



Connie L. Johnson is an author, inspirational speaker, community educator and long-term AIDS survivor. She is dedicated to eradicating negative HIV/AIDS related stigma and helping women and girls realize their optimum potential. Connie uses her voice as a blogger for *A Girl Like Me*, a blog sponsored by The Well Project. Connie began public speaking in 2009. Since then, she has graced stages around the world as the keynote speaker at numerous conferences and other HIV/AIDS

related events. In 2014, Connie developed a creative writing workshop, *HerStory* a workshop designed especially for women living with HIV/AIDS. She has since facilitated this workshop to hundreds of women across the nation. She is the author of *Beyond Measure*, a collection of autobiographical sketches that chronicle the lives of eight Kenyan women who are living with HIV/AIDS. Connie holds a Bachelor of Art in Child and Family Studies from Columbia College in Columbia, SC and Master of Art in Social Justice and Community Development from Loyola Chicago University.



Raven Lopez was born HIV-positive after her mother, HIV/AIDS advocate and care coordinator **Michelle Lopez**, was infected. Raven grew up knowing her status. The experience enabled her to gain her voice, sharing her experience on the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, at an AIDS Walk in 1999 at age 9, and through other outlets. The stigma she faced early in life, especially at school, was daunting. However, Lopez countered the ignorance with knowledge, as she explained to NBLCA's CEO, C. Virginia Fields, "Even though I got made fun of, bullied, food thrown on me, spit on, my hair cut, that still didn't stop me from educating my peers and letting people know that just because I have HIV doesn't make me less of a person or better than a person," Today, I'm a mother of a negative baby boy that is 4 year old. His father is negative and I live my life as any normal

person. HIV does not control me I control HIV!