



# **BUILDING BRIDGES** **BREAKING BARRIERS**

## **BLACK GAY MEN'S NETWORK 2012 ANNUAL RETREAT**

April 1-4, 2012—Santo Domingo  
April 5-9, 2012—Punta Cana  
[www.thebgmnetwork.com](http://www.thebgmnetwork.com)

## **BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW**

The annual Black Gay Men's Network Retreat will sharpen the focus of men of the African Diaspora on a wide range of issues and topics including international human rights, mentoring, the 2012 International AIDS Conference, and HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean—the region with the world's second highest adult HIV prevalence.

In 2011, The Black AIDS Institute's, Black Gay Men's Network and the African/Black Diaspora Global Network on HIV/AIDS hosted an invitational four-day consultation and retreat focused on Black MSM issues in the Diaspora, with a focus on North America and the Caribbean region. The goal of the meeting was to promote meaningful interactions and maximize priority-setting and networking.

### **The objectives of the consultation were:**

- Expand the understanding of recent breakthroughs in bio-medical interventions among Black MSM,
- Develop strategies to increase the voice and presence of Black MSM at the 2012 International AIDS conference in Washington D.C., and
- Strengthen Black gay networks in North America and the Caribbean.

Forty-three men representing Belize, Canada, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, and the United States met in the Dominican Republic to convene the first HIV/AIDS consultation. That gathering produced the first Black Diaspora MSM Consultation Report. This report provides a profile of the participants, descriptions and feedback for each session, key outcomes and recommendations, and detailed discussions of some critical topics addressed by the group.

The men of the Black Diaspora MSM consultation reflected on their experience with the AIDS epidemic learned about new developments and gave their input on the way forward for their respective communities. The first such gathering of its kind, the retreat/consultation built on the tradition of the Black Gay Men's Network Annual Retreat, and incorporated men from across the Black Diaspora in the Western Hemisphere, to energize a regional dialogue among Black Gay men as we entered the fourth decade of the AIDS epidemic. Over the course of the four day consultation participants engaged in thirteen lecture and discussion-driven sessions, and several personal and rapport-development activities.

The 2011 retreat/consultation was in large part made possible by the generous support of the Elton John AIDS Foundation, Ford Foundation, and amFAR: The Foundation for AIDS Research, the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, and the U.S. National Institutes of Health, Office of AIDS Research.

## **PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE FOCUS**

The Building Bridges and Breaking Barriers Retreat will convene April 01-08 2012. Caribbean, Canadian and American Black MSM & Gay men—HIV stakeholders all—will assemble to build on the success of the previous year's retreat, to strengthen earlier

relationships forged, and demonstrate the synergistic results of regional cooperation and collaboration among men of the Caribbean and North American Black Diaspora.

The audience of for the 2012 Retreat includes individuals living or working in the Caribbean and North America, such as:

- People living with HIV
- Members of vulnerable groups
- Researchers and clinicians
- Allied health care professionals
- Caregivers and patient advocates
- Advocates for social justice and health parity
- Members of community and faith-based organizations
- Regional and international governmental; representatives
- Public policy analysts and decision makers
- Civil society and regional media representatives
- Entertainment and celebrities

## **GOALS**

Through the Black Gay Men's Network: Building Bridges and Breaking Barriers 2012 Retreat, participants will:

- **BUILD** upon the previous year's stated objectives by bringing together countries and territories of the Caribbean and North American Black Diaspora to share, learn and network.
- **BRIDGE** Caribbean/North American efforts to work collectively toward preventing the spread of HIV and mitigating the impact of HIV on the health, social and economic status of Black gay and MSM.
- **ENHANCE** regional efforts and responses to HIV through the application of knowledge, research, lessons learned, collaboration and best-practices throughout respective regions.
- **DISMANTLE** discrimination, homophobia and stigma on the international and local fronts—wherever and whenever we encounter such barriers and practices.
- **STRENGTHEN** networks and relationships through information dissemination, using the tools at our disposal—technical and practical, through sharing, learning and networking.

## **RETREAT CHAIR AND COMMITTEES**

Development of the Retreat is being led by Chair Sheldon DeSouza. The Chairperson works in conjunction with the Steering Committee and the Planning Committee.

