

Facts about the Albany Damien Center and our Building

- The Albany Damien Center opened in 1988 and was officially incorporated in 1990 as a 501(c).3 non-profit as the very first drop-in center in the United States. Our mission is to enhance the lives of people affected by HIV/AIDS in an affirming environment and to reduce new infections in the communities we serve. Named after Father Damien, who ministered to the lepers in the late 1800s, the Albany Damien Center began in two rooms at Grace & Holy Innocents Church until we purchased our building at 12 South Lake Avenue. Unfortunately, in August 2013, our building caught on fire and we relocated to the First Lutheran Church. After that moment, our agency decided it was time for a new direction.
- The 26,000 square foot building on a half-acre, now houses the Albany Damien Center's programming, serving 400 people with HIV/AIDS annually and provide permanent supportive housing with 20 apartments for 22 persons who are chronically homeless and living with HIV/AIDS. They moved in on November 6, 2017.
- The project cost \$5.6m and came in under budget. Funding for the construction project is provided in part by a \$4.3 million grant from the NYS Homeless Housing & Assistance Program administered through OTDA and a \$269,000 grant from the Dormitory Authority (DASNY).
- The building at 728 Madison Ave, built in 1875, was owned by the Mormon Church and was vacant for over 10 years prior to the Damien Center's purchase of the site. The historic building was restored back to its original exterior design complete with the restored porch, round attic window, and painted brick façade.
- This investment will produce long-term savings for both local, county, and the state government. The cost of homelessness can be quite high. Hospitalization, medical treatment, incarceration, police intervention, and emergency shelter expenses can add up quickly, making homelessness surprisingly expensive for municipalities and taxpayers. Estimated savings per person is \$25,000 per year making this project's savings over \$550,000 annually.
- The building is fully ADA accessible LEED Gold Certified for maximum energy efficiency that includes solar power and a generator. Building architect was Owen Neitzel from Harris A. Sanders Architects and involved input from the Pine Hills Neighborhood Association from the very beginning.
- The Need - A 2014 survey of our Damien Center members revealed that 80% had experienced homelessness at least once since their HIV diagnosis. More disturbingly, but not unexpected from our experience, was that 20% of our Damien Center members were currently homeless. In addition to homelessness, our members were battling severe poverty, hunger, isolation, trauma, mental health issues, substance use disorder, social injustice, and HIV-related stigma that created substantial barriers to their accessing HIV medications, medical care, support services, and the ability to survive AIDS.
- All tenants have HIV and were homeless prior to moving in. Most have other chronic health conditions that complicate their daily living.
- Tenants were not accessing medical care or taking their medications prior to moving in.
- Tenants pay 30% of their income toward rent.
- Each apartment is fully furnished, complete with a comfy bed, dressers, stove, fridge, and all the household items (bedding, plates, silverware, etc... that make each apartment a home).
- Tenants join other Damien Center members for meals each week—a hot breakfast, lunch, and dinner made from scratch in our kitchen by our Chef's Claire & Trevor.
- Each apartment also has its own kitchen area, complete with stove, fridge, and cooking items.
- Town Total Healthy Pharmacy is located on the B level of the building. Town Total is a specialty pharmacy that provides delivery and medication adherence services to people with HIV/AIDS and other chronic illnesses. This partnership allows the Damien Center to work closely with the pharmacy in ensuring each person becomes and remains virally suppressed.
- The design is warm & cozy - just like home!



6 Ways YOU can support the Albany Damien Center

DONATE

One of the most impactful way to support is to donate to help those much less fortunate in our local community. We have more individuals and families in need now than at any other point in the AIDS epidemic. Your generous gifts can support and expand our impact by:

1. Visiting albanydamiencenter.org/donate
2. Mailing a check or money order to "Albany Damien Center" at 728 Madison Avenue, Suite 100, Albany, NY 12208.
3. Calling 518-449-7119 to make a donation over the phone.



ATTEND AN EVENT

We have several events throughout the year to raise awareness, inform the community about our programs, and raise money to support our mission. Mark your calendars for:

1. Bowling for PAWS on Sunday, February 24, 2019, at Spare Time
2. AIDS Walk & Festival on Saturday, April 13, 2019, at Washington Park Lakehouse

Make sure you join our email list to get the latest updates and invitations!



FOOD, CLOTHING, OR ITEM DRIVES

We value every in-kind donation we receive whether it is made directly to the Damien Center or through our Treasure Chest Thrift Store! We're always in need of the following items:

- **Food:** canned veggies and beans, grains, pasta, spices, & other healthy foods
- **Pet food and supplies:** dog and cat food, treats, kitty litter, & other pet supplies
- **Personal care items:** soap, body wash, shaving cream, deodorant, & feminine products
- **Household items:** furniture, glassware, linens, silverware, bedding, & more
- **Gifts for the holidays:** Many of our members don't have families to get them gifts and your group could get their wish list during the holidays!

All items can be dropped off at our front desk anytime as we are open 24/7. The only exceptions are household items, furniture, and items we sell at our Treasure Chest Thrift Store can be dropped off during store hours or by contacting Walter at 518-331-3752 for pickup. We also provide Estate Liquidation services that benefit the Damien Center and provide proceeds to persons who are downsizing or relocating.



HOST A FUN-RAISER!

Do you have energy, time and passion? Then throw a fundraiser for us! This is a great project for school, church, and employer groups to help raise needed funds and HIV/AIDS awareness! You can even throw one for your birthday or a special occasion online. You can:

- Host a party at your home, school, or office
- Organize an event at a restaurant, bar, park or another venue
- Create your own fundraising page and encourage online donations

We have systems and resources to support your fundraising!

