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Community Access National Network Names 2019 HIV Advocacy Scholarship Honorees

Honorees include Oana Livia Popa of Michigan, Necaela Penn of Georgia, and Jennifer Vaughan of California

WASHINGTON, DC (September 12, 2019) – The Community Access National Network, otherwise known as CANN, today named the honorees for its three advocacy scholarships. Named in memoriam after Thomas P. McCormick, Gary R. Rose, and the Honorable Maurice D. Hinchey, M.C., each of the advocacy scholarships focus on HIV/AIDS-related public policy issues.

- **The Thomas P. McCormick Advocacy Scholarship** was awarded to **Oana Livia Popa**, who is a health and human rights activist, Planned Parenthood Certified Educator (PPIN), and project director of World in Harmony International. The scholarship is awarded annually to an advocate dedicated to improving access to care and treatment under Medicaid. In Michigan, Oana has facilitated community resettlement of refugees and vulnerable populations, provided critical social services, Medicaid/Medicare representation and legal assistance, while working closely with case managers to determine individual clients' health and wellness needs.
- **The Gary R. Rose Advocacy Scholarship** was awarded to **Necaela Penn**, who is an advocate and public speaker from Atlanta, Georgia. Necaela has been living with HIV since 2003. The scholarship is awarded annually to an advocate dedicated to improving access to care and treatment under the Ryan White CARE Act. Necaela is the first transwoman of color to graduating from the Linkage to Care Peer Guide Program from Georgia State University School of Public Health in 2015, and returned as a co-facilitator in that same year to train transwomen of color who are living with HIV to become Peer Educators in metro Atlanta. Currently, Necaela is the co-facilitator for CDC Intervention TWIST (Transgender Women Involved in Strategies for Transformation) at Someone Cares, Inc.

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- **The Honorable Maurice D. Hinchey Advocacy Scholarship** was awarded to **Jennifer Vaughan**, who is a California native, teacher, mother of three and the founder and creator of Jennifer's Positive Life, a YouTube channel featuring her life living with HIV. The scholarship is awarded annually to an advocated dedicated to improving access to care and treatment under national and global health programs. Jennifer's videos propelled her into instant advocacy and from that she founded a private support group through Facebook for HIV+ women. The majority of her members are newly diagnosed and women who have lived years without ever knowing another poz female. Her group currently supports 200 women from all over the globe.

The advocacy scholarships allow advocates to attend specific HIV/AIDS-related educational events.

To learn more about the advocacy scholarships, or sign-up to receive timely updates please visit http://tiicann.org/signup_listserv.html.

For general information, please contact CANN at info@tiicann.org.

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***About the Community Access National Network:** The mission of the Community Access National Network (CANN) is to define, promote, and improve access to healthcare services and supports for people living with HIV/AIDS and/or Viral Hepatitis through advocacy, education, and networking. These services must be affordable to the people who need them regardless of insurance status, income, or geographic location.*