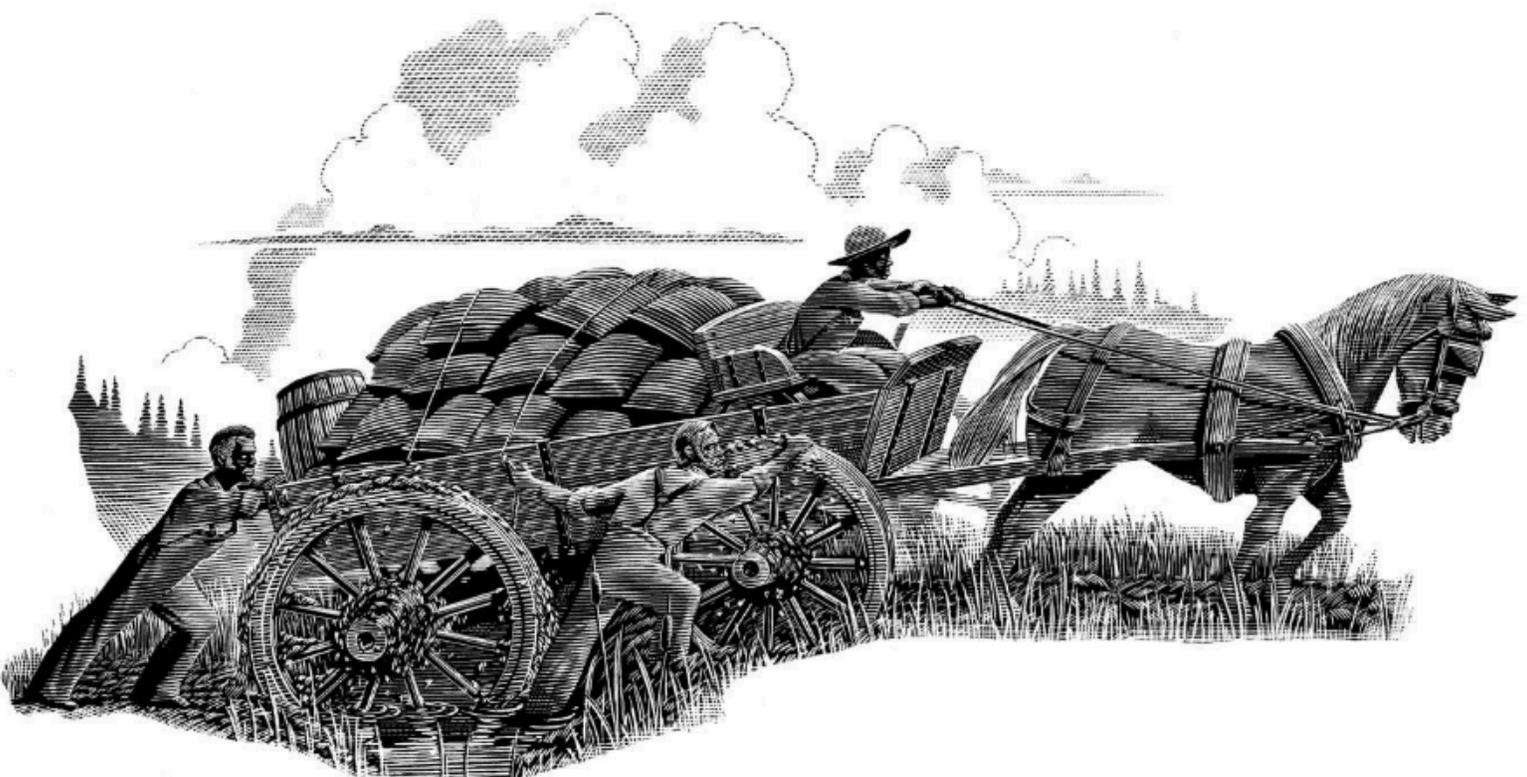




# COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

February 2026



**A Legacy of Care: 150 Years of Meharry**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Page 3 - [A Legacy of Care: 150 Years of Meharry](#)

Page 5 - [Upcoming Tennessee CFAR Events](#)

