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## **WRI 2012 - Contextualizing Women's Lives: Enhancing HIV Research and Care for Women Living with and at Risk for HIV Disease**

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Image



**WOMEN'S  
RESEARCH  
INITIATIVE  
ON HIV/AIDS**

The Women's Research Initiative on HIV/AIDS (WRI) is dedicated to elevating, enhancing and expediting research on women and HIV. The 2012 WRI meeting focused on *contextualizing women's lives: enhancing HIV research and care for women living with and at risk for HIV disease*. Preventing and treating HIV in women and girls – and the research required to do both of these things successfully – require careful consideration of the context in which HIV enters and becomes a part of women's lives.

This context includes an array of physical, social, cultural and interpersonal factors that combine to influence HIV transmission, disease progression and health outcomes among women. It also includes the factors that influence whether and what kind of research is undertaken to address the particular situations of women living with or vulnerable to HIV.



As in previous years, WRI 2012 brought together an extraordinary group of leaders in HIV to identify key opportunities to accelerate our understanding of HIV disease in women. WRI members represent a broad range of stakeholders in the fields of clinical care, research, academia, community-based services, advocacy, government, the pharmaceutical industry and women living with HIV. This diverse membership operationalizes the transdisciplinary approach advocated by the WRI. By addressing issues that affect women through a variety of lenses, the WRI is able to expand understanding of effective treatment and prevention for women and girls living with or at risk for HIV.

- View the full [2012 WRI Summary Report](#) (1 MB)
- View photos from the 2012 WRI meeting on our [Facebook page?](#)

## WRI 2012 Meeting Approach and Speaker Presentations

To highlight the most critical research efforts and findings of the past year, invited expert speakers and WRI members presented their work on key topics in biologic, behavioral and social research in women and HIV. Each of these talks fueled rich discussion and often culminated in unique synthesis and perspective by the group.

These talks:

- [Provided detailed epidemiology on HIV among women in the United States:](#) Dr. Gina Brown, of the Office of AIDS research at the National Institutes of Health, painted a picture of HIV among U.S. women. She highlighted "hot spots" of infection rates, including Washington DC, the South, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. She also pointed to the continuing disproportionate impact that HIV has on African-American women, highlighting the fact that African-American women make up one-fifth of the entire domestic epidemic. Dr. Brown described some concerns and challenges around the incomplete nature of existing data, such as the inability to drill down and determine what populations are identifying as mixed race as well the reality that we know very little about HIV on Native American reservations.
- [Described the complex social and environmental factors that influence risk, protection and access to services among women:](#) Dr. Judith Auerbach of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation described an approach for investigating risk and vulnerability that includes a number of "levels" to be addressed – individual, relationship, group and society. She described some of the social drivers of behavior, both macro and micro, and led a discussion about the appropriate points of

intervention. She concluded with a discussion about whether or not randomized clinical trials should remain the gold standard in HIV prevention research.

- [Addressed issues specifically related to adolescent girls and young women:](#) Dr. Gina Wingood of Emory University, described the social factors that influence risk, protection, care and treatment among adolescent and young women and discussed potential intervention options.

In addition, select WRI members provided short presentations updating the group on their recent research activities.

- Judy Feinberg, MD: Branching out into prevention - establishing a syringe exchange program with broad public health objectives, including HIV prevention and PrEP for female partners of IDUs
- Rowena Johnston, PhD: Women's participation in HIV eradication research
- Amy Meditz, MD: Investigations into sex differences in plasma HIV-1 RNA levels
- Chuck Wira, PhD: Steroidal effects on microbicide prevention of HIV infection and scientific research planning meeting – sexual violence and HIV transmission

## 2012 WRI Meeting Participants

### **Erika Aaron, MSN, CRNP (WRI member)**

Drexel University College of Medicine **Laura Armas- Kolostroubis, MD\* (WRI member)**

University of Florida **Judith Auerbach, PhD\* (WRI member and speaker)**

San Francisco AIDS Foundation **Richard Averitt (WRI team)**

The Well Project **Julie Barroso, PhD, ANP, APRN, BC, FAAN (WRI member)**

Duke University School of Nursing **Gina Brown, RSW (WRI attendee)**

NO/AIDS Task Force **Gina Brown, MD (WRI member and speaker)**

Office of AIDS Research, NIH **Susan E. Cohn, MD, MPH (WRI member)**

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine **Elizabeth Connick, MD\* (WRI member)**

University of Colorado Denver **Jenna Conley (WRI team)**

Conley Communications **Debbie Cooke, CMP (WRI team)**

Meeting Masters **Rebecca Denison (WRI member)**

WORLD **Dazon Dixon Diallo, MPH (WRI member)**

SisterLove, Inc. **Awny Farajallah, MED (WRI attendee)**

Bristol-Myers Squibb **Judith Feinberg, MD (WRI member)**

University of Cincinnati **Yasmin Halima, MPH (WRI member)**

Global Campaign for Microbicides **Sharon Hillier, PhD (WRI member and speaker)**

University of Pittsburgh Medical Center **Rowena Johnston, PhD (WRI member and speaker)**

amfAR - The Foundation for AIDS Research **Naina Khanna (WRI member)**

U.S. Positive Women's Network/WORLD **Alan Landay, PhD (WRI member)**

Rush University Medical Center **Sharon Lee, MD (WRI member)**

Family Health Care **Sandra N. Lehrman (WRI attendee)**

Merck and Co., Inc. **Krista Heitzman Martel (WRI team)**

The Well Project **Amie Lynne Meditz, MD (WRI member and speaker)**

University of Colorado Denver **Caroline Mitchell, MD, MPH (WRI member)**

University of Washington, Harborview OB/GYN **Tonia Poteat, PA-C, MPH\* (WRI member)**

Chase Brexton Health Services **Maura Riordan (TWP Board Member, WRI attendee)**

AIDS United **Linda Scruggs (WRI member)**

AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth and Families **Kathleen Squires, MD (WRI member)**

Thomas Jefferson University **Fulvia Veronese, PhD (WRI member)**

NIH, NIAID, DAIDS **Gina Wingood, ScD, MPH (WRI attendee and speaker)**

Emory University **Charles Wira, PhD (WRI member)**

Dartmouth Medical School

*\* 2012 WRI Executive Committee Member*



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