**Attendees List:**

1. Kyla Loucks – ATC @ Albany Medical Center
2. Vanessa Gonzalez – In Our Own Voices
3. Diane DeGroat – Senior Attorney, Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY
4. Steve Sawicki – NY Links, NYS DOH
5. Sue Johnson – PrEP Specialist, Whitney Young Health
6. Grace Fay – HIAP Enrollment Specialist, Alliance for Positive Health
7. Karen Bovell - AIDS Institute
8. Lauren Quinn – Albany Med Specialized Care Center for Adolescents and Young Adults
9. Akeem Tyrell – Albany Damien Center, Employment Pathways
10. Kate Thorpe - Albany Med Specialized Care Center for Adolescents and Young Adults
11. Jada Harden- Alliance for Positive Health
12. Alexander DeSacia, AMC Dept. of HIV Medicine
13. Amy Palma – Unity House NY
14. Nathaniel Gray - Executive Director of the Pride Center of the Capital Region
15. Kathleen Ide – Institute Bureau of Community Support Services
16. Perry Junjulas – Executive Director, The Albany Damien Center
17. Brynn Watkins

**Call to Order** – Co-chairs Vanessa Gonzalez welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

1. Welcome & Introductions – Kyla Loucks & Vanessa Gonzalez, Committee Chairs
2. Legislative Updates – Perry Junjulas

The budget has been approved. Budget language was not changed. Looking for a legislative fix to make changes to the wording.

340b not repealed. A petition is going around currently. Please sign and send out link to others to sign. Calls for Governor Hochul to repeal the carveout. It affects statewide services dramatically.

If you have an interest in joining the Legislative ETE committee meetings, let Perry know.

1. Minutes Review

**Motion to approve the minutes from the 3/15/2022 meeting. Edit will need to be made before the minutes are approved.**

Steve Sawicki – There are issues around HIV testing in the Capital District. There is a short-term model that is 6-9 months. Maybe this model can be tried with the testing issue. The way it works – there’s an agreement to do it; you set up the meeting and invite people who would not attend meetings such as this one; there is a framing meeting; and a check in meeting for success. Informed Ashley that I would facilitate the process. Idea – to improve HIV testing rates in the Capital District. Focus on Albany, Schenectady & Troy areas.

Kyla Loucks – I am interested.

Karen Bovell – Is assistance needed on this, from this group? Are there dates in mind?

Steve Sawicki – There is a testing committee as part of this group. I do not have any dates in mind. What’s more important is the duration the meetings should be.

Kyla Loucks – May I reach out to folks and give them your contact info?

Steve Sawicki – Could be a task of the ETE group; they can be the sponsors of it. Please feel free to share my email. The initial meeting would be a brainstorming session.

Vanessa Gonzalez – Is there language that can be shared for those who are not attending this meeting?

Steve Sawicki – I have a White paper available; I will put something together that can be shared with others.

Sue Johnson – The PrEP subcommittee fell apart; thinking we should work as a collective.

Vanessa Gonzalez– Youth subcommittee is still having meetings. A collective would work wonderfully.

1. Agency Updates
	1. Discussion on how return to a sense of “normalcy” is impacting our work and how we show up

Perry – Albany Damien Center open now for full services. April 1st the mask mandate was removed for those vaccinated. Folks want to get together again. Planning a Memorial Day Picnic on Memorial Day for the Center and the community. Food voucher has been increased from $100 to $150. Emergency housing money and help with utilities available.

Amy Palma – Unity House – Using a hybrid work schedule. 24-hour programs working. Have a hybrid work schedule for the main office building. Seeing consumers by appointment. Visitors coming in to the first floor. Some services are accessed in person, including the pharmacy. The 24-hour sites had challenges through the pandemic. Both staff and clients got sick. Supported each other across the board.

Nathaniel Gray – Pride Center – Open for several months. Everything is hybrid-optional at the moment; may make a permanent feature. Kyla and her team supporting us with testing, etc.

Diane DeGroat – Legal Aide – Hybrid option. May make the hybrid schedule an option permanently. Closed for walk-ins but have a process for folks to drop off documents. Most courts are in person now. Covid protocols are in effect when in-person meetings take place.

Social security update – Offices are now open for appointments and walk-in services.

Grace Fay – Alliance for Positive Health – Meeting with clients since July. Remote work schedule; has become a permanent part of the agency. Clients are meeting in person in certain programs. May lift our mask mandate at some point. Testing by appointment at Albany and Schenectady locations. Reach out to Grace for more information.

I am an enrollment specialist for those who have health insurance needs. We can come into your center to talk about health insurance needs and information. Our presentation has been done at AMC, among others. We want people to know there are resources out there.

Kyla – Albany Med – In person and seeing more patients now. Getting ready for PRIDE and other new events. Offering walk-in testing at 1 Clara Barton, unable to offer walk-in STI testing at this time. Feeling burnt out.

Vanessa – In our own voices – Have done offsite testing. Hoping to do testing in May. Some anxiety with the staff with regard to walk-ins. Trying to find the best way possible to work with this. Received funding to provide to survivors of domestic violence. The survivors are paid directly. If you have clients in need, please let us know. Email Vanessa for more information.

Planning our Health and Wellness Expo for black and Latino gay pride. We have a vendor application; contact Vanessa. Would like to have different folks provide services to our community at the event.

1. Touch base on messaging ideas: where are we?

Talked about doing a messaging for the communities that we serve.

The ETE Bronx committee is also doing a campaign, with a focus around immigration. We may decide to work with them. They are working on immigration and we’re working on stigma, so we’ll need to decide what our message will be.

Another piece – what is the follow-up? Let’s talk about this as a committee.

Kyla – Reaching out to providers both medical and not. Asking them if they’re willing to participate in the campaign. If there are folks that are allies in the work that we are doing, it would be great to have them talk on the topic.

Vanessa – Let’s process and think about the next phase.

1. Closing comments

None

Meeting adjourned at 9:54 am

**ETE Capital Region Meetings are from 9 AM to 10:30 AM on the 3rd Tues of each month**

Next ETE Meeting is Tuesday, May 17, 2022

**Co-Chair Contact information**

Vanessa Gonzalez vgonzalez@inourownvoices.org 518-432-4188 (phone), 518-491-1554 (work cell)

Kyla Loucks loucksk1@amc.edu 518-264-5839 (work phone)

ETE Webpage at <http://www.albanydamiencenter.org/capital-region-ete.html>