Page 6 - [External Events](#)

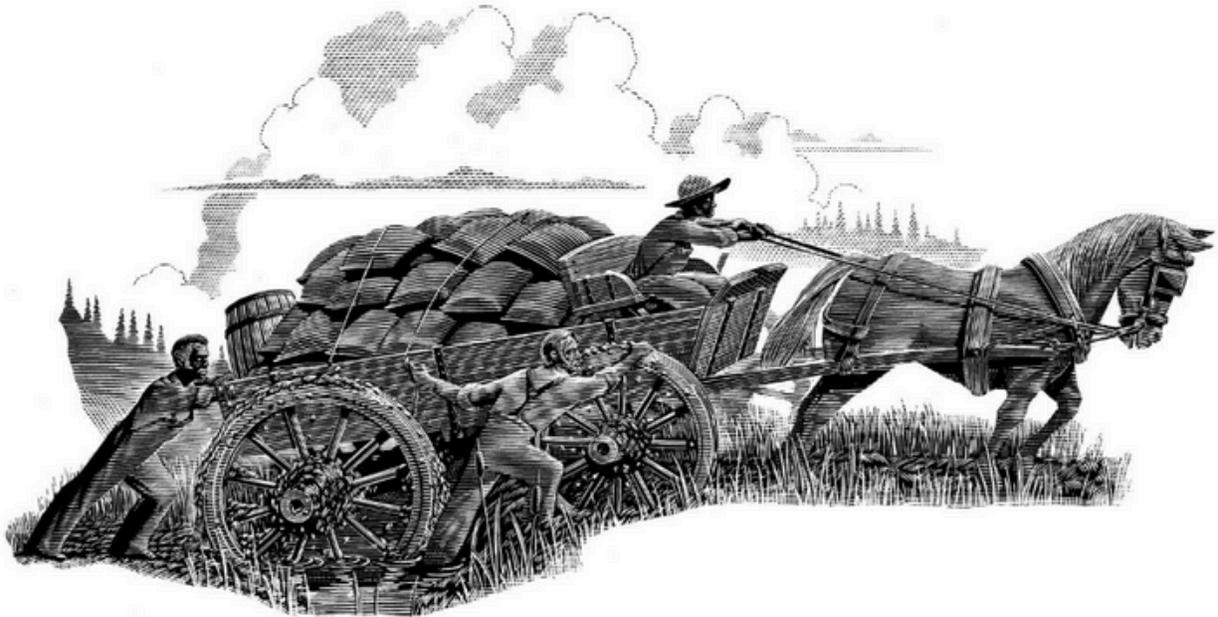
Page 11 - [Recent Findings & Discoveries](#)

Page 13 - [HIV History: 1984](#)

Page 14 - [Opportunities to Enroll Into Research Studies](#)



# A LEGACY OF CARE: 150 YEARS OF MEHARRY



Meharry Medical College was founded in 1876 in Nashville, Tennessee, emerging from a powerful story of compassion and purpose. Inspired by an act of kindness decades earlier, Samuel Meharry and his brothers pledged the resources to establish the Medical Department of Central Tennessee College—the first four-year medical school in the South open to African Americans. In a church basement, co-founders Dr. W.G. Sneed and Dr. George W. Hubbard welcomed the first class of 11 students, setting the stage for a legacy rooted in service and healthcare education.

Over a century and a half, Meharry has grown far beyond its humble beginnings, adding schools of dentistry, graduate studies, applied computational sciences, and global health.

Throughout its history, it has been at the forefront of training Black physicians, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, scientists, and leaders dedicated to advancing health access and equity—breaking barriers in medical education and shaping responses to critical public health challenges.

As Meharry celebrates its 150th anniversary, the institution honors the courage of its founders and the impact of countless alumni while continuing to look forward. Under the leadership of its current president, Dr. James E.K. Hildreth, Meharry remains committed to expanding access to care, driving innovative research, and preparing future generations of health professionals to serve diverse and underserved communities with compassion and excellence.

