



The National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network Honors National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

February 7, 2010: The National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network (NBWHAN) honors National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and takes this opportunity to encourage every Black woman and adolescent girl in this nation to increase their awareness of HIV/AIDS and begin to educate themselves and their communities about the devastating affect this epidemic is having on our communities and the importance of HIV prevention, care and treatment.

"Black women have been disproportionately impacted by the epidemic since it began thirty years ago", said Barbara Joseph Co Chair of NBWHAN. It's important that Black women understand how this disease has spread throughout our communities and that we begin to educate our communities on how we can prevent new cases of HIV infection among Black women and girls", continued Joseph.

According to the CDC, HIV infection is the leading cause of death for black women 25 to 34, the 3rd leading cause of death for black women 35 to 44, and the 4th leading cause of death for black women 45 to 54. Black women account for the majority of new AIDS cases among women, (66%) and represent more than one third (36%) of AIDS cases diagnosed among Blacks in the United States¹.

With an HIV prevalence rate that is 18 times the rate of white women Black women and girls infected with HIV/AIDS find themselves in a national state of public health emergency with no support from the government in the form of a National AIDS Strategy and no representative voice of Black women on the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS.

On National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, the National Black Women's HIV/AIDS Network is calling on the Office of National AIDS Policy and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to increase their awareness of the needs of Black women, adolescent girls and their families living with and affected by HIV/AIDS and ensure that they become an integral part of this country's HIV/AIDS agenda.

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:

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