

# *Mi Vida con VIH* *My Life with HIV*

*Mi Vida con VIH / My Life with HIV* is a photographic exhibit created by ten Latino and Latina activist-artists living with HIV/AIDS in Miami, Florida. These activist-artists, who remain anonymous in the exhibit, receive services at Pridelines, Inc., a nonprofit organization serving LGBTQ persons and their allies. Pridelines provides a wide range of urgently needed community resources in Miami-Dade county, including those for people living with, or at risk for, HIV/AIDS. *Mi Vida con VIH / My Life with HIV* was implemented through a collaboration between Pridelines and Honors College students and faculty at Florida International University (FIU) in 2018-2019, through a course called “PhotoVoice as Community Engagement.” The course brought ten FIU students together with ten activist-artists living with HIV and engaged them in a series of workshops on photography and critical thinking using a method known as “PhotoVoice.” The project aims to foster education and awareness about HIV/AIDS in South Florida through artistic and humanistic productions that describe the meaning of the epidemic for Latinos and Latinas through their own stories, pictures, and words. The photographs in this exhibit invite the viewer to place themselves in the shoes of the photographer and to consider how all of us can contribute to a solution to HIV/AIDS.



Pridelines staff member, Luigi Ferrer, visits students at FIU.



Students and FIU's Dr. Armando Matiz facilitate photo analysis at Pridelines.



Activist-artists describe the meaning of their photographs at Pridelines.

## Why Miami?

Miami-Dade and Broward counties have the highest HIV case rates in the United States. Men who have sex with men (MSM) are particularly vulnerable. Miami and the neighboring city of Fort Lauderdale have the top two rates of HIV of all metropolitan areas in the US, a situation that is exacerbated by high rates of drug and alcohol use. Latino communities in South Florida are disproportionately affected by HIV, and face other challenges such as migratory status, access to health insurance, limited Spanish language information, and social stigmatization. The first step in designing services, programs, and policies for this community is to listen to their voices.