The Steering Committee is comprised of individuals with extensive experience in retreat/event organization and subject area expertise. Committee members are:

- Jasper Hendricks, III
- Jonte Lee, Vice Chair, Membership
- Paris Mullen
- Allyn Rubin, Vice Chair, Membership

Planning Committee members invited Adjunct Workshop Facilitators to participate in the retreats' development based on their expertise working with MSM and Black Gay Men, HIV-affected and infected constituencies and communities. These individuals bring their collective experience and interests in the following areas:

- Academia
- Advocacy
- Clinical science
- Community-based and non-governmental organizations
- Entertainment
- Faith and religion
- Health care
- Human rights
- LBGT organizations
- Media
- Policy-making
- Program administration
- Research
- Social and behavioral sciences
- Youth

## PROPOSED WORKSHOPS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

### PROPOSED WORKSHOP ABSTRACTS

- Coalition and partnerships building
- Political activism: 2012 and beyond
- International human rights
- Faith and religion
- Mental health
- Virtual mentorship program models

### PROPOSED SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

#### Track A

- Red carpet premiere screening with post discussion and after party (not funded)
- High level meeting with U.S. State Department/Embassy in Dominican Republic
- Santo Domingo local community outreach opportunities

#### Track B

- Ropes™ Obstacle course

## OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

The official language of the Retreat is English. All abstracts must be submitted in English. Workshop presentations will be conducted in English (Track B) and may be conducted in either English or Spanish in Track A. Simultaneous interpretation (Spanish/English) will be provided during the community engagement sessions.

## SCHEDULE, ACCOMMODATIONS AND RATES

The Retreat is divided into two tracks held over 8 days and 7 nights.

Track A: **Community Outreach and Global Engagement**  
**Santo Domingo**  
4 days and 4 nights

Track B: **Traditional Concurrent Workshop Sessions**  
**Punta Cana**  
4 days and 3 nights

You may attend either Track A or Track B or both tracks. Note that the accommodation arrangements and pricing structures differ for the two locations. Melia Caribe in Punta Cana is all-inclusive. Renaissance Santo Domingo Jaragua Hotel & Casino in Santo Domingo is not.

### TRACK A

**Santo Domingo, April 1-4, 2012**

**Community Outreach and Global Engagement**

Renaissance Santo Domingo Jaragua Hotel & Casino, Santo Domingo  
\$105-\$135 per night, single or double occupancy

Includes breakfast buffet

Arrive April 1, 2012

Depart for Punta Cana April 5 at 9 a.m.

### ACTIVITIES

- Grass-roots organizing, local networking opportunities and social activities
- Host community LGBT Town Hall
- Local issues and global implications
- Discussions with a representative from the U.S. State Department
- Community engagement
- Local outreach
- International human rights
- Red carpet premiere screening
- After party and reception

### TRACK B

**Punta Cana, April 5-8, 2012**

**Traditional Concurrent Workshop Sessions**

Melia Caribe Tropical Resort, Punta Cana

\$170 per night, single occupancy; \$250 per night, double occupancy  
Resort-specific inclusive package for Punta Cana includes all meals, snacks, beverages and non-motorized water and land sports. (*This all-inclusive package applies to Punta Cana only. Not available in Santo Domingo.*)

Arrive April 5, 2012

Depart April 8 at 12 noon

### ACTIVITIES

- Concurrent sessions
- Cultural, spiritual and leadership issues
- Prevention, social, behavioral and biomedical issues
- Closing banquet and awards ceremony

## REGISTRATION

Registration is \$325 per person.

## TRAVEL

### BAI OFFICIAL TRAVEL AGENT

Georgia International Travel, 800-444-3078

David Lankford, david@gitravel.com, 404 974 4883

### DISCOUNT TRAVEL

United Airlines/Continental: Book at [www.continental.com](http://www.continental.com) or [www.united.com](http://www.united.com). Enter offer code ZKXP905861.

Delta Airlines:

American: Book at [www.aa.com/group](http://www.aa.com/group). Enter promo code 6932BY.

Air Tran: Book at [www.airtran.com](http://www.airtran.com). Enter promo/discount code PUJ040112 (Punta Cana travel only)

## KEY DATES

February 1, 2012	Abstract submission deadline Registration for North Americans opens
February 1, 2012	Caribbean registration opens Scholarship request deadline
February 25, 2012	Scholarship notification begins
March 15, 2012	Housing registration deadline

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

[www.thebgmnetwork.com/retreat.html](http://www.thebgmnetwork.com/retreat.html)

[contacts@BlackAIDS.org](mailto:contacts@BlackAIDS.org) ( Put "BGMN 2012 Retreat" in subject line)

## PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

### RETREAT SPONSORS

MAC AIDS Fund

Elton John AIDS Foundation

Air Tran, Corporate Sponsor

American Airlines, Corporate Sponsor

Delta Airlines, Corporate Sponsor

United Airlines, Corporate Sponsor

Georgia International Travel

### RETREAT PARTNERS (AS OF DECEMBER 2011)

Black Gay Men's Network

African/Black Diaspora Global Network on HIV/AIDS

Amnesty International

International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission

Global Equality Council

TransAfrica Forum

