



Department of Psychiatry  
And Behavioral Medicine

Center for AIDS Intervention  
Research (CAIR)

Selection Committee  
President's Community Engagement Award  
Medical College of Wisconsin

February 5, 2019

Dear Selection Committee,

I am pleased to nominate Broderick Pearson for the President's Community Engagement Award. Broderick is a Research Associate II at the Center for AIDS Intervention Research (CAIR), in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine. Broderick exemplifies MCW's commitment to community engagement and has been instrumental in helping CAIR establish lasting, bi-directional community partnerships. As a current faculty member at CAIR, and former MCW graduate student, I have had the privilege of working with Broderick on numerous research studies over the past several years and have been witness to his incredible work and growth in the field. I cannot think of another individual as deserving of the President's Community Engagement Award as Broderick.

In his position at CAIR, Broderick has played a key role in numerous research studies aimed at reducing the racial disparities in HIV in Milwaukee. HIV disproportionately affects young Black gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM) in Milwaukee and much of CAIR's research in recent years has sought to address these disparities. Not surprisingly, there are significant barriers to conducting this type of research in Milwaukee including a long history of racism and racial segregation, mistrust of MCW and public health, homophobia, and skepticism about research. Broderick has been essential at helping us overcome these barriers and facilitating strong community-academic partnerships to help improve the lives of young Black MSM in Milwaukee.

Broderick was hired in 2011 to work on a study using social networks to reduce HIV risk among young Black MSM. He was responsible for building connections between CAIR, the young Black MSM community, and the broader Milwaukee HIV prevention community. Broderick was instrumental in the study's success and has continued to be a coveted research associate at CAIR. Over the past seven years, he has worked as a research associate for studies led by numerous investigators at CAIR. In his roles, he has built lasting relationships with several community organizations and stakeholders including Diverse and Resilient, the AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, the UWM LGBT Center, Courage MKE, and the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center. Often the 'face' of CAIR and MCW, Broderick continuously shows up. He is present and active at LGBT and HIV advocacy events, shows up to support our partner organizations' events and fundraisers on nights and weekends, and has established himself as a leader in the HIV prevention community. His commitment is unmatched by anyone else at CAIR.

Broderick's leadership and reverence in the community are evident in his recognition by community agencies and expansive list of awards. Broderick was recently elected by his peers as Community Co-chair of the Wisconsin Statewide Action Planning Group (SAPG). SAPG is a collaborative of statewide ambassadors who participate in developing joint HIV prevention and care services plan and advise the Wisconsin HIV Program on the development, implementation, and prioritization of HIV prevention services in Wisconsin. In 2017 and 2018, Broderick also was selected to participate in the Wisconsin Health Leaders Fellows Program, a program designed to increase leadership capacity among gay men of color

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in Milwaukee. In 2017, Broderick also served as Mr. Courage, representing Courage MKE, an organization dedicated to raising awareness of the growing epidemic of homeless LGBTQ+ youth in Milwaukee. Over the year, Broderick was the face of Courage MKE, served as a spokesperson in Milwaukee to raise money and help spread the work about the work Courage MKE is doing. Broderick has also been the recipient of the Gary Hollander Adult Leadership Award from Diverse and Resilient, one of CAIR's strongest community partner agencies.

What is perhaps most impressive about Broderick is his ability to navigate his role at MCW doing community engagement and outreach with the Black MSM community, while also being part of that community himself. He has seamlessly navigated personal, ethical, and research-related challenges that inevitably arise when one is involved in research with their own community. The importance of this cannot be overstated; Broderick puts his personal reputation on the line in his daily work and the weight of that responsibility is significant. He asks his peers and the organizations that serve them to trust CAIR and MCW and engage with us to improve HIV disparities in Milwaukee.

The impact of Broderick's work is difficult to quantify but is most certainly felt at CAIR and in Milwaukee. For example, the stigma surrounding medical and public health research is a significant barrier to engaging young men of color in research and contributes to the development of HIV prevention interventions primarily based on the experiences of White men. Through ongoing, gentle advocacy, Broderick has slowly been able to reduce the stigma around HIV research in the community, helping to enroll hundreds of men at risk for HIV in research studies at CAIR. These young men are willing to work with CAIR because of Broderick and our work and successes would not be possible without him. Similarly, Broderick has worked to improve the trust and reputation of MCW in the LGBT and HIV prevention communities. He has helped facilitate trusting, bi-directional relationships between key stakeholders, community organizations and CAIR investigators and demonstrated what successful community-academic partnerships can accomplish.

Personally, I have learned so much from Broderick. He has pushed me to think differently about community-engaged scholarship, helped me navigate difficult situations with community partners, and encouraged me to challenge the status quo of research at MCW. I am truly honored to call Broderick my friend and colleague and could not think of a more deserving MCW staff member for the President's Community Engagement Award.

Sincerely,  
Katherine Quinn, PhD

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katherine Quinn".

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