**[To Learn more and Celebrate 150 Years of Care, Click Here](#)**

# UPCOMING CFAR EVENTS



## There's an app for that: Leveraging Digital Health Interventions to Support HIV Testing and PrEP Implementation

Presented by:

**Albert Liu, MD, MPH**

Clinical Research Director  
Bridge HIV | Population Health Division | San Francisco  
Department of Public Health

February 11th, 2026 | 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm CST

## CFAR-Wide Seminar Series presented by Tennessee CFAR

## Understanding responses to the HIV Epidemic: A Feminist Theological Analysis



**Ellen Armour**

E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of  
Feminist Theology  
Professor of Feminist Theology  
Director of the Carpenter Program in Religion,  
Gender and Sexuality



Sponsored  
in part by:



Thursday, February 19th, 2025 | 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm CST

## Inter-CFAR FSRC Monthly Working Group Meeting

2026 NATIONAL BLACK HIV AIDS AWARENESS DAY [A7] MEHARRY

# NATIONAL AWARENESS

## *International Impact*

FEBRUARY 6, 2026  
11:30 AM-1:30 PM  
MEHARRY MEDICAL COLLEGE  
CAL TURNER BALLROOM



**Wilna Taylor, MS**  
Associate Director  
UCLA Art & Global  
Health Center

Keynote Address  
**Art as Activism: Using  
Storytelling to Combat  
HIV Stigma**

**LUNCH PROVIDED WITH  
REGISTRATION!**

**CLICK OR SCAN HERE:**

<https://redcap.link/15thAnnualHamptonLecture>



**THE 15TH ANNUAL JACQUELINE FLEMING-HAMPTON  
MEMORIAL LECTURE**



# EXTERNAL EVENTS

The Nashville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.  
International Awareness and Involvement Committee presents



QR CODE HERE!

## **PIZZA & PREP: RETHINK. REBUILD. RISE.** **NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS** **AWARENESS DAY**

**Saturday, February 7, 2026**

Cal Turner Family Center  
1011 21<sup>st</sup> Ave. North, Nashville, TN  
11 AM - 2 PM  
FREE & ALL ARE WELCOME!

SCAN



Food | Free HIV/STI Screenings | Health Education Resources | So Much More!

COLLABORATING PARTNERS



— VANDERBILT ACTG/HVTN CAB

## February CAB Meeting

Building Trust and Power: Centering  
Marginalized Communities in HIV Research

### Special Guest Speaker

**Hope Giselle Godsey**

*National Organizer, Author,  
and Inclusion Advocate*

**February 10, 2026**

5:30 PM - 6:30 PM



**Microsoft TEAMS | Meeting ID: 286 642 230 688**

Virtual Meeting Passcode: Email [jarissa.e.greenard@vumc.org](mailto:jarissa.e.greenard@vumc.org) for details.

# EXTERNAL EVENTS

A vibrant poster for Mashup Weekend 2026. At the top, a winged figure with large, iridescent wings and a metallic blue body stands against a dark, starry background. Below the figure, the text "3 DAYS OF BLACK QUEER JOY" and "FEBRUARY 20-23, 2026" is displayed in white, bold, sans-serif font. The main title "MASHUP weekend" is written in large, stylized letters, with "MASHUP" in a bold, serif font and "weekend" in a cursive script. The lower half of the poster is a collage of diverse Black LGBTQ+ individuals in various settings: some are dancing, some are singing into microphones, and others are embracing. The overall atmosphere is celebratory and joyful.

**3 DAYS OF BLACK QUEER JOY  
FEBRUARY 20-23, 2026**

# MASHUP weekend

**MASHUP WEEKEND IS WHERE BLACK LGBTQ+ BRILLIANCE  
COMES HOME. THREE DAYS OF CULTURE, ROOTED IN CARE AND  
UNAPOLOGETIC BLACK QUEER JOY. WE ARE THE RENAISSANCE.**

**TICKETS: [WWW.MASHUPNATION.ORG/MASHUPWEEKEND](http://WWW.MASHUPNATION.ORG/MASHUPWEEKEND)**

# EXTERNAL EVENTS



**SAVE THE DATE**

**SATURDAY  
JUNE 27, 2026**

**BICENTENNIAL  
CAPITOL MALL  
STATE PARK**

# RECENT FINDINGS & DISCOVERIES

Our CFAR researchers are all kinds of HIV experts like physicians, nurses, mental health professionals, epidemiologists, mathematicians, community members, and scientists. We study a range of HIV topics spanning all the way from how cells and the virus work to how communities can improve their support for people living with HIV.



