it is important that the community is educated on HIV/AIDS because so many people are still dying.

The American South has the most people living and dying of HIV/AIDS in the United States.

"This epidemic continues to be a major challenge for North Carolina," said Storrow. "It's estimated that 36,300 people are living with HIV/AIDS in our state."

According to Storrow 1,500 new cases are diagnosed each year in North Carolina.

This year's conference featured a number of workshops and open panel discussions that covered a number



The HIV/AIDS Advocacy Conference was held on Saturday, Oct. 3 on the campus of WSSU.

of topics including how to effectively interact with policy-makers, and understanding how HIV and heroin overdose epidemics are intertwined.

Panelist included members of the NC Harm Reduction Conference, the NC Justice Center, Working America and

the Latino Commission on AIDS.

A number of attendees work full time or volunteer at HIV/AIDS nonprofit organizations in the area. During the conference they were able to gain knowledge on how issues such as syringe access and the Medicaid coverage gap affect the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The conference also held a number of courses that discussed ways to improve nonprofit organizations such as reaching individuals through social media.

Jennifer Jones, digital strategist for UNC-TV, led a course during the conference that gave those who attended tips to reach more people.

According to Jones, women are 40 percent more likely to support a nonprofit organization if it has a social media presence.

"When working for a nonprofit, social media plays a big role because you can reach out to people at all times of the day," said Jones. "It's simple but effective."

"The HIV/AIDS Advocacy Conference is a place to connect and grow and inspire the growing network and to make lasting policy changes for those living with HIV/AIDS in North Carolina," Storrow said.

For more information on the NC AIDS Action Network visit [www.ncaan.org](http://www.ncaan.org).



Pride Winston-Salem's Trade Street festival attracts thousands of attendees each year.



Church of the Holy Spirit Fellowship was among the many organizations that marched in last year's Pride parade.

# Pride Winston-Salem prepares for festival in historic year

BY TODD LUCK  
THE CHRONICLE

Pride Winston-Salem is holding events for the next couple weeks leading up to its parade and festival on Oct. 17.

On Sunday, Pride will hold a Drag Brunch at Mary's Gourmet Diner, 723 Trade St., at 10 a.m. with a disco themed drag show and a specially themed menu. On Oct. 16, there will be a ticketed kick off event at the Piedmont Club, 200 W. Second St., with hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and live performances from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Then on Saturday, Oct. 17, Pride Winston-Salem will take place with a parade at 11 a.m. on Fourth Street and a festival and food truck rodeo from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Trade Street in the Arts District.

"The theme this year is 'We Are Family' and we tried very hard to make it a family-friendly fun event," said Brent Morin, president of Pride Winston-Salem.

The local pride event can trace its roots back to 1996, when NC Pride held a three day Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender

(LGBT) pride event in Winston-Salem. To protest Pride, an anti-LGBT Family Values March was held several weeks later that attracted 12,000 marchers. One of the protest organizers, Berean Baptist Pastor Ron Baity, whose church hosted Republican Presidential Candidate Ben Carson last week, was quoted in the Greensboro News & Record at the time as saying "It's Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve."

The country has changed significantly since then. Now 12,000 people are expected to attend Pride with only a few protestors holding signs along the parade route. Last year, the festival was held only days after gay marriage became legal in the state. Now it's being held several months after the U.S. Supreme Court found that gay marriage was a constitutional right in all 50 states.

"We have a lot to celebrate, we have federal marriage equality," said Morin. "We have come a long way. We have more and more people coming out every day and being proud of who they are and living

their true authentic self. It's more common to see a celebrity or politician come out these days and we're happy to take them into the fold of family as well."

Originally Pride intended to kick off its lead-in events with a Rainbow Run 5k on Saturday, Oct. 3, but it was postponed because of severe weather, and will be rescheduled after the Pride festivities.

The Rainbow Run, sponsored by the LGBT philanthropic group Adam Foundation, is meant to make the LGBT community more visible and healthier. Pride is conducting a yearlong healthy living campaign with Novant Health. This includes holding an event to promote the preventative HIV/AIDS drug PrEP, a health screening clinic, a mental health day and sponsoring a healthy living pavilion at Pride itself. Morin said Novant is sending a message that it's open and affirming to the LGBT community.

"Coming out to your doctor is sometimes difficult if you don't know where they stand on the issue of sexuality," he said.

The Pride parade will feature several floats including one from Whole Foods and one with its grand marshals Angela Mazaris, Jack Amoureux and their three children. The couple has been involved with LGBT rights and Mazaris is the director of the LGBTQ Center at Wake Forest University. Many walking groups and dignitaries will participate. The parade, which is free for non-profits, is still tak-

ing applications for participants.

The Pride festival will feature many vendors and two stages with musical performances sponsored by Hanes Brands, Inc and Peace Out Vapes. Wells Fargo is sponsoring a Kids Zone.

Morin said while it is a celebration for the LGBT community, it is an event that people of all walks of life attend and participate in annually.

"We would have not had the rapid expectation of marriage equality in the last three years without our straight allies," he said. "Winston-Salem is no exception, with the amount of straight families that come to our event who really look forward to Pride."

For more information, visit [www.pridews.org](http://www.pridews.org).

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As many patients will be seen as time and staff allow, but having a wristband does not guarantee treatment.  
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Find more info: [www.ncmomwinston.org](http://www.ncmomwinston.org)  
Questions? Leave message: 336-713-2828; or [NCMOM@wakehealth.edu](mailto:NCMOM@wakehealth.edu)