

MAY '23

HOUSTON'S LGBTQ MAGAZINE

OutSmart



THE BOHEMIAN SPIRIT LIVES ON

TUTS brings
Rent back
to Houston

Pg.58

Director Ty Defoe,
actor Tomás Matos,
and choreographer
Monica Josette
take the stage



How an LGBTQ-Friendly Thrift Store is Changing the Wellness Landscape in Houston

Thrift stores are well known for providing budget-friendly vintage finds while supporting various causes, but not many are known for doubling as health and wellness providers. That's what makes Out of the Closet Thrift Store on Westheimer Road unique. They are single-handedly changing the way we think about our local secondhand shops.

This mecca of health and wellness provides discreet and high-quality HIV & STD testing and treatment, primary care services, and a specialty pharmacy, all under the same roof as a lively, vibrant, LGBTQ-friendly thrift store. Their ethos is to provide these free and low-cost services in a casual, friendly environment. You can get a rapid HIV test, shop while you wait for the results, and then fill a prescription or drop off donations to support HIV & AIDS services all in one place.

Out of the Closet Thrift Stores have been offering HIV testing to their communities for more than 30 years. AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) wanted to give locals an easy, stigma-free way to get tested for HIV without having to deal with a sterile clinic environment. Their model helps community members feel empowered to get tested regularly. Since their inception, they've expanded to include primary care services, a fully staffed pharmacy, and state-of-the-art HIV and STD testing right here in Houston.

Affordable & Affirming HIV Primary Care
AHF Healthcare Centers provide primary care services on-site. With more than 35 years of experience, these healthcare centers are the gold standard for HIV care across the country. Their staff are experts in the field and are committed to creating a safe, affirming environment to serve the LGBTQ+ community and beyond.

With an HIV diagnosis, stigma can still infiltrate primary-care providers who are not properly trained. That's what sets AHF Healthcare Centers apart. They understand the unique needs of their clients and work with leading experts to provide the most cutting-edge medicine available today. They also offer benefits coordinators, mental health referrals, transportation assistance, and telehealth appointments. Their goal is to provide a wide range of services to make staying healthy as convenient as possible.



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Free testing AND free condoms?

Yep, you read that right. Out of the Closet Thrift Store is also home to an AHF Wellness Center. They provide free HIV testing services, free condoms, STD & STI screenings, and PrEP & PEP referrals with no appointments necessary.

The traditional healthcare system can be full of red tape and roadblocks. That's why AHF Wellness Centers are committed to being your partner in care. They make treatment easy to access when and if you need it. You can talk to their counselors about getting PrEP or PEP without jumping through countless hoops.

Helping the Community One Prescription at a Time

Your experience wouldn't be complete without a quick visit to the on-site AHF Pharmacy. They offer specialty HIV services and can fill any other prescription medications. AHF Pharmacies are unique as they work with your healthcare team to ensure your meds are optimized for your overall good health.

Their team is trained in the intricacies of HIV care and has an in-depth knowledge of the medications it takes to stay healthy while living with HIV. That's why they provide special "adherence packaging," which sorts your medication into either "on-the-go"

packs or convenient calendar packaging that makes staying on top of your prescriptions easier than ever.

They offer all the same services as big-box pharmacies, including discreet medication delivery and hassle-free refills (in-person, by phone, or online), but as a not-for-profit pharmacy, 96 cents of every dollar they earn goes back into HIV care and services. Filling your prescription with them does a world of good here in Houston and around the world.

A New Mecca of Health and Wellness

As a safe space for the LGBTQ+ community, Out of the Closet Thrift Store is setting the tone for compassionate care in Houston and beyond. Visit their one-stop shop today at 1435 Westheimer Road or go to Outofthecloset.org for more information.

With all of your health and wellness bases covered, you can relax, shop, meet like-minded community members, and experience a thrift store that is truly one-of-a-kind.

Out of the Closet Thrift Store AFH Wellness Center

1435 Westheimer Rd, Houston, TX 77006

Hours: Open 10am - 7pm

Outofthecloset.org

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