VOLUNTEER

We love volunteers! Volunteers are extremely important in helping the Damien Center operate each day. There are multiple volunteer opportunities and flexible schedules available in our Kitchen, PAWS, Thrift Store, Living Room, Front Desk, as well as group activities!



LEAVE A LEGACY

There are several ways your community of faith can leave a legacy, including room naming opportunities at the Albany Damien Center's new site at 728 Madison Avenue. A gift through your will or living trust will continue your support of the Albany Damien Center and people living with HIV/AIDS as an important legacy in our community.

Albany Damien Center Programs

The Albany Damien Center Inc.'s mission is to enhance the lives of people affected by HIV/AIDS in an affirming environment and to reduce new infections in the communities we serve. Our vision is a community where people with HIV/AIDS achieve their desired potential and are respected as coworkers, neighbors, and friends, while striving for an HIV free generation. Membership in the Albany Damien Center is for persons who are diagnosed with HIV or are directly affected by HIV.

The Albany Damien Center provides the following programs:

The Drop-In Living Room Program creates an HIV+ peer-led sanctuary drop-in space with trauma-informed activities designed to improve the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of our members. Programs and activities include access to treatment, prevention, and care to achieve durable HIV viral suppression, supportive counseling, support groups, holistic therapies (massage, Reiki, spiritual care), HIV/AIDS information resources, computer access, consumer advocacy, and opportunities for social and recreational activities.



Smart Meals combines nutrition health education with nutritious hot meals homemade on site, pantry bags, and food gift cards to supermarkets.

The Treasure Chest Thrift Store, located at 295 Hamilton Street, Albany, provides vocational training opportunities, clothing, furniture, and household items for members in need.



PAWS (Pets are Wonderful Support) provides task, financial, and informational assistance to pet owners with HIV/AIDS to ensure that they are never separated from their animal companions, often when they need each other the most.

Foundations for Living helps individuals living with HIV/AIDS gain or improve employment, access to vocational training, benefits advisement, and stable housing.

The MPower! Program, located at 77 Central Ave, Albany, provides HIV/HCV/STD prevention and treatment services in a drop-in center geared toward young persons from communities of color.



Pharmacy Program allows our members to get medications delivered to their home, refill reminders, assistance with insurance and copays, and personal counseling support.

How to Become a Member

You are eligible to become a member of the Albany Damien Center if you can provide documentation of being HIV Positive or proof that you are directly affected by HIV. Please note that each program might have additional eligibility requirements.

For more information or to become a member, please call 518-449-7119.

2017 Snapshot



Smart Meals

Offering food security and nutrition education to combat hunger and malnutrition too often experienced by people struggling with HIV/AIDS

16,140 quality meals served through lunches, dinners, BBQs, pantry bags, and food gift cards

730 Nutrition Health sessions held in group and individual settings available to all members



PAWS – Pets Are Wonderful Support

Providing support and care to the pets of our members.

139 pet owners served

211 pets received PAWS services

17,482 lbs. of pet food, litter, and treats distributed

226 times pets received veterinarian assistance

20 pets received in-home and foster care assistance totaling over **657** days of help



Drop-In Living Room

412 members served

8,865 member visits



Housing

Clean, safe, and affordable housing for chronically homeless people living with HIV/AIDS with intensive case management to ensure housing success

20 permanent supportive apartments for **22** individuals at the Madison Ave. location

26,000 sq. ft. renovation of an existing historic building (c. 1875) plus **18 scattered site apartments** in the community



Treasure Chest Thrift Store

Supplies clients with needed items such as clothing and furniture, while giving clients the opportunity for back to work training.

\$56,000 in sales to the public from the store at 295 Hamilton St and from Estate Liquidation sales.

4,821 items provided to members (free) totaling over **\$19,452**



MPOWER!

108 young persons at risk served with **400** encounters

1,198 HIV prevention services provided

Who We Serve

Race/Ethnicity

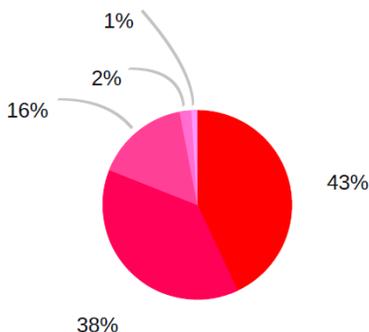
Black/African American 43%

Caucasian 38%

Hispanic 16%

Multi-Racial 2%

American Indian/Alaskan Native 1%



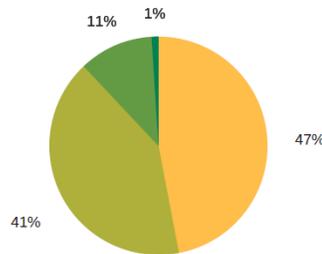
Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual 47%

Gay 41%

Bisexual 11%

Lesbian 1%

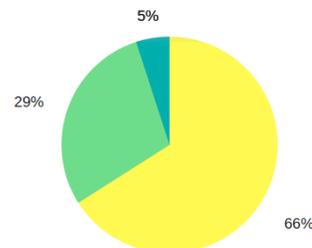


Gender

Men 66%

Women 29%

Trans* 5%



Income

\$0 - \$10,000 73%

\$10,000 - \$20,000 14%

\$25,000+ 13%

