

Arch & Column Pub Raised Over \$100,000 to Fight Against HIV/AIDS

By: Khadijah Williams

COLUMBIA, Mo.- A community proves that it can do more than create social events, as it has raised money for the Spectrum Health Care formerly known as RAIN-Central Missouri organization, toward easing the pain of HIV/AIDS patients.

Pitt Potter, the owner of Arch & Column Pub has a long history with the Spectrum Health Care organization that started with a call to action. Spectrum Health Care organization offers free screening, help with housing and educating others for those afflicted by HIV/AIDS since 1992. According to a recent [study](#) by Generations, 25% of young men have never tested for HIV compared to 7% of middle-aged and older men.

The Spectrum Health Care organization asked Potter if he wanted to be a sponsor for which he agreed to \$200. After several events, the pub raised thousands of dollars over the years.

“Six months into it they break their glasses and they can’t see without them, then okay let’s go get you some new glasses,” Potter said.

Soon after, Potter received no sponsorship package information from the Spectrum Health Care organization which grew over the years. The number of sponsors increased to cover the growing patients who needed help with financing in treatment and housing.

“A bunch of us came to the fundraiser and watched all these great sponsors, they didn’t need us,” Potter said.

The non-profit organization, Trail to a Cure, started in 2007 to raise funds for research and social services in the fight against HIV/AIDS was a new beginning. The pub would host shows featuring female impersonators and a theme party like a ‘70s prom or do raffles.

“A Feast to Fight AIDS, we would eat in a restaurant and the owner would donate a portion of the proceeds to the charity,” said Scott Miniea, a participant in the Trail to a Cure.

In 2017, Trail to a Cure stopped its operation and raised over \$120,740 exceeding their goal for bridging the financial gap for resources which have run out. Potter looks at the brighter side as it was an inspiring experience which brought out the best in people.

“Potter does a lot for the community, provide space for events like birthday parties and open space for self-expression,” said Brett Wisman, a regular patron.