



National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network
Commemorates World AIDS Day 2009
Universal Access and Human Rights

December 1, 2009: As we commemorate the 21st anniversary of World AIDS Day, the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN), remembers all of the brave women who were at the forefront of the battle against HIV and AIDS, and honors those who continue the daily struggle.

"Universal access and human rights are tantamount for Black women, girls, and their families living with and affected by HIV and AIDS," commented Ivy Turnbull, Policy Chair of the NBWHAN. "The protection of human rights is fundamental to combating not only the global HIV and AIDS epidemic but the domestic epidemic as well," she added.

According to the CDC, women account for more than one quarter of all new HIV/AIDS diagnoses in the United States [1]. Historically, women have been underrepresented in HIV/AIDS research, and underserved in HIV/AIDS treatment, care, and prevention efforts. This neglect of women's complex health issues has led, in part, to a dramatic rise in the number of women living with HIV, and an alarming increase in AIDS-related deaths among women.

"On World AIDS Day, the members of NBWHAN rededicate ourselves to our mission: "To be a voice and advocate for Black women and girls living with or affected by HIV/AIDS by engaging in policy and program initiatives that fight gender, social, and health inequities," stated Barbara Joseph, Co-Chair of the NBWHAN. "Empowering Black women and girls to stand up for themselves, and make healthy choices about their lives and those of their families is important and in order for us to come together as a community we must begin with open and honest dialogue."

NBWHAN continues to call upon the Obama Administration to take immediate action on the policy recommendations submitted by NBWHAN on behalf of Black women, girls, and their families living with or affected by HIV/AIDS.

About the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN)

The NBWHAN has been successful in working with many advocacy groups as well as local and national organizations to garner support for women's issues in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Founded in 2007 the NBWHAN has worked to influence the development of research initiatives and resources that will have a positive impact on program development and design for women and produce scientific based evidence of success. The NBWHAN is a community led initiative born out of the urgent need for Black women to set and implement a national HIV/AIDS agenda for Black women and adolescent girls in the areas of prevention, care, treatment, public policy and funding for all Black women and adolescent girls living with or at risk of HIV and AIDS and their families.

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References:

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Fact Sheet HIV/AIDS Among Women
<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/women/resources/factsheets/women.htm>