## **IMPORTANT and THANK YOU!**

Our work isn't possible without our volunteers: People living with HIV throughout Tennessee. THANK YOU to our research participants and community advisors. We appreciate you.

## **Disparities in Diabetes Screening among People Living with HIV in Tennessee**

People with HIV are now living for decades due to effective antiretroviral therapy (ART), but this success has been accompanied by a growing burden of chronic conditions such as diabetes mellitus (DM). While prior research has documented racial and sex disparities in HIV treatment outcomes, less is known about inequities in the detection and management of comorbid diseases. This study examined whether disparities by race, sex, body mass index (BMI), and other factors existed across the diabetes care continuum—including screening, diagnosis, treatment, and glycemic control—among people with HIV receiving care in the southeastern United States.

The team, led by Dr. Nina Millman, conducted a retrospective analysis of people

with HIV receiving ART at the Vanderbilt Comprehensive Care Clinic between 2007 and 2022 who did not have diabetes at baseline. Using hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c), a measure of blood sugar over time, to assess screening and disease outcomes, the team evaluated factors associated with diabetes screening, diagnosis, initiation of treatment, and achievement of HbA1c  $\leq 7.0\%$ . Statistical models were used to estimate adjusted risk ratios for progressing through each step of the diabetes care continuum.

Older individuals, Black individuals, and those who were overweight or obese were more likely to be screened for and diagnosed with diabetes. After adjusting for other factors, sex was not associated with differences in screening or diagnosis. Among those diagnosed with diabetes, there were no significant disparities by age, race, sex, or BMI in treatment initiation or blood sugar control. These findings suggest that while disparities exist in diabetes screening and diagnosis among people with HIV, downstream diabetes treatment and outcomes were equitable within this care setting.



[Nina Millman, MD](#)

To see the whole publication **[click here](#)**.

# HIV HISTORY 1984

In this pivotal year of the AIDS epidemic, scientific advances, public health guidance, activism, and policy decisions unfold amid urgency and uncertainty. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced that researchers at the National Cancer Institute had identified a retrovirus believed to cause AIDS, labeled HTLV-III, and introduced a diagnostic blood test, that expressed a hope that a vaccine could be developed within two years.

Public health understanding continued to evolve as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that avoiding injection drug use and reducing needle sharing can help prevent transmission—an early acknowledgment of harm reduction. At the same time, fear and misinformation persist when media reports suggested AIDS might be transmissible through saliva, a claim that would not be disproven for two more years.

The human cost remained devastating. AIDS activist Bobbi Campbell, a pioneering advocate who helped put a public face on the epidemic, died of AIDS-related illness at age 32. Meanwhile, policy responded intensify when San Francisco public health officials ordered bathhouses closed due to high-risk sexual activity, which sparked debate over public health, civil liberties, and community trust.

**[Click Here to learn more](#)**

# OPPORTUNITIES TO ENROLL INTO RESEARCH STUDIES

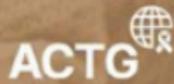
Local CFAR investigators lead studies to improve the lives of people living with HIV, to protect people from acquiring HIV, and other important issues.

Studies are looking for:

- people with frailty who are living with HIV [Page 15](#)
- Black or multiracial women who are sexually active [Page 16](#)
- people living with HIV who regularly drink alcohol [Page 17](#)
- people without HIV, to find a vaccine against HIV [Page 18](#)
- men without HIV, to study long-acting PrEP to prevent HIV [Page 19](#)

Studies typically provide compensation to participants.

If you know of studies that we missed, please let us know at: [tn-cfar@vumc.org](mailto:tn-cfar@vumc.org)



## DO YOU USUALLY FEEL EXHAUSTED, LIKE EVERYTHING YOU DO IS AN EFFORT?

If you are at least age 50 and living with HIV, and often feel exhausted, have trouble walking or climbing stairs, or have low physical activity, you may qualify for a new study.

