



National Latino AIDS Awareness Day Dia Nacional Latino por la Concientizacion del SIDA

24 West 25th Street, 9th Floor - New York, NY 10010
Tel: (212) 675.3288 Fax (212) 675.3466
www.nlaad.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

Guillermo Chacon
Vice President, Latino Commission on AIDS
Tel: (212) 584-9304
gchacon@latinoaids.org

Liliana Ranon
NLAAD Coordinator
Tel: (212) 675-3288 ext.315
lranon@latinoaids.org

LATINOS/HISPANICS ACROSS THE NATION RECOGNIZE NATIONAL LATINO AIDS AWARENESS DAY AND CALL TO ACTION LEADERS IN PROMOTING HIV TESTING PREVENTION AND ACCESS TO CARE.

New York, NY, October 12th, 2007 On October 15th more than one thousand organizations in over 300 cities across the nation including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, will come together to promote HIV testing and prevention initiatives in recognition of National Latino AIDS Awareness Day (NLAAD), a nationwide community mobilization campaign seeking to raise the visibility of HIV/AIDS within the Latino communities.

In 2003, the Latino Commission on AIDS and the Hispanic Federation began the initiative and designated October 15th as National Latino AIDS Awareness Day. Currently, organizations across the country use this day as a celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month and recommit themselves in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

“The HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to devastate our Latino community, more than 77,000 Latinos/Hispanics have died due to AIDS. We must respond united in voice and action to this devastation” said Dennis deLeon, President of the Latino Commission on AIDS. “NLAAD is an important day in the efforts against HIV/AIDS in Latino communities where people across the country are joined together in hope, prevention, action, advocacy and awareness.”

Annually on this day, Latinos/Hispanics around the country recognize the tremendous toll HIV has taken on our communities, and raise awareness on the importance of prevention and care through HIV testing activities, press conferences, health fairs, cultural events, candle-light vigils, religious services, health screenings and many more activities that respond to the AIDS epidemic in their communities.

“Already over 251 organizations across the country have officially registered 154 events and this number will increase as the day nears. The scope of National Latino AIDS Awareness Day is so



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vast that a simple conversation about the importance of HIV testing with a friend on that day makes a difference”, said Liliana Ranon, Coordinator of National Latino AIDS Awareness Day. For others, the need for such a day means a lot more.

“Louisiana has seen a rapid increase in Latino residents, especially since Hurricane Katrina and Rita. It is important for us to participate in National Latino AIDS Awareness Day because bilingual and bicultural prevention services are poor and this needs to change” stated Sergio Farfan, co-chair of the Louisiana Latino Health Coalition for HIV/AIDS Awareness.

“It is time for all Latinos to Wake Up! Take Control! And Take the HIV Test!,” said Lillian Rodriguez, President of Hispanic Federation “we need to recognize that priority number one is to promote HIV testing and the commitment from local, state and federal government to increase the funding levels to better response to the AIDS crisis in our communities.”

“In this fifth year, we promote and we recognize October 15th as a date of national action against AIDS. Hispanic/Latino organizations, departments of health, elected and designated officials have worked together to draft a Hispanic/Latino national agenda that defines our priorities for a short term and long term strategy against this emergency of public health” declared Guillermo Chacon, Vice President of the Latino Commission on the AIDS. All are invited to participate by visiting www.latinoaidsagenda.org.

NLAAD is supported by NBC, Telemundo, Cable Positive, the Kaiser Family Foundation, Univision, MTV Tres, Latina Magazine, Orasure Technologies, Abbott Laboratories, Boehringer-Ingelheim (partial list).

For more information on where to get tested for HIV or to find out how you can participate in one of our many events please visit www.nlaad.org.

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