A research team at Vanderbilt is studying treatment for a condition called "frailty", which affects some people living with HIV. Frailty may also involve losing weight without trying. Study treatment involves two drugs that are approved for other conditions but not for frailty. These pills are taken every 2 weeks for 3 months. Our researchers want to learn if these drugs improve strength and physical activity without too many side effects.

Total Compensation for completing the study is up to \$575



### Ready to get started?

Scan the QR CODE to see if you are eligible

## Are you a Black woman living in Middle Tennessee?

Researchers at Vanderbilt University Medical Center are exploring HIV prevention among Black women in Middle Tennessee. Participation includes one brief survey and a one-time interview at a time chosen by you.

### We would love to hear from you if:

- You are aged 18 years and over
- You are a woman
- You are Black, including multi-racial
- You are or have been sexually active with a man in the past year

Participants are compensated with up to \$50 in e-gift cards for their time and contribution to better understanding preventing HIV in our community.

**If you are interested in participating, scan the QR code below for more information!**



Date of IRB Approval: 10/14/2025





**META  
HIV CVD**

# IF YOU HAVE HIV, THIS STUDY MAY BE FOR YOU!

## MICROBIOME, METABOLITES, AND ALCOHOL IN HIV TO REDUCE CVD



We're looking for adults ages 18 and older who drink alcohol regularly, are HIV+, and take antiretroviral therapy. We want to see whether taking a supplement called a probiotic can help with some of the gut-related health problems related to alcohol use and HIV.



### Participants will be asked to:

- Come to 5 study visits at Vanderbilt over 1 year
- Complete study phone calls about once a month
- Have their blood drawn
- Provide stool samples

Total compensation for  
completing the entire  
study is \$675

**Take our survey to see if you are eligible!**

**<https://redcap.link/metastudy>**

# HIV VACCINE STUDIES, TO DISCOVER A VACCINE THAT PROTECTS PEOPLE FROM ACQUIRING HIV



In the United States HIV disproportionately affects certain groups and populations; however, HIV can affect anyone. Worldwide there are currently over 40 million people living with HIV. That number is growing.

The Vanderbilt HIV Vaccine Program is looking for healthy adults (ages 18-55) from all walks of life who are not living with HIV to participate in an HIV prevention study.

You cannot get HIV from participating in the study.

Volunteers must be available locally for approximately 12 months. Volunteers will be compensated. You can help fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic

Call 615-936-7327 or email [vic.sorrell@vumc.org](mailto:vic.sorrell@vumc.org) for more information.

In order to develop HIV prevention methods that will work for everyone, we need help from everyone!

ALL RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT OUR PROGRAM.

# EXPRESSIVE

## Together we can help advance HIV prevention research



### Learn about the EXPRESSIVE clinical research study for people who could be exposed to HIV

PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) medications may help people at risk of being exposed to the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and lower their chance of becoming infected.

This study is comparing an investigational study medicine to an approved PrEP medicine to assess safety, how the investigational study medicine functions in the body, and any side effects (tolerability).

You may qualify to take part in this study if you are at least 16 years of age and:

- Do not have HIV
- Are a cisgender man (assigned male at birth and identify as male), transgender woman (assigned male at birth and identify as female), transgender man (assigned female at birth and identify as male), or gender nonbinary (assigned any gender at birth and do not identify as exclusively male or female)
- Have had receptive anal sex without a condom in the past year (not counting sex in a committed relationship) and **have at least 1** of these situations:
  - Had receptive anal sex with 2 or more partners in the last 3 months, no matter if you used a condom or not.
  - Had rectal or urethral infections like gonorrhea, chlamydia, or syphilis in the last 6 months.
  - Used any stimulant drugs while having sex in the last 3 months.

There are additional eligibility criteria, which the study team can discuss with you.

**To learn more, including the possible risks and benefits of participation, please contact:**

**Call: 615-327-6353**

**Email: [gstanton@mmc.edu](mailto:gstanton@mmc.edu)**